

May 2020

BOLT

Monthly Current Affairs



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Banking

1. KVGB launched 'Vikas Abhaya' loan scheme

Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVGB), a regional rural bank headquartered in Dharwad, has launched a loan scheme 'Vikas Abhaya' to provide relief to borrowers whose business activities are disrupted on account of the Covid-19 pandemic. *Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank was established on 12th Sept 2005, by a Govt. of India Notification, amalgamating four Regional Rural Banks sponsored by Syndicate Bank in the state of Karnataka. Chairman of KVGB- P Gopi Krishna.*

2. Yes Bank appoints Neeraj Dhawan as chief risk officer with immediate effect

Yes Bank has appointed Neeraj Dhawan as its chief risk officer with immediate effect for a period of three years. Prior to this, Dhawan was holding the position of chief risk officer for retail and business banking at Yes Bank. *Yes Bank Founder: Rana Kapoor; Founded: 2004; Headquarters: Mumbai. Yes Bank CEO: Prashant Kumar*

3. RBI cancels licence of Mumbai-based The CKP Co-operative Bank

Reserve Bank of India cancelled the licence of Mumbai-based The CKP Co-operative Bank Ltd. in view that the financial position of the bank is highly adverse & unsustainable. With this process of paying the depositors as per DICGC Act, 1961 will happen. *The C.K.P. Co-op Bank Ltd is a leading bank in the Co-operative Banking Sector in Mumbai. Established in 1915. Every depositor is entitled to repayment of up to, Rs 5 Lakh.*

4. Over 99% of CKP Co-Op Bank's depositors to get full repayment: RBI

RBI said that over 99% of CKP Co-Op Bank's 1.32 lakh depositors will get full money through DICGC. On liquidation, every depositor is entitled to repayment of his deposits up to a monetary ceiling of Rs 5 lakh from DICGC as per usual terms & conditions. *The functions of the DICGC are governed by the provisions of 'The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961' (DICGC Act) and 'The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation General Regulations, 1961' framed by RBI. RBI had restricted CKP's activities since 2014.*

5. SIDBI launches SME Service platform to boost Digitisation, Credit Access

SIDBI launched an SME service platform to facilitate the digitisation of small businesses and make access to credit easier for those caught in a cash crunch owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. It will list free automated tools to allow MSMEs to work remotely. *Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), Headquarters location: Lucknow; Founded: 2 April 1990; Chairman and Managing Director- Mohammad Mustafa. It will allow business to list warehouses for inventory control.*

6. SBI to extend moratorium to NBFCs and microlenders

State Bank of India has decided to allow non-banking finance companies to avail of the three-month repayment moratorium permitted by Reserve Bank of India. The moratorium will be given on a case to case basis depending on the cash position of these NBFCs. *Separately, SBI has also made available a special long-term working capital loan facility to its 25 NBFC borrowers with A and BBB ratings. On 27 March, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) permitted lenders to give a three-month moratorium for all borrowers SBI chairman: Rajnish Kumar.*

7. Bangladesh gets 500 million-dollar ADB loan to manage COVID-19 impact

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved an additional loan of 500 million dollar to Bangladesh to manage the impact of Corona virus on its economy and public health. 1.5 million workers, mostly women, in export industries will receive salary support. *Founded in 1966, the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) headquarters are in Manila, Philippines. ADB had approved \$100 million concessional loan for Bangladesh.*

8. Public Sector Banks sanction loans worth Rs 5.66 lakh Cr for more than 4181000 accounts during March-April

PSBs have sanctioned loans worth 5.66 lakh crore rupees for more than 41 lakh 81 thousand accounts during March-April this year. These borrowers are from MSME, Retail, Agriculture & Corporate sectors, waiting for disbursal soon after lockdown lifts. *Public Sector Banks in India: Six merged banks - SBI, Bank of Baroda, Punjab National Bank, Canara Bank, Union Bank of India, Indian Bank. Six independent banks -*

Indian Overseas Bank, UCO Bank, Bank of Maharashtra, Punjab and Sind Bank, Bank of India, Central Bank of India.

9. SBI cuts benchmark lending rate by 15 basis points

SBI slashed benchmark lending rate by 15 basis points and introduced Special Deposit Scheme for senior citizens with higher interest rate. With that, the marginal cost of funds-based lending rate comes down to 7.25%, from 7.40% with effect from 10th May. *Under SBI Wecare Deposit, an additional 30 basis points premium will be payable for senior citizen's retail term deposits with Five Years and above tenure only. This scheme would be open until 30th of September. SBI Chairman- **Rajnish Kumar**. SBI has introduced a new product 'SBI Wecare Deposit'.*

10. Cooperative Banks come under SARFAESI Act: SC

Cooperative Banks established under a State Law or Multi-State Level Societies come within the ambit of the SARFAESI, 2002. The Act prescribes a procedure for faster recovery of dues. The five-judge bench was headed by Justice Arun Mishra. *According to the judgement, cooperative banks come under the category of banks as defined under Section 2(1)(c) of the Sarfaesi Act, and the recovery procedures mentioned under that law apply to cooperative banks as well. Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act of 2002 allow banks and financial institutions to auction properties (residential and commercial) when borrowers fail to repay their loans. It enables banks to reduce their non-performing assets by adopting measures for recovery or reconstruction. It allows secured creditors to take possession of the assets of a borrower who fails to pay dues within 60 days of demanding repayment. According to an RBI report, there were 1,551 urban cooperative banks as on 31 March 2018, and 96,612 rural cooperative banks as on 31 March 2017, with the latter accounting for 65.8% of the total asset size of all cooperative banks. Co-op banks come under the definition of 'Banking Company'.*

11. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank approves \$ 500 million loan to support India's COVID-19 operations

Co-financed by the World Bank, the funds were aimed at enabling the government to scale up its containment efforts and to strengthen the health system to manage future outbreaks. The government and the AIIB signed a COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project that would help strengthen India's public health preparedness. *This is the first-ever health sector support from the Beijing-headquartered bank to India. The project will be implemented by the National Health Mission (NHM), the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). AIIB Headquarters: Beijing, China. President: **Mr. Jin Liqun**. AIIB -development bank-finances infrastructure projects in Asia.*

13. IBA's Rs 75,000-crore bad bank idea takes shape

The Indian Bank Association (IBA) has firmed up a proposal to house approximately Rs 70,000-75,000 crore of bad loans at book value in its proposed 'bad bank'. The Bad Bank would require approximately Rs 10,000 crore of capital initially. *Bad Bank Concept: The concept of a bad bank was floated by the committee headed by former Punjab National Bank chairman Sunil Mehta, which came out with project 'Sashakt India Asset Management'. One of the five proposals to manage bad loans was the transfer of NPAs above Rs 500 crore to an independent asset management company (AMC) supported by institutional funding through alternate investment funds. A bad bank buys the bad loans and other illiquid holdings of other banks and financial institutions which in turn will clear their balance sheet. The idea was to drive a private sector initiative along with public sector lenders with lower equity holdings and rope in global investors. The twin entity structure — an Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) first, which acquires the bad loans — will enable to bring in private expertise. Below the ARC, there can be AMCs, which are special purpose vehicles that will manage the bad loans. IBA Chairman: **Rajnish Kumar**.*

14. NABARD disburses Rs 20,500 crore to coop banks, RRBs

NABARD has disbursed Rs 20,500 crore to cooperative banks and RRBs for on-lending to farmers. The amount is a part of the Rs 25,000 crore of special refinance facility provided by RBI to NABARD for refinancing RRBs, cooperative banks and MFIs. *Special Refinance Facility: RBI announced special refinance facilities amounting to Rs 50,000 crore to All-India Financial Institutions like the NABARD, SIDBI*

and NHB. The measure has been taken to meet sectoral credit needs at a time when the institutions are facing difficulty in tapping the market. NABARD is a development bank focussing on rural sector of India.

15. Canara Bank launches special gold loan business vertical

Canara Bank, the fourth-largest public sector lender launched a special business vertical dedicated for gold loans. The Bank's gold loan products are aimed at providing a quick, hassle-free experience for customers with low-interest cost till June 30, '20. *The bank's business vertical is aimed at helping resolve issues and support livelihoods in the current challenging times. Canara Bank launched this special gold loan campaign with an interest rate as low as 7.85 per cent per annum. Canara Bank CEO: Lingam Venkat Prabhakar. Canara Bank Headquarters: Bengaluru.*

16. Kotak Mahindra Bank launches Video KYC for new customers to open savings account

Kotak Mahindra Bank introduced Video KYC for new customers to open a Savings account. Launched on a pilot basis, it is in line with Kotak's digital-first strategy and is a start – to- end fully integrated completely digital and paperless account opening. *In January 2020, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) amended KYC norms and introduced a video-based KYC option to onboard customers. Kotak Mahindra Bank Headquarters: Mumbai. CEO: Uday Kotak. Kotak is 1st bank to integrate Video KYC in account opening.*

17. Franklin Templeton appoints Kotak Mahindra Bank to monetize assets in six wound-up

Franklin Templeton Trustee Services has appointed Kotak Mahindra Bank as an independent adviser to assist Franklin Templeton Asset Management (India) Private Ltd with all portfolio actions in six funds being wound up, including monetising their assets. *The company had on April 23 announced to shut the six credit funds due to liquidity issues amid the coronavirus crisis. The total assets under management (AUM) of the six shut funds stands at over Rs 25,000 crore. Sanjay Sapre, President, Franklin Templeton, India.*

18. IndusInd Bank launches Video KYC platform for savings accounts and credit card customers

IndusInd Bank has expanded the scope and capabilities of its state-of-the-art video banking services, with the integration of a Video KYC platform. The video KYC services will simplify the on-boarding process for new customers. *IndusInd Bank CEO: Sumant Kathpalia; Owner: Hinduja Group. IndusInd Bank Limited, Headquarters: Pune.*

19. RBI cuts repo rate by 40 bps to 4 per cent

The RBI cut the repo rate by 40 basis points from 4.4 per cent to 4 per cent, reducing the reverse repo rate at 3.35 per cent to maintain accommodative stance. The six-member Monetary Policy Committee voted 5:1 in favour of 40 bps cut in interest rate. *Monetary Policy Committee: The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has six members which include the RBI Governor, 2 representatives from the RBI and three nominated by the Government of India. It was created in 2016 to bring transparency and accountability in fixing India's monetary policy. The current MPC members include: 1. Shaktikanta Das 2. Michael Patra 3. Janak Raj 4. Dr Chetan Ghate 5. Dr Pami Dua 6. Dr Rvindra H Dholakia. Highlights of the MPC Meeting: The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate have been reduced from 4.65% to 4.25%. It has granted of 3 more months moratorium on term loan instalments. Forex reserves increased by \$ 9.2 billion in FY21 and now stands at \$ 487 billion, equal to 1 year of imports. It has predicted that the volume of the global trade could shrink by 13 - 32% this year. GDP growth in FY21 to remain negative in negative territory. The biggest blow from COVID-19 has been to private consumption. Industrial Production shrank by 17% in March. Headline Inflation may remain firm in the first half of the year and may ease in second half. RBI to extend 15,000 crore rupee line of credit to EXIM Bank.*

20. HDFC Bank launches special FD scheme for senior citizens

Private sector lender, HDFC Bank launched an FD scheme for seniors called 'Senior Citizen Care FD'. According to this scheme, the bank is offering an additional 75 basis points for deposits with more than 5-year tenors with investments up to Rs 5 crore. *Launched on May 18, 2020, the offer has been introduced in the retail term deposit segment to safeguard the interests of senior citizens (aged 60 and above). The offer is valid up to September 30, 2020; HDFC BNK is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. HDFC Bank CEO: Aditya Puri.*

21. ICICI Bank launches special FD scheme with higher rate for senior citizens

ICICI Bank launched 'ICICI Bank Golden Years FD' for senior citizens. It offers them an interest rate of 6.55% p.a. for deposits up to Rs 2 crore with a tenure of more than 5 to 10 years. It offers 0.80% higher

interest than applicable to general public. *'ICICI Bank Golden Years FD'*, is available from May 20 to September 30, 2020; The customers can avail a loan against their FD up to 90% of principal and accrued interest; The customers can apply for a credit card against their FD from the Bank; Sandeep Bakhshi is the MD & CEO of ICICI Bank. ICICI Bank, Founded: June 1994, Vadodara.

22. ADB, India sign \$177 million loan to upgrade roads in Maharashtra

The Asian Development Bank and the Government of India signed a \$177 million loan to upgrade 450 kilometres of state highways and major district roads in the state of Maharashtra. This could improve the connectivity between rural areas and urban centres. **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**, established on 19 December 1966, Headquarters: Mandaluyong, Philippines; **President: Masatsugu Asakawa**; Membership: 68 countries. Project to upgrade 2 major districts and 11 State Highways.

23. RBI slaps penalty on BoI, Karnataka Bank & Saraswat Bank

RBI imposed the penalty of Rs. 5 cr on Bank of India, Rs. 30 lakhs on Saraswat Co-operative Bank Ltd and Rs. 1.20 cr on Karnataka Bank. The RBI has imposed the penalty on the ground of non-compliance with certain provisions of the directions issued by RBI. RBI also imposed a monetary penalty on Citibank (₹4 crore), Bharat Co-operative Bank (₹60 lakh), TJSB Sahakari Bank (₹45 lakh), and Nagar Urban Co-operative Bank (₹40 lakh). This penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested in RBI under the provisions of section 47A (1) (c) read with sections 46 (4) (i) and 51 (1) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (the Act). Karnataka Bank, CEO: Mahabaleshwara M. S; Headquarters: Mangalore. Bank of India; Headquarters: Mumbai; Atanu Kumar Das. Managing Director & CEO. Saraswat Bank Chairman: Gautam E. Thakur. Saraswat Co-operative Bank Limited Headquarters: Mumbai.

Economy

1. Moody's slashes India's growth estimate to 0.2% for 2020 from 2.5%

Moody's Investors Service slashed India growth forecast for calendar year 2020 to 0.2 per cent, from 2.5% projected in March. For 2021, the rating agency expects India's growth to rebound to 6.2%. China is projected to grow 1% in 2020 and 7.1% in 2021. *Only China, India, and Indonesia are projected to witness economic growth in 2020 by Moody's. It expects G20 advanced economies as a bloc to see a fall in its GDP by 4 per cent in 2020. India lost tag of the fastest-growing economy to China in 2019.*

2. Unified Payments Interface (UPI) records over 20% fall in transactions in April

As per the data released by the National Payments Corporation of India, UPI has registered 0.99 billion transactions amounting to Rs 1,51,140 crore (Rs 1.51 trillion). This is the 1st time in the past 7 months that UPI volume went below the one billion mark. *National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) was set up with the guidance and support of the RBI and Indian Banks Association (IBA) in 2008. Dilip Asbe is current managing director and chief executive officer of the NPCI. In April, IMPS processed 122.47 million payments.*

3. Centre releases 2nd instalment of Rs 500 for women Jan Dhan account holders

Instalment of Rs 500 is being transferred directly into the accounts of women beneficiaries of PM Jan Dhan Yojna. Centre has released the amount to the banks who will credit the amount directly into the accounts of around 20 cr beneficiaries. *Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), the biggest financial inclusion initiative in the world. The scheme was launched by Finance Ministry in 2014.*

4. Government hikes MSP for 49 Minor Forest Produce

Government has raised the minimum support price for Minor Forest Produce of 49 items. Tribal Affairs Ministry said, the increase across various items of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) ranges from 16% to 66% to provide an immediate momentum to procurement. *Government fixes Minimum Support Price (MSP) on the basis of recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). Union Minister of Tribal Affairs: Arjun Munda.*

5. Amid COVID backlash, China tests state-run digital currency to counter dollar monopoly

China has begun piloting its new digital currency in four 4 cities, becoming the first nation to do so. The digital currency- known as the e-RMB- would be used for paying the April-month salaries to some government employees and public servants. *The introduction of the digital currency is seen as a Chinese move to counter dollar weaponization and so provide investors and businesses with a choice--an alternative to dollar settlement. Chinese Central Bank- People's Bank of China.*

6. Iran introduced new Currency to tackle inflation

Iranian Parliament authorized the replacement of rial with another basic unit of currency called the Toman. Each Toman will be worth 10,000 rials under the new system. Gheran is another new denomination. 100 Gheran makes a Toman. *Since 2018 when the Trump administration repudiated the nuclear agreement and reimposes sanctions on Iran, the value of Iran's currency has fallen by roughly 60 percent. Iranian President- Hassan Rouhani, Capital- Tehran.*

7. Moody's pegs FY21 GDP growth at 0%, says risk of slower GDP growth rising

Moody's Investors Service projected India's growth at zero per cent for the current fiscal and said the negative outlook on the sovereign rating reflects increasing risks that GDP growth will remain significantly lower than in the past. Lower growth and government revenue generation, coupled with coronavirus-related fiscal stimulus measures, will lead to higher government debt ratios which we project to rise to around 81 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) over the next few years," Moody's noted. *At present, India's debt is about 72 per cent of the estimated GDP of 2019. Negative outlook shows an upgrade is unlikely in the near term.*

8. ICRA expects GDP to contract by 20% in June quarter; 2% fall in FY21

After the graded relaxations in the lockdown, ICRA estimated that the country's GDP might contract by as much as 20% in the June quarter & is expected to overcome some lost ground in the remainder of the year but still close 2020-21 down by up to 2%. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cut the key policy rate (repo) by a steep 0.75 per cent and also taken a slew of unusual measures to make liquidity available for the needy

sectors of the economy with a view to push growth. *ICRA CEO: Naresh Takkar; Owner: Moody's Corporation. A full-year contraction of 1-2 per cent is inevitable, ICRA said*

9. Govt hikes market borrowing limit to Rs 12 lakh Crore

The government increased its market borrowing estimate by staggering Rs 4.2 Lakh Crore to Rs 12 Lakh Crore for the current fiscal to deal with the expected shortfall in revenue due to the impact of the pandemic. The government resorts to market borrowing to make up for the mismatch between its revenue and expenditure. *The estimated gross market borrowing in the financial year 2020-21 will be Rs 12 lakh crore in place of Rs 7.80 lakh crore as per BE 2020-21. The government has also increased the weekly borrowing target to Rs 30,000 crore from Rs 21,000 crore fixed on March 31. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget for 2020-21 had pegged gross borrowing in the new financial year at Rs 7.8 lakh crore, higher than Rs 7.1 lakh crore estimated for 2019-20.* **GROSS MARKET BORROWING:** *The government borrows money from the market to meet any shortfall in funds to meet its expenditure when it is unable to cover it with income earned through tax, non-tax revenue. The borrowing is done through the issue of dated securities and treasury bills, the purchase and sale of which is conducted by the Reserve Bank of India. The money that government borrows during a particular fiscal year is called the net borrowing, while gross borrowing includes net borrowing for the year and the repayment of past loans. Govt would have to revise its fiscal deficit target from 3.5%.*

10. Nomura predicts Indian GDP to contract by 5.2% in FY 21

Nomura and Goldman Sachs have cut their growth projections for India in the financial year 2020-21 (FY21). Nomura has lowered India's FY21 GDP growth forecast to -5.2% vs -0.4% earlier. *Goldman Sachs expects the economy to contract 0.4 per cent in FY21. The international research and broking house, Nomura expects the central government's fiscal deficit to widen to 7 per cent of GDP in FY21, well above the 3.5 per cent target and much higher than their earlier forecast of 5.1 per cent. Analysts at Goldman Sachs, another international group, expect the economy to contract 0.4 per cent in FY21 versus consensus median 2.7 per cent following the extension of the nationwide lockdown. In April, they had expected the GDP growth to slip to 1.6 per cent in FY21. Both groups expect the RBI to cut rates sharply.*

11. FY21 fiscal deficit likely at 5.8%, growth to slip to 0.5% says report

Bank of America estimated the fiscal deficit to come at 5.8% of the GDP in FY21 as against the budget target of 3.5%. It has also revised down their GDP growth estimate to 0.5% for the current fiscal year, as against the earlier estimate of 1.5%. *Bank of America: The Bank of America Corporation (BoFA) is an American multinational investment bank and financial services company headquartered in Charlotte. CEO: Brian Moynihan. Govt. raised market borrowing for current FY by 4.2 Lakh crore.*

12. Govt broadens the definition of MSME

Microenterprises will be those with an investment of up to Rs 1 crore and a turnover of up to Rs 5 crore. Small enterprises are those up to Rs 10 crore in investment and Rs 50 crore in turnover. Medium enterprises are those up to Rs 20 crore investment. *The government broadened the definition of MSME by revising the limit of investment in machinery or equipment and introducing a "turnover" criterion. It is a reform measure that seeks to reverse the traditional policy bias in favour of units staying small in order to qualify for benefits. In addition, the government has disallowed global companies from participating in tenders up to Rs 200 crore, earmarking that space exclusively for Indian companies. Collateral Free Loans for MSMEs: Emergency Credit Line to Businesses/MSMEs from Banks and NBFCs up to 20% of entire outstanding credit as on February 29, 2020. Eligibility: Borrowers with up to Rs. 25 crores outstanding and Rs 100 crore turnover. Tenor: 4-year tenor with a moratorium of 12 months on Principal repayment. 100% credit guarantee cover to Banks and NBFCs on principal and interest. No guarantee fee, no fresh collateral. Benefits: 45 Lakh units can resume business activity and safeguard jobs. Medium enterprises are those with a turnover of Rs 100 crores.*

13. RBI extends interest subsidy scheme for exporters till March 31, 2021

Exporters get the subsidy under the 'Interest Equalisation Scheme for pre and Post Shipment Rupee Export Credit', a scheme announced in November 2018 & this applies to all exports to the MSME sector. *It has been extended till March 31, 2021. IES: Interest Equalisation Scheme is a rebate of interest provided on pre- and post-shipment export credit like packing credit. This scheme was introduced with effect from 1st April*

2015. Initially, the interest is deducted and a rebate up to 5% is given subsequently based on eligibility and norms. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) DG–Ajay Sahai.

14. India to grow at 1.2% in CY20, global GDP to shrink by 3.2%: UN

In the World Economic Situation and Prospects released by UN, it had slashed India's projected growth rate to 1.2% in 2020 and forecast that the global economy will contract sharply by 3.2% unleashing a recession unseen since the Great Depression of 1930s. *India's economic growth is forecast to slow to 1.2 per cent in 2020, a further deterioration from the already slowed growth of 4.1 per cent in 2019. India, which grew at 6.8 per cent in fiscal year 2018, is forecast to recover slightly and clock a 5.5 per cent growth rate in 2021. UN Secretary-General: Antonio Guterres.*

15. Investment Capacity of India in renewable sector reached 500-700 billion USD: Study

The Institute of Energy Economics and Financial Analysis published a study according to which India has increased its potential for renewable energy in solar power in the country. *The Bhadla Solar Park in Rajasthan is the largest solar park in the world. Study is titled as 'India's Utility-Scale Solar Parks- A Global Success Story'. India also target to install 275 GW of renewable energy by FY2026-27. IEEFA conducts research and analyses on financial and economic issues related to energy and the environment. IEEFA is headquartered in USA. India target to install 175 GW of renewable energy by FY2021-22.*

16. UP, West Bengal account for highest number of street vendors in India: SBI economists

Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are home to the highest number of street vendors, collectively accounting for over one-fourth of India's tally, economists at SBI said. Government had announced a Rs 5,000-crore special credit facility for street vendors. *Under the 'one nation, one ration card' initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled food grains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) from any fair-price shop in the country. The scheme was announced in June 2019. They will be given a loan of ₹10,000 each to restart businesses.*

17. Fiscal deficit to balloon to 7.9% in FY21: Report

With the Government's Rs 20 lakh Cr stimulus package, the country's fiscal deficit is likely to be more than double to 7.9 per cent in the current financial year, according to an SBI research report. *The earlier estimate for the FY21 was 3.5% of the GDP. The government Rs 20 lakh crore package includes Rs 1.7 lakh crore of fiscal stimulus announced in the first phase, Rs 5.6 lakh crore stimulus provided through various monetary policy measures and Rs 5.94 lakh crore through the second phase, implying Rs 6.70 lakh crore package is still to be announced. Govt debt as a % of GDP has been on a rising trend since FY11.*

18. Government to provide 30% viability gap funding for social infrastructure projects

Government would provide 30% viability gap funding (VGF), against the 20% given earlier for social infrastructure projects, to help boost private sector investment in social infrastructure projects with a total outlay of Rs 8,100 crore. *For other sectors, existing VGF support of 20 percent each from the Centre and states shall continue; Viability Gap Finance means a grant to support projects that are economically justified but not financially viable. Minister of State for Finance: Anurag Singh Thakur.*

19. Commercial mining of coal on revenue share basis: Govt

Government announced that it will introduce competition, transparency & private sector participation in the coal sector through revenue sharing mechanism. This will be done instead of regime of fixed rupee/tonne. *Nearly 50 blocks to be offered immediately. ₹50,000 crore will be spent by govt for the evacuation of enhanced CIL's (Coal India Limited) target of 1 billion tons of coal production by 2023-24 plus coal production from private block; Govt had announced ₹1 lakh crore Agri Infrastructure Fund for farm gate infrastructure for farmers and ₹10,000 crore scheme for the formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (MFEs) under the ₹20 lakh crore stimulus package; Creation of affordable rental housing complexes (ARHC) in urban areas for migrant workers and poor comes under the COVID-19 stimulus package; Govt announced collateral-free automatic loans worth up to ₹3 lakh crore for MSMEs and also extended the date of filing income tax returns and ₹90,000 crore liquidity for cash-starved discoms. Coal bed methane (CBM) production would also be encouraged.*

20. 1.2 mn EPFO members withdrawn Rs 3,360 cr of savings during lockdown

Govt announced that around 1.2 million members of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) withdrew Rs 3,360 crore retirement savings during the coronavirus-induced lockdown under the Pradhan

Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) package. *The Employee Provident Fund (EPF) is a scheme that helps people save up a sufficient corpus for retirement. The plan was introduced with the Employees' Provident Funds Act in 1952 and is today managed by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO); EPFO Headquarters- New Delhi; EPFO CEO- Sunil Barthwal; Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) scheme allows individuals to deposit money that has not been taxed. Under the scheme, 50% of the untaxed amount must be paid; PMGKY was launched by the Government of India in 2016. EPFO functions under the Union labour and employment ministry*

21. Indian economy to contract 5% in FY21: Goldman Sachs

America's Goldman Sachs expects the Indian economy to contract by 5% in FY21, making it the worst performance by the country ever. Goldman was earlier expecting a 0.4% contraction before revising it down to a level it shares with Japanese brokerage Nomura. **Goldman Sachs CEO: David M Solomon.** *Goldman Sachs Headquarters: New York, US. It said that fiscal impact of the stimulus is at 1.3% of GDP.*

22. Indian economy to contract 7%: Bernstein

Bernstein, the US-based investment management firm, has estimated contraction in the Indian economy at 7 per cent during 2020-21. BofA Securities pegged it at 0.1 per cent for FY21 and 12 per cent in the first quarter of the fiscal year. *While guarantees for fresh credit to MSMEs, supporting the poor and migrants via an expanded employment guarantee programme, and the provision of food got a thumbs-up from Bernstein, the analysts at Bernstein said that the stimulus package of the government is a lost opportunity. CARE Ratings has projected growth of 1.1-1.2 per cent.*

23. FIEO expects 20 per cent fall in export during FY21

According to the Federation of Indian Export Organisations, exports from India is expected to fall by 20% in FY21 in the wake of the pandemic. The outlook is "extremely negative" at the moment and fall in export to be accompanied by a decline in import. *FIEO is the apex body of the export promotion councils, commodity boards and export development authorities in India, set up in 1965; FIEO confers "Niryat Shree" and "Niryat Bandhu" Awards to its exporters and export facilitators respectively for their outstanding performance in exports. FIEO also confers State Export Excellence Awards to the members of the respective regions; Head office of FIEO is at New Delhi. FIEO director general and chief executive officer: Ajay Sahai.*

24. 9th Edition of the Status Paper on Government Debt released

The Central Government released the 9th Edition of the Status Paper on the Government Debt, which provides a detailed analysis of the Overall Debt Position of the GoI. The Government has been bringing-out a Status Paper on Government Debt since 2010-11. *The central government's debt as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) dropped marginally by 0.1% from 45.8% in fiscal 2017-18 to 45.7% or Rs 86.73 lakh crore in FY19; the general government debt to GDP ratio, which includes the combined debt of the Centre and states, declined by 0.1% from 68.7% in March 2018 to 68.6% or Rs 1.3 crore (Rs 130 trillion) in March last year. As external debt stood at 2.7% of GDP or Rs 5.12 lakh crore in FY19; Around 94.1% of the Centre's liabilities consisted of domestic debt in FY19, of which 84.4% or Rs 59.68 lakh crore was made up of marketable securities; The tenure of the longest security was 37 years; The average interest cost (AIC) for the Centre remained unchanged over FY18 to FY19 at 7.1%. Thus, nominal GDP growth net of AIC was 3.9% in FY19, however, this was within the limits of sustainable debt parameters. It contains Debt Management Strategy from 2019-20 to 2021-22.*

25. ICRA pegs GDP growth at 1.9% in Q4 and 4.3% in FY20

ICRA projected economy to grow by 1.9% in the fourth quarter against 5.8 a year ago and 4.3% in 2019-20 against 6.1% in 2018-19. Earlier, the second advance estimates of the government pegged the growth at 5% in 2019-20, but analysts doubted that number. *The CEO of ICRA, a credit rating agency is Naresh Takkar.*

26. Fitch Ratings, CRISIL, SBI Research see India economy shrinking in FY21

Fitch Ratings, CRISIL, and SBI Research drastically cut India's economic growth forecast in the current FY. Fitch and CRISIL projected to contract 5% from their earlier estimates of at 0.8% and 1.8%, respectively. *SBI Research expects contraction at 6.8%. Credit rating agencies (CRA) are agencies which provide ratings to represent objective analyses and independent assessments of companies, entities or countries that issue debt securities. These ratings are an indication to the buyers of this debt how likely they are to be paid back. The debt instruments rated by CRAs include government Bonds, corporate bonds, CDs, municipal*

bonds, preferred stock, and collateralized securities. The ratings given to such securities are mostly represented as AAA, AAB, Ba3, CCC etc. It is very similar to a marking system wherein the highest rating AAA is given to a borrower who has the highest probability of paying back. CRISIL expects current quarter's GDP to shrink 25% year on year.

27. FDI in India jumps 13% to record \$ 49.98 bn in 2019-20

Foreign direct investment in India grew by 13% to a record of \$ 49.97 billion in the 2019-20 FY. Foreign direct investment in India grew by 13% to a record of \$ 49.97 billion in the 2019-20 financial year. Singapore emerged as the largest source of FDI. *Routes through which India gets FDI- Automatic route: The non-resident or Indian company does not require prior nod of the RBI or government of India for FDI; Govt route: The government's approval is mandatory. The company will have to file an application through Foreign Investment Facilitation Portal, which facilitates single-window clearance. The application is then forwarded to the respective ministry, which will approve/reject the application in consultation with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce. DPIIT will issue the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for processing of applications under the existing FDI policy. Services sector attracted the maximum inflows (\$7.85 billion).*

28. RBI stops selling 7.75% govt savings bonds

The Reserve Bank India stopped selling the 7.75% (Taxable) government savings bond, the most sought-after investment by retail investors in recent times. With this, options have come down for retail investors, looking for high guaranteed-return products. *This was done due to the declining interest rates as RBI has lowered the short-term lending (repo) rate which is currently at 4%. These bonds offered a higher interest rate as compared to bank fixed deposits and other financial investment instruments offering an equal degree of safety. The Bonds were issued at par at Rs 100. Although it did not have any maximum investment limit, the minimum investment in the bonds started at Rs 1,000. These bonds had a seven-year lock-in period.*

National

1. Cauvery Water Management Authority brought under the Jal Shakti Ministry: Central government

The Centre has officially brought the Cauvery Water Management Authority under the Jal Shakti Ministry. CWMA was earlier under the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation. Modi government formed the Jal Shakti Ministry. In February 2018, the apex court directed the Union Water Resources Ministry which now renamed as Jal Shakti Ministry to form the CWMA within six weeks in a verdict that marginally increased Karnataka's share of Cauvery water, reduced the allocation for Tamil Nadu and sought to settle the protracted water dispute between the two southern states **S Masood Husain** is present Chairman of the CWMA. Minister of Jal Shakti -Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.

2. 200 new mandis from 7 states join e-NAM for marketing of agricultural produce

200 new mandis from 7 states joined the e-NAM platform for marketing of Agricultural produce bring the total number of e-NAM mandis in the country to 785. It is for the first time that Karnataka has been added to the list of e-NAM states. National Agriculture Market or eNAM is an online trading platform for agricultural commodities in India, Owner: Ministry of Agriculture; Government of India. Govt estimates 1000 Mandis to join the e-NAM platform.

3. CAIT to launch national e-commerce marketplace 'bharatmarket' for retail traders

Traders' body Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has announced to launch a national e-commerce marketplace 'bharatmarket' soon for all retail traders in collaboration with several technology partners to provide end-to-end services in the logistics. CONFEDERATION OF ALL INDIA TRADERS (CAIT) was established in the year 1990. It has active support from Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

4. CSIR's Kisan Sabha App to connect farmers to supply chain

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research has launched Kisan Sabha App to connect farmers to supply chain and freight transportation Management System. It aims to provide the most economical and timely logistics support to the farmers. The **Central Road Research Institute (CRRI)**, a CSIR lab, came with this app to resolve the problems related to the agricultural supply chain. CSIR, largest research & development organisation in India.

5. PM chairs meeting of Task Force on Corona Vaccine Development, Drug Discovery, Diagnosis & Testing

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a detailed review of the current status of India's efforts in vaccine development, drug discovery, diagnosis and testing. PM also took a note of the extraordinary coming together of academia, industry and government. Coronaviruses have a spike-like structure on their surface called an S protein. (The spikes create the corona-like, or crown-like, appearance that gives the viruses their name.) The S protein attaches to the surface of human cells. A vaccine that targets this protein would prevent it from binding to human cells and stop the virus from reproducing. COVID-19, a respiratory illness caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

6. Nabard disburses Rs 12,767cr to state cooperative banks, RRBs for on lending

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has disbursed Rs 12,767 crore to state cooperative banks and regional rural banks for on lending to farmers. The loans are being offered for one year at an interest rate of 4.8 per cent. NABARD Founded: 12 July 1982; Headquarters: Mumbai. Nabard Chairman-Harsh K Bhanwala.

7. Enhancing audit independence: Corporate Affairs Ministry sets up 7-member panel

The MCA has constituted a seven-member committee to examine the comments received on the consultation paper floated by it for enhancing audit independence and accountability in the country. The panel has been asked to submit its report by June 30. The committee members are: Amarjit Chopra, Past President of CA Institute; KVR Murty, Joint Secretary, MCA; PR Ramesh, former Deloitte India Chairman; Ajay Bahl, Co-Founder & Managing Partner, AZB Partners; Sridhar Pamarthi, Joint Director, MCA; NK Dua, Joint Director, MCA, and Atma Sah, Deputy Director, MCA. Nirmala Sitharaman- Minister of Corporate Affairs.

8. Govt extends time limit for annual GST returns for financial year 2018-19 till 30 September

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has extended the time limit for furnishing of the annual return and Goods and Services Tax (GST) audit for the financial year 2018-2019, till 30 September

2020. Government has also given an extension till 31st May for all the e-way bills generated on or before the March 24th, whose validity were to expire between March 20th and April 15th. This relaxation will allow seamless movement of goods and supplies through road transport carriers ensuring availability of supplies across the county. CBIC Chairperson: M. Ajit Kumar.

9. NITI Aayog starts campaign to 'protect' senior citizens during COVID-19

NITI Aayog in association with Piramal Foundation- the philanthropic arm of the Piramal Group- launched a campaign 'Surakshit Dada-Dadi & Nana-Nani Abhiyan' focussed on ensuring well-being of senior citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. *The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015; Rajiv Kumar is Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog. The campaign targets to reach in 25 Aspirational Districts.*

10. Coronavirus: India starts clinical trial of Ayush medicines

Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan said that the health ministry has started a clinical trial of traditional medicines like Ashwagandha, Yashtimadhu, Guduchi Pippali, Ayush-64 amid rising number of coronavirus positive cases in the country. *The clinical trial would be done as a joint initiative of Ministry of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Science and Technology through Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) with technical support of Indian Council of Medical Research. Shripad Yesso Naik- Union Minister of AYUSH.*

11. CSIR launches Compendium of Indian Technologies to tackle COVID-19 pandemic

A 'Compendium of Indian Technologies for Combating COVID-19 (Tracing, Testing and Treating)' prepared by NDRC was launched by Dr. Shekhar C. Mande, Director General, CSIR, and Secretary, DSIR, Govt. of India at CSIR Headquarters, New Delhi. *National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) was established in 1953 by the Government of India. National Research Development Corporation Chairman and Managing Director-H. Purushottam. NRDC- National Research Development Corporation.*

12. India exports 33.5 lakh tonnes sugar so far in 2019-20 marketing year

Sugar mills have exported 33.49 lakh tonnes of sweetener so far in the current marketing year ending September, with help from government's financial assistance, the All India Sugar Trade Association (AISTA) said in a statement. *India exported sugar to 60 countries, but around 60 per cent of the total shipments were to Iran, Somalia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. The government has allowed export of 60 lakh tonnes of sugar under Maximum Admissible Export Quota (MAEQ) during 2019-20 marketing year to liquidate surplus sugar in global markets. Sugar marketing year runs from October to September.*

13. Coir Board ropes in IIT-Madras for R&D

The Coir Board has signed an MoU with the IIT-Madras to establish a Centre of Excellence for the application of coir exclusively or in combination with other natural fibres. IIT-Madras had earlier validated the research studies on Coir Geo-Textiles (CGT). *Coir is the outside hard layer of husk that surrounds the shell of the coconut. It consists mainly of fibres, which have traditionally been used to manufacture rope, carpets, doormats, upholstery stuffing, brushes etc. Board will aid amount of ₹5 crores initially for two years.*

14. ICMR partners India Post for delivery of COVID-19 testing kits to labs

India Post has entered into a tie-up with the ICMR for delivery of its COVID-19 testing kits to 200 additional labs designated for coronavirus testing across the country. ICMR has set a target of carrying out around 1 lakh tests across the country per day. *Indian Council of Medical Research has set a target of carrying out around 1 lakh tests across the country per day. ICMR-Secretary & Director General: Dr. Balram Bhargava. India Post comes under of Ministry of Communications. Communications and IT Minister- Ravi Shankar Prasad.*

15. FHRAI collaborates with FSSAI to train hospitality professionals

Industry body Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) said it has initiated a training programme on COVID-19 preparedness in collaboration with food safety regulator FSSAI for hospitality professionals across the country. *Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. FSSAI CEO: Arun Singhal . FSSAI & FHRAI are headquartered in New Delhi.*

16. BRO opens a new 80-km road for Kailash Man Sarovar pilgrims

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has completed construction of 80 km road stretch that connects Dharchula to Lipulekh (China Border), popularly known as Kailash-Mansarovar yatra route. *The road ends at the 17,000 feet high Lipulekh pass. From there, Mount Kailash is located around 97 km north of the pass in Tibet. The Lipulekh pass, close to the Tri-junction of India-China-Nepal, is the lowest point in this section of the high Himalayas. With the construction of the road, pilgrims can travel to Lipulekh from Delhi in two days. The road was inaugurated by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.*

17. Uttar Pradesh invokes ordinance to exempt businesses from all key labour laws

To boost investment and help resurrect businesses UP cabinet has cleared the “UP Temporary Exemption from Certain Labour Laws Ordinance, 2020” to exempt all factories and businesses from three labour laws for the next three years. *With this, the state will have three active laws -- Building and Other Construction Workers Act, 1996, Workmen Compensation Act, 1923, Bonded Labour Act, 1976 and Section 5 of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936. Section 5 of the payment of wages act relates to the right to receive timely wages by employees. All other Acts including the Industrial Disputes Act, Factories Act, Trade Union Act etc. will not be in vogue for the next three years. It will give a free hand to co. to operate the way they want.*

18. 'Start up India-Animal Husbandry Grand Challenge' – Winners awarded

Government awarded 12 start-ups for finding innovative solutions to address problems faced by the animal husbandry and dairy sector. The ministry in partnership with ‘Start-Up’ India had launched the ‘Animal Husbandry Grand Challenge’. *The challenge was launched to scout for innovative and commercially viable solutions to address the problems faced by the animal husbandry and dairy sector. As many as 157 applications were received in this competition. Under value-added products category, the winner was Krushak Mitra Agro Services Pvt Ltd, Mumbai while Studio Carbon, Ahmedabad. For Breed improvement, Adis Technologies, Belgavi, Karnataka and CisGeN Biotech Discoveries Pvt Ltd, Chennai were awarded. In the category of eliminating milk adulteration, White Gold Technologies LLP, Mumbai & Micro Life Innovations, Chennai were selected. Under Animal Nutrition, Krimanshi Technologies Pvt Ltd, Jodhpur and Cornext Agri Products Pvt Ltd, Hyderabad were selected. For finding e-commerce solutions, MooFarm, Gurugram, Haryana and AKM Technologies Pvt Ltd, Cuttack got the award. Under Product traceability, EmerTech Solutions Pvt Ltd, Mumbai and NebulARC Technologies Pvt Ltd, Delhi was awarded. No start-up got an award in the category ‘Single Use Plastic Alternatives’. Two winners under each problem awarded with cash grants worth Rs 10 Lakh (Winner) and Rs 7 lakh (Runner – up). The challenge was launched by PM Narendra Modi.*

19. MHRD announces modifications in the PMRF Scheme boost research in the country.

HRD Ministry announced amendments in the PM’s Research Fellowship Scheme including reduction in the required GATE Score & introduction of lateral entry option to attract students. It is also creating a dedicated ‘Research and Innovative Division. *Most of the seats under the fancied scheme, under which 1000 seats were created, have been going vacant every year. The HRD ministry now hopes the changed rules would ensure that more seats get filled up. The requirement of GATE Score is reduced to 650 from 750 apart from minimum CGPA of 8 or equivalent. There will be two channels of entries, one direct entry and lateral entry. In the lateral entry, the students, who are pursuing a PhD in PMRF granting institutions (like IITs and NITs) can also apply to become fellow under the scheme as per new guidelines. Union HRD Minister: Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’.*

20. Central Board of Direct Taxes amends Rule 44G of Income Tax Rules 1962.

CBDT amended 44G of Income Tax Rules, 1962 for making an application to invoke the mutual agreement procedure in Form no. 34. These rules will be called Income-tax (8th Amendment) Rules, 2020. *According to the amended income tax rule, “The competent authority shall endeavour to arrive at a mutually agreeable resolution of the tax disputes in accordance with the agreement between India and the other country or specified territory within an average time period of twenty-four months”. It also states that if a resolution is arrived, the same shall be communicated to the assessee, who shall communicate his acceptance or non-acceptance within 30 days. Upon acceptance of the resolution, the assessee shall withdraw any appeal filed in this regard and pay the tax determined by the assessing officer after giving effect to the resolution. CBDT Chairperson: Pramod Chandra Mody.*

21. CFTRI develops Spirulina groundnut Chikki to boost immunity during pandemic

The Mysuru-based Central Food Technological Research Institute, CFTRI developed by Spirulina groundnut Chikki, provides micro-nutrients & boost the immunity of people during the time of a pandemic. It is rich in micro-nutrients. *The Income Tax Department of Karnataka and Goa region has distributed 500 kilograms of CFTRI Chikkies to migrant labourers in Bengaluru and surrounding areas. Other nutritious snacks of CFTRI such as Nutri mango fruit bar and cardamom flavoured water is also part of the food items supplied to the migrant labourers. The mango bar is rich with carbohydrates, carotene, Vitamin C and Zinc to improve the immunity. Cardamom flavoured water with traditional herbs to have immune booster qualities. The Director of CFTRI - Dr K S M S Raghav Rao.*

22. NTPC, a CPSU, achieves 100% PLF at three of its power stations

NTPC Vindhyachal (4760 MW) in Madhya Pradesh, NTPC Talcher Kaniha (3000 MW) in Odisha & NTPC Sipat (2980 MW) in Chhattisgarh achieved 100% PLF, demonstrating operational efficiency & optimum capacity utilisation despite lockdown. *NTPC Koldam in Himachal Pradesh is emerging as one of the best hydropower stations in the country for FY20-21. Beyond power output, NTPC is making a rich contribution to the social welfare activities for the underprivileged section and migrant workers by providing ration and medical aid amidst COVID-19 situation. With NTPC Group's total installed 62110 MW capacity, NTPC has 70 Power stations comprising of 24 Coal, 7 combined cycle gas/liquid fuel, 1 Hydro, 13 renewables along with 25 JV Power Stations. NTPC Vindhyachal is the largest power station in the country.*

23. India launches Mission Sagar to assist island nations in Eastern Indian Ocean

India launched Mission Sagar as part of the government's outreach initiative towards five nations in the Indian Ocean. Naval Ship Kesari departed for Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros, to provide Food Items & Medicines. *SAGAR highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her neighbouring countries and further strengthens the existing bond. The deployment is in consonance with the Prime Ministers' vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' promulgated in March 2015. The operation is being progressed in close coordination with the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs, and other agencies of the Government of India. Chief of Naval Staff: Admiral Karambir Singh.*

24. TRIFED, AOL ink MoU to promote tribal enterprises

Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs & Art of Living, AOL Foundation have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate in programmes of each organisation for promoting Tribal Enterprises. *TRIFED Regional Offices have identified 9,409 needy tribal artisans located across the country for distribution of ration kits under "I Stand with Humanity campaign" of AOL. The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) is a national-level apex organization functioning under the administrative control of Ministry of Tribal Affairs. TRIFED has its Head Office located in New Delhi and has a network of 13 Regional Offices located at various places in the country. Chairperson: Ramesh Chand Meena. AoL to provide Free Ration Kits to needy Tribes India Artisans.*

25. PM Modi announces special economic package worth Rs 20 lakh crore to kick-start economy

PM Modi announced a special economic package of 20 lakh crore rupees for an 'Atma-Nirbhar Bharat' or self-reliant India. He noted that this package, together with earlier announcements by the govt & decisions by RBI, is to the tune of Rs 20 lakh cr. *The Prime Minister observed that the package will also focus on land, labour, liquidity and laws. It will cater to various sections including cottage industry, MSMEs, labourers, middle class, industries, among others. SELF RELIANT BASED ON 5 PILLARS: He said that a self-reliant India will stand on five pillars viz. Economy, which brings in quantum jump and not incremental change; Infrastructure, which should become the identity of India; System, based on 21st-century technology-driven arrangements; Vibrant Demography, which is our source of energy for a self-reliant India; and Demand, whereby the strength of our demand and supply chain should be utilized to full capacity. He underlined the importance of strengthening all stakeholders in the supply chain to increase, as well as fulfil, the demand. This is equivalent to almost 10 per cent of India's GDP.*

26. MSME Ministry launches CHAMPIONS portal

MSME Ministry has launched CHAMPIONS portal www.Champions.gov.in, a technology-driven control room-cum-management information system. CHAMPIONS - Creation and Harmonious Application of

Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength. *CHAMPIONS: The initiative is aimed at assisting Indian Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to march into the big league as national and global champions. The portal is basically for making the smaller units big by solving their grievances, encouraging, supporting, helping and handholding. MSME Minister: Nitin Jairam Gadkari; Constituency: Nagpur. It is enabled by AI, Data Analytics & Machine Learning.*

27. National infant mortality rate at 32, MP worst performer

According to the data released by the Registrar General of India, the national birth rate in 2018 stood at 20, and death & infant mortality rates stood at 6.2 and 32, respectively. MP has the worst infant mortality rate while Nagaland has the best. Madhya Pradesh has an IMR of 48 and Nagaland 4. Kerala is also the only State to have achieved the single-digit IMR of 7 amongst bigger States, the closest being Delhi with an IMR of 13. This means that Kerala has achieved the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) target for IMR reduction, set at eight for the year 2020. Among smaller states, Goa and Sikkim have done as well as Kerala, with an IMR of 7. Nagaland and Mizoram have also done extremely well with IMR figures of 4 and 5. **INFANT MORTALITY RATE (IMR):** It is the number of deaths per **1,000 live births of children under one year of age**. **BIRTH RATE:** It gives the number of live births per thousand population in a given region and year. India's birth rate has declined drastically over the last four decades from 36.9 in 1971 to 20.0 in 2018. **Bihar has the highest birth rate at 26.2 and Andaman and Nicobar Islands has a birth rate of 11.2.** **DEATH RATE:** Death rate is the ratio of deaths to the population of a particular area or during a particular period of time. The death rate at an all-India level has declined from 7.3 to 6.2. The corresponding decline in rural areas is 7.8 to 6.7 and in urban areas, 5.8 to 5.1. Chhattisgarh has the highest death rate at 8 and Delhi, an almost entirely urban state, has a rate of 3.3, indicating better healthcare facilities. **SAMPLE REGISTRATION SYSTEM (SRS):** The SRS is a demographic survey for providing reliable annual estimates of infant mortality rate, birth rate, death rate and other fertility and mortality indicators at the national and sub-national levels. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Home Affairs (Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner). Registrar General & Census Commissioner: Vivek Joshi. The rates are calculated per one thousand of the population.

28. Consumer Affairs dept partners with 2 start-ups to power 'Suraksha Store initiative'

Dept of Consumer Affairs partnered with tech start-ups Safejob and Seekify to use technology to prevent the spread of Covid-19 at the local Kirana stores. The objective is to educate store owners about safety guidelines & protocols to be followed. **SURAKSHA NORMS:** Seekify, a Sequoia's Surge funded company, has developed an online learning software. They partnered with Safejob to build a custom solution for registering Kirana store owners, their employees, capturing their location, and allowing them to complete online training and certification - all on mobile; Safejob, an NSDC partner and training expert, was able to develop and deploy training material in eight languages as well as an assessment to ensure that they can be certified to be aware of the Suraksha norms. **FSSAI – Food Safety and Standards Authority of India; Chairperson: Rita Teatota; Headquarters: New Delhi. MHA – Ministry of Home Affairs; Minister: Amit Shah; Constituency: Gandhinagar. The protocols were decided by FSSAI & MHA.**

29. India Post releases Special Postal Cover dedicated to Migrant Workers

India Post, Mumbai paid tribute to migrant workers, by releasing a Special Postal Cover dedicated to them at the Bicentennial Hall of the Mumbai GPO building. 5 migrant workers from different sectors were called upon to release the Special Cover. *There were two workers from the construction sector, a taxi driver, a jewellery craftsman and a tailor, who is stitching masks for the India Post. The event took place at a time when, migrant workers, stuck in different parts of the country following the nationwide lockdown, were making efforts to go back to their home states.* **India Post works under the aegis of Ministry of Communications.**

30. Child, maternal malnutrition led to 68 per cent under-five fatalities in India

68.2% of Under-five (U5) deaths were due to child and maternal malnutrition while low birth weight and short gestation led to 83 per cent of neonatal deaths from 2000 to 2017 according to findings of the India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative. *The studies stated that the under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) dropped in India since 2000 by 49% but there is a 6-fold variation between the states and 11-fold variations between districts of India.* **NEONATAL MORTALITY RATE:** NMR has dropped by 38% since 2000 but there is a 5-

fold variation in the rate between the states and 8-fold variation between districts of India. Highest Under 5 deaths in 2017 reported in UP followed by Bihar.

31. Hazaribag's iconic Sohrai tribal art gets GI tag

Jharkhand received the GI tag for its Sohrai – Kohvar art form. Mainly practised by tribal women of remote villages in Hazaribag district, these traditional and ritualistic paintings are made only with naturally available soils of different colours. *Jharkhand Chief Minister: Hemant Soren. Governor: Draupadi Murmu* Geographical Indications Registry is headquartered in Chennai.

32. Telangana's Telia Rumal given GI tag

Telia Rumal is created using the traditional handloom process and not by any other mechanical means. Telia Rumals were worn as a veil by princesses at the erstwhile court of the Nizam of Hyderabad, and as a turban cloth by Arabs in the Middle East. *Telangana CM: K Chandrasekhar Rao. Governor: Tamilisai Soundararajan. GIs is defined under Article 22 (1) of WTO Agreement on TRIPS.*

33. ICMR, NCDC to initiate a population-based Sero-survey in selected districts

ICMR & National Centre for Disease Control to initiate a population-based sero-survey in selected districts in collaboration with key stakeholders and State Health Departments to monitor the trend in the prevalence of COVID-19 infection at district level. *In the survey, 200 samples per district per week and 800 samples per district per month shall be taken. From each district, 10 health facilities including six public and four private health facilities shall be selected. ICMR Secretary & Director-General – Dr Balram Bhargava.*

34. New initiative by Rlys, Postal dept for door delivery, pick up of parcels

In a first of its kind initiative in the country, the Thiruvananthapuram division of Southern Railways and Postal department in Kerala entered into a tie-up for door delivery and pick up of parcels to help people during the lockdown. *INDIA POST: The Department of Posts (DoP), is the government-operated postal system, which is a subsidiary of the Ministry of Communications. It is the most widely distributed postal system in the world. Minister of Communication: Ravi Shankar Prasad. Southern Railway Headquarters: Chennai, Tamil Nadu.*

35. FM announces second tranche of economic stimulus for farmers, migrant workers, traders

FM Nirmala Sitharaman unveiled the second tranche of relief measures to help small farmers, migrant workers, small traders and self-employed people under the Atma-Nirbhar Bharat, Self-reliant India campaign. It is expected to benefit 8 cr. migrant workers. *Key Highlights: 1. Free food for Migrants: For those migrants who do not have NFSA cards or state cards, 5 Kgs of wheat or rice per person and one kg channa per family per month for the next two months to be provided. This will entail Rs 3,500 crore and is likely to benefit around 8 crore migrants. 2. One Nation, One Ration Card: National Portability Ration Cards can be used in any ration shops that will be applicable across the country. By August 2020, 67 cr beneficiaries in 23 states or 83% of all PDS beneficiaries will get covered. 3. Rental Accommodation: Under PM Awas Yojana, a scheme for rental housing for migrant workers. Under the scheme incentives will be offered to private manufacturing units and industrial units to develop affordable housing, converting govt-funded houses into affordable renting accommodations for migrant workers. Shall be done on PPP on concessionaire basis. 4. Street Vendor: Special scheme for street vendors to avail Rs 5,000 crore loan facility. Will be given Rs 10,000 of working capital. 5. Creating employment using CAMPA funds: Approximately Rs 6,000 crore of funds under Compensatory Afforestation Management & Planning Authority (CAMPA) will be used for Afforestation and Plantation works, including in urban areas. This will create job opportunities in urban, semi-urban and rural areas and also for Tribals. 6. For Small/Marginal Farmers: The government is extending Rs 30,000 crore additional capital emergency funds through NABARD for post-harvest Rabi and Kharif related activities for small and marginal farmers. One Nation One Ration Card to be fully operational by Mar 2021.*

36. 2% interest subvention on smallest category of MUDRA-Shishu loans

FM announced Rs 1500 crore interest subvention for MUDRA-Shishu loan payees of up to Rs 50,000, for a period of 12 months as part of the stimulus package given by the Centre. Government to provide interest subvention of 2% for prompt payees of the loan. *PMMY: Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana. Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd. (MUDRA) is a new institution set up by Government of India to provide funding to the non-corporate, non-farm sector income generating activities of micro and small*

enterprises whose credit needs are below ₹10 Lakh. Under the aegis of Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY), MUDRA has created three products i.e. 'Shishu', 'Kishore' and 'Tarun' as per the stage of growth and funding needs of the beneficiary micro unit. These schemes cover loan amounts as below: a. Shishu: covering loans up to ₹50,000. b. Kishore: covering loans above ₹50,000 and up to ₹5,00,000. c. Tarun: covering loans above ₹5,00,000 and up to ₹10,00,000. This could cost the government at least Rs 1500 crore annually.

37. Centre sets up new body to promote rice exports

To give further impetus to rice exports, Centre has set up a new body, Rice Export Promotion Forum (REPF), under Agricultural and Processed Foods Export Promotion Development Authority (Apeda). Rice is the largest commodity in India's Agri-export basket. **APEDA:** It was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act. **Parent Ministry:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry. **Headquarters:** New Delhi. **Chairman of Apeda:** Paban K. Borthakur.

38. Aatmanirbhar package: DISCOMs to get ₹90,000-crore liquidity support

DISCOMs will be offered ₹90,000 crore liquidity support under the 'Aatmanirbhar package' announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Under the package, Power Finance Corporation and Rural Electrification Corporation will infuse liquidity. *The government has also decided to waive off the fixed charges and interstate transmission charges (by Power Grid) against the power not drawn from NTPC, DVC and other CPSE from the period from March 24, 2020 to May 17, 2020; The power sector value chain is primarily divided into three: GENCOs (Generating Companies)/ Power Plants eg. Tata Power, Reliance Power, TRANSCOs (Transmission Companies)/ Operate the transmission lines eg PGCIL (Power Grid Corporation of India) and DISCOMs (Distribution Companies) eg BSES, TPDDL etc for Delhi. Minister for Power & New and Renewable Energy- R K Singh.*

39. Centre launches online dashboard to monitor movement of migrant workers

Centre has asked the States to use online portal National Migrant Information System (NMIS) for capturing the information on movement of migrants & for better inter-State coordination. Portal has been developed by National Disaster Management Authority. *It has additional advantages like contact tracing, which may be useful in overall COVID response work. Through this system, States can upload batch file of individual data on the portal; Union Home Secretary- Ajay Bhalla. NDMA works under the aegis of Ministry of Home Affairs.*

40. Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan: One TV channel each for Class 1 to 12

Digital education initiative for students called PM e-Vidya to be launched which will be an earmarked TV channel per class from 1 to 12. Also, top 100 universities to be permitted to automatically start online courses by 30 May 2020. *Top 100 universities will be permitted to automatically start online courses by 30 May 2020; Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (self-reliant India) was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 12 to deal with the disruption caused by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak; Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) platform will be used extensively for school education in states and union territories; National Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission will be launched on 2020 December, to ensure that every child attains learning levels and outcomes in grade five by 2025; Manodarpan initiative to offer psycho-social support to students, teachers and families for mental health and emotional well-being will be launched immediately. National Foundational Literacy & Numeracy Mission to be launched.*

41. Rajnath Singh approves Rs 400-crore defence testing infrastructure scheme

To provide private sector defence and aerospace companies affordable facilities to test and validate weaponry they are designing, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved a Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS) with an outlay of Rs 400 crore. *This is directed towards promoting indigenous defence capability, specifically amongst micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and start-ups. 25% of funding will be borne by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) composed of Indian private entities and concerned state governments. The special purpose vehicles to be set up to implement the scheme will have to be registered under the Companies Act, 2013, and shall also operate and maintain all assets under the scheme in a self-sustainable manner by collecting user charges. The scheme would run for a duration of five years and aims to set up six to eight new testing facilities in partnership with private industry. According to the latest report by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), a leading think-tank on military*

spending, India's defence expenditure stood at USD 71.1 billion in 2019, which is third highest after the US and China. Each project to receive 75% of its cost as government funding.

42. Finance Minister announces fifth and final tranche of Atma-Nirbhar Bharat Package

FM outlined structural reforms with focus on seven areas of MNREGA, Health and Education, Business during CoVID, Decriminalisation of Company Act, Ease of doing business, Policy related to Public Sector Units, State government and resources related to it. **MNREGA:** The government will allocate an additional Rs 40,000 crore over and above the budget estimate. The budget estimate for MNREGA scheme was Rs 61,000 crore. This will generate 300 crores more person-days of work and it will be addressing the need for work for the returning migrants. **HEALTH AND EDUCATION SECTOR:** Investments at grassroots for health and wellness centres both at rural and urban levels will be ramped up. All the districts will have infectious disease hospital blocks. This apart, public health labs will be set up at block levels. **PM e-VIDYA programme** for multi-mode access to digital and online education to be immediately launched. There will be one TV channel for class 1-12, and there will be extensive use of radio, community radio and podcasts, special e-content for the visually and hearing-impaired students. Top 100 universities are permitted to start online courses by May 30, 2020. An initiative to extend psycho-social support to students, teachers and families for mental health and emotional well-being called 'Manodarpan' to be launched immediately. **INSOLVENCY & BANKRUPTCY CODE:** Debts related to the COVID-19 shall be excluded from defaults under IBC and no fresh insolvency proceeding to be initiated up to 1 year. For MSMEs, a special insolvency framework is to be notified under section 240-A of the IBC. The minimum threshold to initiate the insolvency proceedings is raised to Rs 1 crore from the earlier Rs 1 lakh, this will broadly insulate MSMEs. **COMPANIES ACT:** Majority of compoundable offences sections will be shifted to internal adjudicating mechanisms. The amendments will de-clog the criminal courts of the country and the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). **EASE OF BUSINESS:** Direct listing of securities by the public companies can be done in permitted foreign jurisdictions. Private companies which list non-convertible debentures (NCDs) on the stock exchanges will not be considered as listed companies. **PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISE POLICY:** India needs a policy wherein the private sector will be allowed to participate in all the sectors while the public sector enterprises will still continue to play a key role. A list of strategic sectors that require the presence of public sector enterprises in the interest of the public to be notified. In the strategic sectors, at least one public sector enterprise will be there however the private sector will also be allowed in it. The number of enterprises in the strategic sectors will generally be only one to four and others will be privatised/merged/brought under holding companies so as to minimise the administrative costs. **STATE GOVERNMENTS:** State Governments are now allowed to be borrowed up to 5% of GSDP from the earlier 3%. This means the states can now borrow an additional amount of **Rs 4.28 lakh crore**. GSDP – Gross State Domestic Product. An additional Rs 40,000 crore will be allocated under MNREGA.

43. Union HRD Minister e-Launches "Psycho-Social Impact of Pandemic & Lockdown and How to Cope With"

Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' Launched print as well as e-editions of the set of seven titles on "Psycho-Social impact of pandemic & lockdown and how to Cope With" under the corona studies series published by National Book Trust India. **NBT:** National Book Trust is an Indian publishing house, as an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education of the Government of India. NBT now functions under the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Headquarters: New Delhi. Chairman: Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma. Director of National Book Trust of India - **Yuvrak Malik**.

44. India's Ultra Mega Solar Parks a \$700-bn investment opportunity

India's ultra-mega solar parks have attracted foreign capital and provided investors with an opportunity to join a \$500-700 billion renewable energy and grid infrastructure investment boom in the coming decade, according to the latest report by IEEFA. According to the report titled 'India's Utility-Scale Solar Parks —A Global Success Story', India has pioneered the ultra-mega solar park and, in the process, overcame a range of challenging obstacles. The ultra-mega power plant scheme involves a state government or local distribution company providing a single central grid connection and acquiring land on which the project can be built, shielding developers from procurement and time-delay risks. The Indian government has set a target of installing 275 GW of renewable energy by FY 2026 – 27. **World's largest Solar Park:** The Pavagada Solar Park in Karnataka. **IEEFA:** The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis examines issues

related to energy markets, trends and policies. The Institute's mission is to accelerate the transition to a diverse, sustainable and profitable energy economy. Headquarters: Ohio, USA. Govt set target to install 175 GW of renewable energy by FY22.

45. Tribal Affairs Minister launches 'GOAL' programme to provide online mentorship to tribal youth

Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda has launched the "GOAL - Going Online as Leaders - a programme of his Ministry in partnership with Facebook in New Delhi. The GOAL programme is designed to provide mentorship to tribal youth through digital mode. *The program will focus on three core areas – Digital Literacy, Life Skills and Leadership and Entrepreneurship, and on sectors such as Agriculture, Art & Culture, Handicrafts & Textiles, Health, Nutrition, among others.* Arjun Munda Constituency: Jamshedpur, Jharkhand. Facebook CEO: Mark Zuckerberg. It intends to upskill 5000 tribal youths in the current phase.

46. Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan participates in 73rd WHA online session

Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan participated in the 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA) via video conferencing. A session of the WHA, the decision-making body of the WHO, began its first-ever teleconference due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. *WHA: The World Health Assembly is the key decision-making body of the World Health Organization, attended by representatives of the United Nation's 194 member states. The 2020 assembly was held virtually – it usually happens in Geneva.* Ms. Keve Bain - President of the World Health Assembly (WHA).

47. Government implements Shekatkar Committee recommendations related to creating border infrastructure

Union Govt has implemented Lt. General D B Shekatkar Committee's recommendations related to creating border infrastructure. These were related to road construction leading to socio-economic development in the border areas along India's border with China. *On the matter related to creating border infrastructure, the government has implemented the recommendation of the committee to outsource road construction work beyond the optimal capacity of Border Roads Organisation (BRO). It has been made mandatory to adopt Engineering Procurement Contract (EPC) mode for execution of all works costing more than Rs 100 crore.* Defence Minister: Rajnath Singh. Minister of State for Defence: Shripad Yesso Naik. The Shekatkar Committee submitted a total of 99 recommendations.

48. Govt launches National Test Abhyas mobile app for candidates to take mock tests for JEE Main and NEET

Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched a new mobile app named - the 'National Test Abhyas'. The App has been developed by National Testing Agency-NTA to enable candidates to take mock tests for upcoming exams such as JEE Main and NEET. *NTA: National Testing Agency is a governmental agency that has been approved by the Council of Ministers and established in 2017 to conduct entrance examinations for higher educational institutions. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Human Resource Development. Chairman: Vineet Joshi. It is to facilitate candidates' access to high-quality mocks.*

49. Rajkot, Indore, Navi Mumbai among Centre's '5-star garbage-free' cities

The govt released a rating of cities for their garbage management, giving the top '5-star garbage-free' tag to six cities including Ambikapur, Indore, Navi Mumbai, Rajkot, Surat and Mysore. A total of 141 cities have been rated and 70 cities got 1-star. *The star rating protocol was launched by the central government in January 2018 to institutionalize a mechanism for cities to achieve garbage free status leading to a higher degree of cleanliness. The central ministry comes out with a yearly cleanliness survey – Swachh Survekshan for urban India. This protocol was devised where each ward in every city must achieve a certain standard across 24 different components of solid waste management (SWM) and is graded based on overall marks received. Swachh Survekshan: Swachh Survekshan (Cleanliness survey) is an annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation in cities and towns across India. It was launched as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. Out of 141, 65 cities received three-star ratings.*

50. Sports ministry selects RGU to establish CoE in sports science

The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS) under its National Centre of Sports Sciences and Research (NCSSR) scheme has selected the Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU) to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in sports science education and research. *The centre will conduct courses for sports anthropology, sports*

biochemistry, sports biomechanics and performance analysis, sports nutrition, sports physiology, sports psychology, sports training method/fitness management and sports physiotherapy. The ministry will fund Rs 3 crore per programme (Rs 3.5 cr for PG prog) in the first three years. Thereafter, the grantee institution has to be self-reliant to continue the scheme Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU), Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh.

51. Cabinet approves Rs 3 lakh crore funding for MSMEs at 9.2%

The Union Cabinet approved additional funding up to Rs 3 lakh crore at a concessional rate of 9.2 percent through the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme for the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). MSME minister Nitin Gadkari. The government plans to raise MSMEs contribution to India's exports to 60 per cent from 48 per cent at present and also boost the sector's contribution to the country's GDP from 29 per cent currently to 50 per cent. This was the 2nd-biggest component of Rs 20 lakh crore package.

52. Amazon starts food delivery, picks Bengaluru for launch

Amazon is all set to launch its food-delivery business in India, throwing a challenge to homegrown players Swiggy and Zomato. The ecommerce major will launch Amazon Food at select pin codes of Bengaluru. It started the pilot project in Whitefield, where a major chunk of the IT companies is located. Zomato acquired Uber Eats business in January 2020.

53. High-level panel formed to recommend reforms in India's drug regulatory system

A high-level committee of experts has been formed by the government to recommend reforms in India's drug regulatory system so that approval processes can be fast-tracked. The committee to be chaired by Rajesh Bhushan, the OSD to the Union health minister. India's Joint Drug Controller Dr Eswara Reddy will assist the committee in their work on adopting global best practices. The committee is set up to bring the system in line with global standards, make it more efficient and to streamline Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO). CDSCO: The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization is the Central Drug Authority for discharging functions assigned to the Central Government under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Drugs Controller General of India: Dr V G Somani. The committee will study the current drug regulatory system.

54. More than one in four jobless in rural areas amid migrant influx

More than one in four workers in rural India are unemployed. The rural job loss rate in the country rose to 25.09% in the week ended 24 May from 22.79% a week earlier, according to weekly job loss data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). Overall unemployment in India inched up to 24.34% in the week ended 24 May from 24.01% in the week ended 17 May, according to CMIE data. Urban unemployment rate fell more than 4% points in same period.

55. India's crude steel output declines 65% to 3.13 MT in April: World Steel Association

India's crude steel output declined over 65 per cent to 3.13 million tonnes (MT) during April, according to the World Steel Association. India had posted a 14 per cent decline in steel output at 8.65 MT in March as compared with 10.04 MT in March 2019. Global Decline in Production: China, which had for the first time in many months reported a 1.7 per cent fall in its output in March at 78.97 MT, has started showing growth in production. US produced 4.96 MT of crude steel on April, 32 per cent lower than 7.35 MT in the year-ago month. Japan registered a 23 per cent fall in crude steel production at 6.61 MT in April 2020 as against 8.64 MT in April 2019. South Korea produced 5.50 MT crude steel, down 8.4 per cent from 6 MT in April 2019. In the EU, world steel said, Germany estimated 3 MT of crude steel production in April 2020, down 10.7 per cent from April 2019. Italy's production was down by 30.7 per cent at 1.35 MT. France estimated 0.80 MT of crude steel production in April 2020, a 37.9 per cent decrease compared to April 2019, while Spain produced 0.67 MT of crude steel in April 2020, down 48 per cent from April 2019. France estimated 0.80 MT of crude steel production in April 2020, a 37.9 per cent decrease compared to April 2019, while Spain produced 0.67 MT of crude steel in April 2020, down 48 per cent from April 2019. Turkey's crude steel production for April 2020 was 2.24 MT. WORLD STEEL ASSOCIATION: World Steel Association is the international trade body for the iron and steel industry. It is a non-profit organisation with its headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. Global steel output also declined by 13 per cent to 137.09 MT.

56. Fmr SC judge Justice Sikri inaugurates Indian Dispute Resolution Centre

Former Supreme Court Judge Justice A K Sikri inaugurated Indian Dispute Resolution Centre (IDRC), which provides a paperless dispute resolution environment. IDRCs are located at strategic commercial places in the country with its head office in New Delhi. *This ADR centre provides offline and also e-ADR facility through its state-of-the-art e-Arbitration, e-Mediation, and e-Conciliation software portal. The arbitration panel consists of former judges of the Supreme Court, high courts, district courts apart from senior advocates, bureaucrats and more. It is India's first ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) Centre.*

57. 440-m tunnel dug under Chamba for Char Dham traffic

Border Road Organisation dug up a tunnel below Chamba Town in Uttarakhand under the Char Dham Project which would reduce the journey to only 10 minutes compared to 30 minutes. It will facilitate connectivity to Gangotri, Kedarnath, Yamunotri and Badrinath. *BRO: The Border Roads Organisation develops and maintains road networks in India's border areas and friendly neighbouring countries. Headquarters: New Delhi. Director-General: Lt. Gen. Harpal Singh. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Defence. Chardham is ₹12,000 cr project expected to be through by Oct '20.*

58. FM Nirmala Sitharaman attends Special Board of Governors meeting of NDB through videoconference

FM Nirmala Sitharaman attended the Special Board of Governors meeting of the New Development Bank. She commended the contribution of NDB in funding infrastructure development, which helped the development agenda of member countries, including India. *NDB: The New Development Bank was formed to support infrastructure and sustainable development efforts in BRICS and other underserved, emerging economies for faster development through innovation and cutting-edge technology. Members: Bank's Articles of Agreement specify that all members of the United Nations could be members of the bank, however, the share of the BRICS nations can never be less than 55% of the voting power. Board of Governor for India: Nirmala Sitharaman. Alternate Governor: Tarun Bajaj. New Development Bank is headquartered in Shanghai, China.*

59. Nirmala Sitharaman launches facility for instant allotment of e-PAN based on Aadhaar

As announced in the Budget earlier, FM launched the facility for instant allotment of PAN card using Aadhaar-based e-KYC. The facility is now available for all applicants who possess a valid Aadhaar number and a mobile number registered in UIDAI database. *The trial version of the facility has been available since February 2020, and almost 6.8 lakh instant PANs, with a turnaround time of about 10 minutes, have already been allotted. So far, of the approximately 50 crore PANs allotted to taxpayers, only 32 crore have been seeded with Aadhaar. UIDAI: Unique Identification Authority of India ; Pankaj Kumar CEO of UIDAI. Permanent Account Number (PAN) is a 10-character alphanumeric.*

60. Archaeological Survey of India discovers 9th century sandstone Shiva linga in Vietnam

Archaeological Survey of India recently discovered a monolithic sandstone Shiva linga from 9th century CE, during an ongoing conservation project at My Son, a cluster of abandoned & partially ruined Hindu temples in Quang Nam province in central Vietnam. *Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is under the Ministry of Culture; Founder: Alexander Cunningham; Motto: प्रत्नकीर्तिमपावृणु. ASI DG: V. Vidyavathi. It is believed to be from the Champa Civilization.*

61. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan dedicates 56 CNG stations to the nation

Dharmendra Pradhan dedicated 56 CNG stations to the nation. These stations are spread over 11 states and UTs. He said that 72% population of India will soon be covered through the City Gas Distribution network, with spread over 53% of the geographical area. *These stations are in Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, New Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.*

62. Missile park to be set up at INS Kalinga

The foundation stone for a Missile Park named 'Agnepastha', a one-stop arena for the motivation of inquisitive minds regarding missiles, was laid at INS Kalinga. The park aims to capture glimpses of missile history of INS Kalinga since 1981 till date. *The main attraction is the P-70 Amethyst, an underwater-launched anti-ship missile from the arsenal of the old 'Chakra' (Charlie-1 submarine) which was in service with the*

Indian Navy during 1988-91. Other Initiatives: A 2 MW solar photovoltaic plant was also commissioned at INS Kalinga, keeping in mind the initiative of the Government of India to promote solar power and the objective to achieve 100 GW of solar power by 2022 as part of the National Solar Mission. INS Kalinga is a Navy establishment located in Andhra Pradesh.

63. Piyush Goyal attend Digital Summit on Exports organized by CII

Piyush Goyal, Minister for Commerce & Industry & Railways, participated in the Digital Summit on Exports organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) which has completed 125 years. EXIM Bank of India was the Institutional Partner for the Summit. *CII President: Vikram Shreekanth Kirloskar. NASSCOM to target for \$500 billion export in next five years.*

64. India invites bid for One Sun One World One Grid

India for a global electricity grid called for bids to roll-out "One Sun One World One Grid" (OSOWOG) plan. The vision behind the OSOWOG mantra is "The Sun Never Sets" and is a constant at some geographical location, globally, at any given point of time. *International Solar Alliance (ISA) has 67 countries as members. The first Assembly of the ISA was held from 2nd to 5th October 2018 in Greater Noida. Upendra Tripathy, Director-General, ISA. International Solar Alliance (ISA) was co-founded by India.*

65. IT Minister Launches National AI Portal of India

Minister for Electronics & IT, Law & Justice & Communications Ravi Shankar Prasad launched India's national Artificial Intelligence Portal called www.ai.gov.in. *It was jointly developed by MeitY & IT Industry and he also launched 'Responsible AI for Youth' AI Portal: National e-Governance Division of Ministry of Electronics and IT and NASSCOM from the IT industry will jointly run this portal. This portal shall work as a one-stop digital platform for AI-related developments in India, sharing of resources such as articles, start-ups, investment funds in AI, resources, companies and educational institutions related to AI in India. The portal will also share documents, case studies, research reports etc. It has a section about learning and new job roles related to AI. Responsible AI for Youth: It will help reduce the skill gap while enabling youth to create meaningful social impact solutions. The Program is designed to reach out to students from Government schools pan India and provide them with an opportunity to become part of the skilled workforce in an inclusive manner. 'Responsible AI for Youth' aims to make youth AI-ready.*

International

1. USAID to provide 3 million USD for India's PAHAL project

The US will provide an additional USD 3 million to India, through its aid agency USAID, for mitigating the spread of Covid-19. USAID is providing these funds to the Partnerships for Affordable Healthcare Access and Longevity (PAHAL) project. *USAID is the world's premier international development agency and a catalytic actor driving development results. In 1961, President Kennedy signed the Foreign Assistance Act into law and created USAID by executive order. USAID HQ- Washington, D.C., US. It has provided \$5.9 million to India for addressing pandemic.*

2. Russia to launch its 1st satellite 'Arktika-M' to monitor Arctic climate & environment

Russia will be launching its 1st Arktika-M satellite to monitor the Arctic climate & environment on 2020. The second Arktika-M satellite is also under development and its launch is scheduled for 2023. Satellite will be launched using a Soyuz-2.1b carrier. *The launch of the first Arktika-M satellite from the Baikonur space center was planned for December 9, 2020. The satellite will be launched using a Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket with the Fregat booster. Arktika-M: Remote-sensing & emergency communications satellite.*

3. Putin awards commemorative World War II medal to Kim Jong Un

Russian President Vladimir Putin has awarded Kim Jong Un a commemorative war medal marking the 75th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany, the Russian embassy in Pyongyang. *Country's Foreign Minister Ri Son-gwon received it. The medal was awarded to the North Korean leader for his role in preserving the memory of Soviet soldiers who died on North Korean territory. Russia's ambassador in North Korea, Alexander Matsegora.*

4. UN launches 6.7 bn US dollar global appeal to fight COVID-19

UN and partner agencies have launched a \$6.7-b global appeal to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, more than trebling an earlier appeal made by the UN chief, with special focus on more vulnerable countries & combating food insecurity & gender-based violence. *The COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan was launched on March 25th. Antonio Guterres is the current Secretary-General of the United Nations. He is the ninth Secretary-General. His term began 1 January 2017. UN Headquarters- New York, United States. UN Emergency Relief Coordinator- Mark Lowcock.*

5. UK announces 'once in a generation' transport sector investment

UK government announced 'once in a generation' transport sector investment of around 2 billion pounds with a major chunk allotted for emergency improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure for the country's green recovery from the pandemic. *Pop-up bike lanes, wider pavements, safer junctions, and cycle and bus-only corridors will be created in England within weeks as part of a 250 million pound emergency fund. It is the first part of a 2 billion pound package, which was part of a 5 billion pound investment announced in February. British Prime Minister: Boris Johnson.*

6. WHO, UN Postal agency release commemorative postage stamp on 40th anniversary of eradication of smallpox

In May 1980, the 33rd World Health Assembly issued its official declaration that the world is free from smallpox. It ended after a 10-year global effort that involved thousands of health workers around the world to administer half a billion vaccinations. *It is the first and only human disease eradicated on a global scale through the collaboration of countries worldwide. In 1967, WHO launched the 10-year Intensified Smallpox Eradication Programme to concentrate on endemic countries. Efforts included surveillance, case finding, contact tracing, ring vaccination and communication campaigns to better inform affected populations. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom.*

7. International tourism could decline by 60-80% in 2020: UNWTO

According to the World Tourism Organisation, International tourism could decline by 60-80% in 2020 due to the pandemic resulting in the revenue loss of \$910 billion to \$1.2 trillion placing livelihoods at risk. *Arrivals in March dropped sharply by 57% following the start of a lockdown in many countries, as well as the widespread introduction of travel restrictions and the closure of airports and national borders. This translates into a loss of 67 million international arrivals and about US\$80 billion in receipts. United Nations World Tourism Organisation: It is a United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of responsible,*

sustainable and universally accessible tourism. UNWTO was established in 1975 and has 156 Member States. Headquarters: Madrid, Spain. Secretary-General: Zurab Pololikashvili. 22% fall in international tourist arrivals in 1st quarter of 2020.

8. China launches two satellites to test space-based communications technology

China launched two satellites to test the space-based Internet of Things communications technology. The satellites, Xingyun-2 01 and 02, were launched by a Kuaizhou-1A (KZ-1A) carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China. *The rocket was developed by CASIC. CASIC: China Aerospace Science & Industry Corporation Limited is a large state-owned hi-tech company which is under the direct administration of the central government; CASIC Chairman: Gao Hongwei; Headquarters: Haidian District, Beijing. It is the ninth mission of the KZ-1A carrier rocket.*

9. Dr S Jaishankar holds virtual joint commission with Denmark counterpart, reviews bilateral ties

External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar held his first virtual joint commission with Denmark Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod and reviewed bilateral ties. The focus was on clean technology, urbanization, renewable energy, green solutions & food processing. *Denmark Capital: Copenhagen; Currency: Danish krone. Denmark is a Scandinavian Country in Europe.*

10. UN and partners launch \$6.7 billion appeal for vulnerable countries

UN & partner agencies launched a \$6.7 billion global appeal to fight the pandemic. This Global Humanitarian Response Plan calls for swift and determined action to stave off the most debilitating effects of the pandemic in 63 low & middle-income countries. *Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID 19: It provides help and protection that prioritize the most vulnerable in society, such as older people, people with disabilities, and women and girls. The response plan will be implemented by UN agencies, with international NGOs and NGO consortia playing a direct role in the response. UN Secretary-General: Antonio Guterres. The UN Emergency Relief Coordinator – Mark Lowcock.*

11. BRICS' New Development Bank provides \$1 billion loan to India to fight COVID-19

The New Development Bank of BRICS disbursed \$1 billion emergency assistance loan to India to help it reduce human, social and economic losses due to the pandemic. The 'Emergency Assistance Program Loan' to India was approved by the NDB Board of Directors. *New Development Bank (NDB): The New Development Bank (NDB), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Headquarters: Shanghai, China.*

12. CDC of the US commits \$3.6 million to India

To help fight the spread of COVID-19, the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention committed \$3.6 million to the Indian govt. The funds are also meant to be used to support the development of Infection Prevention and Control centres of excellence. *The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is the leading, national public health institute of the United States. Its main goal is to protect public health and safety through the control and prevention of disease, injury, and disability in the US and internationally. US CDC, a federal agency is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia.*

13. Dr Harsh Vardhan participates in 32nd Commonwealth Health Ministers' meeting via VC

Health Minister participated in the 32nd Commonwealth Health Ministers' Meeting through VC. He highlighted the pro-active measures taken by India towards COVID-19 management. *The theme was "Delivering a co-ordinated Commonwealth COVID-19 response". CHMM: Commonwealth Health Minister Meet is the annual meeting of health ministers from across the Commonwealth countries. CHMM is held every year in Geneva. There are 54 member countries in the commonwealth.*

14. Ericsson Educate: digital learning program for students launched

Ericsson joined the UNESCO-led Global Education Coalition & launched its latest Connect to Learn initiative, Ericsson Educate a digital program delivering online learning content focused on improving digital skills for students in schools and universities. *UNESCO: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. The Organization has 193 Members and 11 Associate Members. Director-General: Audrey Azoulay. UNESCO Headquarters: Paris, France.*

15. Intel introduces 10th Gen Intel Core vPro processors for business solutions

Intel introduced its 10th Gen Intel Core vPro processors as part of the next Gen lineup of business computing innovation- for the increasingly remote workforce. Launch includes 9 Intel Core mobile, 11 Intel Core desktop & 7 Intel Xeon workstation processors. *These vPro processors feature enhanced security and deliver increased productivity improvements, connectivity, security features and remote manageability all to empower IT to deliver amazing experiences, helping employees stay connected, more productive, more secure and in the flow with minimal interruptions Intel CEO : Bob Swan.*

16. India attends second G20 Virtual Trade and Investment Ministers Meet

India has provided medical supplies to over 120 countries to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, out of which 43 countries received it as a grant, Union Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said at the 2nd G20 Virtual Trade & Investment Ministers Meeting. *The G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. It gathers the leaders of the largest economies of the world to discuss financial and socioeconomic issues. The G20 members are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union (EU). The G20 is not a permanent institution with a headquarters. Current chair of G20 grouping, Saudi Arabia hosted the meet.*

17. World Bank approves \$1 billion to support India's fight against Covid-19

The World Bank approved USD 1 billion 'Accelerating India's COVID-19 Social Protection Response Program' to support the country's efforts for providing social assistance to the poor and vulnerable households, severely impacted by the pandemic. The new support will be funded in two phases. *An allocation of \$750 million to be made immediately to help fund the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana to scale up cash transfers and free food grain distribution to vulnerable communities, pensioners and poor workers, and provide insurance support to health workers. The second phase will provide \$250 million, which will fund additional cash and in-kind benefits based on local needs through the State governments and portable social protection delivery systems. WORLD BANK: It is an international financial institution that provides loans and grants to the governments of poorer countries for the purpose of pursuing capital projects. It consists of 5 organisations: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) lends to governments of middle-income and creditworthy low-income countries. The International Development Association: The International Development Association (IDA) provides interest-free loans — called credits — and grants to governments of the poorest countries. Together, IBRD and IDA make up the World Bank. The International Finance Corporation: The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector. We help developing countries achieve sustainable growth by financing investment, mobilizing capital in international financial markets, and providing advisory services to businesses and governments. The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency: The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) was created in 1988 to promote foreign direct investment into developing countries to support economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve people's lives. MIGA fulfils this mandate by offering political risk insurance (guarantees) to investors and lenders. The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes: The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) provides international facilities for conciliation and arbitration of investment disputes. World Bank Headquarters: Washington DC, USA. **President: David Malpass.** This takes the total commitment from the Bank in India to \$2 bn.*

18. Benjamin Netanyahu Israel's Prime Minister for the fifth time

Benjamin Netanyahu has been sworn in as the Prime Minister for the fifth time. Just moments before the ceremony his Coalition Government won a vote of confidence in Parliament by 73 votes to 46. This will be the largest government Israel has ever seen. *Israel Capital: Jerusalem. Currency: Israeli Shekel Benny Gantz was sworn in as Alternate Prime Minister.*

19. Israel Names Street After Rabindranath Tagore On the Poet's 159th Birthday

Israel named a street in Tel Aviv after Rabindranath Tagore as a tribute on his 159th birthday. Tagore, who wrote his poetry, novels, stories and plays in Bengali won the prestigious Nobel prize in literature, the only poet from India to have done so. *Tagore also wrote the national anthem of Bangladesh. The poet also composed the national anthem of India.*

20. Italy develops 'iFeel - you' bracelet for Social Distancing

The Genoa-based Italian Institute of Technology (IIT) has developed iFeel – You, an intelligent bracelet to help with social distancing. It uses a radio signal when another bracelet is approaching and does not use GPS & cannot track the user's location. *Italy Capital: Rome. President: Sergio Mattarella. Currency: Italian Lira. Italy Prime Minister: Giuseppe Conte.*

21. India provides USD 2 million aid to UN agency working for Palestinian refugees

India, by the ROI, has given \$2 million in aid to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency working for the welfare of Palestinian refugees in support of its core programmes and services, including education and health, amidst the coronavirus crisis. *India had increased its annual contribution to the UNRWA to USD 5 million in 2019. It pledged another USD 5 million for 2020 which opens its way to become a member of the agency's advisory commission, according to official sources. UNRWA: The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a UN agency created in December 1949 to support the relief and human development of Palestinian refugees. Formation: 1949. Headquarters: Amman, Jordan. Commissioner-General of UNRWA: Philippe Lazzarini. 3.1 mn refugees depend on health services provided by UNRWA.*

22. Japan's Economy Officially Enters Recession for First Time Since 2015

The world's third-largest economy may see a contraction of more than 20%. The new recession is the first for Japan in four-and-a-half years and is expected to exact a heavy cost on Japanese businesses and consumers. *According to the Japanese Cabinet Office, seasonally adjusted real gross domestic product contracted by 3.4 per cent for the period between January and March 2020. The Japanese government has already announced a record \$1 trillion stimulus package, and the Bank of Japan expanded its stimulus measures for the second straight month in April. Recession - negative economic growth in 2 consecutive quarters.*

23. IOC and WHO sign MoU to promote health through sport

International Olympic Committee (IOC) and WHO Director signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the WHO headquarters in Geneva. The two organizations have been working together since 1984, leading numerous joint initiatives. *International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach; World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. IOC, Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland.*

24. US to withdraw from Open Skies Treaty

The United States has announced to withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty. It is the third arms control pact Trump has abrogated since coming to office. This 18-year-old pact was designed to improve military transparency & confidence between superpowers. *Signed in 1992 following the collapse of the Soviet Union and entering into force in 2002, this treaty includes Russia, the United States and a majority of NATO allies; OST allows its 34 members to engage in unarmed monitoring flights over the territory of other signatories, using approved sensors to collect information on military deployments. A member nation can request a monitoring flight at 72 hours' notice. Including Russia & United States, the treaty has 35 signatories.*

25. India's KHUDOL declared one of Top 10 Global Initiatives to fight COVID-19

United Nations listed the KHUDOL initiative of Manipur as one of the top 10 global initiatives to fight against COVID-19. Under the initiative, the 'Ya_All' NGO provides food, hygiene and health of LGBTQ community, daily wage workers, people with AIDS. *Khudol is the harbinger by transforming these unique, exquisite and invaluable fruits and vegetables into unique, candy, dried and pickle items under traditional home-made recipes. Kholo was established in 2008 aiming on delivering the taste of the elegant food culture of the region; Manipur CM- N. Biren Singh. The organization mobilized network of 100 volunteers.*

26. India, Israel To Conduct Joint Research for Rapid COVID-19 Testing

India and Israel will put in joint research and development efforts for rapid testing of coronavirus to enable normalisation of life amid the pandemic. The two sides discussed joint R&D for rapid diagnosis based on big data and artificial intelligence. This is a part of scientific co-operation between the countries.

27. US Navy successfully tests a laser weapon that can destroy aircraft mid-flight

A United States Navy warship has successfully tested a new high-energy laser weapon that can destroy aircraft mid-flight. According to the Navy, lasers, can be called directed energy weapons, can be effective defences against drones or armed small boats. US Secretary of State: Mike Pompeo.

28. India helps Uganda to set up a military war game centre

Indian Association in Uganda, with help of Indian Military training team, set up military war game centre in Jinja district. President Yoweri Museveni inaugurated the war game centre conceptualised by Indian military team for Uganda Peoples Defence Forces. *UGANDA: Capital: Kampala Currency: Ugandan Shilling Named 'INDIA', it is constructed at a cost of over \$1 billion.*

29. Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen Begins Her Second Term

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen took the oath for her second four-year term, buoyed by popularity as the country continues its successful response to the pandemic. She pledged to engage in dialogue with Beijing provided it respects Taiwan's sovereignty. *Despite the Trump administration's months-long campaign on Taiwan's behalf, Taiwan was not restored to observer status—a position it last enjoyed in 2016 Taipei, the capital of Taiwan is the largest city of Taiwan.*

30. Switzerland launched the world's first app-based on Google and Apple's contact-tracing tech

The first app using Google and Apple's contact-tracing was launched in Switzerland. "SwissCovid" app is now available to members of army, hospital workers & civil servants. It uses Bluetooth signals to keep a record of other phones the user has been near. *Some countries, including the UK and France, have elected to build their own contact tracing apps rather than use the Google/Apple API so as to be able to centrally pool and analyse data. World's Largest Contact Tracing App: Aarogya Setu.*

31. U.S. joins G7 artificial intelligence group to counter China

The United States has joined an international panel for setting ethical guidelines for the use of artificial intelligence. The Trump administration had been the lone holdout among leaders of the Group of Seven in setting up the Global Partnership on AI. *The partnership was launched after a virtual meeting between national technology ministers. It was nearly two years after the leaders of Canada and France announced they were forming a group to guide the responsible adoption of AI based on shared principles of "human rights, inclusion, diversity, innovation and economic growth." G7- Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. White House's chief technology officer: Michael Kratsios.*

State

1. Manipur black rice, Gorakhpur terracotta bagged GI tag

Black rice of Manipur, also called the Chak-Hao, Gorakhpur Terracotta and Kadalai Mittai of Kovalpatti bagged Geographical Indication tag. Chak-Hao, a scented glutinous rice cultivated in Manipur over centuries, is characterised by its special aroma. *A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. Manipur - Governor: Najma Heptulla; Chief minister: N. Biren Singh. Potters make many animal figures in Gorakhpur terracotta work.*

2. Tripura government launches agro entrepreneur facilitation desk to boost economy

Tripura has launched an 'Agro-Entrepreneur Facilitation Desk' to help the entrepreneurs of the state to get subsidies and incentives from Central government funding agencies. *It will be set up at the Directorate of Horticulture and Soil Conservation. The desk will provide information about state and central government's various schemes. The government is aiming to tap around 2,000 youth, who can become an integral part of the agro-based business within a year. Tripura Chief Minister- Biplab Kumar Deb.*

3. Assam CM constitutes advisory committee to revive economy

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal constituted an advisory committee to suggest measures to revive the state's economy, which is hit by the coronavirus outbreak. *The eight-member committee led by retired IAS officer Subhash Das. Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park, Dibru Saikhowa National Park, Nameri National Park, Orang National Park important national parks in Assam. Jagdish Mukhi, present Governor of Assam.*

4. Karnataka announces Rs 1,610 cr package for farmers, construction workers, weavers, auto & taxi drivers

Karnataka state government announced a 1610 crore rupees package for farmers, construction workers, weavers, auto and taxi drivers. He also announced a new Naikar Samaan Yojana that will provide 2000 rupees financial assistance to the weavers. *The flower growers will get a compensation of 25000 rupees per hectare. Washermen, barbers, construction workers, auto and taxi drivers will get 5000 rupees each, the electricity fixed charges for MSMEs will be waived off for two months and a package will be announced soon to compensate fruit and vegetable growers. Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa.*

5. UP suspends majority of labour laws to attract investment

UP government has suspended many labour laws in the state for 3 years with a view to attract investment & to help both existing & new industrial units. It has also decided to establish Japanese help desk to attract the investment from Japanese companies. *About 2,250 fairs are held every year in Uttar Pradesh. The largest number of fairs are held in Mathura, followed by Kanpur and Hamirpur, Jhansi, Agra, and Fatehpur. Kumbh Mela at Haridwar is an important festival. UP Chief Minister- Yogi Adityanath Governor- Anandiben Mafatbhai Patel. Japanese Ambassador to India- Satoshi Suzuki.*

6. Tamil Nadu raises retirement age of government employees to 59

In Tamil Nadu, the retirement age of the government staff, teachers and those in public sector units has been raised by a year to 59. The order comes in the wake of reports of loss of revenue due to the pandemic. Tamil Nadu CM- Edappadi K. Palaniswami. *Tamil Nadu is bounded on north by Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, on the west by Kerala, on the east by the Bay of Bengal, and on the south by the Indian Ocean. Tamil Nadu Governor- Banwarilal Purohit.*

7. Sanjeevani: Unique vehicle developed at local level in Madhya Pradesh

In Madhya Pradesh, in a first of its kind initiative, a unique vehicle named 'Sanjeevani' has been developed at the local level. With the help of this vehicle, health workers can investigate any suspected patients without coming into the contact of him. *Health workers have been infected extensively by Corona virus in Madhya Pradesh. In addition, there have been incidents of attacks on health workers. Madhya Pradesh Capital- Bhopal. Chief Minister- Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Rajnagar administration took the initiative.*

8. Tripura CM launches online portal scholarships.gov.in

In Tripura, CM Biplab Kumar Deb has launched an online portal scholarships.gov.in under 'Mukhyamantri Yuba Yogayog Yojana'. Government will provide Rs. 5,000 to 14,608 youths who are in final year in

colleges or Universities as a grant for Smart Phones. *Eligibility criteria: The student must be a resident of Tripura. The student must be studying in a college resided in Tripura state. A student must be in the final year of the course. The scheme is **not applicable for students who are getting their degree from the colleges which are not in the state.** Submission of online application will continue till 6th June.*

9. Gujarat creates a fund of Rs 100 crore for COVID start-ups

The Gujarat government has announced to help the start-ups who would join the battle against Covid-19 with their knowledge and expertise by creating a fund of Rs 100 crore. As many as 31 such startups are supported by this fund. *For this purpose, KPMG has joined as a knowledge partner and has offered support to such startups for technology application in surveillance, contact tracking, PPE kits, N-95 masks, quarantine welfare, etc. Gujarat Chief Minister- Vijay Rupani.*

10. ASHA workers to get Rs 50 lakh death cover amid Covid-19 outbreak in Chandigarh

Accredited social health activists' (ASHA workers') families will receive Rs 50 lakh in case they succumb to Covid-19, announced the state health department. They will receive a monthly allowance of Rs 1,000 for performing their duties. *The monthly incentives will be paid to them from the month of January to June while the incentive for door-to-door survey will be given to them from April to June. ASHA facilitators will get Rs 5,000 per month for doing their duties and Rs 1,500 per month for conducting door-to-door survey. They will get Rs 1,500 for conducting door-to-door survey.*

11. UP becomes first state to provide facility of beds with ventilators in each district of state

Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country to provide the facility of beds with ventilators in hospitals of each and every district of state. Now, all 75 districts of state can provide a higher level of care to the patients of COVID-19. *The state government has decided to give 50% subsidy on personal protective equipment (PPE) kits, masks, sanitizer and gloves to private hospitals that are providing emergency services to poor patients at Ayushman Bharat rates. UP Governor: Anandiben Patel.*

12. Bengaluru launches Pranavayu programme to create awareness on need to self-examine respiratory health

Prana Vayu programme launched by the city Corporation in Bengaluru has been creating awareness through advertisements in media about the need to carry out self-examination for early detection of any ailment that could aggravate the situation if contracted. *Karnataka CM: B. S. Yediyurappa, Governor: Vajubhai Vala It is an attempt to help people with low oxygen level in blood.*

13. UP CM launches 'Pravasi Raahat Mitra' App for migrant workers

The app is aimed at aiding migrant citizens coming to Uttar Pradesh from other states so that they can take advantage of government schemes. It will also help monitor their health besides providing jobs and livelihood related to their skills. *The app has been developed by the relief commissioner's office with the UN Development Programme's help. The app will have full details of the persons staying in the shelter homes and also of those migrants who have reached their homes directly from other states. The App can work online as well as offline.*

14. Tamil Nadu forms panel under ex RBI Governor C Rangarajan to improve fiscal position

TN govt set up the high – level committee to examine fiscal challenges facing the state owing to the pandemic and suggest the way forward to improve its fiscal position the committee, which will also consist of Finance Secretary S Krishnan as coordinator. *The committee would assess the overall immediate and medium-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on different sectors of the state's economy including the impact of lockdown, additional costs and implications due to social distancing and their precautionary measures. The Committee has 21 members.*

15. MP Home Minister launches country's first ever 'FIR Aapke Dwar' Yojana

Madhya Pradesh is the first state in the country to launch the scheme. According to the scheme people need not be required to visit a police station to lodge an FIR. It has been started as a pilot project in 23 Police Stations. *The Minister also launched helpline 'Dial 112' on the occasion, to facilitate immediate availability of ambulance, police and fire fighting services wherever needed. Madhya Pradesh CM: Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Governor: Lalji Tandon. Madhya Pradesh Home Minister - Dr Narottam Mishra.*

16. Jharkhand: Education dept with Doordarshan starts online classes for School children

The State Education Department & Doordarshan started online classes & educational programs to provide education to students of the state through video & thematic lectures. The lectures are designed for students from class 1 to 12. Students can study regularly at their home during this lockdown period and can get benefitted of the one hour long subject-wise classes specially designed with the help of teachers aided by UNICEF and state education department. *Jharkhand CM: Hemant Soren. Governor: Draupadi Murmu. Classes to be available online on YouTube channel of Doordarshan.*

17. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launches Central University of Odisha helpline 'Bharosa' to help students in distress

Union HRD Minister launched the Central University of Odisha Helpline 'Bharosa' to relieve distress of student community during the pandemic. The helpline aims at providing Cognitive Emotional Rehabilitation Services to all University Students of Odisha. *Odisha CM: Naveen Patnaik. Governor: Ganeshi Lal. Union HRD Minister: Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'. Constituency: Haridwar, Uttarakhand. The Helpline Number was launched through a virtual platform.*

18. Gujarat'S Macpower unveils hot air seam sealing machine for PPE kits

Rajkot-based Macpower CNC produced the country's first indigenous hot air seam sealing machine that is used to manufacture PPE kits at half the price of the imported ones. It seals the seam of PPE kit so that viruses cannot penetrate from small pores. *The machine is important for the manufacturing of PPE kits for coronavirus warriors fighting to treat those affected by COVID-19. At present, India is importing the machine at a higher cost, and it takes three to four months to get the delivery. Director of Macpower CNC: Rupesh Mehta; Gujarat Governor: Acharya Devvrat. It was unveiled by the CM Vijay Rupani.*

19. AP Govt Constitutes High Power Committee To Probe Vizag Gas Leak Incident

The Andhra Pradesh government constituted a five-member High-Power Committee to probe the leakage of styrene gas from the LG Polymer plant in Visakhapatnam. The committee will be headed by Neeraj Kumar Prasad. *Andhra Pradesh CM: Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy; Governor: Biswabhusan Harichandran. Styrene is used in manufacturing of fiberglass, rubber & latex.*

20. Uttarakhand CM launches 'HOPE', a portal for unemployed youth to get jobs

Uttarakhand CM Trivendra Singh Rawat launched a portal aimed at creating employment avenues for the trained youth as well as offering them skill development opportunities to increase their employability. HOPE stands for Helping Out People Everywhere. *HOPE: The portal will provide a platform to the youths for job hunting and skill development through its database. Once the database is ready, the portal will be linked with the Mukhya Mantri Swarojgar Yojana which was launched recently. Uttarakhand Governor: Baby Rani Maurya. It can help employers find human resources as per requirements.*

21. Gujarat govt forms six-member committee to revive post-CoVID economy

Gujarat, the most Industrialised state in India, has set up a six-member committee of experts to deliberate on economic revival measures, including fiscal restructuring, in the post-COVID-19 pandemic scenario and provide comprehensive suggestions. *Gujarat Governor: Acharya Devvrat. Committee is headed by former finance secretary, Hasmukh Adhia.*

22. Gujarat CM announces Atma-Nirbhar Gujarat Sahay Yojana

Gujarat announced Atma-Nirbhar Gujarat Sahay Yojana, a scheme for small shop keepers and self-employed hit by the lockdown. Under the scheme, one lakh rupees collateral-free loan will be given at two per cent for the beneficiaries for three years. *The annual interest on the loan is 8% but the beneficiaries would have to pay only 2% as the state government would bear remaining 6%. The beneficiaries would also get a moratorium of six months on repayment of interest and principal amount. Over 10 lakh self-employed & shop keepers to be benefited.*

23. West Bengal govt launches Matir Smristi scheme

The West Bengal government launched Matir Smristi scheme to utilise 50,000 acres of barren land in six districts for income-generating activities like horticulture and pisciculture. The scheme will benefit around 2.5 lakh people in rural Bengal. *West Bengal CM: Mamata Banerjee. Governor of West Bengal: Jagdeep Dhankhar.*

24. Jal Jeevan Mission: Haryana and J&K to provide tap water to every household by Dec 2022

The Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir and the state Government of Haryana have planned to provide tap connection to supply water to all rural families by December 2022 under the Jal Jeevan Mission. *The national target has been set for the year 2024-25. Jal Jeevan Mission, a central government initiative under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, aims to ensure access of piped water for every household in India; The World Health Organization prescribes 25 litres of water for one person per day to meet all basic hygiene and food needs. Minister of Jal Shakti- Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.*

25. Madhya Pradesh launches Charan Paduka initiative for migrant labourers

In Madhya Pradesh, in a first of its kind of initiative, Charan Paduka campaign has been started for the migrant labourers passing through the state. Under this, migrant labourers going barefoot are providing shoes and slippers to reduce their pain. *Madhya Pradesh CM: Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Governor: Lalji Tandon. This campaign is being conducted by the police in most places.*

26. Centre, West Bengal govt, AIIB ink loan agreement for \$145 mn project

The government of India, West Bengal government and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank inked a loan agreement for a \$145 million project to improve irrigation services and flood management in the Damodar Valley Command Area (DVCA) in West Bengal. *The West Bengal Major Irrigation and Flood Management Project will benefit about 2.7 million farmers from five districts of the state across 393,964 ha area with better irrigation services and improved protection against annual flooding to mitigate the impact of climate change. Funding: The total value of the project is \$413.8 million, co-financed between the AIIB worth \$145 million, IBRD worth \$145 million and the government of West Bengal worth \$123.8 million. The \$145 million loan from the AIIB has a six-year grace period and a maturity of 24 years. IBRD: The International Bank for Reconstruction Development provides financial products and policy advice to help countries reduce poverty and extend the benefits of sustainable growth to all of their people. It is a subsidiary of the World Bank. AIIB: The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank with a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia. Headquarters: Beijing, China. President: Jin Liqun. Member countries: 102. Total value - \$413.8 million financed by AIIB, IBRD & WB Govt.*

27. NABARD sanctions Rs 1,500 cr for Punjab to ensure credit flow to farmers

NABARD has sanctioned Rs 1,500 cr for Punjab to ensure continuous credit flow to farmers, through state cooperative banks. This is part of NABARD's Rs 25,000 crore nationwide SLF, made available ensure the flow of credit to farmers during the pandemic. *NABARD has disbursed Rs 1,000 crore to Punjab State Cooperative Bank and Rs 100 crore to Punjab Gramin Bank for supporting agricultural and other activities of farmers, out of the total Rs 1,500 crore. NABARD: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development was constituted based on the recommendations of CRAFTICARD committee headed by B Sivaraman. Headquarters: Mumbai. Chairperson of NABARD - Harsh Kumar Bhanwala.*

28. Government of West Bengal announces new schemes- 'Sneher Porosh' & 'Prochesta'

The Chief Minister of West Bengal launched two schemes 'Sneher Porosh' to provide support for the migrant workers and 'Prochesta' to help the workers of the unorganised sector of Bengal to enable them to earn their living in the lockdown situation. Prochesta Scheme is to provide wages to all daily wage workers.

29. Karnataka launches incubator for cyber security start-ups in India

Karnataka launched its first cyber security-specific accelerator programme 'H.A.C. K'. The programme is implemented by CySecK, which is state's Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security meant to create a cyber-safe environment for industry collaboration. *Karnataka CM: B S Yediyurappa. Governor: Vajubhai Valla. It is housed at Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.*

30. UP govt presents Rs 5.12 lakh cr budget in state assembly

The Uttar Pradesh government presented a Rs 5,12,860.72 crore budget for FY 2020-21 in the state assembly. The budget, the size of which is Rs 33,159 crore more than the last year's budget, has provisions worth Rs 10,967.87 crore for new schemes. Finance Minister of Uttar Pradesh: Suresh Kumar Khanna.

31. Punjab govt promulgates 'Punjab Good Conduct Prisoners Amendment Ordinance, 2020'

Punjab Government promulgated 'The Punjab Good Conduct Prisoners (Temporary Release) Amendment Ordinance, 2020. As per new provisions, the temporary release of the prisoners has been allowed beyond the maximum period of 16 weeks in a calendar year. *The condition of the temporary release being availed of, on quarterly basis also stands waived.* Punjab CM: Captain Amarinder Singh. Governor: Vijayender Pal Singh Badnore. Cooperation & Jails Minister, Punjab: Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa.

32. J&K starts an initiative SUKOON' - COVID-19 Beat the Stress

In order to spread awareness about the psychological impact of lockdown and measures to be adopted to overcome them, Department of Information and Public Relations, Jammu and Kashmir has started an initiative 'SUKOON' - COVID-19 Beat the Stress". It is to ensure that people stay mentally fit & cope with fears.

33. MP: Rural Livelihood Mission begins Didi Vehicle Service for safe delivery of rural women

In the tribal-dominated Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh, the women of Rural Livelihood Mission have started Didi Vehicle Service for rural women for the safe delivery. This vehicle service is completely free. Lalji Tandon is 22nd and current Governor of Madhya Pradesh. Rural Livelihood Mission started this service for 29 villages.

34. 'Mee Annapurna' program for Welfare of Farmers Bhoomiputras launched across Maharashtra

IRDA Licensed insurance intermediary Integrated Risk Insurance Brokers Limited announced 'Mee Annapurna', an initiative that integrates three critical aspects of livelihood and comprehensive engagement. The Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Maharashtra announced a three-year empanelment of insurance companies and intermediaries for implementation of crop insurance scheme across the state. S C Khaneja - Chairman - Integrated Risk Insurance Brokers Ltd.

35. AndhraGreens portal to facilitate e-commerce of fruits and vegetables in Andhra Pradesh

AP govt. launched a website to procure & sell fruits online as part of supporting the horticulture farmers in the state. Through Kalgudi digital platform, AndhraGreens.com is a farmer-to-consumer e-commerce portal specialized in fruits, vegetables & spices. *The orders will be delivered to consumers at their doorsteps in cities like Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Guntur in AP and Hyderabad in Telangana and Bengaluru in Karnataka. More cities and towns will be added to the list in a gradual manner.* Yeduguri Sandinti Jaganmohan Reddy current CM of Andhra Pradesh.

36. Centre clears OIL plans for drilling in Assam's Dibru Saikhowa Park

Oil India Limited said that Ministry of Environment accorded environment clearance for extension of drilling for hydrocarbon exploration in Dibru Saikhowa National Park in Assam as part of Centre's target to reduce 10% imports & Northeast Vision 2030. Prakash Javadekar is the Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; National Parks in Assam are- Kaziranga National Park, Manas National park, Orang National Park, & Nameri National Park. It houses 36 different species & is a major tourist attraction.

37. Madhya Pradesh CM to inaugurate 'Everybody will get employment' scheme through video conferencing

In Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will inaugurate the 'Everybody will get employment' scheme to provide employment to migrant labourers, through video conferencing. Under this, MNREGA job cards will be distributed to labourers. *As per the official information, 19 lakh 92 thousand labourers are working in 22 thousand 695 gram Panchayats in the state. From April 1 till now, more than 35 lakh 45 thousand labourers have been provided employment under MNREGA during Corona crisis. In this 42.2 per cent of women have been given employment. 4 lakh 82 thousand labourers of Madhya Pradesh stranded in different states have returned so far. At the same time, more than one lakh labourers have been sent back to their home states.* Madhya Pradesh Governor: Lalji Tandon.

38. Ladakh Police comes into existence

After the formation of UT of Ladakh, separate Ladakh Police has come into being. Police in Leh & Kargil districts now will be called Ladakh police. The Ladakh Police will have its new symbols, insignia, formation sign & flag with a separate identity. *The state of Jammu and Kashmir bifurcated into the Union Territories of*

J&K and Ladakh on 2019 October 31; Radha Krishna Mathur as Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh. Police flag reads 'service & courage is ready to fly high'.

39. Dept of Posts and Horticulture in Bihar join hands to supply Shahi Lichi and Zardalu Mango

In view of the lockdown, Bihar Postal Circle UNDER Ministry of Communication made an agreement with Department of Horticulture for logistics of Shahi Litchi from Muzaffarpur and Zardalu Mango from Bhagalpur and its delivery to the doorstep of the people. *Minister of Communications: Ravi Shankar Prasad. Horticulture comes under the Department of Agriculture. Lichi and Mango are famous in world of their unique fragrance.*

40. CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches 'Shram Siddhi' to provide job at all workers

CM of MP launched the 'Shram Siddhi' campaign in panchayats. The campaign guarantees jobs to workers whether they have a job card or not. Under this, unskilled labourers will be provided work under MNREGS and skilled workers according to their ability. *Panchayats doing good work will be awarded the first getting a prize of Rs 2 lakhs, second Rs 1 Lakh and third Rs 50,000. The awards will be given for making the most job cards, starting the most jobs, constructing structures of the highest importance and works of the highest quality. SAMBAL YOJANA: Sambal Yojana is aimed to strengthen the lives of the poor and the SC and ST communities by providing them social security cover, right from birth to death. Sambal Yojana is restarted and extended to migrants now.*

41. Mizoram grants 'industry' status to sports

In a first, the north-eastern state of Mizoram has accorded 'industry' status to sports. The Cabinet cleared the Sports and Youth Service department's proposal to recognise sports as an 'industry'. The main aim of the decision is to professionalise sports. *This could seek more investment in sports for the generation of employment and increasing value. The industry status could also help meet the requirements of sportspersons and others involved in the sector. Mizoram has a pool of footballers playing for premier clubs across the country. The State has also done well in hockey and weightlifting in recent years. Sports minister of Mizoram - Robert Romawia Royte.*

42. In a first, Uttarakhand releases report on conservation of endemic, threatened floras

Uttarakhand is the first state to release a report highlighting its conservation efforts to save over 1,100 rare plants from extinction. Around 1,145 species are conserved of which 46 species are endemic & 68 species are rare, endangered or threatened. *The species covered were under the red list of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) or under state biodiversity board, under this project by the research wing of the state forest department. IUCN: The International Union for Conservation of Nature is an international organization working in the field of nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Headquarters: Gland, Switzerland. Director General: Grethel Aguilar. Around 386 species, conserved, have medicinal properties.*

43. Uttar Pradesh govt to set up migration commission to help find jobs for workers returning from different States

Uttar Pradesh government has decided to set up a migration commission to help find jobs for workers returning home. CM Yogi Adityanath also said that other states will need permission from the UP government if they want to make use of labourers from UP. *The planned commission will look into workers' rights, prevent their exploitation and provide an official framework to ensure socio-economic and legal support for the migrant workers. UP also launched Pravasi Rahat Mitra to collect data on migrants.*

44. SKIMS in Srinagar gets its first of its kind Infectious Disease Block facility

In the UT of J&K, Adviser to Lieutenant Governor Baseer Ahmad Khan inaugurated a first of its kind Infectious Disease Block facility at Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) in Srinagar. This is to be used solely for treatment of COVID-19. *It is the first centre of its kind in north India which is equipped with superlative quality facilities. The services that will be provided include 40-bed isolation ward, 15-bed high dependency isolation ward and intensive care unit (ICU). Jammu and Kashmir: Girish Chandra Murmu. Prof. A. G. Ahangar, Director of SKIMS.*

45. Karnataka govt to launch a project to maintain health database of all citizens

Karnataka govt to soon launch project to maintain the health database of all its citizens undertaking a survey of all 6.5 Crore people. A first of its kind initiative State Health Register will be robust and standardized

health repository of all citizens. *The government is to undertake a survey of all 6.5 crore people in the state using a team of Primary Health Centre officials, revenue officials, education department staff and ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) karyakartas. This project to be implemented first in Chikkaballapur district.*

46. Kargil's first Solar Lift Irrigation Plant inaugurated

Director of Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries Dr Mohammad Raza inaugurated the first Solar Lift Irrigation Plant of Kargil with five KW Solar Plant and three HP Submersible Pump at Yak Breeding Farm, Bodh Kharboo. *The Pump is discharging 45,000 Litre water per day from Dawn to Desk. Kargil Renewable Energy Agency (KREDA) This is to help the problem of shortage of water and irrigation.*

47. Tamil Nadu signs MoUs worth over Rs 15,000 crore to generate 47,000 jobs

Tamil Nadu signed 17 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) worth Rs 15,128 crore to generate 47,150 jobs in the state. Daimler India, Salcomp and other companies would invest over Rs 15000 crore. The Government also signed MoUs for renewable energy projects. *Companies like BYD India, Polymatech Electronics, Chennai Power Generation Ltd, Chung Jye, Lai Investment Manager Pvt Ltd have proposed to invest in the state. Mahindra Origins will be investing Rs 46 crore.*

48. UP to sign MoU for employment of 9.5 lakh migrant workers

UP govt to sign MoUs Indian Industries Association and the National Real Estate Development Council to ensure employment. NAREDCO to employ 2.5 lakh people in realty sector, IIA to employ 500,000 migrant workers in MSMEs, and CII to employ 200,000 workers. *The agencies will also ensure short-term training or apprenticeship to skill migrant workers. The government looks to provide apprenticeship allowances to workers. The National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO), Founded: 1998; Headquarters: New Delhi; NAREDCO President Niranjan Hiranandani; Chairman-Rajeev Talwar. Uttar Pradesh has seen an inflow of around 26 lakh migrants.*

49. Andhra Pradesh government launches web portal for educational institutes to upload details

AP has launched a web portal on schools and colleges will have to upload details regarding their infrastructure and other facilities. Students' parents may visit the institutes and complain if the facilities provided do not match the information provided. *Kaundinya Wildlife Sanctuary & Gundla Brahmeswaram Wildlife Sanctuary are located in AP.*

50. Himachal to launch portal for registration of returnees who lost jobs

The cabinet headed by CM Jai Ram Thakur launched of a portal for registration of people who returned to the state due to job-loss and are either in need of employment or upgrade of skills and decided to formulate a scheme for working capital requirements. *Himachal Pradesh Chief Justice-Lingappa Narayana Swamy. Governor of Himachal Pradesh: Bandaru Dattatreya.*

51. MP govt launches 'Rozgar Setu' scheme to provide employment to labourers

Madhya Pradesh is the first state to launch a unique scheme to harness the work efficiency of labourers, 'Rozgar Setu' and to provide employment to them. Labourers will be provided employment in industries; construction works according to their skills. *Madhya Pradesh Capital: Bhopal. Survey work of skilled migrant labourers is to be started.*

Sports

1. Richard Hadlee Medal goes to Ross Taylor, Southee bags Test prize

Ross Taylor was honoured with Sir Richard Hadlee Medal for the third time for excelling across formats. Tim Southee bagged the top Test prize. Taylor went past Stephen Fleming's tally to become the leading run-scorer for New Zealand in Tests. *Sir Richard Hadlee medal is the New Zealand's highest cricketing honour. Kim Cotton was named the Umpire of the Year.*

2. Australia deposes India for the first time since 2016 in Test ranking for men: ICC India slips to 3rd Position

Virat Kohli-led Indian cricket team was dethroned from the top spot in the ICC Test rankings for the first time in close to four years after cricket parent's body announced the latest rankings. India had yielded the top spot for since October 2016. *The MRF Tyres ICC Team Rankings is a rating method developed by David Kendix to rank men's teams playing across Test, One-Day International and Twenty20 International formats and women's teams playing One-Day International & Twenty20 International cricket. India is now at the 3rd spot after Australia & New Zealand.*

3. Former world snooker champion Peter Ebdon retires from sport

Former World Snooker champion Peter Ebdon has retired from the sport to avoid having to endure daunting spinal surgery. Peter Ebdon won the 2002 world title, beating Stephen Hendry in an 18-17 final thriller. He was also a two-time runner-up. *Ebdon, nicknamed 'The Force', twice achieved a career high world ranking of number three while his last victory at a ranking event came at the 2012 China Open. His last match was at December's German Masters qualifiers. He was the recipient of WPBSA's Newcomer of the Year award.*

4. COVID-19 impact: CGF postpones 7th season of 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games to 2023

The 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games is postponed to 2023 because of clash of dates with Tokyo Olympics, which has been pushed back by a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Tokyo Olympics were originally scheduled to be held from 2020 July 23 to August 8. Trinidad and Tobago were awarded the right to stage the seventh edition of the Games by the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) in June last year with the competition set to take place from 1-7 August 2021. CGF President- Dame Louise Martin.*

5. FINA postpones 2021 Fukuoka world championships to May 2022

The 2021 World Aquatics Championships in Japan will now be held in 2022, the sport's governing body FINA (International Swimming Federation) said. It was initially scheduled for the summer of 2021 from July 16 to August 1 in the Japanese city of Fukuoka. *The Federation Internationale De Natation (FINA) was founded in 1908. Swimming has been contested since the inaugural modern Olympic games in 1896. FINA Headquarters- Lausanne, Switzerland.*

6. Discus thrower Sandeep Kumari banned for 4 years by WADA after testing positive for methenolone

Discus thrower Sandeep Kumari has been slapped with a four-year ban by WADA's (World Anti-Doping Agency) Athletics Integrity Unit for flunking a dope test, nearly two years after her sample was deemed clean by the NDTL (National Dope Testing Laboratory). *The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was established in 1999 as an international independent agency composed and funded equally by the sport movement and governments of the world. Its key activities include scientific research, education etc. Jhuma Khatun was also handed a four-year ban.*

7. Egypt's tennis player Youssef Hossam gets life ban for match-fixing

Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU) has banned Egyptian tennis player Youssef Hossam (21) for life after being involved in a number of match-fixing and corruption cases. He had violated the anti-corruption rules related to 21 times between 2015 and 2019. *Egypt, Capital: Cairo; Currency: Egyptian pound; Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi; Egypt's Prime Minister Mustafa Madbouli. Tennis Integrity Unit HQ- London, United Kingdom.*

8. China wins online Nations Cup, India finishes fifth

Top-seed and favourite China were crowned champions at the FIDE Chess.com Online Nations Cup by virtue of superior points tally despite their final match against the USA ending in 2-2 draw. *China won the top prize on the basis of having won the round-robin stage. The win for China came from Yu Yangyi, who*

was consistent through the tournament, as he beat Wesley So. India finished a poor fifth in the six-team event.

9. Sania Mirza Becomes First Indian to Win the Fed Cup Heart Award

Sania played an integral role in India securing a first-ever place in the Fed Cup playoffs. She won the doubles match & helped secure a win over Indonesia. She also received \$ 2,000 which she donated to the relief fund. *Sania won the award for Asia/Oceania zone after securing more than 10,000 votes out of the total 16,985 online votes cast for this year's three regional Group I nominees. The Fed Cup Heart Award: The Fed Cup Heart Award is an International Tennis Federation initiative that was first presented at the Final in 2009. It aims to recognize players who have represented their country with distinction, shown exceptional courage on the court and demonstrated outstanding commitment to the team. She clinched the women's doubles title at Hobart International.*

10. Deepa Malik announces retirement

Paralympics silver medallist Deepa Malik announced her retirement to hold her post as the President of the Paralympic Committee of India in accordance with the National Sports Code. *Deepa was the first Indian woman to win a medal in Paralympic Games, winning silver in shot put at the 2016 Summer Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro. She also won the gold in the F-53/54 javelin throw at the Para Athletic Grand Prix in Dubai in 2018. She was given the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award. She had become the second para-athlete to be honoured with the prestigious award after javelin thrower Devendra Jhajharia in 2017. She was honoured with the Arjuna award in 2012 and the Padma Shri Award in 2017. An active athlete cannot hold an official post in any federation*

11. FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in India to be held from Feb 17 to Mar 7 in 2021

The FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, which was originally scheduled to be held later this year in India, has been moved back to early 2021. Five venues – Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Kolkata and Navi Mumbai – had already been finalised. *The opening game being allotted to Guwahati and the final to Navi Mumbai. Union Sports Minister: Kiren Rijiju; FIFA: Federation Internationale de Football Association; President: Gianni Infantino; Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland. Swedish Coach Thomas Dennerby in charge of the Indian team.*

12. Kumble-led ICC committee recommends ban on saliva to shine ball

ICC cricket committee - headed by Anil Kumble has recommended the prohibition of saliva to shine the ball, in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. It has also recommended increase in DRS per innings is introduced in each format as an interim measure. *ICC Chairperson: Shashank Manohar; CEO: Manu Sawhney. International Cricket Council (ICC), Headquarters: Dubai, UAE.*

Agreements

1. MyGov, VMate collaborates to disperse information on Covid-19

Short video app VMate has joined hands with the Government's citizen engagement platform MyGov to aid the Centre's efforts in combating the menace of the COVID-19 pandemic. An official profile of the entity, named MyGovIndia, has been launched on VMate. *MyGov launched on 26 July 2014. MyGov India CEO Abhishek Singh. First video posted on the profile talks about Aarogya Setu.*

2. IIT Hyderabad to collaborate with Hong Kong firm to create venture ecosystem

IIT-Hyderabad has planned to collaborate with a Hong Kong-based financial firm New Frontier Capital Management, to establish a global network for ventures as well as to create a venture ecosystem. Objective is to promote innovation, research & incubation. *The MoU also mentions the establishment of "Joint Innovation Centres" in Tokyo, Japan, as well as in Telangana and will help create an ecosystem that is connected to global research institutions. Firm has a worldwide presence including in Tokyo and Singapore.*

3. ICMR to leverage IBM's virtual agent Watson to enable rapid response to Covid-19 testing facilities

Indian Council of Medical Research, Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, have collaborated with IBM on a virtual assistant to bolster Rapid Response to India's Frontline Testing Facilities on Covid-19. *The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi, the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research, is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world. The bot will respond to specific queries.*

4. PNB Housing Finance signs MoU with IIT Delhi

PNB Housing Finance has signed a MoU with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi. The initiative will support critical R&D of a unique prototype material to be used in manufacturing sustainable (washable and reusable) PPE surgical gowns and masks. *Neeraj Vyas: Interim MD and CEO; PNB Housing Fin chief Sanjaya Gupta recently resigned. PPE (Personal Protective Equipment).*

5. CSIR-IGIB and TATA Sons sign MoU for licensing 'KNOWHOW' for rapid diagnosis of Covid-19

An MoU was signed between CSIR's constituent lab, Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) and TATA Sons for licensing of 'KNOWHOW' for FNCAS9 Editor Linked Uniform Detection Assay (FELUDA) for rapid diagnosis of Covid19. *"This innovative CRISPR 'Feluda' test uses cutting edge CRISPR technology for detection of the genomic sequence of the novel coronavirus. It uses a test protocol that is simple to administer and easy to interpret enabling results to be made available to the medical fraternity in relatively lesser time, as compared to other test protocols,". Ratan Tata, chairman emeritus at Tata Sons. Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).*

6. Wipro signs MoU with Maharashtra govt to change Pune campus in 450-bed COVID-19 hospital

To help Maharashtra citizens tackle Covid-19 cases, IT-giant Wipro has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the state's government. Wipro has decided to change its IT campuses in Hinjewadi, Pune, to a 450-bed intermediary care COVID-19 hospital. *It will be an independent, isolated COVID-19 dedicated complex that also includes 24 well-appointed rooms to accommodate doctors and medical staff. Rishad Premji, Chairman, Wipro Limited. Maharashtra, Chief Minister, Uddhav Thackeray Wipro is set to complete this task within four weeks' time.*

7. Bharat Dynamics signs an MoU with IIT Kanpur to manufacture ventilators for COVID-19 patient Car

Bharat Dynamics (BDL), a Defence Public Sector Undertaking, has come forward for the large-scale manufacturing of the ventilators developed by Nocca Robotics, an incubated start-up of IIT Kanpur. It will be widely available as a 'Make in India' product. *An MoU was signed recently between BDL, IIT Kanpur, IIT Kanpur's incubator Foundation for Innovation and Research in Science and Technology (FIRST) and Nocca Robotics Private Limited (NRPL). Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Director, IIT Kanpur.*

8. Tata Consumer Products ties up with Domino's Pizza, Zomato to deliver essential goods

Tata Consumer Products (TCPL) said it has partnered with food delivery platforms like Domino's Pizza and Zomato to strengthen its direct distribution model and ensure steady supply of its essential products. They aim to safeguard people's health. *On Domino's Pizza app, this service will be available under "Domino's*

Essentials" for consumers in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata. TCPL Managing Director and CEO- Sunil D'Souza.

9. Volvo partners with Luminar for LiDAR tech; plans to sell self-driving cars by 2022

Volvo company is partnering with tech firm Luminar to make use of their LiDAR & perception technology for the next generation of Volvo cars. Next-generation of cars will be built on the SPA 2 modular vehicle architecture that goes into production in 2022. *Lidar systems shoot out millions of points of lights a second, measuring how long they take to return after bouncing off nearby objects to build a map of their surroundings. Volvo CEO- Hakan Samuelsson. LiDAR stands for Light Detection and Ranging.*

10. Jio gets new marquee investor: Vista Equity to buy 2.32% for Rs 11,367 crore

Vista Equity Partners, a US-based private equity firm that runs the world's largest exclusively tech-focused fund, will pick up a 2.32% stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 11,367 Cr, making it the 3rd high-profile investment in the Reliance Industries Ltd unit. *In April, Facebook bought a 9.9 percent stake in Jio for Rs 43,574 crore. This was the social media powerhouse's biggest investment since its \$22 billion buyout of WhatsApp in 2014. On May 4, American private equity giant Silver Lake Partners purchased 1 percent of Jio Platforms for Rs 5,655.75 crore. This values Jio Platforms at an equity value of Rs 4.91 lakh Cr.*

11. Defence Ministry signs contract with Tata Power SED for infra modernisation at 37 airfields

Defence Ministry signed a contract with Tata Power SED for modernisation of infrastructure of the Indian Air Force, Coast Guard and Navy at a cost of around Rs 1,200 cr. This is phase 2 of the MAFI programme. *The up gradation of navigational aids and infrastructure under this project would enhance the operational capability by facilitating air operations of military and civil aircraft even in poor visibility and adverse weather conditions while enhancing aerospace safety. MAFI – Modernisation of the Airfield Infrastructure.*

12. InsurTech Riskcovry ties-up with NPCI

InsurTech Riskcovry has tied-up with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), an umbrella organization for operating retail payments and settlement systems to enable NPCI to offer Covid-19 health insurance to their over 700 million RuPay card users. *NPCI: National Payments Corporation of India, an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India, is an initiative of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA) under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, for creating a robust Payment & Settlement Infrastructure in India. NPCI President: Dilip Asbe.*

13. Federal Bank, MoneyGram tie up for direct-to-bank account credit service

MoneyGram Payment Systems has tied up with Federal Bank to offer a cost-effective direct-to-bank account credit option for customers. Through this partnership, customers can receive deposits directly in their bank accounts without leaving their homes. *Federal Bank Tagline: Your Perfect Banking Partner. Headquarters: Aluva, Kochi. Federal Bank CEO: Shyam Srinivasan. Federal Bank has over 15% share of country's remittance market.*

14. University of Hyderabad, CCMB, Vins Bioproducts team up for Covid-19 therapy

University of Hyderabad (UoH) and CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology have tied up with Vins Bioproducts Ltd to develop antibody fragment-based immunotherapy for treatment for Covid-19 pandemic. They plan to use the F(ab')₂ platform technology. *F(ab')₂ platform technology has been providing neutralising antibodies from horses for a variety of life-threatening pathologies in humans as anti-venoms, anti-toxins and anti-virals. F(ab')₂ has been providing neutralising antibodies from horses.*

15. ACT Grants partners with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, others to combat Covid-19

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation and Wadhvani Foundation have joined Action Covid-19 Team (ACT) Grants as donors and will extend the outreach of the initiative. ACT is an Indian not-for-profit grant. *Gates Foundation will be a part of the projects' selection process and will support project execution, with a focus on states such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Wadhvani Foundation will also provide grants for selected projects. ACT was set up by venture capital investors & start-up founders.*

16. PepsiCo India ties up with Swiggy

In a bid to strengthen availability of its snack brands at a time when the country is grappling with the Covid-19 pandemic, PepsiCo India has entered into a distribution partnership with Swiggy to launch Lay's and Kurkure e-stores on the app. *Earlier in the US, PepsiCo Inc announced the launch of PantryShop.com and Snacks.com, two direct-to-consumer websites where shoppers can order an assortment of PepsiCo's food and beverage brands. CEO of PepsiCo India- Ramon Laguarta.*

17. IRCON, RZD International sign MoU

Ircon International (IRCON) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with RZD International LLC to explore opportunities for joint development of railways and infrastructure projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America. IRCON is a Miniratna Schedule A PSE. *Ircon International (IRCON), a government company incorporated by the Central Government (Ministry of Railways) under the Companies Act. It is the leading turnkey construction company in the public sector. S. K. Chaudhary - Chairman & Managing Director, IRCON.*

18. Ministry of Defence inks MoU with eGov Foundation for online management of Cantonment Boards

Ministry of Defence has signed an MoU with eGov Foundation for online management of Cantonment Boards. The joint initiative sees Directorate General Defence Estates (DGDE), Ministry of Defence and eGov Foundation working together to drive e-governance. *This blend of technological intervention and administrative reform will be achieved through DIGIT (Digital Infrastructure for Governance, Impact & Transformation), India's largest open source platform for urban governance. The application suite includes dashboards, web portals, property tax, miscellaneous collection, trade license, public grievance redressal system, fire NoC system, water and sewerage charges, online building permission system and finance and accounting system. Viraj Tyagi, CEO, eGov Foundation. There are 62 cantonment boards in the country.*

19. Flipkart ties-up with Bajaj Allianz General Insurance to offer digital motor insurance

Flipkart has partnered with the private general insurer, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company (BAGIC) to offer motor insurance to customers on the digital platform. For four wheelers, The Motor OTS facility will allow customers to inspect their vehicle. *No-Claim Bonus is a unique facility wherein customers are rewarded for each year that they don't make a claim. While switching insurers, they will be allowed to transfer up to 50% of this NCB amount. Tapan Singhel, MD & CEO, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.*

20. ONGC and NTPC to Form JV for Renewable Energy Business

The Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited & India's largest power generation utility NTPC are planning to set up Joint Venture company for renewable energy business. This will enable both companies achieve their targets in renewable energy sector. *ONGC was set up under the visionary leadership of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. ONGC has been conferred with Maharatna status in the year 2010; NTPC became a Maharatna company in May 2010. ONGC CEO: Shashi Shankar. NTPC Chief: Gurdeep Singh.*

21. Zaggie, Visa tie up for Visa payments

Fintech startup Zaggie partnered with payments technology major Visa to launch innovative payment solutions. Under this, both companies will jointly create solutions for small and medium enterprises and start-ups to improve productivity and efficiency. *VISA: Visa Inc. is an American multinational financial services corporation headquartered in California, United States. It facilitates electronic funds transfers throughout the world, most commonly through Visa-branded credit cards, debit cards and prepaid cards. VISA CEO: Alfred F Kelly Jr. Zaggie is payments company with focus on businesses & corporates.*

22. Maruti Suzuki ties up with Cholamandalam Investment & Finance; launches 'Buy-Now-Pay-Later Offer'

Maruti Suzuki India partnered with Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Company Ltd to provide customised auto retail financing solutions to retail buyers. The new solution 'Buy-Now-Pay-Later Offer' is aimed to provide customers with easy financing options. *Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company: Headquarters: Chennai, India. Parent Organization: Murugappa Group. Maruti Suzuki: Headquarters: New Delhi. CEO: Kenichi Ayukawa. Parent Organisation of Maruti Suzuki: Suzuki.*

23. Flipkart partners Vishal Mega Mart for home delivery of essentials in 26 cities

To facilitate the delivery of essentials at doorstep in a fastest and safest manner, Flipkart partnered with modern retail store chain, Vishal Mega Mart. Consumers across 365 Vishal Mega Mart stores can order products and get them delivered by Flipkart. *Consumers across 26 cities will be able to order essentials from Vishal Mega Mart, which will be further scaled to 240 cities in the next four weeks. Gunender Kapur – CEO & MD at Vishal Mega Mart.*

24. Airtel Payments Bank, Mastercard team up to develop customised financial products for farmers, SMEs

Airtel Payments Bank Limited (APBL) has teamed up with Mastercard to develop customized financial products for Indian farmers and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in a bid to deepen penetration of financial services in unbanked and underbanked regions. *Airtel Payments Bank: Headquarters: New Delhi. CEO: Anubrata Biswas. Airtel Payments Bank and Bharti Axa Life Insurance have started to provide government's insurance plan Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana in August 2018. In 2019, Airtel Payments Bank started offering Atal Pension Yojana through its platform. This could help farmers gain access to neighbourhood banking.*

25. Maruti Suzuki partners ICICI Bank to offer customized EMI financing schemes to customers

Maruti Suzuki India joined hands with ICICI Bank to offer retail financing schemes to its customers. Accordingly, the bank is offering Flexi EMI scheme which enables customers to pay low EMI initially, in order to help with the ongoing liquidity stress. EMI starts from ₹ 899 on loan of Rs 1 lakh for first 3 months.

26. CSIR-IIIM & Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) to develop RT-LAMP based test for Coronavirus

CSIR-IIIM, Jammu a constituent laboratory of CSIR partnered with Reliance Industries Limited to develop a new Reverse Transcriptase-Loop Mediated Isothermal Amplification (RT-LAMP) based COVID-19 diagnostic kit for which a formal MOU has also been signed. *The advantage of this test is that the RT-LAMP-based COVID-19 kit components are easily available, and these can be completely manufactured in India. The RT-LAMP test can be done with minimal expertise in a very basic lab setup like mobile units or kiosks for testing at airports, railway stations, bus stands and other public places. CSIR IIIM - CSIR-Indian Institute Of Integrative Medicine is dedicated to the research of drug discovery. This nucleic acid-based test is a rapid (45 – 60 minutes) test.*

27. PFC signs MoU with NBPCL to fund hydro-electric projects in MP

Power Finance Corporation, under Ministry of Power, entered into an agreement with Narmada Basin Projects Company Ltd., a company of Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, to fund projects worth Rs.22,000 crore for 225 MW hydro-electric projects & multipurpose projects. *PFC: Power Finance Corporation Ltd. is an Indian financial institution. Established in 1986, it is the financial backbone of Indian Power Sector. Chairman and Managing-Director: Rajeev Sharma. Narmada Basin Projects Company Limited is located in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India and is part of the Water & Sewer Utilities Industry. The funds will be deployed by NBPCL for setting up the projects.*

28. Flipkart, K'taka Mango Board tie-up to help farmers sell online

Flipkart and Karnataka State Mango Department and Marketing Corporation signed a memorandum of understanding, enabling mango farmers to sell their fresh produce online through the Flipkart platform. The farmers would be provided market access to consumers. *Consumers can place orders on Flipkart's platform for several varieties of mangoes, including Alphonso, Badami, Apoos, Banganalli, Kesar, Neelam, Himam Pasand, Sendur and Mallika, in batches of 3 kg. Flipkart has partnered with various Fast-Moving Consumer Good (FMCG) companies to bring a wider range of essentials on its platform. Consumers can place orders on Flipkart for varieties of mangoes.*

29. Board of BEML approves signing of MoU with MELCO for setting up a JV

Board of BEML has approved the MoU with MELCO for a Joint Venture with BEML, for manufacture of certain propulsion systems and other railway electrical equipment utilized for Electric Multiple Units for Indian Metro Rail Projects, Indian Railway Projects. *BEML Headquarters: Bengaluru. Melco India Pvt. Ltd. has a highly specialized domain of Ash Handling Systems and Coal Mill Reject Systems. Chairman & Managing Director of BEML: D K Hota.*

30. Maruti Suzuki India partners with HDFC Bank to offer flexible car finance schemes

Maruti Suzuki has partnered with HDFC Bank to offer Flexi EMI options under which a customer can avail low EMI for 3 months every year, up to 100 per cent on-road funding and instalments starting from Rs 899 per month, per lakh, for the first six months. *HDFC Bank's EVA (Electronic Virtual Assistant) is India's first and largest Artificial Intelligence powered banking chatbot. CEO of Maruti Suzuki, India's largest Carmaker: Kenichi Ayukawa.*

31. ITC, Amway tie up to launch products in health and immunity space

Leading FMCG player ITC has tied up with Amway India with a focus on products in the health and nutrition space. It has been kicked-off with the launch of 'B Natural+' fruit beverage range, developed by ITC, and positioned in the immunity-boosting space. *Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). ITC Limited, headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal; CEO: Sanjiv Puri. Anshu Budhraj - CEO, Amway India.*

32. Free "Online Career Skills Training" launched on NCS portal in partner with TCS iON

Ministry of Labour & Employment under its National Career Service project is offering free online "Career Skills Training" in partner with TCS iON for its registered jobseekers. This soft skills course assists learners in enhancing personality development. *NCS also offers the functionality of creation of video profiles for job seekers in partnership with HIREMEE, a platform which provides online assessment and hiring services. Jobseekers can showcase their ability to recruiters using short video clips. A Special link for Work from Home Jobs and Online Trainings has been created on NCS portal Home Page to give direct access to jobseekers to such jobs. All services on NCS are free. Around 76 Online Job Fairs conducted by NCS during the lockdown.*

Schemes

1. Chhattisgarh tops among other states in providing employment under MGNREGS

Chhattisgarh has topped the list of states in providing employment to over 18 lakh unskilled labourers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). Around 77.85 lakh people are engaged in work under the MGNREGS scheme. *Chhattisgarh was carved out of Madhya Pradesh came into being on 1 November 2000 as the 26th State of the Union. It is bounded by southern Jharkhand and Odisha in the east, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra in the west, Uttar Pradesh and western Jharkhand in the north and Andhra Pradesh in the south; MGNREGA act was passed in the year 2005. Chhattisgarh provided employment to 18.51 lakh workers.*

2. Five more States, UTs integrates with National Cluster under 'One Nation, One Ration Card' plan

Ram Vilas Paswan approved the integration of five more States and UTs with the National Cluster under the One Nation, One Ration Card plan. These States and UTs are Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu. *Under the 'one nation, one ration card' initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled food grains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) from any fair-price shop in the country. The scheme was announced in June last year. Consumer Affairs Minister- Ram Vilas Paswan.*

3. HP govt to launch employment scheme for urban areas

Looking to revive the coronavirus-hit economy of the state, the Himachal Pradesh government decided to launch a programme- Mukhya Mantri Shahari Rojgar Guarantee Yojna - guaranteeing at least 120 days employment to the those living in urban areas. *If required, adequate training will be given to them for their skill upgrade, the cabinet decided in its meeting chaired by Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur. HP CM- Jai Ram Thakur, Governor- Bandaru Dattatreya.*

4. 'Nigah' Scheme to be launched by Himachal Pradesh Government

State government has decided to launch a new programme 'Nigah', in order to educate the family members of the people coming to the state from various parts of India. Under this a team of ASHA, health & Anganwadi workers will sensitize the family members. *Important National Park in Himachal Pradesh. Great Himalayan National Park – Admire Wildlife; Pin Valley National Park – Relax In Natural Beauty; Inderkilla National Park- View Flora And Fauna; Khirganga National Park – Thrill of Wild Bears; Simbalbara National Park – Sustenance of Nature. Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister- Jairam Thakur.*

5. Jharkhand govt launches 3 schemes to spike man-days for MGNREGA to help returnee migrant workers

With thousands of migrant workers returning to the state amid coronavirus outbreak, the Jharkhand government has launched 3 schemes to generate 25 Cr man-days for MGNREGA to enable the workers earn wages & to provide steady income to the poor households. *Betla National Park & Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary are located in Jharkhand. Jharkhand Chief Minister- Hemant Soren.*

6. Atal Pension Yojana marks 5 years of implementation

Atal Pension Yojana (APY) was launched in 2015 by PM Modi with an objective of delivering old age income security particularly to the workers in the unorganised sector and Government providing a guarantee of minimum pension after 60 years of age. *ATAL PENSION YOJANA: Atal Pension Yojana is a pension scheme mainly aimed at the unorganized sector. This scheme replaced the previous Swavalamban Yojana. APY is a guaranteed pension scheme and is administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA). Features of APY: 1. Guaranteed monthly pension for subscribers, ranging from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000 per month. 2. Government of India (GoI) will also co-contribute 50% of the subscriber's contribution or Rs. 1,000 per annum, whichever is lower. Beneficiaries: All Indian citizens between the age of 18 to 40 years can enrol for pension after the age of 60 under the APY. The individual applying for the benefit of the scheme must contribute for at least 20 years. PFRDA: Pension Fund Regulatory Development Authority. It was established in 2003 to be a model Regulator for the promotion and development of an organized pension system to serve the old age income needs of people on a sustainable basis. The Department of Financial Services deals with the legislative and policy issue pertaining to this regulatory body. Chairperson: Supratim Bandyopadhyay.*

7. Defaults related to COVID-19 to be exempted from IBC for upto 1 year: FM Sitharaman

FM N Sitharaman said debts related to COVID-19 will be excluded from the "default" category under the **Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code** for a period of upto 1 year. Also, minimum threshold to initiate insolvency proceedings has been raised to Rs 1 crore. *Sitharaman also said the minimum threshold to initiate insolvency proceedings has been raised to Rs 1 crore from Rs 1 lakh, which will insulate micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). This could mean that the Centre will have to amend Section 7, 9 and 10 of the IBC, possibly through an Ordinance to enable the suspension; The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India was established on 1st October, 2016 under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (Code). Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code was passed as an Act in 2016.*

8. UP launches start-up fund, signs MoU with SIDBI to promote aspiring entrepreneurs

In order to mobilize the youth of the state towards entrepreneurship, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the 'Uttar Pradesh Start-up Fund' handing over the first instalment of **Rs 15 crore** to Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). *SIDBI has been set up on April 02nd, 1990 under an Act of Indian Parliament. Being the Principal FI for MSMEs, SIDBI has dedicated its resources towards evolution of a vibrant MSME ecosystem. SIDBI, Headquarters location: Lucknow.*

9. Blue Revolution: Cabinet approves Rs 20,050 crore scheme for fisheries sector

The Cabinet approved the Rs 20,050-crore Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) to bring about Blue Revolution through sustainable development of fisheries sector over next five years. Total investment will comprise of Centre's share of Rs 9,407 cr. *The scheme will also help improve availability of certified quality fish seed and feed, traceability in fish and including effective aquatic health management. Creation of critical infrastructure including modernisation and strengthening of value chain will also be a major focus under it. BK Mishra, MD of National Federation of Fishers Cooperatives.*

10. Chhattisgarh govt launches Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana (RGKNY) on the death anniversary of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi in Raipur. Acc. to the govt., about 19 lakh farmers of the state will be benefitted by this scheme. *Under the RGKNY, Rs 5,700 crore would be transferred to the farmers' accounts in four installments through DBT and in the second phase of the scheme landless farmers and labourers would be included. Anusuiya Uikey, governor of Chhattisgarh. Chhattisgarh, State Animal: Wild Asian Buffalo.*

11. 1 Crore Treatments Provided Under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), the flagship health assurance scheme of the Government of India today marked 1 crore treatments. *On this occasion, Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched a 'Ask Ayushman' chat bot on WhatsApp, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare inaugurated the first edition of Arogya Dhara, a series of webinars created as an open platform for discussion on topical issues of public health. The webinar is titled "Ayushman Bharat: 1 crore treatments and beyond". Dr. Indu Bhushan, CEO, NHA.*

12. Cabinet approves Scheme for Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises

Cabinet gave its approval to the Scheme for Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises for the Unorganized Sector on All India basis with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 cr. To be monitored under the chairmanship of Minister, Food Processing Industries. *Scheme will be implemented over a five-year period from 2020-21 to 2024-25 and two lakh micro-enterprises are to be assisted with credit linked subsidy. Micro enterprises will get credit linked subsidy at 35 per cent of the eligible project cost with ceiling of Rs. 10 lakhs. Beneficiary contribution will be minimum 10 per cent and balance from loan. The scheme would be monitored at Centre by an Inter-Ministerial Empowered Committee under the Chairmanship of Minister, Food Processing Industries; Harsimrat Kaur Badal is the Minister of Food Processing Industries. The expenditure to be shared by Centre & States in ratio 60:40.*

13. Govt releases Rs 170 crore as MGNREGA wages

Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj has disbursed Rs 170 Cr into the accounts of beneficiaries under MGNREGA. It has disbursed around Rs 183 crore to benefit the poor which have been otherwise rendered jobless due to the prevailing lockdown. *The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments; MGNREGA*

guarantees hundred days of wage employment in a financial year, to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work; Narendra Singh Tomar- Minister of Rural Development, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare & Panchayati Raj. MGNREGA scheme was introduced in the year 2006.

14. Govt's senior citizen pension scheme extended but interest lowered

Union Cabinet extended Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana, a pension scheme for who are above 60, for a period of 3 years. The social security scheme for senior citizens to be valid till March '23 and fixed its annual rate of return at 7.4% for FY2020-21. *PMVVY: The Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana is offered by Life insurance Corporation (LIC) of India gives a guaranteed payout of pension at a specified rate for 10 years. It also offers a death benefit in the form of the return of purchase price to the nominee. Investment Limit of the policy: ₹15 lakh. Tenure is 10 years.*

15. PMMSY aims to enhance fish production to 220 LMT in the next five years

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, a blue revolution scheme, aims to enhance fish production to 220 lakh metric tons by 2024-25 from 137.58 lakh metric tons in 2018-19 at an average annual growth rate of about 9% with an investment of ₹20,050 crores. *PMMSY: Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana was first introduced in the 2019-20 budget. It aims to bring a 'Blue Revolution' through sustainable and responsible development of the fisheries sector in India. The scheme has two components namely: a. Central Sector Scheme. b. Central Sponsored Scheme. The share from the Centre: ₹ 9,407 crore. Share from the state: ₹ 4,880 crore. Share from Beneficiaries: ₹ 5,763 crore. Insurance coverage for fishing vessels to be introduced for the first time. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying. Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying Minister- Giriraj Singh.*

Appointments

1. Indian Oil names Shrikant Vaidya as new Chairman

India's largest state-run oil refiner & fuel retailer- Indian Oil names Shrikant Madhav Vaidya as Chairman. Currently, he is the director of refineries in the company & will succeed Sanjiv Singh, who demits office on June 30. He is a Chemical Engineer. *IndianOil accounts for nearly half of India's petroleum products market share, with sales of about 90 million tonnes in 2018-19. Its throughput capacity of 94.20 MMTPA for crude oil and petroleum products and 21.69 MMSCMD for gas makes it one of the largest pipeline networks in the world. IOC is headquartered in New Delhi.*

2. India appoints new Ambassadors to Qatar & Bahrain

Deepak Mittal has been appointed India's next Ambassador to Qatar, while Piyush Srivastava goes to Bahrain in the same capacity, as per an official release of Ministry of External Affairs. The new appointees are of the 1998 batch of Indian Foreign Service. *The government has also appointed Namrata S Kumar as India's next ambassador to Slovenia, while Jaideep Mazumdar goes to Austria as the country's next envoy. Qatari riyal is the currency of Qatar; Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin AbdulAziz al-Thani is the PM of Qatar. Dinar is the currency of Bahrain; Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa is the PM of Bahrain. Qatar Capital- Doha, Bahrain Capital- Manama.*

3. RBL Bank appoints Deepak Kumar as Chief Risk Officer

RBL Bank announced that it has appointed Deepak Kumar as the Chief Risk Officer (CRO) of the bank for a period of two years who will replace Ramnath Krishnan. Kumar has served as the Chief General Manager of the State Bank of India (SBI). *RBL Bank headquartered in Mumbai; Vishwavir Ahuja CEO of RBL Bank Limited. RBL Bank HQ: Mumbai.*

4. Professor Shobhana Narsimhan Elected to American Academy Of Arts And Sciences

Professor Shobhana Narasimhan from the Theoretical Sciences Unit (TSU) at the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), has been elected as an International Honorary Member to the American Academy of Arts and Science. *The list includes scholars and leaders like Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein and Nelson Mandela. NCASR is an autonomous institute under Dept of Science & Tech.*

5. Ramesh Babu appointed as NTPC director operations

NTPC has appointed Ramesh Babu V as Director Operations. He joined NTPC as Executive Trainee in 1987 and has more than 32 years' experience in managing large Power Stations in the areas of operations & maintenance, renovation & modernisation of old units. *NTPC is India's largest energy conglomerate with roots planted way back in 1975 to accelerate power development in India. NTPC became a Maharatna company in May 2010, one of the only four companies to be awarded this status. National Thermal Power Corporation Headquarters- New Delhi.*

6. ACC Okays Appointment of PK Das as CMD, IREDA

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has provided its consent for the appointment of Pradip Kumar Das as new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA). *IREDA is under the administrative control of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE). It is a Public Limited Government Company established as a Non-Banking Financial Institution in 1987. IREDA is a Mini Ratna (Category-I) Government Enterprise.*

7. Flipkart appoints Sriram Venkataraman as CFO Flipkart Commerce

Flipkart has appointed Sriram Venkataraman as Chief Financial Officer for Flipkart Commerce (Flipkart and Myntra). Sriram will be responsible for key finance operations and functions at Flipkart and Myntra, including Tax & Treasury. *Flipkart Founders: Sachin Bansal, Binny Bansal; Parent organization: Walmart. Flipkart CEO- Kalyan Krishnamurthy.*

8. Sanjay Kumar Jha assumes charge as CMD, Midhani

Sanjay Kumar Jha, Director (Production & Marketing) of Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd (MIDHANI), assumed charge as its Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) in Hyderabad. Jha served in Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) for more than 27 years. *Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited (MIDHANI) Headquarters: Hyderabad, Telangana; Founded: 1973. Midhani is a PSU specialized on metals and metal alloys.*

9. Max Bupa Health Insurance appoints Krishnan Ramachandran as MD & CEO

Max Bupa Health Insurance has appointed Krishnan Ramachandran as MD & CEO. Krishnan has 23 years of experience across health insurance, healthcare & life sciences industry. Last he served as CEO of Apollo Munich Health Insurance. *He succeeds Ashish Mehrotra. Max Bupa Health Insurance Company Ltd is a joint venture between True North, a leading Indian private equity firm, and the UK's 70-year-old healthcare services expert, Bupa. Max Bupa's Parent organization: Fettle Tone LLP.*

10. Standard Chartered Bank appoints Kusal Roy as head of retail banking

Standard Chartered Bank India has appointed Kusal Roy as its head of retail banking. Prior to joining Standard Chartered Bank, he was the managing director and chief executive at Tata Capital Financial Services Ltd. *Standard Chartered PLC is a British multinational banking and financial services company headquartered in London, England; CEO: Bill Winters. Standard Chartered Bank India chief executive- Zarin Daruwala.*

11. National Fertilizer appoints new Non-official Independent Director

State-run National Fertilizers Ltd (NFL) announced the appointment of Pandya Ashwinkumar Balvantray as Non-official Independent Director on the Board of the Company. His appointment will be for three years. *National Fertilizers Limited – Miniratna company; Headquarters: Noida. Manoj Mishra- Chairman & Managing Director of NFL.*

12. DPS Negi takes over as Director General Labour Bureau

Indian Economic Services officer D P S Negi took charge as Director General of Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Labour Bureau collects and analyse data related to workers, employment, and retail inflation. *Santosh Gangwar (MOS independent charge), Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour and Employment. He is also the Senior Labour & Employment Advisor.*

13. DEA Secretary Tarun Bajaj nominated to RBI Central Board

Government has nominated Tarun Bajaj, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, as a Director on the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India. He replaces Atanu Chakraborty to the position in the RBI. *There are 5 official and 14 non-official members in the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India. Five official members are from the RBI – the Governor and the four Deputy Governors. The remaining 14 non-official members are nominated by the government from different fields. Of these, four are from Local Boards of the RBI. Bajaj took over as the DEA secretary on May 1.*

14. HSBC executive Stuart Levey to run Facebook-backed Libra cryptocurrency

The Facebook-backed Libra cryptocurrency project has appointed a former US finance foreign policy chief as its first chief executive as it seeks to win the favour of global regulators. Stuart Levey is currently chief legal officer at HSBC. *India, which is the target market for Libra right now has 190 million unbanked folks, the second largest in the world after China. HSBC Holdings plc Headquarters: London, United Kingdom; CEO: Noel Quinn. Facebook Headquarters: Menlo Park, California, United States.*

15. Mustafa al-Kadhimi sworn in as prime minister of Iraq

Iraq's prime minister-designate Mustafa al-Kadhimi was sworn in as the country's new prime minister after weeks of political negotiations. Al-Kadhimi, 53, has headed the Iraqi Intelligence Service since June 2016. *Iraq Currency: Iraqi dinar; President: Barham Salih. Iraq, officially the Republic of Iraq, Capital-Baghdad.*

16. Narinder Batra gets extension as FIH president

Indian Sports Administrator Narinder Batra's term is extended as the world body's congress has been postponed to May next year due to the pandemic. FIH – International Hockey Federation. It is the international governing body of field hockey and indoor field hockey. *FIH is responsible for field hockey's major international tournaments, notably the World Cup. Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland. Besides Batra, 4 executive board members also got extensions.*

17. Shri Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi assumes charge as Secretary, Ministry of New & Renewable Energy

Shri Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi (IAS) assumed charge as new Secretary, Ministry of New & Renewable Energy. He succeeded Shri Anand Kumar in the Ministry who earlier took charge Secretary, Ministry of Culture. *Prior to this appointment, Shri. Chaturvedi was serving as Additional Chief Secretary and Additional Secretary (Climate Change Department) of the Ministry of Climate Change Department,*

Environment & Forest, Government of Jharkhand. Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy: Raj Kumar Singh. He has worked with the Govt of Jharkhand & Govt of India.

18. IAS officer Manoj Ahuja appointed new CBSE Chairperson

IAS officer Manoj Ahuja has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). He will replace Anita Karwal. A 1990 batch Odisha cadre officer who is currently serving as Special Director, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration. *The Board functions under the overall supervision of the controlling authority which is vested with the Secretary, School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development. CBSE is an autonomous body working under MHRD.*

19. Kumar Sangakkara set to serve second term as MCC president

Former Sri Lanka skipper Kumar Sangakkara is set to serve his second term as the president of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC). Sangakkara who is the first overseas president of Marylebone Cricket Club. He took charge of the club on October 1 last year. *Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) is a cricket club founded in 1787 and based since 1814 at Lord's Cricket Ground. MCC is the body responsible for and remains the copyright holder of, the Laws of Cricket. Its Laws Sub-Committee is responsible for debating and drafting changes to the Laws, with the Main Committee then voting on any changes proposed. Presidents of MCC traditionally serve only a 12-month term. Marylebone Cricket Club is located in London, UK.*

20. Archaeological Survey of India gets new chief: V Vidyavathi

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) got a new Director-General with the appointment of IAS officer V. Vidyavathi, according to Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. She will be serving in the rank of Additional Secretary to the Government of India. *The Archaeological Survey of India is an Indian government agency attached to the Ministry of Culture that is responsible for archaeological research and the conservation and preservation of cultural monuments in the country. It was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham who also became its first Director-General. Headquarters of ASI: New Delhi.*

21. Akhil Kumar re-inducted into NADA disciplinary panel

Former Commonwealth Games gold-winning boxer Akhil Kumar has been re-inducted into the NADA's Disciplinary Panel. He is among the most accomplished names in Indian boxing and has also been the government observer for the sport between 2017 and 2019. *NADA: National Anti-Doping Agency was set up under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 in 2005 with a mandate for Dope free sports in India. The primary objectives are to implement anti-doping rules as per WADA code, regulate dope control programme, to promote education and research and creating awareness about doping and its ill effects. Brand Ambassador: Suniel Shetty. National Anti-Doping Agency Director General - Navin Agarwal.*

22. Roberto Azevedo quits as WTO chief a year early

The Head of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Roberto Azevedo, a former diplomat from Brazil, has decided to resign, a year before his term expires. He has been the Director-General of WTO since September 2013 and will step down on August 31st. *World Trade Organization (WTO), Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland; Founded: 1 January 1995. WTO's function is to help negotiate multilateral trade deals.*

23. Zubair Iqbal appointed MD J-K Bank, Chibber to continue as chairman

The Jammu and Kashmir administration approved the appointment of senior vice president of HDFC Bank Zubair Iqbal as its new managing director. R K Chibber will continue as the bank's chairman for the next three years. Iqbal will have a three-year tenure. *The tagline of Jammu & Kashmir Bank: Serving to Empower. Headquarters of Jammu & Kashmir Bank: Srinagar.*

24. Liberty Steel appoints Paramjit Kahlon as CEO

UK-based Liberty Steel appointed Paramjit Kahlon, joining from ArcelorMittal as the CEO of its primary steel and integrated mining businesses. Liberty Steel is part of British Indian entrepreneur Sanjeev Gupta's diversified business house Liberty Group. *Liberty Steel, with an annual capacity of 18 million tonnes of steel products, has operations in 10 countries. Liberty Steel is the eighth-largest steel group outside China.*

25. Disney's Head of Streaming Is New TikTok C.E.O.

The Walt Disney Company's top streaming executive, Kevin Mayer, resigned to become the chief executive of Tik Tok, a Chinese-owned company. The app is used for making and sharing videos that have exploded in

popularity during the coronavirus pandemic. *The wildly popular video-sharing app, which is owned by the Chinese company ByteDance, has been downloaded more than 2 billion times globally. TikTok's has been downloaded about 1.9 billion times worldwide.*

26. Dilip Oommen is new President of Indian Steel Association

Dilip Oommen, CEO, Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India has taken over as President of the Indian Steel Association (ISA). He is appointed to the position for the next 2 years. His appointment comes after the resignation of T V Narendran, MD of Tata Steel. *Leading steelmakers such as JSW Steel Ltd, Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL), Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL), Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel Ltd are members of the ISA. The Indian Steel Association is headquartered in New Delhi.*

27. Health Minister Harsh Vardhan to Step Up as Head of WHO Executive Board

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan is set to take over as the chairman of the Executive Board of the World Health Organisation. The board consists of 34 members and India's health minister will be succeeding Japan's Dr Hiroki Nakatani. *The proposal to appoint a nominee from India as the new chairman of the WHO Executive Board was reportedly signed by the World Health Assembly consisting of 194 nations The World Health Organization, Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.*

28. Ayush Secretary Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha gets two years extension

Ayurveda expert Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha has got two years extension as the secretary, Ministry of Ayush. He was in 2017 appointed special secretary in the Ministry of Ayush (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) for three years. *The AYUSH Ministry is headed by a Minister of State, which is currently held by Shripad Yesso Naik. Kotecha took over as the Ayush secretary in October 2017.*

29. Moeketsi Majoro sworn in as Lesotho's new prime minister

Moeketsi Majoro has been sworn in as Lesotho's prime minister following the resignation of his embattled predecessor, Thomas Thabane. Thabane attended swearing-in ceremony at the royal palace of King Letsie III. Lesotho capital, Maseru.

30. Govinda Rajulu Chintala appointed NABARD chairman

The Appointments Committee of the cabinet cleared Chintala's appointment, currently CGM at NABARD, for 2 years. It also cleared the appointment of **Shaji KV**, currently General Manager at Canara Bank, as Deputy Managing Director at NABARD for five years. *NABARD came into existence on 12 July 1982 by transferring the agricultural credit functions of RBI and refinance functions of the then Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation (ARDC); It was set up with an initial capital of Rs.100 crore; NABARD has its head office at Mumbai; Harsh Kumar Bhanwala is the Chairman of NABARD. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).*

31. Abhas Jha appointed to key World Bank position on Climate Change, Disaster Management in South Asia

Abhas Jha has been appointed by the World Bank to a key position on climate change and disaster management in South Asia, the global lender said. Jha's appointment comes at a time when Cyclone Amphan has badly hit West Bengal, Odisha in India & Bangladesh. *According to the Bank's Investing in Urban Resilience report, by 2030, without significant investment into making cities more resilient, natural disasters may cost cities worldwide \$314 billion each year; The World Bank's Shock Waves report finds that almost 75% of the losses are attributable to extreme weather events, and climate change threatens to push an additional 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030; The United Nations estimates that more than two-thirds of the world's population will live in cities by 2050. David R. Malpass is the 13th & current President of World Bank.*

32. Assam's Jahnabi Phookan appointed FICCI FLO National President

Assam-based entrepreneur Jahnabi Phookan has been appointed as the National President of FICCI Ladies Organization (represents over 8,000 women entrepreneurs), women wing of the leading industry chamber of the country. She is the **37th National President**. FICCI FLO: FLO is the women wing of the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). An all India forum for women, FLO has its headquarters in New Delhi, with 17 chapters covering different geographical regions of India. FLO represents over 6800 women entrepreneurs and professionals. *The objective of the organization is to encourage and facilitate women to showcase their talents, skills, experiences and energies across sectors and verticals of the*

economy, for a truly inclusive economic growth trajectory. She is the founder Vice Chairperson of FLO North East chapter.

33. World Bank names Carmen Reinhart as chief economist and vice president

The World Bank named Carmen Reinhart as its new vice president and chief economist. She is an adviser and contributor to ongoing World Bank debt transparency discussions and a member of a new IMF external advisory group working on policy challenges. *Reinhart, now a professor at Harvard University, published a book entitled "This Time is Different: Eight Centuries of Financial Folly," together with economist Kenneth Rogoff of Harvard University in 2009. She worked as vice president & chief economist at Bear Stearns.*

34. Jean-Francois Van Boxmeer to succeed Gerard Kleisterlee as Vodafone chairman

Jean-Francois Van Boxmeer has been appointed as the new chairman of the world's second-biggest mobile operator Vodafone. He will succeed Gerard Kleisterlee as chairman from November. He has been Heineken's CEO since 2005. *TRAI: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India is a statutory body set up by the Government of India under section 3 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997. It is the regulator of the telecommunications sector in India. Chairman: R S Sharma. Vodafone CEO: Nick Read. Headquarters: United Kingdom.*

35. P Kumaran appointed India's High Commissioner to Singapore

Periasamy Kumaran was appointed as India's High Commissioner to Singapore. He is at present Ambassador of India to Qatar. He will replace Jawed Ashraf, who took over as High Commissioner of India to Singapore in November 2016. *Minister of External Affairs: Subrahmanyam Jaishankar. Minister of State of External Affairs: V. Muraleedharan. Prem K Nair appointed as Ambassador to the Republic of Niger.*

36. Brazil's Marcos Troyjo is NDB's new President

Marcos Prado Troyjo, former deputy economy minister of Brazil will replace KV Kamath as the president of the New Development Bank's, a financial institution to mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS economies. *The NDB President is elected on a rotational basis from one of the founding members, and there are four Vice Presidents from each of the other four founding members Anil Kishora, an Indian, appointed as vice president of the NDB.*

37. Leo Puri to take over as Chairman of JP Morgan at South and South-East Asia

On the retirement of Veteran Banker Kalpana Morparia, Chairman, South and South-East Asia at JP Morgan, Leo Puri was appointed to succeed her position. Puri is the former MD of UTI Asset Management Company. *Murli Maiya to be CEO South and South-East Asia. JP Morgan Chase is the sixth-largest bank in the world.*

38. GE Power India Designates Mahesh Palashikar as Chairman

GE Power India Ltd (GEPIL), formerly known as Alstom India, has designated Mahesh Shrikrishna Palashikar as its Additional Director and Non-Executive Chairman. Palashikar was the President and CEO of GE South Asia. He succeeded Vishal Keerti Wanchoo. *GE is a leading energy player in the country with strong capabilities in engineering, manufacturing, project management and supply of products and solutions for power generation and transmission infrastructure requirements. Headquarters: New York, USA. President & CEO: Russell Stokes. Vijay Sharma appointed as Additional & Whole-time Director.*

39. Senior IAS officer Vishwas Mehta is new chief secretary of Kerala

Senior IAS officer Vishwas Mehta has been appointed as the new chief secretary of Kerala. Dr Mehta, who's now Additional Chief Secretary (Home), will assume office on June 1. The incumbent chief secretary Tom Jose is set to retire on May 31. *Sankar Reddy has been posted as Road Safety Commissioner. ADGP M.R. Ajithkumar will be appointed Transport Commissioner. He has also served as MILMA Managing Director.*

40. R Sreelekha to Become Kerala's First Woman DGP

Kerala Police gets its first woman Director General, R. Sreelekha and will head Kerala Fire and Rescue Services. Presently an Additional Director General of Police, she heads the Jail Department. *She became the first woman Superintendent of Police in 1991. The first woman Director General of Police (DGP), Kanchan Chaudhary Bhattacharya. Centre allows only four DGPs for Kerala.*

41. Simon & Schuster names Jonathan Karp as new CEO

Jonathan Karp, who has worked with authors ranging from Sen. Edward Kennedy to Susan Orlean, has been named the new CEO of Simon & Schuster. Karp joined the company in 2010 and served as the president and

publisher of Simon & Schuster Adult Publishing. *Simon & Schuster, a subsidiary of ViacomCBS, is an American publishing company founded in New York City. He replaces Carolyn Reidy who passed away recently.*

42. Capgemini's Thierry Delaporte to be Wipro's new CEO and MD

Wipro has appointed Thierry Delaporte as its CEO & MD. Delaporte, the co-Founder and President of the not-for-profit organization Life Project 4 Youth, was working as the Chief Operating Officer of Capgemini Group and a member of its Group Executive Board. *Capgemini, a French multinational corporation. Wipro Owner: Azim Premji. He will replace the present CEO Abidali Neemuchwala.*

43. PFC board clears R S Dhillon's appointment

State-run Power Finance Corporation (PFC) under the Ministry of Power announced the appointment of Ravinder Singh Dhillon, currently its Director, as Chairman and Managing Director from June 1 following superannuation of Rajeev Sharma this month. *PFC, recently tied up with Narmada Basin Projects Company Limited (NBPCL), a wholly-owned company of Government of Madhya Pradesh, and will fund projects worth Rs 22,000 crore for 225 MW hydro-electric projects & multi-purpose projects in the state of Madhya Pradesh. Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has headquarters in New Delhi.*

44. Finance Ministry appoints PR Jaishankar managing director of IIFCL

Ministry of finance appointed PR Jaishankar as the managing director of the India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL). He has served as the executive director of the National Housing Bank prior to this after the recommendations of Bank Boards Bureau. *IIFCL was set up in 2006 to provide long term debt for infrastructure projects. Harsha Bangari appointed deputy managing director of Exim Bank.*

45. Prof Sonajharia Minz appointed as VC of Sido Kanhu Murmu University

Jawaharlal Nehru University professor Sonajharia Minz, who was also the President of JNU Teachers' Association, was appointed vice-chancellor of Sido Kanhu Murmu University (SKMU) in Jharkhand's Dumka, **becoming the first tribal women to head a university.** *Sido Kanhu Murmu University (SKMU), formerly Siddhu Kanhu University, is a public university located in the Santhal Parganas region of Jharkhand state in eastern India. Jharkhand Governor: Draupadi Murmu.*

46. IIT-IIM alumnus S Gopalakrishnan appointed as additional secretary in PMO

S Gopalakrishnan, a senior Tamil Nadu cadre IAS officer, has been appointed as additional secretary in the Prime Minister's Office. Gopalakrishnan's appointment was cleared by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. *The ACC also cleared appointed the Bihar cadre IAS officer C Sridhar as a joint secretary and Himachal Pradesh cadre IAS officer Meera Mohanty as a director at the PMO. He is currently serving at the Ministry of Electronics.*

47. IndiGo appoints Venkataramani Sumantran as independent director

Venkataramani Sumantran, the chairman and managing director of Chennai based Celeris Technologies, has been appointed as the Independent Director of IndiGo, the Indian airline company headquartered in Gurgaon. He will hold the post for the next five years. **Ronojoy Dutta;** *Whole Time Director and Chief Executive Officer, IndiGo. IndiGo is the largest airline in India by passengers carried.*

48. BBB recommends Ashwini Bhatia for post of SBI MD

The Banks Board Bureau headed by B P Sharma. recommended names of Ashwini Bhatia, M V Rao and P Sengupta for the post of managing director of three state-owned lenders - State Bank of India, Central Bank of India and Indian Overseas Bank, respectively. *Banks Board Bureau headquarters is in Mumbai and started its functioning on April 1, 2016. Former CAG Vinod Rai was the first chairman of the board. BBB-head-hunter for state-owned banks and financial institutions.*

Awards

1. Manipuri doctor Thangjam Dhabali Singh conferred 'Order of Rising Sun - Gold and Silver Rays' by Japan

Thangjam Dhabali Singh has been conferred the 'Order of Rising Sun' by the Japan government for promoting a better understanding of Japan in India and deepening ties between the two countries. *Order was constituted by Japanese Emperor Meiji in 1875. Thangjam Dhabali Singh is an allopathic doctor by profession; MANIPUR TOURISM FORUM was founded in 2012. Shinzo Abe-Prime Minister of Japan. Thangjam is the founder of Manipur Tourism Forum (MTF).*

2. Nikkei Asia Prize 2020 to IIT Madras prof for work on water filters

Prof. T. Pradeep of IIT Madras has been honoured with the Nikkei Asia Prizes (NAP) 2020 in the science and technology category. NAP are awarded annually in three areas- Economic and Business Innovation, Science and Technology and Culture and Community. *First presented in 1996, Nikkei Asia Prizes has entered its 25th edition. Past awardees from India include former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, N. R. Narayana Murthy, Prof. C. N. R. Rao, Kiran Majumdar-Shaw, Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty, Nandan Nilekani and Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak. Dr. Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh was also a recipient. The prize includes three million yen and a certificate.*

3. Marcus Wallenberg Prize 2020: 'Nobel Prize of Forest Research'

Joseph J Landsberg, Richard H Waring & Nicholas C Coops share the 2020 MW Prize for a model to predict forest growth in a changing climate. *Satellite imagery offers the possibility to scale up the model to show how environmental conditions affect the forests. Marcus "Husky" Wallenberg is a Swedish banker and industrialist.*

4. Thomas Cook India wins Silver at Asia Sustainability Reporting Awards 2019

Thomas Cook (India) Ltd., India's leading integrated travel services company, was selected as winner of the prestigious silver award for Asia's Best Integrated Report (First Time) at the 5th Asia Sustainability Reporting Awards (ASRA). *The Asia Sustainability Reporting Awards is committed to contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Mr. Madhavan Menon, Chairman and Managing Director, Thomas Cook.*

5. J&K photojournalists secure Pulitzer 2020 for 'striking images of life'

Associated Press news agency's photographers Dar Yasin, Mukhtar Khan, and Channi Anand secured the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in feature photography for 'striking images of life' by covering the crackdown in Kashmir post the revocation of Article 370. *Pulitzer Prize, any of a series of annual prizes awarded by Columbia University, New York City, for outstanding public service and achievement in American journalism, letters, and music. Pulitzers- Honour for US-based journalists & organisations.*

6. IIT Bombay professor wins Young Career Award by the government for his work in nano science

Professor Saurabh Lodha from IIT Bombay has received the Young Career Award in Nano Science and Technology conferred by the DST for his contributions in the development of logic transistor technologies beyond silicon and nanoelectronics devices. *This award recognizes his pioneering contributions in the development of logic transistor technologies beyond silicon and nanoelectronics devices based on two-dimensional Van der Waals materials. Union Minister for Science & Technology- Harsh Vardhan.*

7. Bengaluru airport voted as best regional airport in India & Central Asia

The Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru has won this year's SKYTRAX Award for Best Regional Airport in India and Central Asia. It was voted as the best Regional Airport for the third time in four years at the 2020 World Airport Awards. *The Awards are based on the World Airport Survey questionnaires completed by over 100 nationalities of airport customers during the 6-month survey period. The survey evaluated the customer experience across airport service and product key performance indicators – from check-in, arrivals, transfers, shopping, security and immigration through to departure at the gate. Previously, this airport was adjudged the best in 2011 & 2012.*

8. Singapore Changi Airport crowned the "World's Best Airport"

For the eighth consecutive year, Singapore's Changi Airport has been named the world's best at the awards run by research firm Skytrax. Asian airports dominated the top 10, with Japan's 4 of the country's airports

nominated for the top award. *World's Cleanest Airport: Tokyo Haneda; World's Best Airport Hotel: Crowne Plaza, Changi. World's Top Three Best Airports: 1. Singapore Changi Airport, 2. Tokyo Haneda Airport (Japan), 3. Hamad International Airport (Qatar). Outside Asia, Amsterdam & Munich's airports got nominations.*

9. The Wire's Founding Editor Among 17 Winners of Deutsche Welle Freedom of Speech Award

Indian journalist Siddharth Varadarajan was one of 17 recipients of the Freedom of Speech Award presented by German public news outlet Deutsche Welle. He was a former editor of The Hindu and is one of the founding editors of digital news portal The Wire. *FREEDOM OF SPEECH AWARD: 17 journalists from 14 countries have been named for Deutsche Welle Freedom of Speech Award 2020 for showing "outstanding commitment to human rights and freedom of expression in the media". Deutsche Welle Freedom of Speech Award: Since 2015, DW has presented the Freedom of Speech Award annually to a person or initiative that has shown outstanding commitment to human rights and freedom of expression in the media. World Press Freedom Day is celebrated on 3rd May.*

10. Vice Admiral GM Hiranandani rolling trophy awarded in Kochi

Lieutenant commander Akshay Kumar of Anti-Submarine Warfare School of Southern Naval Command (SNC) at Kochi was awarded the coveted Vice Admiral GM Hiranandani Memorial Rolling Award for the year 2020. The trophy was instituted in the year 2013. *The trophy was instituted in the memory of the late Vice Admiral GM Hiranandani, who was the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Southern Naval Command from 1985 to 1987 and retired as Vice Chief of Naval Staff in 1989. Chief of the Indian Naval Staff – Admiral Karambir Singh.*

11. India's Chief Hydrographer Vice Admiral Vinay Badhwar wins UK award

Vice Admiral Vinay Badhwar, the National Hydrographer to the government of India, has been honoured with the **2019 Alexander Dalrymple Award** in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Indian hydrography and across the wider Indian Ocean region. *The award, first presented by the UK Ministry of Defence-sponsored UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) in 2006, is named after the first Hydrographer of the Admiralty, Alexander Dalrymple. Recipients of the award are selected by the Executive Committee of the UKHO for their efforts in raising the standards of hydrography, cartography and navigation around the world. In his capacity as National Hydrographer, Vice Admiral Badhwar has been a pivotal member of the IHO's Capacity Building Sub-Committee since its creation. He also leads the Indian Naval Hydrographic Office's own regional Capacity Building programmes. The Indian Naval Hydrographic Department (INHD), headed by the Chief Hydrographer to the Government of India, is an Indian government agency responsible for hydrographic surveys and nautical charting in India. Its headquarters National Hydrographic Office is located in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. Recipients are selected for their efforts in hydrography.*

12. Webby Awards: Tom Hanks, 'Game of Thrones,' Cardi B, LeBron James Among Winners

Jimmy Fallon, Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai, Tom Hanks, Cardi B, LeBron James, Lil Nas X, Dolly Parton, Ronan Farrow, Game of Thrones and Celine Dion are among the winners of the 24th annual Webby Awards, which honor the best of the web. Webby winners are selected by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences. *National Geographic was named the Webby Media Company of the Year for earning the most honors across all Webby categories, with 15 wins overall. International Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences is in New York.*

13. Hema Divakar awarded Global Asian of the Year 2018 – 19

Bengaluru-based medical doctor Hema Divakar was honoured with the 'Global Asian of the Year 2018-19' award in Dubai at the Asian Business and Social Forum recently for her yeomen services and contributions to the women's healthcare ecosystem. *Hema is also spearheading a healthcare initiative for the overall well-being of women, with affordable and quality treatment. Category of Award: 'In Service of the Society and the Nation'.*

14. TCS Wins Two Stevie Awards for 2019 TCS New York City Marathon App

Tata Consultancy Services, a leading global IT service, consulting and business solutions organization, has won two Stevies in the 2020 American Business Awards, the nation's premier business awards program, for the 2019 TCS New York City Marathon app. *TCS received a Gold Stevie in the category Mobile Marketing*

Campaign of the Year and a Silver Stevie in the category Best User Experience. With this, TCS has so far received 2 gold and 2 silver Awards.

15. Stefan Manegold Wins 2020 Sigmod Contributions Award

CWI researcher Stefan Manegold was awarded the 2020 SIGMOD Contributions Award. It recognizes his innovative work in data management community to encourage scientific reproducibility. *Manegold was a pioneer in encouraging reproducibility in data management SIGMOD is the Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Management of Data. It is given for significant contributions to database systems.*

16. Delhi-based NGO wins WHO award

The World Health Organization (WHO) has conferred the World No Tobacco Day Award 2020 to the Socio-Economic and Educational Development Society (SEEDS), an NGO, for its efforts to ban pan masala, gutkha, e-cigarettes and hookah in Bihar and Jharkhand. *World Health Organization: Founded: 7 April 1948. SEEDS is among the 3 awardees from the South East Asia region.*

Ranks & Reports

1. India installs 7.3 GW of solar power in CY 2019 & secures world's 3rd largest solar market: Mercom

Mercom India Research has released a data report, India Solar Market Leaderboard 2020, which reveals the solar industry market leaders that emerged during the calendar year (CY) 2019. *India is the third-largest solar market in the world as per the report. Large-scale solar installations in 2019 accounted for 85% of the additions at 6.2 GW. Also, solar accounted for 41% of new power capacity additions in 2019 behind coal, which accounted for 44%. Mercom Communications India is located in Bangalore. Cumulative solar installations of India- 35.7 GW.*

2. Disasters, conflicts triggered 5 mn displacements in India in 2019: Report

Nearly 5 million people were displaced in India in 2019- the highest in the world so far- according to a recent report from the IDMC titled 'The Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID 2020)'. The centre is a part of the Norwegian Refugee Council. *The **Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) Headquarters location: Geneva, Switzerland; Founded: 1998. Its work informs policy and operational decisions that improve the lives of the millions of people living in internal displacement, or at risk of becoming displaced in the future. IDMC- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.***

3. India ranks 53rd in budget transparency, accountability in IBP survey

India has been placed at 53rd spot among 117 nations in terms of budget transparency & accountability, according to the Open Budget Survey conducted by International Budget Partnership. *India's Budget process bagged a transparency score of 49 out of 100. New Zealand tops the chart with a score 87. South Africa (87), Mexico (82) and Brazil (81) are among the top six countries providing extensive information to public for scrutiny. It covered 117 countries. **Transparency International-Headquarters, Berlin, Germany. Global average transparency score is 45.***

4. India is placed 3rd among countries in scientific publication: NSTMIS Survey

The National Science and Technology Management Information (NSTMIS) survey on Research and Development Statistics and Indicators 2019- says that India ranks 3rd globally in the scientific publication. USA and China occupied the first two ranks. *India occupies 3rd rank in terms of number of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.)'s awarded in Science and Engineering (S&E) after USA and China. India is placed 3rd among countries in scientific publication as per NSF database. India's gross expenditure in R&D tripled between 2008 & 2018.*

5. India's unemployment rate climbs to 27.1%, 121.5mn out of work: CMIE

According to Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy (CMIE), 91.3 million including daily wagers and those working with small traders were out of jobs in April followed by 18.2 million employment loss of entrepreneurs, and 17.8 million among salaried class. *The ongoing lockdown, one of the biggest in the world, closed businesses pushing up the jobless rate to 27.1% in the week ended May 3. CMIE, Headquarters location: Mumbai.*

6. India has over 500 million active Internet users: IAMAI

According to IAMAI's 'Digital in India' report, India had 504 million active Internet users, who logged onto the web at least once in the last one month, at the end of November 2019. 433 million are of the age of 12 years and above. *Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) Chairman-Amazon's India head Amit Agarwal. The data has been curated by Nielsen, based on IRS data.*

7. UNICEF released 'Lost at Home' report

At the end of 2019, an estimated 46 million people were internally displaced by conflict and violence as per the UNICEF's 'Lost at Home' report. It presents the scale & scope of the internal displacement of children & their families around the world. *The United Nations Children's Fund, Headquarters: New York, New York, United States; **Head: Henrietta H. Fore; Founded: 11 December 1946. More than 4 in 10, or 19 million, were to be children.***

8. India saves Rs 89,122 crore in 2018-19 by energy efficiency: Report

India saved Rs 89,122 Cr through energy efficiency in 2018-19 and reduced energy intensity by 20% in the fiscal compared to 2005 level, according to PwC report. India has set a target to reduce the energy intensity

by 33-35% by 2030 compared to 2005 level. *The report was prepared by an expert agency PWC Ltd, which was engaged by Bureau of Energy efficiency (BEE) for an independent verification to assess the resultant annual savings in energy as well as CO₂ emissions through various initiatives in India. Union Power Minister- R K Singh.*

9. State of the World Nursing Report 2020

WHO released the first-ever State of the world's nursing report. It has been developed by WHO with the International Council of Nurses and the global Nursing Now campaign. According to the report, there is a global shortfall of 5.9 million. 191 countries provided data for this report. *Out of the global nursing workforce of 27.9 million, 19.3 million are professional nurses. Over 80% of the world's nurses are found in countries that account for half of the world's population. One nurse out of every eight practises in a country other than the one where they were born or trained. There are 27.9 million nurses worldwide.*

10. India up at 74th place on WEF's global energy transition index

India has moved up two positions to rank 74th on a global 'Energy Transition Index' with improvements on all key parameters of economic growth, energy security and environmental sustainability. Sweden has topped the Index for the third consecutive year. *ENERGY TRANSITION INDEX: The Energy Transition Index (ETI) is a fact-based ranking intended to enable policymakers and businesses to plot the course for a successful energy transition. 55.1% is the global average ETI score in 2020, an improvement of 2 percentage points since 2015. The Energy Transition Index, a composite score of 40 indicators, benchmarks 115 countries on the current performance of their energy system, and their readiness for transition to a secure, sustainable, affordable, and inclusive future energy system. The results for 2020 show that 75 per cent of countries have improved their environmental sustainability. India's improvements have come across all three dimensions of the energy triangle -- economic development and growth, energy access and security, and environmental sustainability. India is one of the few countries in the world to have made consistent year-on-year progress since 2015. France (ranked 8th) and the UK (7th) are the only G20 countries in the top ten. Rank 1: Sweden Rank 2: Switzerland Rank 3: Finland* **WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM:** WEF was established in 1971 with a commitment to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic and other leaders of the society to shape global, regional and industry agendas. **Founder & Executive Chairman: Klaus Schwab. President: Borge Brende. World Economic Forum: Coligny, Switzerland.**

11. Global Nutrition Report 2020 – India may miss nutrition targets

India among 88 countries that are likely to miss global nutrition targets by 2025, according to the Report. It is also identified as the country with the highest rates of domestic inequalities in malnutrition. In 2012, WHA identified 6 nutrition targets. *The Global Nutrition Report was conceived following the first Nutrition for Growth Initiative Summit (N4G) in 2013 as a mechanism for tracking the commitments made by 100 stakeholders spanning governments, aid donors, civil society, the UN and businesses. Vision: A world free from malnutrition in all its forms. India's and Global Nutrition Report 2020: India is identified as among the three worst countries, along with Nigeria and Indonesia, for steep within-country disparities on stunting, where the levels varied four-fold across communities. India will miss targets for all four nutritional indicators for which there is data available, i.e. stunting among under-5 children, anaemia among women of reproductive age, childhood overweight and exclusive breastfeeding. Maternal, infant & young child nutrition target - be met by '25.*

12. Deforestation rate globally declined between 2015 and 2020: FAO report

The rate of forest loss in 2015-2020 declined to an estimated 10 million hectares (MHA), down from 12 MHA in 2010-2015, according to Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 (FRA). It was released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. *More than 54% of the world's forests were in only five countries: Russian Federation, Brazil, Canada, the USA and China. South America had the highest share of forests in protected areas, at 31 per cent. Among the world's regions, Africa had the largest annual rate of net forest loss in 2010–2020, at 3.9 mha, followed by South America, at 2.6 MHA. Asia had the highest net gain of forest area in 2010–2020, followed by Oceania and Europe. UN FAO: The Food and Agriculture Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. Headquarters: Rome, Italy. Director-General: QU Dongyu. World's total forest area-4.06 bha–31% of the total land area.*

13. After China, India is now the second largest producer of PPE coveralls during the COVID-19 pandemic

India became the world's 2nd-largest manufacturer of Personal Protective Equipment body coveralls within a short time span of two months. China is the world's leading producer of PPE body coveralls, crucial to safeguard against the COVID-19 pandemic. Besides, Textiles Committee, Mumbai too will now test and certify PPE body coveralls required for healthcare workers and other COVID-19 warriors; Ajit Chavan is the Secretary, Textiles Committee and Additional Textile Commissioner, Ministry of Textiles; The Textiles Committee is a statutory body established in 1963 through an Act of Parliament and is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India; The current Minister of Textiles is Smriti Irani. Textiles Committee is testing & certifying PPE body coveralls.

Important Days

1. 1 May: International Labour Day

International Labour Day is observed on May 1st to pay tribute to the contribution of workers across the world. It is also Maharashtra Day & Gujarat Day- on this day in 1960 the 2 states attained statehood after Bombay had been divided on linguistic lines. *International Workers' Day started in Chicago in May 1886. In India, the first May Day was celebrated in Chennai by the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan on May 1, 1923. It was also the first time when the Red Flag which symbolises Labour Day was used in India for the first time. It is also known as Workers' Day or International Workers' Day.*

2. 2 May: World Tuna Day

World Tuna Day is observed on 2 May. The day aims to raise awareness about the importance of tuna. The day will promote more sustainable fishing practices. The day also spreads information about the possible impact of drastically declining tuna stocks. *Tuna and tuna-like species include approximately 40 species occurring in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans and in the Mediterranean Sea. Tuna species account for 20 per cent of the value of all marine capture fisheries and over eight per cent of all globally traded seafood. It is observed for the first time in 2017.*

3. 2 May: International Astronomy Day

International Astronomy Day is celebrated twice a year- one in autumn and another in spring. The Astronomy Day 2020 is celebrated on May 2. Enthusiasts and professionals celebrate the day to share their knowledge and love of outer space with the public. *International Astronomical Union, Headquarters: Paris, France. Next Astronomy Day will be celebrated on 2020 September 26.*

4. World Press Freedom Day being celebrated across globe

World Press Freedom Day is being celebrated across the globe under the theme of the day is "Journalism without Fear or Favour." World Press Freedom Day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1993, following recommendation of UNESCO's Gen Conference. *The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Founded: 16 November 1945. UNESCO Head: Audrey Azoulay; HQ: Paris*

5. World Laughter Day 2020: May 3

World Laughter Day is an annual event celebrated on the first Sunday of May to raise awareness about laughter and its many healing benefits. This year the day falls on May 03, 2020. Every year more than 70 countries around the world celebrates the day. *The first World Laughter day was arranged by Dr Madan Kataria. He is a family doctor in India who was inspired to start the Laughter Yoga movement in part by the facial feedback hypothesis. World Laughter Day was first celebrated on 1998, in Mumbai.*

6. May 4: International Firefighters Day

International Firefighters' Day is observed each year on 4th May. IFFD is a time where the world's community can recognise and honour the sacrifices that firefighters make to ensure that their communities and environment are as safe as possible. *Firefighters' Day was born after 5 firefighters died tragically in 1999 during a bushfire at Linton in Victoria, Australia when they were on a rescue mission. They died due to the sudden change in the direction of the wind. The symbol of IFFD consists of red and blue coloured ribbon.*

7. Coal Miners Day: May 4

Every year May 4 is celebrated as Coal Miners Day. This day show appreciation for the sacrifices, honour the accomplishments and remember the tragedies that these hardworking individuals experience. Coal mining is one of the toughest professions. *In India, coal mining began in 1774. The states Orissa, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and some central and southern parts of the country are coal-rich regions. It also highlights the situation of people working in mines.*

8. World Asthma Day is celebrated on 5 May

The Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) celebrates World Asthma Day on May 5 every year. But this year of 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they have postponed the global campaign planned to be launched at the World Asthma Day. *GINA is working to improve the lives of people with asthma in every corner of the globe; HQs-Fontana, USA. World Asthma Day is held on the first Tuesday in May.*

9. May 5: International Day of the Midwife

The International Day of the Midwife is observed on 5th May every year to acknowledge the works of midwives and to raise awareness about their status. Theme for 2020 is ‘Midwives with women: celebrate, demonstrate, mobilize, unite - our time is NOW!’. *World Health Organization (WHO)-Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland. 2020- 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale.*

10. 6 May: International No Diet Day

Every year, International No Diet Day is celebrated on May 6. It is a celebration of body acceptance, which includes all shapes & sizes. It raises awareness of body acceptance & body shape diversity. No-Diet Day was brought to light by Mary Evans in 1992. Mary Evans had gone through anorexia herself.

11. World Athletics Day is celebrated on 7 May

The first World Athletics Day was celebrated in 1996. Primo Nebiolo, the then-president of the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), started the celebration. It is celebrated every year in May. IAAF decides the date every year. *The headquarters of IAAF (renamed as World Athletics) is located in Monaco. It has 215 member federations. The Current President World Athletics is Sebastian Coe. IAAF was founded in 1912 at Stockholm.*

12. Vesak day is observed on 7 May

Vesak, the Day of the Full Moon in the month of May, is the most sacred day to millions of Buddhists around the world. It was on the Day of Vesak, in the year 623 B.C., that the Buddha was born, attained enlightenment & in his eightieth year passed away. *UNESCO is currently implementing a project to develop a unique Buddhist Heritage Route for Sustainable Tourism Development in South Asia with support from the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). UN adopted resolution regarding the day on 1999.*

13. 8 May: World Red Cross Day

World Red Cross day is observed on May 8 to celebrate the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is the birth anniversary of Henry Dunant, who was the founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross. *Programmes conducted by the Red Cross Society can be broadly categorised into four parts including the promotion of humanitarian principles and values; disaster response; disaster preparedness; and health and care. Red Cross Society is based on 7 principles.*

14. 8 May: World Thalassaemia Day

World Thalassaemia Day is an annual observance day that occurs on May 8th, to raise awareness about thalassaemia and its symptoms. Theme- Begin thalassaemia prevention from young age, blood test before marriage will make the future generation safe. *Thalassaemia is caused when there are fewer red blood cells and less hemoglobin than required in the body. It can cause many diseases like anemia and making the immunity very weak. Haemoglobin is required by the body as it enables RBSs to carry the oxygen to different parts of the body. Thalassaemia is a genetic blood disorder.*

15. World Migratory Bird Day 2020: May 9

World Migratory Bird Day 2020 was observed on May 9 this year. It is celebrated to raise awareness about the conservation of the ecological importance of birds in the ecosystem. It is observed on the second Saturdays of May and October, every year. *World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated on two peak days each year - the second Saturdays of May and October, to highlight the need for international collaboration to ensure the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats globally. CONVENTION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES: The CMS is an environmental treaty of the UN that provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats. It is the only global convention specialising in the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and migration routes. The pact was signed in 1979 in Germany and is known as the Bonn Convention. India has been a party to the CMS since 1983. World Migratory Bird Day 2020 Theme: Birds Connect our World.*

16. International Mother's Day 2020: May 10

Mothers' Day is celebrated annually in many countries around the world on the Second Sunday of May every year. It is a celebration of the mother of the family of her relentless contribution towards the well-being of her children. It is believed that first Mothers' day celebration began in USA.

17. National Technology Day: May 11

National Technology Day will be celebrated today. Keeping in mind the need to formulate an action plan to reboot the economy, thorough Science & Technology. Technology Development Board is celebrating National Technology Day. *A high-level digital conference on 'Rebooting the Economy through Science, Technology and Research Translations titled RESTART' was organised by Technology Development Board (TDB) a statutory body of the Department of Science & Technology (DST) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to celebrate the National Technology Day. It is to be celebrated on the 11th of May every year.*

18. International Nurses Day 2020: May 12

Every year, May 12 is observed as the International Nurses Day around the world. The day marks the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, who is revered as the founder of modern nursing. 2020 is her 200th birth anniversary. *The theme was set by the International Council of Nurses (ICN) which emphasises on the need for a supported and empowered nursing workforce as an effective solution to the problem of improving health outcomes. WHO has declared the year 2020 as "The Year of Nurses and Midwives". The theme for 2020: Nursing the World to Health.*

19. International Day of Families: May 15

The International Day of Families provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increase the knowledge of the social, economic processes affecting families. *Theme - "Families in Development: Copenhagen & Beijing + 25". The International Day of Families, 15th May 2020 which is held every year since 1995 is to reflect on the work started during 1994 and to celebrate the importance of families, people, societies and cultures around the world. UN Secretary General - Antonio Guterres.*

20. International Day of Light: May 16

UN marks the International Day of Light as an annual initiative held globally to raise awareness on the critical role played by light-based technologies in everyday life on May 16. It marks the anniversary of the successful operation of the laser in 1960. *The IDL is administered from the International Basic Science Programme (IBSP) of UNESCO, and its Secretariat is located at the Abdus Salam International Centre of Theoretical Physics (ICTP) at Trieste, Italy. The laser was first operated by physicist Theodore Maiman.*

21. International Day of Living Together: May 16

In 2017, the United Nations declared this Day to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding, and solidarity across the world. It was officially recognized by the General Assembly of the UN and was celebrated for the first time in 2018. *The International Day of Living Together in Peace is a means of mobilizing the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity. The Day aims to uphold the desire to live and act together, united in differences and diversity, in order to build a sustainable world of peace, solidarity and harmony. President of UNGA: Tijjani Muhammad – Bande of Nigeria.*

22. National Dengue Day: May 16

16th May is observed as the National Dengue Day in India. It marks the need for awareness and preparedness before the transmission season of dengue begins in the country and is observed with the recommendation of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. *Dengue is a vector-borne disease that has been a cause for concern in India. Dengue is alone responsible for a large number of deaths each year. It is caused by dengue virus, transmitted by Aedes mosquitos.*

23. World Telecommunication and Information Society Day: 17 May

World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) is to help raise awareness of the possibilities that the use of the Internet & communication technologies. *Theme 2020: "Connect 2030: ICTs for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)". First International Telegraph Convention was signed in Paris on 17 May 1865; World Telecommunication and Information Society Day is being observed since 1969. The day marks signing of 1st International Telegraph Convention.*

24. World Hypertension Day (WHD): May 17

The purpose of World Hypertension Day is to promote public awareness of hypertension and to encourage citizens all around the world to prevent and control this modern epidemic. The expanded theme is Measure Your Blood Pressure, Control It, Live Longer. *It is organised by the World Hypertension League (WHL). It is*

a non-profit, non-governmental organization comprised predominantly of volunteers dedicated to the prevention and control of hypertension globally to include awareness of non-communicable diseases. The WHL is in official relations with the International Society of Hypertension (ISH) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The Journal of Clinical Hypertension (JCH) is the official WHL journal. Celebrated May 17 every year to raise awareness about high BP.

25. International Museum Day: May 18

International Museum Day is observed on May 18 every year to raise awareness among people about the museums. Museums are an important means of cultural exchange and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among people. A doll museum in Himachal Pradesh's Dharamshala called Losel Doll Museum boasts of the world's largest collection of Losel Dolls. *World's Largest museum: The Louvre. The Louvre is also the most visited museum in Paris and one of the most visited museums in the world. Development of Museums and Cultural Spaces, Ministry of Culture, Government of India hosted a webinar on "Revitalising Museums and Cultural Spaces" to celebrate the International Museum Day and kick start conversations around creating sustainable cultural organizations in post-pandemic India. The webinar featured some of the best experts in the museum and cultural spaces domain. Minister of State for Culture: Prahlad Singh Patel. Constituency: Damoh, MP. Theme for 2020 - Museums for Equality: Diversity and Inclusion.*

26. World Bee Day: 20 May

To raise awareness of the importance of pollinators, the threats they face and their contribution to sustainable development, the UN designated 20 May as World Bee Day. The goal is to strengthen measures aimed at protecting bees and other pollinators. *According to United Nations guidelines, World Bee Day aims at significantly contributing to solving problems related to the global food supply chain and eliminate hunger in developing countries. The First World Bee Day was celebrated on Sunday, May 20, 2018. World Bee Day 2020 theme is "Bee Engaged".*

27. World Metrology Day observed on May 20

World Metrology Day is an annual celebration of the signature of the Metre Convention on 20 May 1875 by representatives of seventeen nations. The theme for World Metrology Day 2020 is 'Measurements for global trade'. *This theme was chosen to create awareness of the important role measurement plays in facilitating fair global trade, ensuring products meet standards and regulations, and satisfying customer quality expectations. Metrology is the scientific study of measurement.*

28. International Tea Day: 21 May

International Tea Day promote and foster collective actions to implement activities in favour of the sustainable production and consumption of tea and raise awareness of its importance in fighting hunger and poverty. *Tea production and processing contributes to the reduction of extreme poverty (Goal 1), the fight against hunger (Goal 2), the empowerment of women (Goal 5) and the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems (Goal 15). There is evidence that tea was consumed in China 5,000 years ago.*

29. National Anti-Terrorism Day Observed to Commemorate Rajiv Gandhi's Assassination

May 21 is observed as Anti-terrorism day across India. The objective behind the observance of Anti-Terrorism Day is to spread the message of peace, humanity, unity and harmony among the people and make them aware about anti-social act of terrorism. *It is observed to commemorate the death anniversary of the former PM Rajiv Gandhi who was assassinated on this day in 1991, by LTTE cadres in a suicide bombing attack at a rally at Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu. Rajiv Gandhi, youngest PM of India.*

30. World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development: 21 May

The day provides us with an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to advance the goals of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions adopted on 20 October 2005. *In 2001, UNESCO adopted the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. and in December 2002, the UN General Assembly, in its resolution, declared May 21 to be the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, and in 2015, the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution on Culture and Sustainable Development, affirming culture's contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, acknowledging further the natural and cultural diversity of the world, and recognizing that cultures and*

civilizations can contribute to, and are crucial enablers of, sustainable development. Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO.

31. International Day for Biological Diversity 22 May

The UN has proclaimed 22 May the International Day for Biological Diversity to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. Biological diversity resources are the pillars upon which we build civilizations. *The theme covered 3 essential topics during the week leading up to the observance: 18 May will cover the importance of knowledge and science; 19-21 May will raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity; and finally, the day of the observance, will issue a call to action. 2020 Theme: Our solutions are in nature.*

32. International Day to End Obstetric Fistula: 23 May

May 23 - UN's International Day to End Obstetric Fistula, which promotes action towards treating and preventing obstetric fistula, a condition that affects many girls and women. Theme 2020: "End gender inequality! End health inequities! End Fistula now!" *In 2003 the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and its partners launched the global Campaign to End Fistula, a collaborative initiative to prevent fistula and restore the health of those affected by the condition. In 2012, the UN announced that it would observe International Day to End Obstetric Fistula on May 23 each year, starting on 2013; UNFPA Headquarters- New York, USA. Around 2 to 3 mn women in developing countries living with it.*

33. World Turtle Day: 23 May

World Turtle Day is observed on May 23rd each year and is celebrated throughout the world. It was started in 2000 by American Tortoise Rescue. The day includes motivating humans to step forward virtually and help turtles survive. *The shell of a turtle is actually a part of its skeleton, and is made up of nearly 50 bones; Turtles breathe air and lay their eggs on land, which makes them amniotes; Turtles are cold-blooded, which results to an incredibly long life span; The official announcement of World Turtle Day occurred in 2000. American Tortoise Rescue, Headquarters: California, United States.*

34. May 24: Commonwealth Day in India

The Commonwealth Day is celebrated in India on May 24. This day is celebrated by all the countries that were once under the reign of the British Empire, Commonwealth Day is celebrated on the birth date of Queen Victoria, who was born on May 24, 1819. *The day marked the celebration of the British Empire- a group of countries that the United Kingdom ruled over until the year 1997. Initially, the Empire consisted of around 35 percent of the world's surface; As per official records, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and Australia are the oldest-standing members of the Commonwealth since the year 1931. Commonwealth Day was previously named as Empire Day.*

35. International Missing Children's Day: 25 May

Every year, 25 May is commemorated as International Missing Children's Day. In 2001, 25 May was first formally recognized as International Missing Children's Day (IMCD), a joint effort on the part of ICMEC, Missing Children Europe and European Commission. *It was designated by the US President Ronald Reagan in 1983.*

36. World Thyroid Day: May 25

World Thyroid Day is observed on May 25. The thyroid gland situated in the front part of our neck. It produces thyroid hormone which is essential to various metabolic processes of the body. Every organ in your body derives energy from the thyroid gland. It was established in the year 2008.

37. International Women's Health Day: May 28

International Day of Action for Women's Health (or International Women's Health Day) has been observed every year on May 28 since 1987. The main agenda is to promote the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of all women all over the world. Coordinated by Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights.

38. World Menstrual Hygiene Day: May 28

World Menstrual Hygiene Day is observed on May 28. The main idea behind marking this day is to change the social stigma associated with menstruation. This day was initiated by the German non-profit WASH United in 2013 and was first celebrated in 2014. *The date May 28 was chosen to observe the day because on*

an average the menstrual cycle for most women is 28 days and the menstruation period for most women is for five days. Hence, the date was kept as 28/5. The theme for 2020: 'Periods in Pandemic'.

39. International Day of UN Peacekeepers: 29 May

International Day of UN Peacekeepers is celebrated every year on 29 May. On this day, UN commemorates peacekeepers. People pay tribute to all the women and men who have served as military, police or civilians in UN Peacekeeping programs and operations. *The first UN peacekeeping mission was established on 29 May 1948, when the Security Council authorized the deployment of a small number of UN military observers to the Middle East to form the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours. The theme for 2020 is "Women in Peacekeeping: A Key to Peace".*

40. World No Tobacco Day: 31 May

Every year, on 31 May, the World Health Organisation and global partners celebrate World No Tobacco Day. The annual campaign is an opportunity to raise awareness on the harmful and deadly effects of tobacco and to discourage the use of tobacco in any form. *The theme of WNTD 2020 is "Protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use". The USA recently terminated its relations with the WHO.*

Summit & Conferences

1. G20 Digital Economy Ministers meet held through video conference

G20 Digital Economy Ministers meeting was convened recently. A ministerial statement was issued by the G20 Digital Economy Task Force at the meet. The Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad represented India. A virtual G20 meet was held on March 2020. *G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. Originated in 1999 at the level of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, the G20 gathered for high-level discussions on macro-financial issues. The first G20 Leaders' Summit took place in Washington D.C. in November 2008. Saudi Arabia assumed the G20 Presidency on 1 December 2019.*

2. AIIA organises 'AYURAKSHA' programme with Delhi Police

A joint programme was organised by All India Institute of Ayurveda and Delhi Police, with a title AYURAKSHA 'Corona Se Jung: Delhi Police Ke Sang'. It was organised to fight against COVID-19 by undertaking time tested Ayurveda immunity boosting measures. *It has also been planned to set up a Kiosk in every Delhi police district headquarters wherein the complete diet and lifestyle related information as well as usefulness of Ayurvedic formulations in boosting the immunity would be explained by consultants of All India Institute of Ayurveda initially for 15 days. Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava; AIIA is under the Ministry of AYUSH.*

3. PM Modi to participate in NAM Summit through Video Conferencing

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the Virtual Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit through Video Conferencing. The summit will discuss and decide on the enhanced coordination of the member states in their fight against the coronavirus pandemic. *NAM represents the biggest grouping of countries outside the UN. The first NAM Summit Conference took place in Belgrade on 1961. At each Summit, a new Head of State formally becomes the NAM chair. NAM- 120 developing countries from Asia, Africa & Latin America.*

4. NMCG & NIUA organized IDEathon on 'The Future of River Management'

The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti and National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) organized an IDEathon on 'The future of River Management' to explore how the COVID-19 crisis can shape River Management strategies. *Established in 1976, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) is a premier institute for research, capacity building and dissemination of knowledge for the urban sector in India. NMCG is a registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.*

5. Bamboo Conclave held through video Conference

Minister of State for N-E Development Jitendra Singh attended the Bamboo Conclave held through video conference to boost the economy of the country with the help of Bamboo resources. The making of **Agarbatti** was one of the key discussions of the conclave. *Over a span of last 6 years, Government has accorded highest priority to the development of the N-E region, which resulted in a boost to the bamboo sector which it had never received since independence. N-E consists of 60% of India's reserve of Bamboo. The restructured National Bamboo mission was approved in 2018.*

6. Covid-19: Global leaders pledge \$8 billion for coronavirus research & vaccine

Several world leaders and organisations pledged \$8 billion (over Rs 60,000 crore) to manufacture a vaccine to combat Covid-19- the diseases caused by the novel coronavirus- during the Coronavirus Global Response International Pledging Conference. *The European Union is a political and economic union of 27 member states. Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium; Founded: 1 November 1993, Maastricht, Netherlands. European Commission President- Ursula von der Leyen. The European Union initiated the Conference.*

7. J&K: National Webinar on 'Education and Leadership During A Crisis' organized to deal with COVID-19 crisis

A two-day National Webinar on 'Education and Leadership During A Crisis', being organised by School of Education, Central University, Jammu, under Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching scheme began in Jammu. *J&K is a UT of India (until October 31, 2019, a state), located in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent in the vicinity of the Karakoram and westernmost Himalayan mountain ranges. The territory is part of the larger region of Kashmir. Lieutenant Governor of J&K- Girish Chandra Murmu.*

8. EAM Jaishankar participates in SCO video conference on COVID-19

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar participated in a virtual conference of Foreign Ministers Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) hosted by Russia. Member states insisted on the collective action against the terrorism and the security challenges. *SCO: The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation. **Member States: 8.** Secretariat: Beijing, China. Secretary-General of SCO – Vladimir Norov.*

Science & Technology

1. SNBNCBS develops Nanomedicine to alter oxidative stress to treat viral infections including COVID-19

Scientists at S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences, Kolkata have developed cost-effective nanomedicine that promises treatment of a number of diseases by altering oxidative stress in the body. It may provide hope in India's fight against COVID-19. *Reactive oxygen species (ROS) are chemically reactive chemical species containing oxygen. Examples include peroxides, superoxide, hydroxyl radical, singlet oxygen, and alpha oxygen. It can decrease/ increase Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) in body.*

2. Glenmark pharma starts clinical trial on antiviral Favipiravir for Covid-19 treatment

Glenmark Pharmaceuticals said has received the Indian drug controller's approval to conduct clinical trial on Favipiravir, the antiviral drug that is being used in the treatment of Covid-19 in few countries. *It became the 1st company to get nod from DCGI. Glenmark Pharmaceuticals; headquartered in Mumbai, CEO: Glenn Mario Saldanha; Dr. V. G. Somani is current Drugs Controller General of India.*

3. ATULYA: Microwave sterilizer to disintegrate COVID-19 developed

The Defence Ministry has proposed the use of ATULYA- a microwave steriliser - that can disintegrate Covid-19 virus within 30 seconds. It was developed by the Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, Pune, a deemed university supported by the DRDO. *Rajnath Singh is the current defence minister of India. Virus gets disintegrated by differential heating.*

4. CSIR-NCL innovates Digital IR Thermometer to help mitigate COVID-19

Digital IR thermometer is one of the important innovations recently announced by CSIR and National Chemical Laboratory in Pune. The CSIR - NCLs Venture Centres incubate BMek headed by Prateek Kulkarni has developed this handheld digital IR thermometer. *Prime Minister of India is the chairman of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. CSIR- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.*

5. NASA partners with private companies for Moon-to-Mars campaign

NASA selected space firms SpaceX, Blue Origin and Dynetics to build lunar landing systems that can carry astronauts to the moon by 2024, the White House's accelerated deadline under the space agency's moon-to-Mars campaign. *In 2019, Jeff Bezos unveiled Blue Origin's design for the lunar lander, Blue Moon. SpaceX also plans to develop its Starship landing system to send a crew and up to 100 pounds of cargo to the moon. Three companies will share US\$967 million from NASA.*

6. NIAB develops portable 'ECovSens' tool for diagnosis of COVID-19 antigens from saliva

Leading scientists from the Hyderabad-based National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB) have developed a portable device called 'eCovSens' that can be used for detecting COVID-19 antigens from saliva samples of suspected coronavirus patients. *The scientists also said that the portable bio-sensor tool can also be connected to a computer or a cell phone via Bluetooth and can very much help in boosting the efforts to fight against COVID-19 pandemic. 'ECovSens' can detect the corona infection in just 30 seconds.*

7. UV Blaster: DRDO develops WiFi-enabled UV disinfection tower

DRDO has developed an ultraviolet (UV) disinfection tower that can be used for rapid and chemical-free disinfection of infection-prone areas. It is likely to prove useful at a time when the novel coronavirus pandemic has disrupted normal life across India. *The equipment has six lamps each with 43 watts of UV-C power at 254 nm wavelength for 360-degree illumination. For a room of about 12 x 12 feet dimension, the disinfection time is about 10 minutes and 30 minutes for 400 square feet area. LASTECH- DRDO's Delhi-based premier laboratory developed it.*

8. Long March 5B: China's new Rocket launched successfully

China has launched a new rocket along with a prototype deep-space spacecraft. Aboard the Long March 5 was a special prototype spacecraft that is somewhat akin to the deep-space Orion capsule NASA has been developing to people to the Moon and beyond. *The assembly of China's Tiangong space station is expected to begin this year and finish in 2022. The name of the space station means Heavenly Palace and it will have three modules with living and working quarters and two annexes for scientific experiments. Long March 5B rocket took off from the Wenchang launch site.*

9. Indian Navy's PPE clears certification by INMAS

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), designed and produced by Indian Navy, has been tested by Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), Delhi and has been certified to be mass-produced and used in clinical COVID situations. *INMAS is working in the area of biomedical and clinical research with reference to radiation, neurocognitive imaging and CBRN research. It was established in 1956, as a Radiation Cell at Defence Science Laboratory. INMAS- DRDO organization tasked with certification of PPE.*

10. Astronomers find Jupiter-like Cloud Bands on closest Brown Dwarf

A team of astronomers has discovered that the closest known brown dwarf, Luhman 16A, shows signs of cloud bands similar to those seen on Jupiter and Saturn. Brown dwarfs are objects heavier than planets but lighter than stars. *Luhman 16A is part of a binary system containing a second brown dwarf, Luhman 16B. At a distance of 6.5 light-years, it is the third closest system to our Sun after Alpha Centauri and Barnard's Star. Both brown dwarfs weigh about 30 times as much as Jupiter. They typically have 13 to 80 times the mass of Jupiter.*

11. West Bengal: CLW produces automatic medical trolley to serve patients in hospitals without human contact

Chittaranjan Locomotive Works in West Bengal is mostly engaged in manufacturing of Railway engines. To deal with the Corona threat CLW has produced an automatic medical trolley which can reach to patients in hospital without human contact. *Chittaranjan Locomotive Works is a Government electric locomotive manufacturer based in India. It has been named after the great freedom fighter, leader and statesmen Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. It was founded on 1947. Medical trolley can provide medicines through remote control.*

12. Selco launches solar-powered mobile swab collection units

Selco Solar Light Pvt Ltd launched a solar-powered solution to help the frontline healthcare workers in rural areas. It has installed a solar panel in a mobile swab collection van for the benefit of healthcare workers from Kundapur taluk of Udupi district. *75-watt solar panel installed on top of the van can power two fans, a mobile charging unit, and a torchlight. Selco Solar is installing solar panels to mobile swab collection vans under its village care programme. SELCO is a for-profit social enterprise based in Bangalore.*

13. Swiss scientists clone SARS-CoV2 virus in lab

In a move that may hasten the development of antiviral drugs and vaccines against Covid-19, researchers at the Institute of Virology and Immunology (IVI) of Switzerland and the University of Bern has cloned the SARS-CoV2 in the lab. *They reconstructed the coronavirus from synthetic DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). DNA copies containing parts of the coronavirus genome were introduced into yeast cells and assembled into a complete copy of the virus. IVI is under the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office.*

14. Bharat Biotech to lead project to develop human antibodies for covid-19 therapy

Bharat Biotech International Ltd will lead a project sanctioned by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research for developing human monoclonal antibodies as therapy for covid-19 infections. NCCS in Pune, IIT-Indore & start-up PredOmix are part of it. *The project aims at an alternate therapeutic regimen by generating highly effective and specific human monoclonal antibodies that are capable of neutralising the SARS-CoV2 virus. Such virus-neutralising antibodies can block the spread of infection by binding to the virus and rendering it ineffective. Monoclonal antibody therapy is a highly effective and safe method. NCCS- National Centre for Cell Science.*

15. NIV develops ELISA test kit for diagnosis of novel Corona Virus

National Institute of Virology, Pune, has developed first indigenous antibody-based ELISA test kit, COVID KAVACH, for diagnosis of novel Corona Virus. This test is expected to change the dynamics of COVID-19 testing in the country. *ELISA - Enzyme-Linked ImmunoSorbent Assay. The test will detect IgG antibodies present in blood samples. ELISA is routinely used for detecting HIV infection. This is the first time India has developed an indigenous ELISA test for Coronavirus. It can test around 90 samples in approx. two and a half hours.*

16. DRDO lab develops automated UV systems to sanitise electronic gadgets, papers & currency notes

Hyderabad based Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) lab has developed automated Ultraviolet systems, called Defence Research Ultraviolet Sanitiser (DRUVS) to sanitise electronic gadgets, papers and currency notes. *The DRUVS cabinet is having a contactless operation which is very important to contain the spread of the virus. The proximity sensor switches clubbed with drawer opening and closing mechanism makes its operation automatic and contactless. DRDO Chief: G Satheesh Reddy. It provides 360-degree exposure of UV to objects placed inside.*

17. IIT Delhi start up launches 'Reusable Antimicrobial Mask'

With an increasing demand for face masks to contain transmission of coronavirus, an IIT-Delhi start-up named 'Nano safe Solutions' has launched an antimicrobial and washable face mask that can be reused up to 50 launderings. *The mask has been designed to maximize durability and dimensional stability. Effective reusability is an important factor as single-use masks will cause huge disposal issues. Dr Anasuya Roy - Founder and CEO of Nano safe Solutions.*

18. CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Bengaluru develop BiPAP

NAL, a constituent lab of CSIR developed a Non-Invasive BiPAP Ventilator, "SwasthVayu" in just 36 days to treat COVID-19 patients. It is simple to use without any specialized nursing, cost-effective, compact & configured with indigenous components. *BiPAP Non-Invasive ventilator is a microcontroller-based precise closed-loop adaptive control system with a built-in biocompatible "3D printed manifold & coupler" with HEPA filter (Highly Efficient Particulate Air Filter). These unique features help to alleviate the fear of the virus spread. Director CSIR-NAL - Jitendra J. Jadhav.*

19. DFRL develops mobile COVID-19 testing lab

A state-of-the-art mobile microbial containment (BSL-3) laboratory, developed by the Mysuru-based Defence Food Research Laboratory (DFRL) - DRDO, was handed over to the Mysuru Medical College and Research Institute (MMCRI). *The mobile facility is equipped with "dynamic pass box" for transferring samples directly to Class-III bio-safety cabinet for safe handling besides complete Heating Ventilation Air Condition (HVAC) for maintenance of unidirectional airflow and room pressure gradients of negative pressure as compared to the ambient. DFRL Director - Anil Dutt Semwal. MMCRI Director and Dean - C.P. Nanjaraj. The mobile lab is named 'PARAKH'.*

20. Planet hunters discover new 'one in a million' Super-Earth

Astronomers at the University of Canterbury (UC) have found an incredibly rare new Super-Earth planet towards the centre of the galaxy. The planet is one of only a handful that has been discovered with both size and orbit comparable to that of Earth. The planet was discovered using a technique called gravitational microlensing. *Using the solar system as a point of reference, the host star is about 10% the mass of our Sun, and the planet would have a mass somewhere between that of Earth and Neptune, and would orbit at a location between Venus and Earth from the parent star. Due to the host star having a smaller mass than our Sun, the planet would have a 'year' of approximately 617 days. The research is published in the "Astronomical Journal".*

21. Brakes India gears up to make ventilators to fight Covid-19

Part of the TVS Group, Brakes India is manufacturing low-cost automated respiratory assist device 'Sundaram Ventago' along with partners like Sundaram Medical Foundation, IIT-M, Kauvery Hospital, Madras Medical College and with guidance from MIT, Boston. *The device provides respiratory support to patients via controlled and automated squeezing of a self-inflating or AMBU bag and includes functionalities to control respiratory rate (breaths per minute), tidal volume, pressure parameters. Chairman of the TVS Group – Venu Srinivasan.*

22. Dr Harsh Vardhan dedicates COVID-19 testing machine COBAS 6800 to the nation

Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, visited the National Centre for Disease Control in Delhi, and dedicated the COBAS 6800 COVID-19 testing machine to the nation. *It performs RT-PCR tests for COVID-19. COBAS 6800 is a sophisticated machine enabled with robotics that minimizes the chance of contamination as well as the risk of infection to the health care workers since it can be operated remotely with limited human intervention. COBAS 6800 can also detect other pathogens like Viral Hepatitis B & C, HIV, MTb, Papilloma, CMV, Chlamydia, Neisseria etc. NCDC was*

formerly known as National Institute of Communicable Diseases. It comes under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. COBAS requires a minimum BSL2+ containment level for testing.

23. Researchers at CSIRO develops 'heat resistant' corals to fight bleaching

Researchers from Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation, Australian Institute of Marine Science & the University of Melbourne has successfully developed a potential agent that could help coral reefs increase their heat tolerance. *Team made the coral more tolerant of temperature-induced bleaching by bolstering the heat tolerance of its microalgal symbionts- tiny cells of algae that live inside the coral tissue. The research team made the microalgae heat resistant by isolating it and culturing using a technique called "directed evolution" in the specialist symbiont lab at AIMS. Then the cultured microalgae were exposed to warmer temperatures over a period of four years to see if they survive hotter conditions. CSIRO Headquarters- Canberra, Australia.*

24. IISc develops antimicrobial composite material and testing protocols for PPEs

A team from Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru (IISc) has developed a three-layered antimicrobial composite material of low-cost for making masks. The material is designed to cut off particles of the size of 0.3 micrometres to about 95% efficiency. *Personal protective equipment, commonly referred to as 'PPE', is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. N95 masks filter out 95% of particles of size 0.3 micrometres.*

25. CSIR joins hands with IIT-H and Intel

CSIR is working with Intel India and IIT - Hyderabad to help achieve faster and less expensive COVID-19 testing and coronavirus genome sequencing to understand the epidemiology and AI-based risk stratification for patients with co-morbidities. *Intel Headquarters: California, USA.*

26. ARCI jointly develop biodegradable metal implants for use in humans

Scientists at International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy & New Materials, ARCI & Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences developed new generation Iron-Manganese based alloys for biodegradable metal implants for use in humans. *ARCI is located in Hyderabad. Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute is located in Trivandrum.*

27. CSIR CMERI develops mobile indoor disinfection sprayer to combat COVID-19

Scientists at CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute Durgapur, developed two mobile indoor Disinfection Sprayer units (BPDS & POMID). They can be used to clean & disinfect pathogenic micro-organism effectively, especially in hospitals. *CSIR CMERI: CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute is located in West Bengal. Director: Prof. Harish Hirani. These units can be used to clean frequently touched surfaces.*

28. South Central Railway develops robotic device to assist in patients care in hospitals

South Central Railway zone has developed a robotic device, "RAIL-BOT" (R-BOT) to assist in hospital management functions towards patient care during the pandemic. It is used to provide medicines, medical accessories without any need for physical contact. *The R-BOT is operated through a unique mobile application developed as part of the Innovation, supported by Wi-Fi- facility. It is capable of raising an alarm in case of any abnormally high-temperature readings so as to alert the Medics attending to the patients. It uses infrared technology with emergency Night lamp and night vision to enable communication even in complete darkness. SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY: The South-Central Railway is one of the 18 zones of Indian Railways. The jurisdiction of the zone is spread over the states of Telangana, Maharashtra, and some portions of Madhya Pradesh. Headquarters: Secunderabad. It holds sensor-based features to read the body temperature.*

29. Jaipur based company 'Club First' made robots to help masses

'Club First' have made India's first service robots and named it as Sona 1.5 and Sona .5 which is a fully autonomous self-navigator robot with multi floor access .It will be used for doing jobs such as sanitizing hospitals & delivering food in restaurants. The company is also making firefighting robot.

30. Coir Geo textiles gets nod for Rural Road Construction

Coir Geo textiles, a permeable fabric, natural, strong, highly durable, resistant to rots, moulds and moisture, free from any microbial attack, has been accepted as a good material for rural road construction. 1674 km

road will be constructed in 7 states. *As per these instructions, 5% length of the rural roads under PMGSY-III will be constructed using Coir Geo textiles. Accordingly, 164 Kms of road will be constructed using coir geo textiles in Andhra Pradesh, 151 kms in Gujarat, 71 kms in Kerala, 328 kms in Maharashtra, 470 kms in Odisha, 369 kms TN and 121 kms in Telangana. Nitin Gadkari, Minister of MSME and Road Transport & Highways.*

31. IIT Guwahati discovers new ways to prevent memory loss due to Alzheimer

The research team at IIT Guwahati studied the neurochemical principles of Alzheimer's and explored ways to prevent accumulation of neurotoxic molecules in brain associated with short-term memory loss. It can help prevent or reduce short-term memory losses. *The researchers explored the possibility of using 'Trojan peptides' to arrest aggregation of these neurotoxic molecule; Harsh Vardhan is the Union Minister for Science & Technology. India has 3rd highest number of patients after China and the US.*

32. IIT Madras develops Low-Cost system to concentrate solar energy

IIT Madras-developed device to concentrate solar energy is lightweight, low-cost, & designed to function in India's diverse climatic conditions. It can pave the way for sustainable energy solutions in states like Bihar, Haryana, MP, Maharashtra & Gujarat. *The PTC concentrates sunlight into a small area where it is absorbed and utilised for heating to generate energy; The national solar mission was launched in 2019 with the target of providing 20,000 MW through solar power by 2022. Parabolic Trough Collector (PTC) have high energy efficiency.*

33. Researchers at IIT-M develop solar parabolic trough collector

A new trough collector equipped with enhanced energy to serve industries has developed by IIT, Madras. The 'Parabolic Trough Collector' is a lightweight and low-cost system with high energy efficiency and can operate under varied climatic conditions. It can pave way for sustainable energy solutions in agriculture.

34. DRDO's RCI develops AI-based Attendance Application

RCI, DRDO in Hyderabad developed an AI-based Attendance Application (AINA) which allows non-contact-based personnel verification, using facial features of the person, replacing the unsafe use of contact-based biometric verification for attendance marking. *Research Centre Imarat – RCI. Director: BHVS Narayana Murthy.*

35. Indian Navy's 'breathable' PPE kit 'NavRakshak'

The Indian Navy's indigenously made PPE kit, "NavRakshak", made for enhancing comforts of the health workers under Indian conditions, is helping fight the war against COVID in a better and effective manner. *Navrakshak translates to a "novel protector". Intellectual Property Facilitation Cell (IPFC) of the Ministry of Defence has already filed a patent for the innovative cost-effective PPE developed by Indian Navy, to enable rapid mass production of NavRakshak PPE. It is made with an innovative 'breathable' fabric material.*

36. Indian start-up makes the world's first contactless visitor management software

Mumbai – based start-up makes world's first contactless visitor management software, called VAMS SafeGuard with temperature scanner and mask detection. It uses AI to allow visitors those who comply with protection measures and can read face with a mask on. *It reads, scans and record one person at a time from a distance of 18 inch in less than 3-5 seconds. CEO of VAMS Global: Nikhil Kothari.*

37. IIT Madras develops light-weight alloy to replace steel, aluminium in cars

Researchers at the IIT Madras, along with the University of North Texas and US Army Research Laboratory, have developed a magnesium alloy with significantly improved properties, that can replace steel and aluminium in automotive and aerospace components. *Being one of the lightest and energy-efficient structural materials, magnesium alloys are potential candidates to replace steel and aluminium alloys in automotive and aerospace components since their density is two-thirds of aluminium and one-quarter of steel. This could help lower the carbon footprint of vehicles.*

38. CIPET to take up R&D initiatives in healthcare areas to deal with COVID-19

Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers will take up Research and Development initiatives in the areas of Health Care, like Manufacturing and Certifying

PPE to deal with COVID-19 pandemic. *CIPET: Director-General: S K Nayak. Head Office: Chennai It has also expanded its capacity to test food grain packaging.*

39. NPCI launches AI virtual assistant PAi to create product awareness

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), as an initiative to improve digital financial inclusion, launched an artificial intelligence (AI) based chatbot, PAi, to create awareness around its products like FASTag, RuPay, UPI, AePS on a real-time basis. *Kunal Kalawatia, Chief of Marketing, NPCI. Dilip Asbe is the current managing director and chief executive officer of the NPCI. PAi is developed by Bengaluru based startup CoRover Pvt Ltd.*

40. SpaceX makes history with successful first human space launch

SpaceX flew NASA astronauts Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken to space aboard its Crew Dragon spacecraft using a Falcon 9 rocket. The launch, titled 'Demo-2', is for final demonstration mission in human rating process of SpaceX's Crew Dragon and Falcon 9. *The inaugural flight is the first manned mission since the end of the Space Shuttle program in 2011 to be launched into space from the United States. It is the first time that humans have been aboard SpaceX vehicle.*

Defence

1. Govt raises FDI limit in defence production to 74% from 49%

FM N Sitharaman announced raising the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit in the defence sector under the automatic route from 49% to 74%. Also, Ordnance Factory Boards to be corporatized for better management & eventually get listed in stock markets. *According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the US, China and India were the world's three biggest military spenders in 2019, followed by Russia and Saudi Arabia; Sitharaman's announcements were part of the ₹20 trillion stimulus package meant to restart the Indian economy. Union Defence Minister: Rajnath Singh.*

Books & Authors

1. New book to revisit Maharashtra's history, politics and societal evolution

In 'Shivaji in South Block: The Unwritten History of a Proud People', journalist Girish Kuber talks about Maharashtra's politics, history and society. From the time of the Satavahanas down to the present day, he chronicles many lesser-known tales. *The book also discusses the evolution of movements of the right and left as well as for Dalit pride, the leader who mentored Gandhi and the man who killed him, the best prime minister India never had etc. Maharashtra celebrates the 60th year of its formation on 2020.*

2. Union Culture Minister released e-book 'Prof. B. B. Lal -India Rediscovered' to mark the centenary year of Prof B. B. Lal

Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, Union Culture Minister, released an e-book 'Prof. B. B. Lal- India Rediscovered' in New Delhi, on the occasion of centenary year (100th birthday) of the great archaeologist Professor Braj Basi Lal. *The book is a centenary special edition which has been prepared by Ministry of culture in collaboration with Prof B Lal Centenary Celebration Committee. Prof. B. B. Lal was conferred upon Padma Bhushan in the year of 2000. It was released for his involvement to the field of archaeology.*

3. Health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launches multimedia guide 'COVID Katha'

Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched 'COVID Katha', a multimedia guide on the Covid-19 disease. 'COVID Katha' provides consolidated and authentic information on the global crisis to the masses in an interesting and interactive mode. *DST & its autonomous institutions have elevated Science and Technology in India to international levels. DST's efforts have helped India attain 3rd position globally after China and the US in terms of the number of publications in science citation index. It was launched on the 50th DST Foundation Day.*

4. A book titled as 'Vijyant at Kargil: The Life of a Kargil War Hero' authored by Colonel VN Thapar and Neha Dwivedi

Captain Vijyant Thapar was only 22 when he was martyred in the Kargil war in 1999. Now two decades after his demise comes his 'first-ever' biography giving a rare insight into the heart and mind of one of India's bravest soldiers. On June 28, 1999, two Rajputana Rifles were given the task of capturing the Three Pimples, Knoll and Lone Hill area'. *Vijyant was killed by a burst of fire while leading his team in Knoll, which was eventually conquered on June 29, 1999. He was awarded a Vir Chakra posthumously. e-Book Title- 'Vijyant at Kargil: The Life of a Kargil Hero'.*

5. Prince Harry, Meghan tell-all biography 'Finding Freedom' set for August release

The book 'Finding Freedom: Harry and Meghan and the Making of a Modern Royal Family' by royal reporters Omid Scobie and Carolyn Durand will be released worldwide on August 11. *The authors claim they will provide a glimpse into the lesser-known aspects of their romance and decision to go their separate way from Buckingham Palace. Harry and Meghan quit as senior members of the royal family.*

6. Vadhan's news book titled "Fear of God"

Sai Chandravadhan with the Pen Name, **Vadhan**, authored the book titled "Fear of God". It was published by Tree Shade publications. The book deals with law, corruption and vigilantism. It is Vadhan's third book. *Fear of God: It is a thriller that connects law, corruption, vigilantism and courtroom drama through 3 characters who aspire to achieve the same goal but via different means. Vadhan's other books: Shatru & Agniputr: When Agni First Spoke.*

7. 'Wuhan Diary': Book Offers Eyewitness' Account of Life Amid COVID-19 Outbreak

An eyewitness account of events as they unfolded in Wuhan is now available as an e-book. The book called 'Wuhan Diary: Dispatches from a Quarantined City' is a compilation of online diary entries and social media posts by Chinese Literary writer Fang. *Translated by Michael Berry, the book documents the author's voice against social injustice, abuse of power that impeded the response to the epidemic. The book will be translated into 15 languages. It captures the challenges of daily life of being quarantined.*

8. JK Rowling unveils The Ickabog, her first non-Harry Potter children's book

JK Rowling announced a brand-new children's book, which she is publishing in daily instalments on her website for free. The Ickabog is her 1st children's story not to be linked to Harry Potter. *Chapters of The Ickabog are being published daily until 10 July. The Ickabog is a fearsome monster character in her book which is "said to eat children and sheep". Final Harry Potter novel came out in 2007.*

Miscellaneous

1. AIIMS invites advance appointments for tele-consultations

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences has invited advance appointments for tele-consultations from follow-up patients of the hospital. The follow-up patients can now book advance appointments for tele-consultation by calling the number 9115444155. *All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi Director: Randeep Guleria. AIIMS had started UHID (Unique Health Identification).*

2. Green nod to Rs 922 crore new Parliament complex

Green nod has been given to construction of the new Parliament building at a cost of Rs 922 Cr. Environment ministry's Expert Appraisal committee cleared the controversial project in its April 22-24 meeting. Existing Building was constructed 93 years ago. *A bronze statue of Chandragupta Maurya (dreaming of the India he was to create) is installed in the Parliament House. He is one of the greatest figures in ancient Indian history and founder of the Mauryan dynasty, who reigned from 321 B.C. to 296 B.C. The Parliament House was designed by Lutyens and Baker.*

3. Ministry of Tourism holds its 14th webinar 'Bengal by the Himalayas' under Dekho Apna Desh Webinar Series

The 14th session of Ministry of Tourism's webinar titled, 'Bengal by the Himalayas' under Dekho Apna Desh Webinar Series was a presentation by Shri Supratim (Raj) Basu, Help Tourism Pvt. Ltd which took the participants to the attractions of Darjeeling. *The promotion of Himalayas as a tourism destination by Ministry of Tourism has enabled India to be marketed as a round-the-year travel destination. The Ministry of Tourism, under the Swadesh Darshan scheme is developing thematic circuits in the country. Prahlad Singh Patel- Minister of Tourism.*

4. Indian Navy launches operation 'Samudra Setu' to return Indians stranded abroad

Indian Navy announced Operation 'Samudra Setu' to repatriate Indian citizens who were stranded overseas because of the global grounding of airlines due to the COVID-19 pandemic. INS Jalashwa and INS Magar are currently enroute to the port of Male. *INS Jalashwa, formerly the USS Trenton, is an amphibious landing dock capable of carrying over 1,000 people. INS Magar is capable of carrying around 500 troops. Chief of the Naval Staff- Admiral Karambir Singh.*

5. India rolls out 'Vande Bharat Mission' to bring back Indians stranded abroad

Air India will operate 64 repatriation flights for a week from May 7 while the Navy deployed two ships as India rolled out a massive evacuation plan to bring back thousands of its nationals stranded abroad due to the coronavirus-triggered lockdown. *Following the directive, a meeting took place between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, Jaishankar, and Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri. This was followed by a meeting of PM's Principal Secretary and other senior PMO officers, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, the Cabinet Secretary and Secretaries of the Ministries concerned. Civil Aviation Minister- Hardeep Singh Puri.*

6. IIT Alumni Council Launches India's first COVID-19 test bus in Mumbai

Indian Institute of Technology, IIT Alumni Council has developed & launched India's first 'COVID19 Test Bus' in Mumbai. This unique bus will move across the city and collect samples for rapid testing. Bus is based on the indigenous Koday Technology Stack. *IIT Alumni has partnered with Krsnaa Diagnostics, a leading venture capital-funded diagnostic laboratory for infrastructure and operation support for COVID19 Test Bus. IIT Alumni is a global body of all 23 IITs.*

7. Carlyle to buy 74% stake in SeQuent for Rs 1,587 crore

The US-based private equity firm The Carlyle Group has agreed to acquire 74% stake in SeQuent Scientific Limited, the largest pure-play animal healthcare company in India, for \$210 million (Rs.1587 crore). *Sequent manufactures 26 commercial active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and 1,000 finished dosage formulations (FDFs) of 12 dosage forms with a presence in more than 100 countries. It owns eight manufacturing facilities in India, Spain, Germany, Brazil and Turkey. Carlyle will buy shares at a price of Rs.86 apiece.*

8. Mahindra launches 'Own Online': Digital solution for contactless vehicle sales

Mahindra now offers online solutions starting from car ownership, covering pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase. It is a mass-market digital sales platform that allows customers to check on-road or transaction price offered by dealerships. *Mahindra's pan-India network of 270+ dealers and 900+ touchpoints is integrated with the Own-Online platform. Anand Gopal Mahindra is the chairman of Mahindra Group. It is an easy four-step journey.*

9. 'United We Fight': ICCR's Musical Creation to Fight COVID-19

Bringing together composers, musicians and singers from across India, contributing recordings from homes, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) unveiled a musical creation "United We Fight". This song spreads the message of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. *ICCR: The Indian Council for Cultural was founded in 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, independent India's first Education Minister. It is involved in India's external cultural relations, through cultural exchange with other countries and their people. President: Dr Vinay Sahasrabudde. ICCR is headquartered in New Delhi.*

10. NIT Kurukshetra Implements Enterprises Resource Planning (ERP), SAMARTH

SAMARTH is an **Open Standard Open Source** Architecture, Secure, Scalable and Evolutionary Process Automation Engine for Universities and Higher Educational Institutions. It caters to faculty, students and staff at University/Higher Educational Institutions. *The ERP, SAMARTH, has been implemented at National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra, a participating unit under the World Bank supported Technical Education Quality Improvement Program (TEQIP). The objective of this initiative is to automate the processes of the Institute. SAMARTH has now been implemented at NIT, Kurukshetra in Haryana.*

11. Acer India launches 'Back to School' campaign

Acer India announced its Back to School primarily aimed at helping students and parents to easily procure a new Acer laptop. It has partnered with EduThrill that uses gamification to deliver tests and assessment tools to unleash more fun in learning. Headquarters of Acer: New Taipei City, Taiwan.

12. Pearson India launches MyPedia Alexa skill to help enhance English vocabulary

Digital learning firm Pearson India introduced an interactive skill on **Amazon Alexa** for learners of all age groups to learn English. The Pearson MyPedia skill offers a collection of engaging stories coupled with fun facts, trivia, quizzes and rewards. MyPedia skill enhances the interest of students in the language.

13. Tata Motors' JLR rolls out first Range Rover made under social distancing measures

The first Range Rover made under new social distancing measures in place to combat coronavirus drove off the production line at the Tata Motors' owned Jaguar Land Rover's manufacturing plant in Solihull in the West Midlands region of England. *Jaguar Land Rover Automotive PLC, CEO: Ralf Speth; Headquarters: Coventry, United Kingdom. JLR, the UK's largest carmaker.*

14. ICMR to replace HCQ with anti-HIV drug

Indian Council of Medical Research is considering replacing hydroxychloroquine with anti-HIV drugs to improve immunity & reduce viral replication. After the well-known herb Ashwagandha, now, Kangra tea has been marked as a potential coronavirus blocker. *AIIMS professor Balram Bhargava is the Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Secretary of the Department of Health Research; Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA) was redesignated in 1949 as the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) IHBT of Himachal Pradesh organized a webinar regarding this.*

15. Southern reaches of Western Ghats yield 3 new plant species

Scientists of BSI reported discovery of 3 new plant species - *Eugenia sphaerocarpa* of the Myrtaceae or Rose apple family, *Goniothalamus sericeus* of Annonaceae of custard apple & *Memecylon nervosum* of Melastomataceae, from the Western Ghats in Kerala & TN. *At least 325 globally threatened (IUCN Red Data List) species occur in the Western Ghats. The Ghats traverse the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. It is the result of a recent exploration led by K.A. Sujana.*

16. Patanjali's digital platform 'OrderMe'

Ramdev's Patanjali foray into e-commerce through its app 'OrderMe' started with average 10,000 daily transaction, targeting neighbourhood Kirana shops. The app derives its name from sacred sound and spiritual symbol in Indian religions 'OM' O-Order; M-Me. *The portal will also offer 24X7 free medical advice to*

people from approximately 1,500 doctors of Patanjali, as well as yoga tutorials. Patanjali's CEO Acharya Balakrishna. HQ: Haridwar, Uttarakhand.

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Obituary

1. Indian football legend and former captain Chuni Goswami dies aged 82

Former India football captain Chuni Goswami, who led India to the 1962 Asian Games gold, passed away in Kolkata. Goswami played 50 matches for India as a footballer from 1956 to 1964. India finished runners-up in 1964 Asian Cup under his leadership. He also played first-class cricket for Bengal.

2. Freedom fighter and Social activist Hema Bharali passes away at 102

Assam born freedom fighter and social activist and Padma Hema Bharali passed away at her residence in Guwahati. She was 102 years old. She is known for her initiative to establish the Kasturba Ashram Pub Sarania. She was also known for her contributions for women empowerment.

3. South African anti-apartheid veteran Denis Goldberg dies

Veteran South African anti-apartheid activist Denis Goldberg, who was tried alongside Nelson Mandela, has died at the age of 87. He was convicted of armed resistance to white-minority rule and sentenced to four life terms in 1964. *Apartheid was a legalised form of racism in which white people were privileged above all others. It governed every aspect of life in South Africa & only white people were able to vote until the first democratic elections in 1994 when Mandela was elected. He was a member of the ANC's military wing.*

4. Kannada poet KS Nissar Ahmed passes away

Renowned Kannada poet KS Nissar Ahmed passed away. Nissar had won several awards including Rajyotsava Award in 1981, Padma Shri in 2008. He was the 73rd president for Kannada Sahitya Sammalenna held at Shivamogga in the year 2007. Karnataka CM: B. S. Yediyurappa; Governor: Vajubhai Vala

5. Writer and columnist RV Smith, known for his books on Delhi, passed away at 81

Eminent author and columnist Ronald Vivian Smith, who is best known for his writings on Delhi, passed away at the age of 81. Author to several books on Delhi, of which 'The Delhi That No One Knows' was a best seller. *His last book was a collection of a potpourri of myths, lores and historical tales, in and around Delhi, titled Lingering Charm of Delhi. Smith also wrote poetry and romantic novels.*

6. Justice Ajay Kumar Tripathi passed away due to COVID-19 disease

Justice Ajay Kumar Tripathi, former Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh HC, died after suffering cardiac arrest at AIIMS in Delhi. He had also served as an Additional Advocate General in Bihar. Later, he was elevated as Additional Judge of the Patna High Court. *He was appointed the Judicial Member of the Lokpal on March 23 last year. Current Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh HC- P. R. Ramachandra Menon. He was appointed as the Judicial Member of the Lokpal on 2019.*

7. Former Union Minister Dalit Ezhilmalai passed away at 74

Dalit Ezhilmalai, former Union Minister of State for Health in the Vajpayee Cabinet, died at his residence on the outskirts of Chennai. He was 74. He was the recipient of Sainik Sewa Medal from the President for meritorious service in the Army. *Union Minister of Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, and Health and Family Welfare -Harsh Vardhan. He took part in the Indo- Pakistan War of 1971.*

8. Grammy Winning Soul – singer Betty Wright dies of cancer

Betty Wright, the celebrated Grammy-winning soul singer, died from cancer. She was 66. Wright, known for her hits "Clean Up Woman" and "Tonight Is the Night," was nominated for six Grammys. *She released her first album, "My First Time Around," in 1968 at 15. She produced more than 15 albums throughout her prolific career, one as recently as 2014 called "Living ... Love ... Lies." She won for best R&B song for Where Is the Love.*

9. Eminent Historian Hari Shankar Vasudevan dies

Eminent Historian Hari Shankar Vasudevan had tested positive for the novel coronavirus and succumbed to it. He was 68. He was considered one of the foremost names in Russian and Central Asian history. *Vasudevan was considered an authority of Russian, Central Asian and East Asian history among Indian historians and was also widely recognised in the world. He was involved in projects on Indo-Russian relations.*

10. Jerry Stiller, comedian and 'Seinfeld' actor, passes away

A multitalented performer, who appeared in an assortment of movies, he had for decades teamed with wife Anne Meara. Stiller earned a 1997 Emmy nomination for his indelible 'Seinfeld' performance. Stiller appeared in 26 of Seinfeld's 172 episodes. *Stiller was the son of a bus driver and a housewife. Stiller grew up in Depression era Brooklyn. His inspiration to enter show business came at age 8 when his father took him to see the Marx Brothers in the comedy classic 'A Night at the Opera.'* He reached new heights as the high-strung Frank Costanza.

11. Actor Shafique Ansari Passes Away in Mumbai

Actor Shafique Ansari rose to prominence with his work in several episodes of television show Crime Patrol. The actor resided in Mumbai and passed away after battling with cancer. He was also a member of Cine & TV Artistes' Association.

12. Former national table tennis champion Manmeet Singh Walia passed away

Former national table tennis champion, Manmeet Singh Walia passed away after suffering from a prolonged illness in Montreal, Canada. Manmeet is remembered for his consistent form in the Indian table tennis circuit during the 1980s. He also represented the country at multiple global events. *During his era, the Indian table tennis team had minimum resources then, and practically no overseas exposure. He was unfortunate to have lost to the champion four times.*

13. Professional sumo wrestler Shobushi dies at 28 after contracting Covid-19

The Japan Sumo Association (JSA) confirmed the death of wrestler as Shobushi, whose real name was Kiyotaka Suetake. He is reported to have been the first sumo wrestler to die from the virus, and the first person in his 20s to die in Japan from Covid-19. Japan Sumo Association (JSA) chairman: Hakkaku.

14. Former Miss America, sportscasting pioneer Phyllis Ann George has passed away

Phyllis George, a broadcast television pioneer who became the first female co-anchor of the football pregame show "The NFL Today," has died. She was 70. She had been crowned the 50th Miss America in 1971. *Phyllis Ann George authored five books and she was a founding member of the Henry Clay Center for Statesmanship. Miss World 2019: Toni-Ann Singh.*

15. Marathi writer, playwright, Ratnakar Matkari passes away

Veteran Marathi writer and playwright Ratnakar Matkari, 81, who tested positive for Covid-19, passed away. He is considered a pioneer of the children's drama movement in Marathi. From story books for kids to plays, his work in literature was phenomenal. He was the director and producer of numerous Marathi films.

16. Christian apologist Ravi Zacharias passes away at 74

Renowned Christian apologist and author Ravi Zacharias passed away at the age of 74. Zacharias was born in the south Indian city of Madras (now Chennai) in 1946, into an Anglican family. In 1984, he founded Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM). Anglican means belonging or relating to the Church of England.

17. Eminent homeopathic doctor S. Vidyaprakash passes away

Eminent homeopathic doctor Dr. S. Vidyaprakash (60) passed away. He is the son of Alappuzha native and Akkarakkattil family member Dr. KS Prakash and Dr Vidyavathy Amma. KS Prakash was the former principal of Kozhikode Homeo College. Kozhikode is a coastal city in the south Indian state of Kerala.

18. Spiritual leader Dev Prabhakar Shastri dies in Katni

Noted spiritual leader Dev Prabhakar Shastri, popularly called "Daddaji", died night at "Daddadham" in Katni in Madhya Pradesh. He was undergoing treatment in Delhi and was 82 years old. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

19. Aussie Grand Slam winner Ashley Cooper dies

8-time Grand Slam-winning Australian tennis player Ashley Cooper has died. The Australian, Wimbledon and U.S. singles titleholder, was part of the golden era of Australian men's tennis in 1950s winning four Grand Slams singles titles and four in doubles. *In tennis, the term Grand Slam refers to the accomplishment of winning all four major championships-the championships of Australia, France, Britain (Wimbledon), and the United States-in the same calendar season. Tennis Australia CEO - Craig Tiley.*

20. Renowned vocalist Shyamala G Bhave no more

Renowned vocalist Shyamala G Bhave, who had an equal command over Hindustani and Carnatic music, passed away. She was 79. Her mother Lakshmi Bhave was also a classical vocalist. She was bestowed with the title of 'Ubhaya Gaana Vidushi (expert in both styles)' by Sir M Visvesvaraya, the 19th Diwan of Mysore. She was tutored by A Subbaraya and B Doreswamy.

21. Former U.P. minister Naipal Singh passes away

Former Uttar Pradesh minister Naipal Singh passed away. Mr. Singh had served in the State cabinet headed by Kalyan Singh and Rajnath Singh. In 2014, he became a member of parliament from Rampur Lok Sabha seat. *Yogi Adityanath is the current Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh; Anandiben Patel is serving as the current Governor of Uttar Pradesh. He was 5-time member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council.*

22. Congress MLA from Jharkhand, Rajendra Prasad Singh dies

Rajendra Prasad Singh, the Congress MLA of Bermo constituency of Bokaro district and former Health and Finance Minister of Jharkhand died due to illness in a hospital in Gurugram. Mr Singh represented the Bermo Assembly for the sixth time. Jharkhand Capital: Ranchi. CM: Hemant Soren.

23. Hockey icon Balbir Singh Sr dies at 95

Balbir Singh Sr, one of India's hockey players, died after battling multiple health issues. He was a three-time Olympic Gold medallist. His world record for most goals scored by an individual in men's hockey final of Olympics still remains unbeaten. *Balbir Singh, who captained India at the 1956 Olympic Games, was the first hockey player to be awarded the Padma Shri in 1957. In 1977, he came up with his autobiography 'The Golden Hat Trick: My Hockey Days'.* He was the manager of India's only World Cup-winning side in '75

24. Former Inter coach Gigi Simoni passes away aged 81

Former Inter head coach Gigi Simoni, who led a Ronaldo-inspired team to UEFA Cup glory in 1998, has passed away at the age of 81. Simoni had a well-travelled coaching career and guided seven teams and promotions from Serie B to the Italian topflight. Gigi Simoni was an Italian football official.

25. Sri Lankan Minister Arumugam Thondaman passes away

Ceylon Workers' Congress [CWC] leader and Sri Lanka Cabinet Minister Arumugam Thondaman passed away at 55. Arumugam Thondaman served in President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's government as Minister of Community Empowerment and Estate Infrastructure Development. Sri Lanka President: Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

26. Noted Urdu writer & satirist Mujtaba Hussain no more

Renowned Urdu writer and satirist Mujtaba Hussain, who had returned the Padma Shri award to the union government last year, passed away. Hussain was awarded the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award, in 2007 for his contribution to Urdu literature. *He was often described as the 'Mark Twain' of Urdu. His works were translated into Oriya, Kannada, Hindi, English, Russian and Japanese languages. He started writing in 1961 and had authored about 30 books.*

27. Former Tamil Nadu footballer Shanmugam passes away

Former Tamil Nadu footballer and coach R. Shanmugam passed away aged 77. He attended the FIFA Coca Cola coaching course in 1978 & '91, and the Olympic solidarity course in 1996. He has coached ICF, Tamil Nadu and Indian Railways for the Santosh trophy. He served as President of Football Coach Associations in Chennai

28. Stanley Ho: Hong Kong's 'king of gambling' dies aged 98

Stanley Ho, the Hong Kong tycoon credited with turning Macau into world's gambling capital, has passed away. Ho, one of Asia's richest men, was known as the "king of gambling". He was the head of the world's most lucrative gaming businesses, SJM Holdings. Ho dominated the casino business in Macau.

29. M P Veerendra Kumar dies at 84

M P Veerendra Kumar, the Managing Director of Malayalam daily Mathrubhumi and a member of PTI's Board of Directors, passed away. Veerendra Kumar, a Rajya Sabha MP from Kerala and a former union minister. He was the chairman of Press Trust of India thrice. He was also the director of a news agency.

30. Ajit Jogi, First Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Dies At 74

Ajit Jogi, the former Congress leader, who became the first Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh when the state was born in 2000, has passed away after being hospitalized for three weeks. He was a Veteran Indian Police Service and Indian Administrative Service. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister: Bhupesh Baghel.

31. Veteran lyricist Yogesh, who penned songs for 'Anand' and 'Rajnigandha', dies at 77

Veteran lyricist Yogesh Gaur, who penned the famous 'Kahin Door Jab Din Dhal Jaaye' and 'Zindagi Kaisi Hai Paheli' in "Anand", passed away. He was 77. Known by his first name in film circles, Yogesh was a prominent lyricist in '70s Hindi cinema. Gore's evergreens include 'mili', 'Ek Chhoti Si Baat', etc.,

Person in news

1. Google ropes in former Axis Bank CEO Shikha Sharma for its payments business

Google Pay, the digital payments arm of tech giant Google, has roped in former Axis Bank CEO Shikha Sharma as an advisor. Google offers UPI based payments in India in partnership with 4 major banks- HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank and State Bank of India. *Axis Bank head office in Mumbai, Maharashtra; CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry. Google CEO- Sundar Pichai.*

2. Sania Mirza becomes first Indian to be nominated for Fed Cup Heart award

Tennis star Sania Mirza became the first Indian to be nominated for the Fed Cup Heart Award. Sania is the nominee for the award from the Asia/Oceania Zone along with Indonesia's Priska Madelyn Nugroho. The winner will be declared on May 11. *It recognises those Fed Cup players who represent their countries with distinction, show exceptional courage on court and demonstrate outstanding commitment to the ideals of the competition. International Tennis Federation-Headquarters: London, United Kingdom; President: David Haggerty. The Fed Cup Heart Award was 1st presented at the Final in 2009.*

3. Tata Motors JLR CEO Ralf Speth elected Fellow of UK's Royal Society

Professor Sir Ralf Speth, the Chief Executive of Tata Motors-owned Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), has been elected a Fellow of the prestigious Royal Society in the UK. The honour is in recognition of Speth's advocacy for UK R&D. *Guenter Karl Butschek is the current CEO and Managing Director of Tata Motors Worldwide. Royal Society is the oldest scientific academy founded in 1660.*

4. Karnataka cadre IAS officer Nilaya Mitash gets ADB posting

Senior IAS officer Nilaya Mitash has been posted at the Asian Development Bank as principal operations coordination specialist. The Karnataka cadre IAS officer of the 1991 batch, was working as Resident Commissioner of Karnataka in the national capital. *Founded in 1966, the Asian Development Bank's primary mission is to foster growth and cooperation among countries in the Asia-Pacific Region. The two largest shareholders of the Asian Development Bank are the United States and Japan. Asian Development Bank Headquarters- Manila, Philippines.*

5. India qualifies to become permanent member of UNSC, says Syed Akbaruddin

India is qualified to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, said country's Permanent Representative at the United Nations Syed Akbaruddin, according to reports. T S Trimurti is to succeed Syed Akbaruddin in this post. *The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote. Five permanent members- US, France, UK, Russia and China.*

6. Trump nominates Indian American as US representative to IBRD

U.S. President Donald Trump has nominated Indian American Ashok Michael Pinto as a representative to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Pinto was nominated as US Alternate Executive Director of IBRD for a term of two years. *The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is a global development cooperative owned by 189 member countries. Created in 1944 to help Europe rebuild after World War II, IBRD joins with IDA, to form the World Bank. He is the Counsellor at the US Department of the Treasury.*

7. Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury took charge as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury took charge as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament in New Delhi. He has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Committee for the term beginning on 1 May 2020 and ending on 30 April 2021. *The Public Accounts Committee examines how the Government spends public money. It examines the amount granted by the Parliament and the amount actually spent. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla made the appointment.*

8. Danseuse Leela Samson to head JCB Prize for Literature 2020 jury

Noted Bharatanatyam dancer, former chairperson of Sangeet Natak Akademi and author Leela Samson will head the five-member jury for the ₹25 lakh JCB Prize for Literature 2020. The winner will be announced at the awards ceremony on November 7. *Writer and translator Aruni Kashyap, cultural theorist and author Tejaswini Niranjana, playwright and director Ramu Ramanathan and Deepika Sorabjee, head of the arts and*

culture portfolio at Tata Trusts, are the other members of the jury. *The Far Field* by Madhuri Vijay won the **2019 JCB Prize for Literature**. Mita Kapur, Literary Director, The JCB Prize.

9. Ajinkya Rahane appointed ELSA Corp India brand ambassador

Indian Test team vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane has been named as the brand ambassador of ELSA Corp India, a global Edu-tech company. He was appointed as ELSA Corp's brand ambassador for India, Middle East, ANZ and SAARC. *The company's product ELSA Speak is a mobile app which uses speech recognition technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to help language learners improve their English pronunciation.* Manit Parikh, Country Head - India, ELSA.

10. UNEP extends Dia Mirza's term as Goodwill Ambassador till 2022

The United Nations Environment Programme extended environmentalist and actor-producer Dia Mirza's term as its National Goodwill Ambassador for another two years till the end of 2022. She is also a United Nations Sustainability Development Goals Advocate. *The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading environmental authority in the United Nations system. It was founded on 5 June 1972. Executive Director of UNEP- Inger Andersen. UNEP Headquarters- Nairobi, Kenya.*

11. Delhi HC judge Sangita Dhingra Sehgal named president of Delhi State Consumer Commission

Delhi High Court judge, Justice Sangita Dhingra Sehgal has tendered her resignation from the post following her appointment as President of the Delhi State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission. *Ravi Shankar Prasad is the current Law and Justice minister of India; The Judges of the High Court are appointed by the President. While appointing the judges, the President consults the Chief Justice of India and the Governor of the concerned state. The retirement age of a high court judge is 62 years.*

12. Naomi Osaka becomes world's highest-paid female athlete

Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka has become the highest-paid female athlete in the world, topping American great Serena Williams. Osaka earned \$37.4 million in the last twelve months from prize money and endorsements, \$1.4 million more than Williams. *Since Forbes began tracking women athletes' income in 1990, tennis players have topped the annual list every year. Williams had been the world's highest-paid female athlete in each of the past four years, with Sharapova ruling for the five years before that. FORBES: Forbes is an American business magazine. Published bi-weekly, it features original articles on finance, industry, investing, and marketing topics. Its headquarters is located in Jersey City, New Jersey. Osaka is the winner of 2018 US Open and 2019 Australian Open.*

13. Spanish Striker Aritz Aduriz Announces Retirement from Football

Athletic Bilbao striker Aritz Aduriz announced retirement from football. He played for Spanish clubs Valladolid, Mallorca and Valencia, and is club's sixth-highest scorer with 172 goals. He was a member of Spain's squad at the 2016 European Championship. He scored 4 goals over 2 legs of 2015 Spanish Super Cup final.

14. US tennis star Jamie Hampton announces retirement

Former World Top 25 and US Tennis Star Jamie Hampton has announced her retirement from professional tennis. Hampton played her last official match six years ago, suffered injuries and reached a career-high ranking of World No. 24 in July 2013. *Tennis was first played in France in the 12th century. Jamie also reached one WTA finals doubles finals.*

15. Major Suman Gawani First Indian Peacekeeper to Win UN Military Gender Award

Woman peacekeeper and Indian Army officer, Major Suman Gawani is selected for the United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award. Recognized for her work her campaign against sexual violence, she is the first Indian Peacekeeper to win the award. *Major Gawani is sharing the award with a Brazilian woman Commander Carla Monteiro de Castro Araujo. Created in 2016, the award recognizes the dedication and contribution of individual military peacekeepers in promoting peace and security, and gender protection in the operations. UN Peacekeeping: United Nations Peacekeeping helps countries torn by conflict create conditions for lasting peace. She was described as 'powerful role model' by the UN Chief.*

16. Indian American Scientist Rajiv Joshi Wins 'Inventor of The Year' Award In New York

Prolific Indian American inventor Rajiv Joshi, with more than 250 patented inventions, has bagged the prestigious Inventor of the Year award for his pioneering work in advancing the electronic industry and

improving Artificial Intelligence capabilities. *His invention span from novel interconnect structures and processes for more scaling, machine learning techniques for predictive failure analytics, high bandwidth, high performance and low power integrated circuits and memories and their usage in hardware accelerators, meant for artificial intelligence applications. Award was given by the NY Intellectual Property Law Association.*

17. IRDAI member Nilesh Sathe appointed NHAI finance advisor

Nilesh Sathe, former IRDAI member and veteran Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has joined National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) as Financial Advisor. The government is looking to raise funds for road development from foreign institutional investors. *Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), chief- Subhash Chandra Khuntia; Headquarters: Hyderabad. NHAI Chairman: Sukhbir Singh Sandhu.*

Insurance

1. Maharashtra becomes first state in India to provide free & cashless insurance cover to its people

Maharashtra announced that all citizens will be covered under the state government's health scheme, and it will be the first state to provide free and cashless insurance protection to its people. 85% of the state's population was covered under MJPJAY. *Govt has signed a MoU with the General Insurance Public Sector Association for treatment of COVID-19 patients at private hospitals in Pune & Mumbai. Govt capped the COVID-19 treatment fee as per the Disaster Management Act and Epidemic Act. MJPJAY- Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Jan Arogya Yojana.*

2. IRDAI sets up panel to draft standard professional indemnity policy for insurance intermediaries

IRDAI has set up a panel to frame standard professional indemnity policy for insurance intermediaries. This offers protection to professionals against potential claims for injury/ loss resulting from their advice action for failure to fulfil their duties. *The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) Chairperson: Subhash Chandra Khuntia IRDAI Headquarters- Hyderabad, Telangana.*

3. Edelweiss General Insurance launches pay as you go Motor OD floater policy

Edelweiss General Insurance has launched an app-based Motor Own Damage floater policy, called Edelweiss SWITCH, under regulatory sandbox of IRDAI. It is a driver-based motor insurance policy allows vehicle owners to SWITCH the motor insurance on and off. *Motor Floater Policy: A floater motor insurance policy is a type of insurance that would provide coverage to all owned vehicles under a single plan instead of buying individual plans for each vehicle one owns. It saves time but also frees you from documentation and other processes involved in buying multiple plans. Shanai Ghosh - ED and CEO of Edelweiss General Insurance.*

4. LIC launches revamped PMVVY for senior citizens

After the recent extension of the Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana up to 31 st March 2023 by the government, LIC has launched a modified non-linked, non-participating, pension plan. The policy term is 10 years and the assured rate of interest is 7.4%. *This scheme can be purchased offline as well as online from LIC of India. LIC of India is solely authorized to operate this scheme.*

India & World

1. US places India on priority watch list for intellectual property protection

The US placed India on the 'Priority Watch List' for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its intellectual property framework on the 'long-standing' and 'new challenges' that have negatively affected American right holders over the past year. *The countries placed on the list by the Trump administration on intellectual property (IP) related issues are Algeria, Argentina, Chile, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and Venezuela. US placed 10 countries, including India and China.*

2. Nepal's new political map claims India's territories

According to Ministry of External Affairs Nepal's new official map is "artificial" and unacceptable to India, after Kathmandu unveiled a new political map that claimed Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh of Uttarakhand as part of its sovereign territory. *Nepali diplomatic sources maintain the region of Kalapani and the contiguous areas to the east of the river Kali and Susta on the Uttar Pradesh-Bihar border are the only parts of the nearly 1,800-km India-Nepal boundary that remain unresolved. The area of Susta near Gorakhpur can also be noted in the new map. Kathmandu claims that India has encroached upon this area, claiming tracts of land, and wants Delhi to evacuate population from the location. Nepal, Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli.*

3. Saudi pips Iraq as top oil supplier to India in April: trade

Saudi Arabia replaced Iraq as the top oil supplier to India in April after a gap of three months as refiners in Asia's third largest economy were drawn by deep discounts on Saudi crudes. UAE retained the No.3 spot followed by Nigeria. *Refiners in India, the third largest oil importer, requested higher volumes for April from Saudi Aramco and UAE's Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC), which both increased output while cutting prices last month. The current president of Iraq- Barham Salih; Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown prince of Saudi Arabia. India's oil imports in April totalled 4.63 mn. barrels per day.*

4. UK PM appoints Indian-origin academic as Natural History Museum Trustee

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson appointed Indian-origin academic Yadvinder Malhi as a new Trustee of the Natural History Museum in London. His appointment has been made in accordance with the UK Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. *The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) consists of a group of islands off the western coast of Europe. Malhi is Professor of Ecosystem Science at University of Oxford.*

Environment

1. IMD releases new list of upcoming cyclone names over North Indian Ocean

The IMD has released 169 new names for the tropical cyclones in the Indian Ocean Region. The names were contributed by 13 countries namely India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Thailand, Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Pakistan, Bangladesh & Iran. **Mrutyunjay Mohapatra** - chief of India Meteorological Department (IMD); Formed: 1875; Parent department: Ministry of Earth Sciences. Indian Meteorological Department is headquartered in New Delhi.

2. Kashmir Saffron receives GI Tag

The Saffron cultivated in the Kashmir valley-known as a spice, cosmetics and health rejuvenator- has received Geographical Indication Tag. Gorakhpur Teracotta, Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai and Black rice of Manipur also received GI tag recently. A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. **Darjeeling Tea** was the first Indian product to get the geographical indication tag. It is the only saffron in the world that is grown at 1,600 m.

3. IIG develops new simulation code to study electric field structure in Earth's Magnetosphere

Scientists at the Indian Institute of Geomagnetism have developed a generalized one-dimensional fluid simulation code capable of studying a wide spectrum of coherent electric field structures in near-earth plasma environment or earth's magnetosphere. The 1st magnetic observations in India were started at Madras in 1822, followed by the recordings at Simla (1841), Trivandrum (1841) and Colaba (1841). IIG conducts basic and applied research in Geomagnetism and allied fields like Solid Earth Geomagnetism. The study can be useful in planning of future space missions.

4. US Scientists discover 1st known aquatic Dinosaur 'Spinosaurus aegyptiacus'

According to the study published in the journal Nature, a team of United States scientists have discovered a carnivorous swimming dinosaur named 'Spinosaurus aegyptiacus' at the Kem region of the Moroccan Sahara in North Africa. The predatory Spinosaurus, which could grow up to 23 feet (7 meters) long, had a broad, paddle-like tail that behaved more like the tails of today's crocodiles than that of other carnivorous dinosaurs. Spinosaurus is said to be lived about 95 million years ago.

5. Union Agriculture Minister calls for farmers' movement on integrated soil nutrient management based on Soil Health Card

Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar has called for making integrated soil nutrient management a farmers' movement. He directed running mission mode awareness campaigns on increasing use of bio and organic fertilisers. Soil Health Card Scheme, a scheme launched by the Government of India in 19 February 2015. He advocated the setting up of village level Soil Testing Labs.

6. Black panther spotted in Goa's Netravali sanctuary

A Black panther was spotted in Goa's Netravali sanctuary. While the area is a known habitat of tigers, this is for the first time a Black Panther has been captured in camera in Netravali sanctuary. Netravali is an important tributary of River Zuari. Bhagwan Mahavir National Park, Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary, Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary, Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary, Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, Anshi National Park are located in Goa. Goa Chief Minister- Pramod Sawant.

7. Tiger population in Sunderbans rises to 96: Report

The latest estimation of tiger numbers in the Indian Sunderbans indicates an increase in the population of big cats. According to the West Bengal Forest Department, the tiger count for the year 2019-20 rose to 96, from 88 in 2018-19. 23 tigers were found in 24 Parganas (South) Division and 73 tigers were recorded inside the four divisions of the Sunderban Tiger Reserve. Sunderbans delta is the only mangrove forest in the world inhabited by tigers. Sunderbans delta spread over India and Bangladesh.

8. Three new species of fishes found in Western Ghats

New research using morphological and genetic analysis based on a fresh collection of Dawkinsia, a genus of cyprinid fish specimens from the Western Ghats, has resulted in the discovery of three new fish species. Scientists from the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) and the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune, have unravelled

the diversity in the filament barbs of the Western Ghats. They are found in the rivers of peninsular India and Sri Lanka, where nine species are known under the genus Dawkinsia. They are popular among aquarium hobbyists and are wild-collected and captive-bred for trade. Filament barbs are a group of small freshwater fishes.

9. National Endangered Species Day on May 15th, 2020

Endangered Species Day is an opportunity for people of all ages to celebrate and learn about endangered species and how to protect them. Due to the global coronavirus crisis. *According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, no less than 40 per cent species of animals, insects and plants are at the risk of extinction across the globe. **Endangered animals in India, Indian Bison, Lion Tailed Macaque, Kashmir Red Stag, Nilgiri Tahr, One Horned Rhinoceros, Red Panda, Bengal Tiger, Asiatic Lion, Snow Leopard, Blackbuck.** It is observed on third Friday of May annually.*

10. 40 gharials released in Ghaghara river amid lockdown

40 gharials were released in the Ghaghara river by Uttar Pradesh forest division, amid the nationwide lockdown due to the novel coronavirus disease. They are critically endangered in the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Species. *The IUCN head office is in Gland, Switzerland. Established in 1964, The International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species is the world's most comprehensive inventory of the global conservation status of plant and animal species; Gharials, sometimes called gavials, are a type of Asian crocodilian distinguished by their long, thin snouts. A major chunk of gharials is found in the Chambal river.*

11. Centre launches scheme to solarise entire Konark Temple, Konark town

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has launched a scheme for solarisation of Konark Sun Temple and Konark town in Odisha. *The scheme envisages a 10-megawatt (MW) grid-connected solar project & various solar off-grid applications such as solar trees. The scheme envisages setting up of the 10-MW grid connected solar project and various solar off-grid applications such as solar trees, solar drinking water kiosks and off-grid solar power plants with battery storage, with a 100 per cent central financial assistance (CFA) support of around Rs 25 crore from the Government of India through the MNRE. Implementation of this project will be done by the Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA). Power and New & Renewable Energy Minister R K Singh.*

12. GoI launches 5 initiatives towards Conservation of Biodiversity

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched five initiatives on conservation of biodiversity. The newly launched 'Biodiversity Samrakshan Internship Programme' aims at engaging 20 students in post graduate programme for a period of 1 year. *NEP Campaign on Illegal Trafficking of Endangered Species: 'Not all Animals Migrate by Choice' was also launched; A Webinar Series on 'Biodiversity Conservation and Biological Diversity Act, 2002' was also launched along with the WWF Model Conference of Parties (MCoP); Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change- Shri Prakash Javadekar. The year 2020 is called Super Year for Biodiversity.*

13. NHPC Board Approves Foray into Solar Energy Business

State-run hydro power giant NHPC has announced that its board has approved the proposal to foray into the solar energy business. The firm is mainly into hydropower generation. *NHPC presently has an installation base of 7,071.2 MW from 24 power stations. NHPC Ltd is a Mini-Ratna Category-I Enterprise of the Government of India. NHPC Chairman: Abhay Kumar Singh. HQ: Faridabad.*

Apps & Portals

1. Agra Smart City of UP launched GIS dashboard to monitor COVID-19 hot-spots

Agra Smart City created a GIS dashboard to show various hotspots, heat maps, positive cases, recovered cases, etc of COVID-19. This dashboard developed on IGis platform is an indigenous technology which brings GIS, Image Processing, Photogrammetry & CAD. *Uttar Pradesh-Capital: Lucknow; Governor: Anandiben Patel; Chief minister: Yogi Adityanath. GIS- Geographic Information Systems.*

2. DST launches 'YASH' with focus on COVID-19

National Council for Science & Technology Communication (NCSTC), Department of Science & Technology (DST) has launched a programme on health and risk communication 'Year of Awareness on Science & Health (YASH)' with focus on COVID-19. *Manoj Kr Patariya, head, National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC). Dr. Harsh Vardhan, minister of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Earth Sciences. The programme is aimed at minimizing risks at all levels.*

3. Ministry of Coal launches Project Monitoring Unit for facilitating early operationalisation of coal mines

MoC launched a PMU for facilitation of early operationalisation of coal mines allocated by the Government. This is an important step forward to promote Ease of Doing Business as it will support in obtaining timely approval to operationalise the mines. *PMU has been launched for helping the allocatees of coal mines in obtaining various clearances required from the Central/State government authorities for operationalization of coal mines. This will lead to ramping up of coal production in the country. Pralhad Joshi- Minister of Coal, Mines & Parliamentary Affairs.*

4. Union minister Nitin Gadkari launches 'MSME Bank of Ideas, Innovation and Research' portal

Shri Nitin Gadkari launched Bank of Schemes, Ideas, Innovation and Research portal (<http://ideas.msme.gov.in/>) on MSMEs through Video Conference from Nagpur. The Portal gives access to all Schemes of Union, State and UT Governments. *Users who have idea, innovation or Research with him/her can share it on this platform which will be reviewed by the concerned Officer and publish them for public view. Nitin Gadkari- Minister of Road transport & Highways and MSME.*

5. Government launches e-retail platform for rural India

In a bid to improve the mobility of essential commodities in the rural and remote areas during the covid-19 lockdown, the Central government has started an e-commerce platform for the retail stores. The Common Service Centres have led the online platform. *CSC is a Digital India vehicle for delivering e-services to rural and remote locations. People can order through a curated application that has been provided to village-level entrepreneurs (VLEs). Dinesh Tyagi is the CEO of CSC.*

6. Ministry of Shipping launches new website-shipmin.gov.in

Ministry of Shipping has revamped its website shipmin.gov.in. The new website is based on open source technology and is deployed on NIC cloud Meghraj. The website is designed as per GIGW issued by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. *Social Media Integration with better video uploading facility is a new feature in this website. Mansukh L. Mandaviya- Union Minister of Shipping. GIGW- Guidelines for Indian Government Websites.*

7. Aarogya Setu launches Mitr Telemedicine Portal for consultations

Indian Government has launched a new Mitr portal to offer free telemedicine & consultation services for coronavirus-related inquiries in Aarogya Setu app. Tech Mahindra & Tata Group have reportedly helped in developing the portal. *The company has tied up with eSanjeevaniOPD, Swasth, StepOne, Tata Bridgital Health, and Tech Mahindra's Connectsense TeleHeath platform in order to provide online consultation. It will allow the users to book doorstep lab tests.*

8. 'The Saras Collection' launched on government e-marketplace portal to showcase daily utility products by rural SHGs

The Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj & Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar, launched 'The Saras Collection' on the Government e Marketplace (GeM) portal to showcase daily utility products by rural SHGs. *Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India in June*

2011 as a restructured version of Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY). It is a unique initiative of GeM and DAY-NRLM.

9. UP govt makes Arogya Setu app must for those in hotspot areas

Uttar Pradesh government has made it compulsory to download Arogya Setu app for those living in hotspot areas of the state. State government has also issued instructions regarding opening of offices and resuming work in industrial areas. *Aarogya Setu is a mobile application developed by the Government of India to connect essential health services with the people of India in the fight against COVID-19. App was launched on April 2020. UP Chief Minister- Yogi Adityanath, Governor- Anandiben Patel.*

10. BharatPe launches two apps to limit the need to touch handsets for checking transactions

BharatPe announced 2 additional features on its app for the merchants- Paisa Bolega & BharatPe Balance. With Paisa Bolega, shopkeepers can hear aloud instant confirmation of all payments received through their BharatPe QR, without touching the phone. *BharatPe is a financial technology (Fintech) startup that provides a one-stop solution for merchants to collect UPI payments via multiple payment apps in India. They can start receiving payments to their bank accounts instantly once they have signed up. BharatPe Balance- Shows total money available to the shopkeeper.*

11. Whatsapp payments to roll out with ICICI, HDFC and Axis Bank UPI handles by May end

Whatsapp is set to roll out its Payment facility in India in loop with three private sector lenders, namely ICICI, HDFC and Axis Bank. Whatsapp currently has a user base of 400 million customers whereas UPI has above 100 million users under it. *ICICI Bank CEO: Sandeep Bakhshi; HDFC Bank CEO: Aditya Puri ;Axis Bank CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry. Whatsapp Cofounders- Brian Acton and Jan Koum.*

12. India launches GARUD portal for fast-track approval to COVID-19 related drone operations

The union civil aviation ministry and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) have launched GARUD (Government Authorisation for Relief Using Drones) portal for fast-track approval to government agencies for COVID-19-related drone operations. *Civil aviation ministry Officeholder: Hardeep Singh Puri (Union Minister); DGCA chief-Arun Kumar. Authorities use drones for surveillance in several cities.*

13. West Bengal govt launches 'Exit App' for stranded people of other states

The West Bengal government launched an app for people from other states who are stranded in West Bengal due to the lockdown and want to return to their native place. Persons willing to go back to their native states can apply online through this app. *Gorumara National Park, Jaldapara National Park, Neora Valley National Park, Sunklekhola National Park are located in West Bengal. West Bengal CM- Mamata Banerjee.*

14. Govt starts Aarogya Setu IVRS services to cater to people having feature phone or landline

Union Government has started Aarogya Setu IVRS services to cater to people having feature phone or landline. This service is available across the country. Based on the responses given, citizens will also get an SMS indicating their health status. *Aarogya Setu Mobile App is developed by the Ministry of Electronics and IT. It enables people to assess themselves the risk of their catching the Corona Virus infection. The service is implemented in 11 regional languages.*

15. UP government launches migrant portal and app jansunwai.up.nic.in

Uttar Pradesh Jansunwai launched portal jansunwai.up.nic.in. The purpose is to coordinate smoothly the movement of migrant workers who wish to return to their native places and are stranded due to the COVID-19 lockdown. *Rihand Thermal Power Station is located at Rihandnagar, Sonbhadra district, Uttar Pradesh. Owned and operated by NTPC, the coal-fired power plant has an installed capacity of 3,000MW. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.*

16. Uttar Pradesh government launches 'Ayush Kavach' app

An application by the name of 'Ayush Kavach' was launched in UP CM Yogi Adityanath. The app is designed to tell users how commonly available kitchen ingredients such as tulsi & cinnamon can be used to enhance the body's immunity to fight against COVID-19. *Dudhwa National Park is located in Uttar Pradesh. "National Park" means an area declared, whether under sec.35 or sec.38 or deemed, under sub-section (3) of sec.66. to be declared, as a National Park. Uttar Pradesh Governor- Anandiben Patel.*

17. Kerala launches portal for non-residents to book cabs for home

Kerala Tourism launched an online platform to enable non-residents Keralites to book vehicles of tour operators to travel back to the state. Keralites stranded in other parts of the country can submit enquiries through the department's website. *National parks like Eravikulam and Periyar are located in Kerala. Kerala CM: Pinarayi Vijayan. Governor: Arif Mohammad Khan.*

18. Tencent launches video conferencing app VooV Meeting in India

China's Tencent launched VooV Meeting, a Zoom-like video conferencing platform with advanced features across Apple App Store and Google Play in more than 100 countries. The app allows attendees a duration per meeting of 9999 minutes without any charges. *PUBG Mobile (PUBGM) is an online multiplayer battle royale game developed by Tencent. Headquarters: Shenzhen, China. The platform supports up to 25 attendees at a time.*

19. Tata Capital launches voicebot 'TIA' on Whatsapp

Tata Capital has launched the voicebot "TIA" on WhatsApp. The voicebot offers a range of services to its customers like opting for a new loan or getting queries resolved etc. TIA, the Voicebot is also available on Alexa and also as a Chatbot. *Through TIA on Whatsapp, the customers can view their account and EMI details, download documents instantly, update their details, get instant responses for any product related queries and apply for a new loan or for a new product and. Rajiv Sabharwal, Managing Director & CEO Tata Capital.*

20. "Tatpar" scheme in Ranchi to transport migrant workers

Over 140 migrant workers were sent to their native places on buses, a day after the "Tatpar" programme was launched by the Ranchi district administration to ease their tiresome journey on foot. *The administration also launched a helpline -1950. Under the programme, officials collect information about those walking on national highways or on any other road to provide them transport facilities. Ranchi capital of Jharkhand, Chief Minister Hemant Soren.*

21. HRD Min Launches CBSE handbooks on Cybersecurity for Students, 21st Century Skills

Union HRD Minister Ramesh Nishank released three handbooks - 'Cyber safety - A handbook for students'; 'In pursuit of Excellence' and '21st Century skills', by the CBSE on measures taken by the board to adopt value-based global standards of education. *'Cyber safety-A Handbook for Students of Secondary & Senior Secondary Schools' is prepared to create awareness about cyber security among the students from class IX to XII; 'In Pursuit of Excellence- A Handbook for Principals', the principals of schools will be made aware of the Board's systems and other useful information. It will ensure better coordination between schools and CBSE administration; '21st Century Skills: A Handbook' through which CBSE will make everyone aware of 21st century skills and motivate them to use them in their daily life. Ramesh 'Pokhriyal' Nishank Constituency: Haridwar, Uttarakhand.*

22. Facebook launches CatchUp, an audio-only calling app

Facebook's internal R&D group, NPE Team launched a new app called CatchUp that makes it easier for friends and family in the U.S. to coordinate phone calls or set up group calls with up to 8 people. CatchUp does not need a Fb account to use the service. *Facebook CEO: Mark Zuckerberg; Headquarters: Menlo Park, California, United States. CatchUp is an audio-only service and uses phone's contact list.*

Acquisitions & Mergers

1. Manulife picks 49% stake in Mahindra AMC for Rs 265 crore

Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services (Mahindra Finance) said global financial services group Manulife has acquired 49 per cent stake in its wholly owned subsidiary Mahindra Asset Management Company. *This agreement was announced in June 2019. Ashutosh Bishnoi, MD & CEO, Mahindra AMC; Headquarters- Mumbai, Maharashtra; Manulife Financial Corporation-Headquarters: Toronto, Canada. Manulife has invested \$35 million to pick up 49% stake.*

2. RIL raises stake in US-based SkyTran to 26.3%

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd has increased its stake in US-based SkyTran Inc, a venture-funded technology company that develops pod car transport systems. It has raised its holding in SkyTran to 26.31% from 17.37% on a fully diluted basis. SkyTran Inc provides passenger transit services. *The Company offers personal rapid transit systems which moves passengers in safe and economical manner. SkyTran aims to solve traffic congestion problem.*

3. CCI approves BP Global's proposed 49% acquisition of Reliance BP Mobility Limited

CCI approved the proposed combination between BP Global Investments Ltd and Reliance BP Mobility Ltd under **Section 31(1) of the Competition Act 2002**. BP Global is an investment holding company and holds shares in subsidiaries and associated companies. *The combination includes the subsequent proposed acquisition by BP Global of an aggregate 49 per cent of the fully diluted paid-up equity share capital and voting rights in and of RBPML by way of acquisition of existing equity shares of RBPML from RIL. RBPML doesn't conduct any business now anywhere in the world.*

4. Private equity firm Silver Lake to invest Rs 5,655.75 Cr in Reliance Jio Platforms

US private equity firm Silver Lake will invest Rs 5,655.75 Cr in Jio Platforms for a 1.15% stake, the 2nd deal after Facebook's share acquisition plan less than two weeks ago. Silver Lake has \$40-b in combined assets under management and committed capital. *Jio Platforms, a wholly owned subsidiary of Reliance, comprises mainly its telecom business under Reliance Jio Infocomm, which is the largest in the country with over 388 million subscribers. Jio will have external investors holding an 11.14% stake.*

5. Polycab India buys 50% stake in Ryker from Trafigura

Polycab India (PIL) has signed an agreement with Trafigura, Singapore, to acquire 50% stake in Ryker Base thereby terminating the existing joint venture. Ryker is involved in manufacturing of copper wire rods with a total annual capacity of 225,000 MT. *Copper is an important element of Polycabs business and is used extensively in wires, cables as well as most of fast moving electrical goods (FMEG) products. T. Jaisinghani-Chairman & Managing Director of Polycab.*

6. Kalpataru completes sale of 100 pc stake in Kalpataru Satpura Transco to CLP India

Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited has successfully completed sale of its entire stake in Kalpataru Satpura Transco Private Limited (KSTPL) to CLP India Private Limited. CLP India is owned by CLP Group and Caisse de dpt et placement du Qubec (CDPQ). *In July 2019, KPTL said that it has entered into binding agreements with Canada's institutional fund manager CDPQ's arm CLP India to sell its stake in three power transmission assets -- KSTPL, Alipurduar Transmission Ltd (ATL) and Kohima Mariani Transmission Ltd (KMTL) referred jointly as SPVs -- for an estimated enterprise value of Rs 3,275 crore. CDPQ is one of Canada's leading institutional fund managers.*

7. Apple Buys Virtual-Reality Streaming Upstart NextVR

Apple Inc. has acquired virtual-reality streaming company NextVR Inc., a signal of the tech giant's continued ambitions in virtual- and augmented-reality technologies. Acquisition was expected to come in at around \$100 million. *Apple hasn't since announced any new developments in VR, and SteamVR recently ended support for macOS. Apple CEO: Tim Cook.*

8. GCPL acquires balance 25% stake in Kenya-based Canon Chemicals

FMCG major Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL) announced the acquisition of the balance 25% stake in Kenya-based Canon Chemicals Ltd for an undisclosed sum. Through this transaction, Canon Chemicals would now be a wholly owned subsidiary of the company. *GCPL: Godrej Consumer Products Ltd is an Indian consumer goods company based in Mumbai. Canon Chemicals: Canon Chemicals Limited is located*

in Nairobi, Kenya and is part of the Manufacturing Sector Industry. Godrej Group firm had earlier acquired 75% stake in the company.

9. GA to invest ₹6,598.38 cr. for 1.34% stake in Jio Platforms

General Atlantic, a leading global growth equity firm, has agreed to invest ₹6598.38 crores in Jio Platforms Ltd for a 1.34% stake, valuing the company at ₹5.16 lakh crore. With this Jio Platforms raised ₹67194.75 crores from leading technology investors. *General Atlantic is a global growth equity firm that invests in the technology, consumer, financial services and healthcare sectors. The investment in Jio Platforms will be GA's largest investment in Asia. Jio Platforms has raised stakes from leading technology investors, including Facebook, Silver Lake Partners, Vista Equity Partners and General Atlantic, in less than four weeks. Bill Ford - CEO of General Atlantic. HQ: New York, USA.*

10. Facebook buys Giphy, will integrate GIF library with Instagram

Facebook acquired Giphy, a popular website for making and sharing animated images or GIFs. Giphy will now work as part of the Instagram team. Its GIF library will be integrated with the photo-sharing application as well as with Facebook's other apps. *Giphy provides built-in search and sticker functions for Instagram. The company will continue to operate in the same way and become part of the Instagram group. Giphy was founded by Alex Chung and Jace Coke in Feb '13.*

11. Tata to buy out PepsiCo's stake in JV NourishCo Beverages

Tata Consumer Products Ltd to acquire the stake of PepsiCo in their joint venture NourishCo Beverages. NourishCo, a 50:50 joint venture of TCPL and PepsiCo, operates in the healthy hydration space and has brands like Tata Gluco Plus and Tata Water Plus. NourishCo formed in 2010 as joint venture between TCPL & PepsiCo

12. Accenture Acquires Byte Prophecy to Enhance AI and Digital Analytics Capabilities

Accenture acquired Byte Prophecy, an automated insights and big data analytics company based in Ahmedabad, to meet the demand for enterprise-scale AI and digital analytics solutions. This is to add nearly 50 data science & data engineering experts. *The move will deepen existing consulting and technology capabilities that help clients in areas such as data foundations and advanced analytics. Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services in strategy and consulting, interactive, technology and operations, with digital capabilities across all of these services. Accenture, a Fortune 500 company headquartered in Dublin.*

13. Microsoft acquires robotic process automation platform Softomotive

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella confirmed that the company has acquired Softomotive, a software robotic automation platform. It would become part of Microsoft's Power Automate platform. Until now, Power Automate did not feature any desktop automation tools. *Softomotive's WinAutomation platform will be freely available to Power Automate users with what Microsoft calls an RPA attended license in Power Automate. Softomotive was founded in 2005 by Marios Stavropoulos.*

14. Airtel acquires stake in conversational AI startup Voicezen

Bharti Airtel has acquired a strategic stake in Voicezen, an early stage startup focused on conversational AI technologies. The acquisition has been made by the company under Airtel Startup Accelerator Program. *Voicezen has been working on developing advanced solutions that leverage machine learning, AI, speech to text and voice technologies to offer real time analytics to help brands serve customers better. Adarsh Nair, Chief Product Officer - Bharti Airtel.*

15. Tata Power arm TPIPL acquires 10% equity in ABV, total stake now 50%

Tata Power International Pte Ltd (TPIPL) has acquired 10% stake in Adjaristsqali Netherlands BV from the International Finance Corporation for USD 150,000 (about Rs 1.13 crore). The 10% stake acquisition has increased TPIPL's shareholding in ABV to 50%. *Tata Power is one of India's largest integrated power companies, and together with its subsidiaries, has a total installed capacity of 10,763 MW; Registered Office- Mumbai, Maharashtra; CEO & Managing Director- Praveer Sinha; ABV is a subsidiary of Clean Energy Invest; Clean Energy Invest AS (CEI) is a Norwegian single purpose company, which holds a perpetual licence to build, own and operate the hydropower potential on the Adjaristsqali River and its tributaries in Adjara, Georgia. ABV owns 100 per cent stake in Adjaristsqali Georgia LLC (AGL).*

16. CCI approves acquisition of Emami Cement Limited by Nuvoco Vistas Corporation Limited

CCI approves acquisition of 100% of the total issued and paid up share capital of Emami Cement Ltd, on fully diluted basis, by Nuvoco Vistas Corp Ltd. NVCL is a Nirma promoter group company engaged in manufacturing and sale of variety of grey cements. *The objectives of the Competition Act are sought to be achieved through the Competition Commission of India, which has been established by the Central Government with effect from 14th October 2003. CCI consists of a Chairperson and 6 Members appointed by the Central Government. CCI Headquarters: New Delhi. Chairman: Ashok Kumar Gupta.*

17. KKR to invest Rs 11,367 crore in Jio Platforms for 2.32% stake

Private equity firm KKR is set to invest Rs 11367 crore in Jio Platforms for a 2.32% stake. This will be the fifth investment in Reliance company business in rapid succession, following Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners and General Atlantic. *India has been a key strategic market for KKR with a history of investing in the country since 2006; Mukesh Ambani is the chairman and MD of RIL. It is KKR's largest investment in Asia. KKR was founded in 1976.*

18. Intel acquires Rivet Networks, the maker of 'Killer' WiFi cards

Intel has bought the company behind the popular Killer brand of Wi-Fi products found in laptops from Alienware, Dell, Lenovo, HP and more. Rivet Networks, which was previously acquired by Qualcomm in 2011, makes network interface cards (NICs). *Killer is a name typically associated with the Wi-Fi cards found in high-performance PCs; U.S. Intel Corporation is an American multinational corporation and technology company headquartered in Santa Clara, California, in Silicon Valley; Robert Swan is the CEO of Intel. Its technology boasts gaming-centric features.*

19. RITES signs pact to acquire 24% stake in Indian Railway Station Development

State-owned RITES Ltd (Rail India Technical and Economic Service), headquartered in Gurgaon, signed an agreement to buy **24% stake** in Indian Railway Station Development Corp. Ltd, the company tasked with redeveloping railway stations across the country. *RITES: Rail India Technical and Economic Service is an engineering consultancy company, specializing in the field of transport infrastructure. It was established in 1974 by the Government of India. It is headquartered in Gurgaon, India. Rajeev Mehrotra is the chairman & managing director of RITES Ltd.*

20. ITC signs Share Purchase Agreement to acquire Sunrise Foods

The ITC Limited has entered into a Share Purchase Agreement to acquire 100% of equity share capital of Sunrise Foods Private Ltd, dealing with spices, under the trademark 'Sunrise'. *The ITC's Aashirvaad is one of leading producers and exporters of spices. Indian Tobacco Company CEO: Sanjiv Puri. Headquarters: Kolkata.*

21. IL&FS to sell 26% stake in ONGC Tripura Power

Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services group sought expression of interest from potential buyers to sell its entire 26% stake in gas-based power plant ONGC Tripura Power Company Ltd. The proposed sale is part of IL&FS' ongoing asset monetisation plan. *OTPC operates a fully operational natural gas-based 726.6 MW power plant located in Palatana, Tripura, supplying power to the energy deficit region of northeast India. ONGC Tripura is one of India's largest gas-based power projects.*

22. NCLT approves sale of IL&FS stake in GIFT City to Gujarat govt

National Company Law Tribunal has allowed the debt-ridden IL&FS to sell its 50 per cent stake in the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City, India's first operational smart city, to the Gujarat government for an aggregate consideration of Rs 32.70 crore. *Sale of stake in the GIFT City is a part of the resolution process of the IL & FS, which along with its over 300 companies had a cumulative debt of ₹ 94,215 crore. NCLT: The National Company Law Tribunal is a quasi-judicial body in India that adjudicates issues relating to Indian companies. The tribunal was established under the Companies Act 2013 and was constituted on 1 June 2016 by the government of India and is based on the recommendation of the V. Balakrishna Eradi committee on law relating to the insolvency and the winding up of companies ; Chairperson: Justice Bansi Lal Bhat. GIFT City is India's international financial services centre.*

23. Ola Electric acquires Etergo, looks to launch electric scooters in India by 2021

Ola Electric Mobility Pvt Ltd, electric vehicle arm of Ola acquired Amsterdam-based Etergo BV, manufacturer of electric scooters. With this acquisition, Ola Electric will enter the premium electric two-wheeler market and manufacture these scooters. Founded in 2014, Etergo has developed an all-electric state-of-the-art 'AppScooter', which was first revealed in 2018. *The AppScooter uses swappable high energy density batteries to deliver a range up to 240km. Ola plans to bring these electric scooters on Indian roads by the start of 2021, with manufacturing units set up in the country. In July last year, Ola Electric became one of the fastest unicorns of the Indian startup ecosystem after it raised over ₹1,725 crores (about \$250 million) from SoftBank, pegging the valuation of the entity to a little more than \$1 billion. Bhavish Aggarwal - Founder and chairman of Ola Electric.*

24. Apple buys machine learning specialist Inductiv to bolster Siri, AI projects

Adding to a mounting number of AI-related acquisitions, Apple recently purchased Ontario-based Inductiv to work on Siri and machine learning initiatives. Inductiv developed a system that relies on AI to automatically identify and correct errors in data. Inductiv develops AI that can identify and correct errors in large data sets. *Inductiv's technology may be used to clean data collated from users, which can improve Apple's machine learning capabilities and deliver better voice recognition through Siri. Apple CEO: Tim Cook. Headquarters: California, USA.*

25. Cisco acquires ThousandEyes for around \$1 billion to make deeper push into software

Cisco continued its software acquisition spree, announcing the purchase of ThousandEyes, founded by Mohit Lad, whose technology helps companies monitor their network for outages. Cisco has been focused on expanding its portfolio of cloud-based software. *The purchase follows Cisco's 2017 acquisition of AppDynamics for \$3.7 billion, which brought in software that helps companies spot bugs in their apps and quickly fix them. Cisco CEO: Chuck Robbins. HQ: California, USA.*

26. Yes Bank Acquires 24% Stake in Dish TV After Invoking Pledged Shares

Yes Bank, after the invocation of pledged shares, has acquired 44,53,48,990 equity shares of Dish TV India constituting approximately 24.19% of the post-issue paid-up share capital as at March 31, 2020. Dish TV is a DTH entertainment service provider. *DishTV India is operated by the Zee Group and the Videocon Group; Anil Dua, Executive Director & Group CEO, Dish TV India Limited. Yes Bank CEO: Prashant Kumar.*

QUICK LEARNERS

BANKING

POLICY/EXCHANGE RATE & RESERVE RATIO	PERCENTAGE
Repo Rate	4.00%
Reverse Repo Rate	3.35%
Marginal Standing Facility Rate (MSF)	4.25%
Bank Rate	4.25%
Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)	3.0%
Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)	18.0%

ECONOMY

ORGANIZATION/ PARAMETERS	RATE/ FIGURES
Moody's (India's economic growth)	0.2% (CY20), 0% (FY21)
Moody's (China's economic growth)	1% (FY20), 7.1% (FY21)
ICRA (India's economic growth)	Contract by 20% in June quarter, 2% fall in FY21
Nomura (India's economic growth)	-5.2% (FY21)
Goldman Sachs (India's economic growth)	0.4% (FY21)
Nomura (Fiscal Deficit)	7% of GDP (FY21)
Goldman Sachs (India's economic growth)	Contract by 5% (FY21)
Bank of America (Fiscal Deficit)	5.8% of the GDP (FY21)
Bank of America (India's economic growth)	0.5% (FY21)
United Nations (India's economic growth)	1.2% (CY20)
United Nations (Global economy growth)	Contract sharply by 3.2% (CY20)
SBI research report (Fiscal Deficit)	7.9% (CY20)
Bernstein (India's economic growth)	7% (FY20-21)
ICRA (India's economic growth)	1.9% in Q4 and 4.3% in FY20
Fitch Ratings (India's economic growth)	Contract by 0.8% (FY21)
CRISIL (India's economic growth)	Contract by 1.8% (FY21)
SBI Research (India's economic growth)	Contract by 6.8% (FY21)
Foreign direct investment in India	13% (FY2019-20)

APPOINTMENTS

APPOINTMENT	POST
Shrikant Vaidya	Indian Oil's new Chairman
Deepak Mittal	India's next Ambassador to Qatar
Deepak Kumar	RBL Chief Risk Officer
Shobhana Narasimhan	International Honorary Member to the American Academy of Arts and Science
Ramesh Babu	NTPC director operations
Pradip Kumar	CMD of IREDA
Sriram Venkataraman	CFO Flipkart Commerce
Sanjay Kumar Jha	CMD of Midhani
Krishnan Ramachandran	MD & CEO of Max Bupa
Kusal Roy	Standard Chartered Bank's head of retail banking
Pandya Ashwinkumar Balvantray	Non-official Independent Director on the Board of National Fertilizers Ltd
DPS Negi	Director General of Labour Bureau
Tarun Bajaj	Nominated to RBI Central Board
Stuart Levey	CEO of Facebook-backed Libra cryptocurrency
Mustafa al-Kadhimi	Prime Minister of Iraq
Narinder Batra	Gets extension as FIH president
Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi	Secretary, Ministry of New & Renewable Energy
Manoj Ahuja	CBSE Chairperson
Kumar Sangakkara	Second term as MCC president
V. Vidyavathi	Archaeological Survey of India Director-General
Akhil Kumar	Re-inducted into NADA disciplinary panel
Roberto Azevedo	Quits as WTO chief a year early
Zubair Iqbal	MD of J-K Bank
Paramjit Kahlon	Liberty Steel CEO
Kevin Mayer	TikTok C.E. O
Dilip Oommen	President of Indian Steel Association
Harsh Vardhan	Head of WHO Executive Board
Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha	Ayush Secretary gets two years extension
Moeketsi Majoro	Sworn in as Lesotho's new prime minister
Govinda Rajulu Chintala	NABARD chairman
Abhas Jha	Key World Bank position on Climate Change, Disaster Management in South Asia
Jahnabi Phookan	FICCI FLO National President
Carmen Reinhart	World Bank chief economist and vice president
Jean-Francois Van Boxmeer	Vodafone chairman
P Kumaran	India's High Commissioner to Singapore

Marcos Troyjo	NDB's new President
Leo Puri	Chairman of JP Morgan at South and South-East Asia
Mahesh Palashikar	GE Power India Chairman
Vishwas Mehta	Chief Secretary of Kerala
R Sreelekha	Kerala's First Woman DGP
Jonathan Karp	CEO of Simon & Schuster
Thierry Delaporte	Wipro's new CEO and MD
Ravinder Singh Dhillon	Power Finance Corporation CMD
PR Jaishankar	Managing Director of IIFCL
Sonajharia Minz	VC of Sido Kanhu Murmu University
S Gopalakrishnan	Additional secretary in PMO
Venkataramani Sumantran	IndiGo's independent director
Ashwini Bhatia	Recommended for the post of SBI MD

AWARDS

WINNER	AWARD
Thangjam Dhabali Singh	'Order of Rising Sun - Gold and Silver Rays' by Japan
T. Pradeep	Nikkei Asia Prize 2020
Joseph J Landsberg, Richard H Waring & Nicholas C Coops	Marcus Wallenberg Prize 2020
Thomas Cook India	Silver at Asia Sustainability Reporting Awards 2019
Dar Yasin, Mukhtar Khan, and Channi Anand	2020 Pulitzer Prize in feature photography
Saurabh Lodha	Young Career Award
Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru	SKYTRAX Award for Best regional airport in India & Central Asia
Singapore Changi Airport	SKYTRAX Award for the "World's Best Airport"
Siddharth Varadarajan & other 17 recipients	Deutsche Welle Freedom of Speech Award
Akshay Kumar	Vice Admiral GM Hiranandani Memorial Rolling Award
Vinay Badhwar	2019 Alexander Dalrymple Award
Hema Divakar	Global Asian of the Year 2018 – 19
TCS	Stevies in the 2020 American Business Awards
Stefan Manegold	2020 Sigmod Contributions Award
Socio-Economic and Educational Development Society (SEEDS)	World No Tobacco Day Award 2020

IMPORTANT DAYS

DATE	DAY	THEME
1 May	International Labour Day	NA
2 May	World Tuna Day	NA
2 May	International Astronomy Day	NA
3 May	World Press Freedom Day	Journalism without Fear or Favour
1st Sunday of May	World Laughter Day	NA
4 May	International Firefighters Day	NA
4 May	Coal Miners Day	NA
5 May	World Asthma Day	NA
5 May	International Day of the Midwife	Midwives with women: celebrate, demonstrate, mobilize, unite - our time is NOW!
6 May	International No Diet Day	NA
7 May	Vesak day	NA
8 May	World Red Cross Day	NA
8 May	World Thalassaemia Day	Begin thalassaemia prevention from young age, blood test before marriage will make the future generation safe
2nd Saturdays of May & October	World Migratory Bird Day	NA
2nd Sunday of May	International Mother's Day	NA
11 May	National Technology Day	NA
12 May	International Nurses Day 2020	Nursing the World to Health
15 May	International Day of Families	Families in Development: Copenhagen & Beijing + 25
16 May	International Day of Light	NA
16 May	International Day of Living Together	NA
16 May	National Dengue Day	NA
17 May	World Telecommunication and Information Society Day	Connect 2030: ICTs for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
17 May	World Hypertension Day (WHD)	Measure Your Blood Pressure, Control It, Live Longer
18 May	International Museum Day	NA
20 May	World Bee Day	Bee Engaged
20 May	World Metrology Day	Measurements for global trade
21 May	International Tea Day	NA
21 May	Anti-terrorism day in India	NA

21 May	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	NA
22 May	International Day for Biological Diversity	NA
23 May	International Day to End Obstetric Fistula	End gender inequality! End health inequities! End Fistula now!
23 May	World Turtle Day	NA
24 May	Commonwealth Day in India	NA
25 May	International Missing Children's Day	NA
25 May	World Thyroid Day	NA
28 May	International Women's Health Day	NA
28 May	World Menstrual Hygiene Day	Periods in Pandemic
29 May	International Day of UN Peacekeepers	Women in Peacekeeping: A Key to Peace
31 May	World No Tobacco Day	Protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use

OBITUARY

OBITUARY	RELATED FIELD
Chuni Goswami	Indian football legend and former captain
Hema Bharali	Freedom fighter and Social activist
Denis Goldberg	South African anti-apartheid veteran
KS Nissar Ahmed	Kannada poet
RV Smith	Writer and columnist
Ajay Kumar Tripathi	Former Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh HC
Dalit Ezhilmalai	Former Union Minister
Betty Wright	Grammy Winning Soul – singer
Hari Shankar Vasudevan	Eminent Historian
Jerry Stiller	Comedian and 'Seinfeld' actor
Shafique Ansari	Actor
Manmeet Singh Walia	Former national table tennis champion
Shobushi	Professional sumo wrestler
Phyllis Ann George	Former Miss America, sportscasting pioneer
Ratnakar Matkari	Marathi writer, playwright,
Ravi Zacharias	Christian apologist
S. Vidyaprakash	Eminent homeopathic doctor
Dev Prabhakar Shastri	Spiritual leader
Ashley Cooper	Aussie Grand Slam winner
Shyamala G Bhave	Renowned vocalist
Naipal Singh	Former U.P. minister
Rajendra Prasad Singh	Congress MLA from Jharkhand

Balbir Singh Sr	Hockey icon
Gigi Simoni	Former Inter coach
Arumugan Thondaman	Sri Lankan Minister
Shanmugam	Former Tamil Nadu footballer
Stanley Ho	Hong Kong tycoon credited with turning Macau into world's gambling capital
M P Veerendra Kumar	MD of Malayalam daily Mathrubhumi & a member of PTI's Board of Directors
Ajit Jogi	First Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh
Yogesh Gaur	Veteran lyricist

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	S.P Malik
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	Lalji Tandon
Maharashtra	Mumbai	Uddhav Thackrey	Bhagat Singh Koshyari
Manipur	Imphal	N Biren Singh	Dr. Najma Heptulla
Meghalaya	Shillong	Conrad Sangma	Tathagata Roy
Mizoram	Aizawl	Pu Zoramthanga	P S Sreedharan Pillai

Nagaland	Kohima	Neiphiu Rio	RN Ravi
Odisha	Bhubaneswar	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 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
Ram Vilas Paswan	Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution	NA
Narendra Singh Tomar	Ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare, Ministry of Rural Development & Ministry of Panchayati Raj	Morena, M. P
Ravi Shankar Prasad	Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of communications & Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	Patna Sahib, Bihar
Harsimrat Kaur Badal	Ministry of Food Processing Industries	Bathinda, Punjab
Thaawar Chand Gehlot	Ministry of Social justice and empowerment	Rajya Sabha (M.P)
Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar	Ministry of External Affairs	Rajya Sabha (Gujarat)
Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'	Ministry of Human Resource Development	Haridwar, Uttarakhand

Arjun Munda	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Khunti, Jharkhand
Smriti Zubin Irani	Ministry of Women and child Development & Ministry of Textiles	Amethi, UP
Dr Harsh Vardhan	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Science and Technology & Ministry of Earth Sciences	Chandni Chowk, Delhi
Prakash Javadekar	Ministry of environment, forest and climate change & Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprise	Rajya Sabha (M.P)
Piyush Goyal	Ministry of Railways & Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Rajya Sabha (Maharashtra)
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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