

February 2021

BOLT

Monthly Current Affairs



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Ankit Kumar
SSC CGL (AIR 32)



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



Banking & Finance

1. RBI Enhances Rules for Banks' Grievance Redress Mechanisms

Framework effective from Jan 27, enhances disclosures on complaints, to provide insight on volume & nature, time taken, mechanism for ombudsman to recover cost of redressal from banks whose complaints exceed their peer group average, review by RBI etc. Banking Ombudsman Scheme was introduced in 1995.

2. Federal Bank launches 'FedFirst' savings account scheme for children (both resident and NRIs) up to 18 years

The account will enable children to learn importance of money management. Account holder is provided with a FedFirst contactless Debit Card with daily cash withdrawal limit of Rs 2,500 & POS/eCom limit of Rs.10000 & access to net banking, mobile/mail alerts. Federal Bank: MD&CEO: Shyam Srinivasan; HQ: Aluva, Kerala.

3. Reserve Bank of India projects GDP at 10.5 percent in 2021-22

The RBI monetary policy review has decided to maintain the status quo on key policy rates. GDP growth is projected at 10.5% in FY 2021-22 and the projection of CPI inflation has been revised to 5.2% for the fourth quarter of the current financial year. Repo Rate- 4%; Reverse Repo Rate- 3.35%; Bank Rate - 4.25%.

4. RBI has announced certain measures of protection including a 24x7 helpline for digital payment services

RBI has announced certain measures for common bank account holders. It includes setting up of 24*7 helpline for digital payment services, integrated ombudsman scheme, CTS across all bank branches & allowing retail investors to open Gilt accounts with RBI. Integrated Ombudsman Scheme will be rolled out in June 2021.

5. ICICI Bank signs MoU with Japan's MUFG Bank

ICICI Bank signed an MoU with MUFG Bank, Japan's premier bank, for collaboration towards catering to the banking requirements of Japanese corporates present in India. MUFG Bank is the largest bank in Japan headquartered in Tokyo. CEO: Kanetsugu Mike. ICICI Bank CEO: Sandeep Bakhshi HQ: Mumbai

6. RBI releases Annual Report of Ombudsman Schemes, 2019-20

According to the report, there was an increase of nearly 65% in the receipt of complaints under the 3 Ombudsman Schemes of RBI in 2019-20, & a disposal rate of over 92% was achieved. In 2019-20, a total of 330543 complaints were received under the schemes. Banking Ombudsman Scheme was introduced in 1995.

7. Bank of Maharashtra ties up with LoanTap Credit for co-lending to MSMEs

Bank of Maharashtra entered into a co-lending agreement with the Pune-based non-banking financial company LoanTap Credit Products, for MSME loans. Under this, the bank will have an exposure of up to 80 per cent while the rest will be borne by the LoanTap. MD & CEO of Maharashtra: A. S. Rajeev. HQ: Pune.

8. RBI observes Financial Literacy Week 2021: February 8 to February 12

The RBI observes Financial Literacy Week 2021 (FLW 2021) between February 8 and 12. RBI has been observing FLW annually since 2016. The theme for FLW 2021 is 'Credit Discipline and Credit From Formal Institutions'. It was launched by Ajay Kumar. Reserve Bank of India is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

9. PNB inks deal with Indian Oil to provide up to Rs 2 cr loan to dealers

PNB inked a pact with Indian Oil Corp to provide up to Rs 2 crore to the oil company's dealers. It will benefit dealers with credit facilities at lower interest rates, nil margin, & with minimum/zero collateral requirements through PNB e-Dealer scheme. IOCL Chairman: S M Vaidya HQ: New Delhi

10. BRICS' New Development Bank commits \$100 mn to NIIF Fund of Funds

NDB committed \$100 million to India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund's (NIIF) Fund of Funds. Envisioned in the Union budget 2015, NIIF was launched as an alternative investment fund in December 2016 with a target corpus of '40,000 crore. In August, NIIF's FoF received investment from the ADB.

11. RBI restricts withdrawals from Nashik based Independence Co-operative Bank

RBI in exercise of its powers under Section 35A of Banking Regulation Act, 1949, put restrictions on withdrawals from Independence Co-op Bank Limited because of its present liquidity position. However, 99.89% of the depositors are covered by DICGC scheme. The restrictions will remain in force for a period of 6 months.

12. SIDBI, COWE launch campaign to promote Stand-Up India scheme

SIDBI, along with the Confederation of Women Entrepreneurs of India, launched a campaign to give a fillip to the government's Stand Up India scheme. The mega campaign - Swavalamban Sashakt is a 20 webinar series aimed at creating awareness about SUI scheme. The scheme has now been extended up to FY2025.

13. AGS Transact and Mastercard partner to give India's first-ever 'Contactless' Cash Withdrawals on ATMs

Mastercard cardholders will be able to withdraw cash by scanning a QR code displayed on ATM screen of all participating banks using their banking app on phone. Involves 4 steps: open app, scan QR code, authenticate amount by entering mPIN and pick-up cash. Mastercard: Executive Chairman: Ajay Banga; HQ: New York, US.

14. RBI tightens norms for investments in NBFCs from non-FATF nations

According to the new rules, fresh investors from jurisdictions which feature in FATF's list of high risk countries or those placed under monitoring should hold less than the threshold of 20% of the voting power in an NBFC. It is to stop money laundering. There are 17 such non-compliant FATF nations at present.

15. HDFC Bank invites startups and solo entrepreneurs to apply for SmartUp grants under its CSR brand Parivartan.

The initiative is aimed at finding and deploying long-term, sustainable solutions at scale, to address social issues and contribute to economic and social development of the country. Start-ups in edtech & skill development sector will be focused this year. Bank has partnered with 9 start-up incubators for the same.

16. CREDAI, IPPB ink pact to open bank accounts for construction workers

Realty developers' body, Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India signed MoU with Indian Payments & Postal Bank to facilitate opening of bank accounts for construction workers. It is aimed at ensuring financial literacy among them. CEO of IPPB: J. Venkatramu CEO of CREDAI: Pramod K Gupta

17. RBI forms expert panel to explore consolidation of urban co-op banks

RBI constituted an 8-member expert panel to draw up a regulatory road map for urban co-operative banks (UCBs) and study the sector's consolidation prospects. The committee will suggest effective measures for faster rehabilitation and resolution of UCBs. Head of the committee: Former Dy Gov of RBI N S Viswanathan.

18. Bank credit growth at 90% of FY20 level: RBI

According to the Reserve Bank of India's data on Scheduled Banks' Statement of Position in India Bank credit growth in FY21, as of January 29 reached about 90% of the year-ago level. Year-to-date (YTD) credit growth of all scheduled banks: '3,39,147 crore. YTD credit growth a year ago: '3,74,938 crore.

19. Asian Development Bank to provide Rs 100 crore loan to Medanta to combat COVID-19

Asian Development Bank (ADB) to provide Rs 100 crore loan to hospital chain Medanta for healthcare services and medical equipment to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. It will support

the purchase of personal protective equipment, ventilators, beds, etc., It will also support staff training programmes.

20. RBI issues directions for housing finance companies

RBI came out with a slew of directions related to maintenance of liquidity coverage ratio, risk management, asset classification and loan-to-value ratio, among others, for housing finance companies. These directions came into force with immediate effect. HFC is a form of Non-Banking Financial Company.

21. RBI permits residents to make remittances to IFSCs under LRS

RBI permitted resident individuals to make remittances under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme to International Financial Services Centres in India under the Special Economic Zone Act, 2005. It is aimed at deepening the financial markets in the IFSCs. India's first IFSC: Gujarat International Finance Tec-City.

22. Google partners with European Investment Fund to invest \$75 million in coronavirus-hit small businesses

Google partnered with European Investment Fund & two other organisations in Latin America and Asia to provide \$75 million in funding to small & medium sized co., suffering from impact of pandemic. The funds are part of \$800 mn initiative announced last year EIF is the lending arm of the European Union.

23. Indian Bank signs MoU with SID of IISc, for funding Start-ups and MSMEs

State-owned Indian Bank signed an MoU with Society for Innovation and Development (SID), an initiative of Indian Institute of Science, for extending exclusive credit facilities to Start-ups & MSMEs. It is a part of Ind Spring Board for financing Start-ups. Indian Bank CEO: Padmaja Chundru HQ: Chennai

24. Bank of Maharashtra partners with Vayana Network to offer help MSMEs

BoM entered into a strategic partnership with Vayana Network to offer financial support to MSME sector. Through this association BoM will provide short term credit to meet funding requirements of dealers of corporates via Mahabank Channel Financing Scheme. BoM HQ: Pune CEO: A S Rajeev

25. RBI puts Rs 1,000 withdrawal cap on Deccan Urban Cooperative Bank

RBI imposed a withdrawal cap of Rs 1000 on customers of Deccan Urban Cooperative Bank & barred the lender from granting fresh loans or accepting deposits. The bank cannot undertake any fresh business, including giving new loans and taking fresh deposits. 99.58% of the depositors are fully covered by the DICGC.

26. RBI ropes in Punjabi rapper Viruss for awareness campaign on cyber fraud

The RBI has been running the campaign 'RBI Kehta Hai' on social media accounts since 2016 but has never been accompanied with peppy music. The campaign also includes Viruss' popular 2017 Indie hit 'Bam Bhole'. 'RBI Kehta Hai', was launched in 14 languages.

27. ICICI Bank partners with Greater Chennai Corporation and Chennai Smart City Limited to launch 'Namma Chennai Smart Card'

ICICI Bank announced the launch of a Common Payment Card System (CPCS) in partnership with the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) and Chennai Smart City Limited (CSCL) to provide citizens a one-stop solution for making various kind of payments. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K. Palaniswami.

28. State Bank of India joins JPMorgan's blockchain payments network

State Bank of India has tied up with JPMorgan to use the US bank's blockchain technology to speed up overseas transactions. The tie-up is expected to reduce SBI customers' transaction costs and time taken for payments. Venkat Nageswar, deputy MD - international banking group, SBI.

29. Paytm-Ola-IndusInd Bank to apply for New Umbrella Entity (NUE) to launch payments network

Ola Financial, Paytm and IndusInd Bank are planning to apply for a New Umbrella Entity (NUE) license to set up a domestic payments network similar to the National Payments Corporation of India's (NPCI) unified payments interface (UPI). The consortium will submit its proposal to the RBI

30. Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated Competition Commission of India's South Regional Office in Chennai

Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman virtually inaugurated the CCI Regional Office (South) in Chennai in the august presence of Union Minister of State for Finance & Corporate Affairs Shri Anurag Singh Thakur. CCI:- Founded: 14 October 2003; HQ: New Delhi



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Economy

1. Budget 2021-22 proposals rest on 6 pillars;fiscal deficit is set to jump to 9.5% of GDP in 2020-21 as per Revised Estimates.

6 pillars:health and well-being,physical,financial capital and infrastructure,inclusive development for aspirational India,reinvigorating human capital,innovation and R&D & minimum government and maximum governance.Deficit is higher than 3.5% projected. Personal income tax slabs remain as is.

2. Budget 2021:137% hike in health & wellness budget, new PM Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat scheme announced

Includes a '60,030 crore outlay on drinking water and sanitation,a '2,700 crore outlay on nutrition,'35,000 crore toward vaccination etc.The new scheme meant to strengthen the health system,will be launched with an outlay of Rs 64,180 crore over six years. Outlay for health and well-being is Rs 2,23,846 crore in 2021-22

3. Budget 2021: Increase in insurance FDI limit,PSB recapitalisation,Privatisation of 2 PSBs & 1 General Insurance

Increase in FDI limit in insurance from 49% to 74% & allow foreign ownership and control with safeguards;provision of Rs 20,000 crore for PSB recapitalisation in 2021-22;bad bank-like structure through ARC and AMC to be set up To Resolve NPAs. IPO of LIC as part of Rs 1.75-lakh-crore disinvestment plan

4. Budget 2021:Voluntary Vehicle scrapping policy,Production Linked Incentive scheme,Mega Investment Textiles Parks (MITRA)

Fitness test after 20 years for personal vehicles & 15 years for commercial vehicles.Rs.1.97 lakh cr in next 5 years for PLI schemes in 13 Sectors;Rs.2,217 crore to tackle air pollution for 42 urban centres with a million-plus population. 7 Textile Parks to be established over 3 years

5. Budget 2021:National Infrastructure Pipeline(NIP)Expanded To Cover 7,400 Projects.

Measures announced include:Rs.20,000 crore to set up & capitalise a Development Financial Institution(DFI);National Asset Monetization Pipeline to be launched;Rs. 5.54 lakh crore capital expenditure in BE 2021-22 ' sharp increase of 34.5% over BE 2020-21. NIP jointly funded:centeral 39%, state 40% & private sector 21%.

6. Budget 2021:Power discoms get second chance,gets Rs 3.05 trillion for 5 years for a revamped reforms-based result-linked scheme.

Scheme will provide assistance to DISCOMS for Infrastructure creation.Consumers to have alternatives to choose Distribution Company for enhancing competitiveness.A comprehensive National Hydrogen Energy Mission 2021-22 to be launched to generate hydrogen. 1.41 lakh circuit km of transmission lines added in past 6 years

7. Budget 2021:Rs 1,500 Crore Scheme to boost Digital Payments;lowers loan limit for debt recovery for NBFCs.

Value of loans that can be introduced for debt recovery under SARFAESI Act lowered to Rs.20 lakh from Rs.50 lakh for NBFCs having a minimum asset size of Rs.100 crore.Government to also facilitate setting up of a world class fintech hub in GIFT city. A single Securities Markets Code to be evolved as well.

8. Budget 2021: 100 new Sainik Schools, 750 Eklavya schools will be set up,National Language Translation Mission (NLTM) introduced.

15,000 schools to be strengthened by implementing all National Education Policy components;Rs 50,000 cr allocated for the National Research Foundation for over 5 years;NLTM to make policy and government documents available in major Indian languages. Central University to come up in Leh,Ladakh.

9. Railway Budget 2021: 57% jump in allocation with Rs.1.1 lakh crore, National Rail Plan for India(2030) by Indian Railways

Of this allocation, Rs 1.07 lakh crore will be for capital expenditure; 100% electrification of broad gauge routes to be completed by Dec 2023; Metro lite & metro neo to provide metro rail systems at much lesser cost in Tier 2 cities and outer areas of Tier 1 National Rail Plan is to create a 'future ready' Railway system.

10. Budget 2021: Road Min gets 'highest ever' allocation of Rs 1.18 trillion.

The allocation has gone up 2.5 times since 2014, when the new NDA government announced an outlay of Rs 33,305 crore. Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, and Assam will get highways worth Rs 2.27 trillion. 11,000 km of NH corridors to be completed by March 2022.

11. Budget 2021: Seven major ports worth '2,000 cr. to be privatised, maiden Gas Pipeline Project in J&K

Also announced a subsidy scheme of '1,624 crore for a period of 5 years for Indian shipping companies to encourage more merchant ships with Indian flags. Capacity of recycling shipyards would be doubled from 4.5 million light displacement tonne by 2024. Pipeline, part of plan to add 100 districts to City Gas Network.

12. MCA amends definition of small companies, allows NRIs to incorporate One Person Companies(OPCs)

Paid up capital & turnover of small company shall not exceed Rs.2 cr & Rs.20 cr. Earlier it was Rs.50 lakh and Rs.2 cr. It will lighten compliance burden. Also reduced number of days a person has to stay in India to qualify as resident from 182 to 120. Allowed voluntary conversion of OPCs to private/public company.

13. Cabinet gives in-principle approval to privatise Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd.

The government currently holds 100 per cent stake in the maker of crude steel. The PSU, that is a corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, comes under Ministry of Steel. Sale proceeds would be part of the disinvestment target for next fiscal. Govt has budgeted Rs 1.75 lakh cr from disinvestment in 2021-22.

14. State Bank of India revises FY21 GDP estimates to 7%

SBI's Economic Research Department revised FY21 GDP estimates to -7.0%. Previously it had estimated GDP at -7.4%. The report was authored by SBI's Group Chief Economic Advisor Dr Soumya Kanti Ghosh. SBI is expecting FY 22 GDP to be 11%. Chairperson of SBI: Dinesh Kumar Khara HQ: Mumbai

15. India's real GDP will grow at 10.4% in FY22: India Ratings and Research

According to India Ratings and Research India's real GDP will grow at 10.4 per cent in FY22, after a 7.8 per cent contraction in the pandemic-impacted FY21. The agency expects headline retail inflation to cool down to 4.3 per cent in FY22. India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) is headquartered in Mumbai.

16. Retail inflation eases to 4.06% in January; factory output grows 1% in December

Retail Inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) eased to a 16-month low of 4.06% in January mainly due to a sharp decline in food prices justifying the RBI's accommodative monetary policy stance. Inflation based on CPI was at 4.59% in December. Retail Inflation: Change in the price index over a period of time

17. GDP to grow at 13.5% in FY22; economic activity on verge of normality': Nomura

Japanese brokerage Nomura said that economic activity is on the 'verge of normality' after a pandemic. It predicted that India GDP will grow at 13.5% in FY22. It expects real GDP to contract by 6.7 per cent in FY21. RBI projected growth of 10.5% for FY22. India's real GDP to grow at 11% in 2021-22: Economic Survey.

18. India recorded \$1422 mn FDI inflow from UK in 2019-20: Grant Thornton report

According to Grant Thornton Bharat's Britain Meets the FDI inflow from the UK to India has increased from \$898 million in 2015-16 to \$1,422 million in 2019-20. The report was

prepared in collaboration with the CII and UK's Dept of International Trade. Maharashtra was the top destination for UK Companies.



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National

1. Microsoft launches its new engineering hub India Development Center(IDC) in NCR

IDC NCR is Microsoft's third Development Center in India after Bengaluru and Hyderabad. The contemporary workspace is a step towards realizing IDC's vision of being a source of innovation for the next billion users by collaborating with global teams. IDC NCR workspace architecture is inspired by the Taj Mahal

2. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated National Tribal Festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' at Dilli Haat, New Delhi.

The fortnight-long festival hosted by Ministry of Tribal Affairs will feature exhibition-cum-sale of tribal handicrafts, art, paintings, fabric, jewellery & much more through 200 stalls to showcase this. About 1000 tribal artisans and artists are participating. The Aadi Mahotsav is an annual event that was started in 2017.

3. Kashmir's 25-yr-old Ayesha Aziz becomes India's youngest female pilot.

In 2011, Aziz became the youngest student pilot to get a license at the age of 15 and underwent training to fly a MIG-29 jet at Russia's Sokol airbase the following year. She graduated from Bombay Flying Club & obtained license in 2017. She also underwent 2-month space training course at NASA in 2012

4. India's first geothermal power project to be established at Puga village of Ladakh

Puga village of Ladakh was identified as a hotspot of geothermal energy by scientists. In the 1st phase of the project, 1 MW power generation capacity will be generated. The Geothermal Field Development Project is planned to commission by the end of 2022. Geothermal energy - Thermal energy generated & stored in Earth.

5. India becomes fastest country to reach six million vaccinations in world

In 24 days, India became the fastest country to reach 6 mn vaccinations in the world. USA took 26 days to reach the mark while UK took 46 days to reach 6 mn vaccinations. India is the 3rd topmost country in terms of number of COVID-19 vaccine administered. COVISHIELD vaccine is manufactured by Serum Institute of India.

6. President inaugurates museum dedicated to pride of Kodagu General Thimayya in Madikeri

An ode to the pride of Kodagu, the President of India inaugurated the General Thimayya Museum in Madikeri. The museum has been built at Sunnyside, the former residence of General KS Thimayya. General KS Thimayya served as Chief of Army Staff. Kodagu is a rural district in the southwest Karnataka.

7. PM Modi inaugurates first full-fledged international cruise terminal at Cochin Port in Kerala

PM inaugurated Sagarika International Cruise Terminal marking another landmark, which has turned into a major cruise destination across the globe. He also inaugurated Cochin Shipyard's Vigyan Sagar, a campus for Marine Engineering Training Institute. Kochi is located in the Ernakulam district of Kerala.

8. Delhi-Dehradun expressway, worth '13,000 cr to be first in India to have a 12 km long elevated corridor for protecting wildlife

Transport Min Nitin Gadkari approved a new Delhi-Dehradun expressway worth '13,000 crores. It will have 10 elevated roads and it will also reduce the travel time between the cities to 3-3.15 hours. Expressway will have a minimum driving speed of 100 kmph. Budget Allocation for Highways in 2021: '1.18 lakh crore.

9. Amazon is setting up its first device manufacturing line in India

Amazon announced to develop its first manufacturing facility in India to produce Amazon Devices in Chennai. It will commence its manufacturing efforts with contract manufacturer Cloud Network Technology, a subsidiary of Foxconn located in Chennai. Amazon's Chennai unit will produce Fire TV Stick devices.

10. PM Modi to chair 6th meeting of Governing Council of NITI Aayog virtually

PM to chair 6th meeting of Governing Council of NITI Aayog. The meeting will witness entry of Ladakh for the 1st time in addition to J&K. It will also be attended by ex-officio members of Governing Council, Ministers, Vice Chairman & Members of NITI Aayog. Chairperson of NITI Aayog: The Prime Minister of India.

11. Go Electric campaign launched to ensure energy security in the country

Centre launched the Go Electric campaign to boost the adoption of electric mobility vehicles & electric cooking appliances to ensure energy security in India. It aims to reduce import dependence and is being promoted as a step towards a greener future. Fossil fuels have an import bill of '8 lakh crore.

12. 25 cities selected for Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge

MoHUA announced names of 25 cities selected for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge in collaboration with the Bernard van Leer Foundation under Smart Cities Mission. The cities would carry out projects for making early childhood-friendly neighbourhoods. The Challenge is a 3-year initiative.

13. International Solar Alliance (ISA) to Launch World Solar Bank

The ISA has planned to launch the World Solar Bank (WSB) at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow that is scheduled for November 2021. The World Solar Bank will support India's attempt to secure its leadership in the climate arena. The HQ of World Solar Bank is expected to be set up in India.

14. PM Modi inaugurates Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Institute of Medical Sciences & Research at IIT Kharagpur

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Institute of Medical Sciences and Research at IIT Kharagpur. The super speciality hospital was set up by the Ministry of Education. He also addressed the 66th Convocation of IIT Kharagpur. MBBS programme is expected to start from academic year '21-22.

15. Rajnath Singh inaugurates 26th edition of 'Hunar Haat'

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the 26th edition of 'Hunar Haat' in New Delhi. The government's craft fair Hunar Haat focuses on enabling micro-businesses involving artisans and craftsmen to sell and promote their products. Hunar Haat gives emphasis on Vocal for Local.

16. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs approves construction of 56,368 houses under PMAY-U

The construction of PMAY-U houses are in various stages. As of now, more than 73 Lakh houses have been grounded and nearly 43 Lakh have been completed. These houses are proposed to be constructed under various verticals of PMAY-U Mission. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban)-PMAY (U).

17. NHA signs MoU with CSCs to issue new PVC Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY cards for free

The National Health Authority (NHA) has signed an MoU with Common Service Centres (CSCs) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to generate new PVC beneficiary cards called "Ayushman cards" under the PM-JAY. Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY).

18. City Innovation Exchange (CiX) Launched for Fostering Innovation in Urban Ecosystem

City Innovation Exchange (CiX) will connect cities to innovators across the national ecosystem to design innovative solutions for their pressing challenges. The platform will ease the discovery, design & validation of solutions through robust solutions. Launched by: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

19. Union Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurates Saras Aajeevika Mela 2021

Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Food Processing Shri Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated Saras Aajeevika Mela at Noida Haat. More than 300 rural SHGs & craftsmen from 27 states are participating in mela. Self Help groups: small voluntary association of the rural women



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International

1. Vietnam ruling Communist Party chief Nguyen Phu Trong re-elected for 3rd term

Vietnam has no paramount ruler & is officially led by four pillars: chief of its Communist Party, the most powerful post; a president; a prime minister & the National Assembly chair. Mr. Trong spearheaded a blazing furnace crackdown on corruption in last 5 yrs. Vietnam: Capital: Hanoi; Currency: Vietnamese dong.

2. US extends New START Nuclear Arms Control Treaty with Russia for five years

US has extended New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) nuclear arms control treaty with Russia for 5 yrs. It limits US & Russia to deploying more than 1,550 strategic nuclear warheads each & imposes restrictions on missiles & bombers to deliver them. The treaty first went into effect in 2011.

3. Denmark to create world's first energy island in the North Sea

Denmark approved a plan to build world's 1st energy island in the North Sea that will produce and store enough green energy to cover the electricity needs of 3 mn European households. The island is expected to cost around 210 billion Danish crowns to build Denmark Capital: Copenhagen PM: Mette Frederiksen

4. New Zealand suspends ties with Myanmar

New Zealand's govt suspended all high-level political & military contact with Myanmar. It will also impose a travel ban on military leaders & ensure its aid programme will not include projects that are delivered with, or benefit, the military government. New Zealand PM: Jacinda Ardern. Capital: Wellington.

5. South Korea to construct world's largest offshore wind farm

South Korea plans to build an 8.2GW offshore wind farm in Jeonnam province by 2030. This will be the world's biggest offshore wind power complex as it seeks to become carbon neutral by the year 2050. The project will cost a total of \$43.2 billion. Hornsea 1 (1.2GW) in Britain is currently the world's largest.

6. China celebrates Lunar New Year: February 12, 2021

As per the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar, Chinese New Year celebrates beginning of a new year. New Year began on February 12, 2021. 2021 is a year of the Ox. It will be a Metal Ox year. This festival is celebrated by China & other Asian countries. The day marks the first new moon of the lunisolar calendars.

7. Mario Draghi, Former EU Central Bank Head, Sworn In As Italy's Prime Minister

He has been sworn in as Italy's prime minister (PM) at the head of a unity government called on to confront the coronavirus crisis and economic slump. Draghi is nicknamed "Super Mario" for his role in saving the euro. He is 30th PM of Italy since 1946. Sergio Mattarella is Italy's president

8. 'Pahela Phagun' spring festival celebrated in Bangladesh

Pahela Phagun a.k.a. the first day of Spring of the Bengali month Phagun, is celebrated in Bangladesh. It was started in 1991 by students at Dhaka University's Faculty of Fine Arts. The first of Phagun usually falls on 13 February of the Gregorian Calendar Bangladesh Capital: Dhaka Currency: Bangladeshi taka

9. Russian Scientists have detected first case of transmission of Avian Flu to humans

Russia has said that its scientists have detected the 1st case of transmission of the H5N8 strain of Avian Flu to humans & inform the World Health Organization in this regard. It is the world's first case of transmission of the Avian Flu (H5N8) to humans. Highly contagious strain H5N8 is lethal for birds.

Sports

1. Indian tennis legend Akhtar Ali passed away

Indian tennis legend Akhtar Ali passed away. A member of India's Davis Cup teams from late 1950s to mid-1960s, he holds a 9-2 win-loss record in the tournament. After retirement, he played a key role in guiding Ramesh Krishnan, Vijay Amritraj, Leander Paes. In 1955, Ali won the junior national championship.

2. Drass Red win 13th CEC Cup Ice Hockey Championship

In Kargil Ladakh, Drass Red has won the 13th CEC Cup Ice Hockey Championship beating Hockey Club Chiktan team in the Final match. The 1st Women CEC Ice Hockey Cup 2021 was lifted by Shakar Chiktan Team defeating Wakha Mulbekh Team. ITBP won the national ice hockey championship.

3. Centre grants permission to BCCI to use drones for live aerial cinematography of India Cricket Season in 2021

Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) & Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) granted conditional exemption to the Board of Control for Cricket in India for the deployment of drones for live aerial cinematography of the India Cricket Season in 2021. The conditional exemption is valid till 31st of December 2021.

4. Ishant Sharma becomes third Indian pacer to take 300 Test wickets

Veteran fast bowler Ishant Sharma became the 6th Indian & 3rd pacer from India to take 300 wickets in Test Cricket after Kapil Dev & Anil Kumble. Ravichandran Ashwin, Harbhajan Singh and Zaheer Khan are others who have reached the landmark. Ishant reached the landmark when he trapped Dan Lawrence.

5. International Cricket Council (ICC) announces BYJU'S as global partner until 2023

BYJU'S will partner all ICC events over the period, including the forthcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup in India, and the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in New Zealand. As a global partner, BYJU'S will have extensive in-venue, broadcast & digital rights. In Aug, 2019 BYJU'S became official jersey partner of Indian team.

6. Ravichandran Ashwin becomes first bowler to dismiss left-handers 200 times in Tests

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin became the first player in the history of Test Cricket to take 200 wickets against left-handed batsmen. He achieved the feat during the second day of India's second Test against England in Chennai. He dismissed Stuart Broad. Ashwin has picked 391 wickets in his career so far.

7. Naman Ojha announces retirement from all forms of cricket

Former India Wicketkeeper-batsman Naman Ojha announced his retirement from all forms of cricket, bringing down curtains on a two-decade-long illustrious domestic career. He holds the record for the most dismissals by a wicketkeeper in the Ranji Trophy. Ojha made his international debut in 2010 against Sri Lanka.

8. Japan Olympics Minister Hashimoto to accept role as head of Tokyo 2020

Japan's Seiko Hashimoto has been appointed the next Tokyo 2020 president, after her predecessor quit over sexist comments he made. The former Olympics Minister is a seven time Olympian herself, having competed as a cyclist and a speed skater. Previous leader Yoshiro Mori quit due to sexist remarks.

9. Australian Open 2021: Naomi Osaka lifts Women's title defeating Jennifer Brady

Japan's Naomi Osaka won women's singles game by beating American Jennifer Brady in Australian Open final to win her 4th Grand Slam title. Osaka has now won 2 Australian Open titles with her other Grand Slam successes coming at the US Open in 2018 and 2020. Naomi Osaka is a Japanese tennis player.

10. Australia Open 2021: Elise Mertens, Aryna Sabalenka win women's doubles title

In Tennis, the Belgian and Belarus pair of Elise Mertens and Aryna Sabalenka won the women's doubles final of the Australian Open 2021. They defeated Barbora Krejčíková and Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic. It is the pair's 2nd grand slam title. They had earlier won the 2019 US Open together.

11. Chris Morris becomes costliest ever player at IPL auction for Rajasthan Royal

Chris Morris became the costliest ever player at an IPL auction for Rajasthan Royal while Krishnappa Gowtham became the costliest Indian uncapped player for Chennai Super Kings at IPL 2021 auction. Punjab Kings had the biggest purse coming into the auction. A total of 292 players were enlisted for shortened auctions.

12. Karnataka to host second Khelo India University Games this year

Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju announced that the 2nd Khelo India University Games will be hosted by Karnataka. The Games will be held in Bengaluru's Jain University & other venues in the state, in partnership with Association of Indian Universities. KIUG is the largest University Games in the country.

13. Indian boxers win two gold medals at Adriatic Pearl Tournament

Vinka (60 kg) & T Sanamcha Chanu (75 kg) clinched gold medals as Indian youth boxers continued their outstanding show at the 30th Adriatic Pearl Tournament in Montenegro. Earlier, Alfiya Pathan (+81kg) secured India's first gold in the on-going tournament. Montenegro Capital: Podgorica Currency: Euro

14. Sri Lanka bowler Dhammika Prasad retires from international cricket

Sri Lanka's fast bowler Dhammika Prasad, who last played in 2015 against West Indies retired from International cricket. He played an integral role in Sri Lanka's first series win in England in 2014. He scalped 75 wickets in the longest format of the game. Prasad is a right-arm fast-medium bowler.

15. Ivan Dodig and Filip Polasek win Australian Open men's doubles title

Ivan Dodig and Filip Polasek upset defending champions Joe Salisbury and Rajeev Ram to win the Australia Open men's doubles title. It is their first title as a team. Ivan Dodig is a Croatian tennis player. Filip Polasek is a tennis player from Slovakia. Australian Open is the 1st of the 4 Grand Slam tennis events.

16. Novak Djokovic beats Daniil Medvedev to win record-extending 9th Australian Open title

Novak Djokovic won his record-extending 9th Australian Open men's singles title after defeating Russia's Daniil Medvedev in the final at Melbourne. This is Djokovic's 18th Grand Slam title win and he is now two short of equalling his 'Big Three' rivals. Serbia's Novak is currently ranked as World No.1 by the ATP.

17. G Sathiyam clinches National title with win over Sharath Kamal

In Table Tennis, Playing his fourth final in seven years, Sathiyam ended the jinx by beating nine-time winner Sharath Kamal 11-6, 11-7, 10-12, 7-11, 11-8, 11-8 in under 50 minutes at Panchkula. Sathiyam received Rs. 2.50 lakh besides a trophy. Table Tennis Federation of India, President: Dushyant Chautala.

18. 2nd edition of Khelo India Winter Games begins in Gulmarg

The Games will be held from 26th February to 2nd March 2021. The event has been organized by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council and the Winter Games Association of J&K. Kiren Rijiju is the current Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports

19. Yusuf Pathan Announces Retirement From All Forms Of Cricket

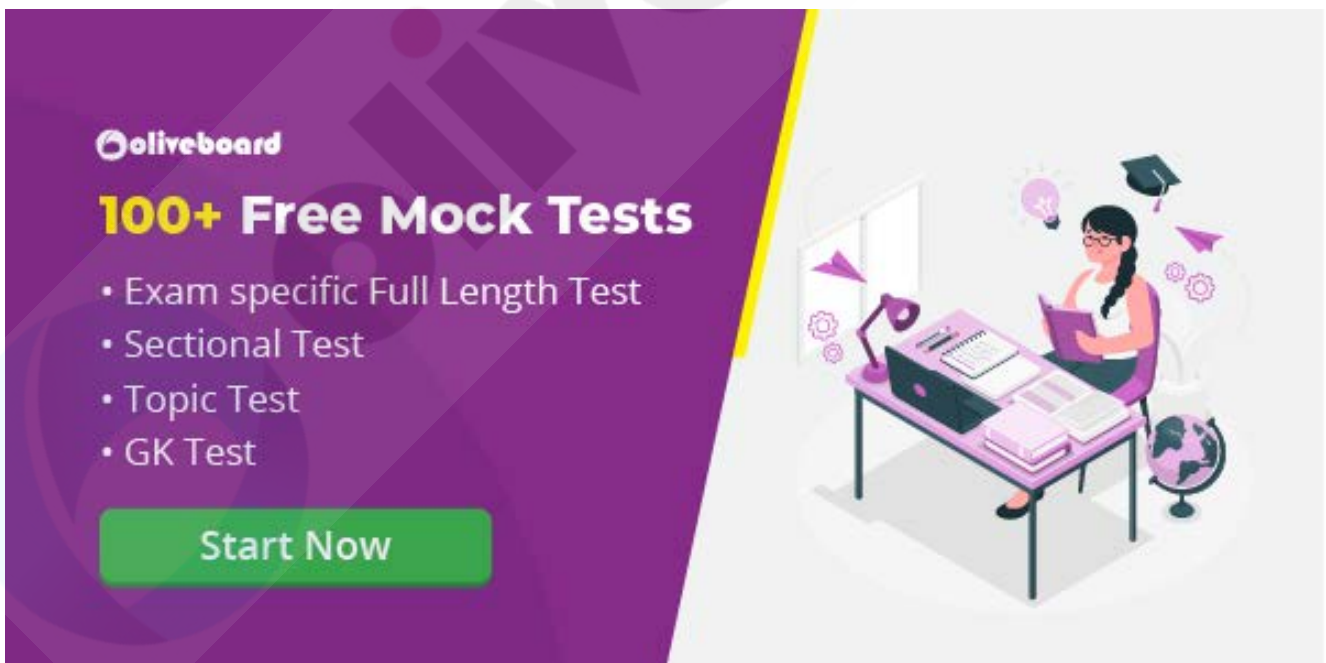
Former India all-rounder Yusuf Pathan announced his retirement from all formats of cricket. He is a two-time World Cup winner. Yusuf has won the Indian Premier League twice. He played 57 ODIs & 22 T20Is for India since making his international debut in 2007. He is the older brother of former India cricketer Irfan Pathan.


20. Indian men's skeet team wins bronze in ISSF World Cup

The Indian trio of Mairaj Ahmed Khan, Angad Vir Singh Bajwa, and Gurjoat Khangura won the bronze medal in the men's skeet team event at the International Shooting Sport Federation tournament (ISSF) Shotgun World Cup in Cairo. ISSF HQ: Munich, Germany; President: Vladimir Lisin; Formed: 1907

21. Former India quick R Vinay Kumar retires from first-class and international cricket


R Vinay Kumar, the former India seamer, has announced his retirement from first-class & international cricket, bringing the curtain down on a first-class career that spanned 16 years & made him a domestic giant. He played most of those years for Karnataka. He finished 504 first-class wickets & record 442 in Ranji trophy



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Agreements & MoUs

1. India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam bags 679 MW lower Arun Hydro Project in Nepal; estimated project cost around USD 860 million.

The project cost for Lower Arun is estimated at over 100 billion Nepalese rupees. Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam should prioritise providing certain percent of power free of cost and will hand over the ownership to Nepal after 20 years of commercial operation. Project will generate 3561 million units of electricity per year

2. Housing ministry, Zomato partner to take street food vendors' businesses online

MoU is part of PM SVANidhi scheme. Zomato will onboard street food vendors on its food-tech platform. Initially, a pilot programme will be initiated by onboarding 300 vendors across six cities namely Bhopal, Ludhiana, Nagpur, Patna, Raipur and Vadodara. A similar partnership with Swiggy was done in Oct 2020.

3. Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) ties up with AIM-NITI Aayog to boost startup ecosystem in mobility sector.

ARAI will use its TechNovuus platform & lend its expertise and equipment to nurture startups incubated under and associated with Atal Innovation Mission. Will collab under Atal New India Challenge for deploying technologies as identified by Road Ministry. ARAI (autonomous body): Director: Reji Mathai; HQ: Pune

4. HAL inks deal with Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited (MIDHANI) to develop, manufacture composite raw materials

This is the first time that such an MoU has been signed for composite raw materials. HAL also signed a contract valued over '100 crore with GE Aviation for development and supply of ring forgings for its Aviation military and commercial engine programs. CMD: HAL: R Madhavan; MIDHANI: Dr S K Jha

5. Karnataka govt sign Memorandum of Understanding with 34 Aerospace and Defence firms

Karnataka has signed an MoU with 34 Aerospace and Defence firms in an effort to emerge as the aerospace hub for Asia. The newly signed MoU's is expected to attract an investment of Rs 2,464cr & generate 6,462 direct employment opportunities. Karnataka contributes over 65% of defence & aerospace exports.

6. MoU signed between DRDO and IISc for Joint Advanced Technology Program

Defence Research and Development Organisation signed an MoU with Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru for creation of JATP'Center of Excellence in the premises of IISc to expand the scope and objective of existing Joint Advanced Technology Program. Chairman of DRDO: Dr G. Satheesh Reddy.

7. Ministry Of Defence, Bharat Electronics Limited sign contract worth over '1,000 crore to procure modern radio system

Min of Defence & PSU Bharat Electronics Ltd signed a contract for procurement of Software Defined Radio Tactical (SDR-Tac) worth over '1000 cr. SDR-Tac is a 4 Channel Multi-mode, Multi-Band, 19" Rack-mountable, shipborne Software Defined Radio system Bharat Electronics Limited is headquartered in Bengaluru.

8. Siemens inks pact with IISc, CMTI on development of industrial IoT, industry 4.0-enabled products

Siemens Ltd signed MoU with IISc to establish a digital transformation lab and CMTI to set up a smart manufacturing demo and development cell. It will focus on development of Industrial Internet of Things and Industry 4.0-enabled products & technologies. MD & CEO of Siemens Limited: Sunil Mathur.

9. GSL signs MoU with HSL, Vizag for augmenting ship building, repair capacity

An MoU was signed between Hindustan Shipyard Ltd, Visakhapatnam & Goa Shipyard Limited to undertake repair & construction of Indian Navy or Coast Guard ships on the eastern

seaboard to take advantage of their bigger drydock & draught available. This will enable GSL to take repairs of much bigger ships.

10. Indian Navy Signs Contract For Acquisition Of Five Diving Support Craft (DSC) with M/s Titagarh Wagons Ltd, Kolkata.

Adding another milestone to Make in India initiative, the contract envisages construction of 5 DSCs. Once commissioned, DSCs will meet the mission needs of Command Clearance Diving Teams & also serve as platform for conducting training of Navy's diving cadre. Chief of the Naval Staff is Admiral Karambir Singh.

11. Recykal becomes first Indian startup to be selected for WEF's Circulars Accelerator Programme 2021.

Recykal is an end-to-end digital 'waste-commerce' solutions provider headquartered in Hyderabad. The programme, an initiative of Accenture, will connect industry leaders with 17 circular-economy entrepreneurs to scale up cross-sector value-chain innovation. Abhay Deshpande is founder of Recykal.

12. CREDAI, IPPB ink pact to open bank accounts for construction workers.

At present, around 3 crore workers are engaged in construction activities across real estate projects in India. The pact aims to cover around 10 lakh workers under this initiative in a year. It will cover all CREDAI chapters. Jaxay Shah is national chairman, CREDAI, realty developers' body.

13. M/s CE Info Systems Pvt Ltd.(MapmyIndia) ties up with ISRO to build an alternative to Google Maps

It is to develop mapping portals, apps and other location-based services in India. They will build utilising Earth Observation Datasets, NavIC, Web Services & APIs available in MapmyIndia, Bhuvan, VEDAS & MOSDAC geoportals of ISRO. MapmyIndia: CEO: Rohan Verma; HQ: New Delhi.

14. Skills development ministry launches Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship in partnership with 9 IIMs

In the 2-year academic programme, IIMs will impart training in preliminary stage and later fellows will work on strengthening District Skill Committees & District Skill administration. Stipend will be Rs.50k/month during 1st year & Rs.60k/month in 2nd year. Launched under WB assisted SANKALP programme.

15. ISRO tests satellites developed by private sector for the first time

2 satellites by Indian startups: Chennai's SpaceKidz India & Bengaluru's Pixxel (incorporated as Sygyzy)-were tested at the UR Rao Satellite Centre of ISRO. ISRO helped these two companies fix problems with the solar panels on their respective satellites. Founder & CEO: Space Kidz: Srimathy Kesan; Pixxel: Awais Ahmed

16. Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd (ESFBL) launches country's first FASTag powered truck terminal

In partnership with Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation & Ocean Highway Facilities and Solutions launched the terminal at Khalapur, Maharashtra on Yashwantrao Chavan Mumbai - Pune Expressway (from 26th Jan, 2021 FASTag became compulsory on this). Smriti Mandhana is Brand Ambassador of Chennai HQ-ed ESFBL.

17. HP and NSDC collaborate to support learning and early childhood skill development with free content

As part of this, NSDC will host content from HP's Print Learn Center (PLC) on its digital skilling platform 'eSkill India and make it available for millions of potential users free of cost. HP-PLC is an initiative by HP providing learning modules by experts HP-PLC content will be in English and 7 Indian languages.

18. HCL Tech inks pact with IIT Kanpur to strengthen capabilities in cybersecurity

HCL Technologies inked an agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) to collaborate in the area of cybersecurity. Under this, the IT company will work with C3iHub,

a specialised cybersecurity research centre at IITK. HCL Technologies: CEO: C Vijayakumar
HQ: Noida

19. PHDCCI inks pact with SIDBI to facilitate credit schemes for MSMEs

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) in New Delhi signed an agreement with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to facilitate providing of various credit and other schemes of SIDBI to micro, small and medium enterprises in India. SIDBI HQ: Lucknow, UP

20. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and CSIR sign MoU to promote health research

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation & CSIR signed an MoU to support the development, conduct and promotion of health research in India. The organisations will work together to identify opportunities to initiate scientific & technological collaborations. CSIR India comprises of 37 research laboratories.

21. WE HUB inks MoU with J & K Entrepreneurship Development Institute

WE HUB, a state-run startup incubator of Telangana govt to foster and promote women entrepreneurship, signed an MoU with the J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI). This effort will help create a start-up exchange module between JKEDI & WE HUB. WE- Hub: Women Entrepreneurship Hub.

22. Amazon India signs agreement with DGR for hiring ex-service personnel

Amazon India signed an agreement with the Directorate General Resettlement (DGR) to provide ex-service personnel with work opportunities across its network in India. With this, Amazon will create alternate career opportunities for ex-service personnel. Founder of Amazon: Jeff Bezos

23. Amazon India inks MoU with the Directorate General Resettlement(DGR) for hiring ex-service personnel

With this partnership, Amazon India will continue to create fulfilling alternate career opportunities for ex-service personnel who have served the country. This collaborative effort further expands Amazon India's existing Military Veterans Employment program Maj Gen MK Sagoch, Director General, DGR.

24. TERI, POSOCO sign MoU to encourage research in domestic power sector

The Energy and Resources Institute signed an MoU with Power System Operation Corporation (POSOCO) to encourage research in the domestic power sector. Preparation of joint reports and capacity building of state utilities is also part of the MoU. K V S Baba, Chairman and Managing Director, POSOCO Ltd.

25. Coal India, Centre for Railway Information Systems sign MoU for rakes data sharing

The first-of-its-kind data sharing offers CIL a bouquet of benefits that helps it in rationalizing the entire coal supply matrix through rail mode. It provides precise details of loading, weighment and unloading details along with turnaround time of rakes. Centre for Railway Information Systems, Headquarters: New Delhi.

26. IETO, Karnataka govt sign MoU for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

An MoU was signed between the Indian Economic Trade Organization (IETO) and the Government of Karnataka for working closely to implement the SDGs in the state with much effective manner and expanding the scope of the sustainable future. Indian Economic Trade Organization, Headquarters: Bengaluru

27. Tata STRIVE and Wipro GE Healthcare partner to train youth towards bridging healthcare skill gap

Tata STRIVE and Wipro GE Healthcare today entered into a partnership to skill youth for jobs in the healthcare sector over a period of three years. The agreement aims to skill 6,200 candidates in various technical and operational areas of healthcare. Anita Rajan, CEO, Tata STRIVE.

28. Stellapps, India Post Payments Bank to take banking services to dairy farmers

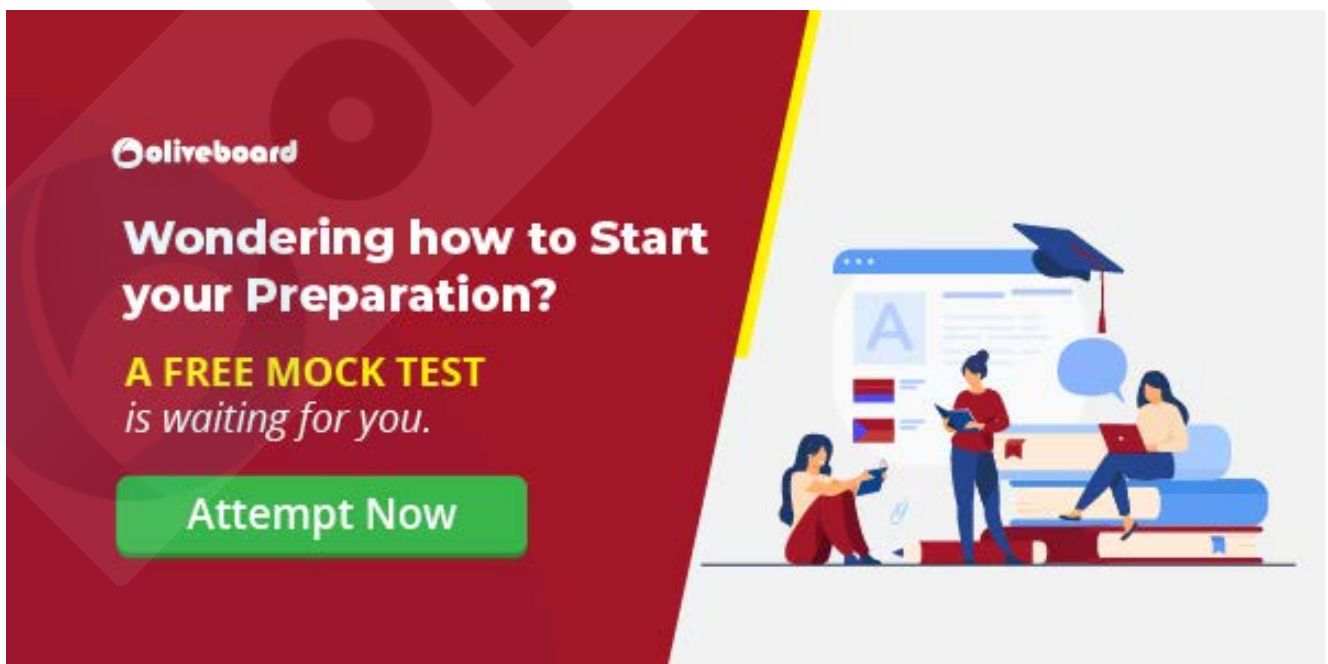
Under the partnership, the Bengaluru-based Stellapps startup will digitise the dairy milk procurement value chain by promoting various IPPB banking facilities at remote milk collection centres. IPPB, CEO: J. Venkatramu, Founded: 1 September 2018.

29. Shapoorji Pallonji Real Estate and SBI sign MoU to offer faster home loan approvals to homebuyers

As part of the agreement, customers of Shapoorji Pallonji Real Estate & SBI will be able to avail the benefits of faster home loan processing and approvals, & other unique value add schemes. It is one of the top five real estate developers in India by sale. Eureka Forbes is a subsidiary of Shapoorji Pallonji Group.

30. Inland Waterways Authority (IWAI) inks pact with world's largest gas carrier MOL Group under the Make-in-India initiative

This facilitates the transportation of LNG through Inland Waterways. MoU is signed between IWAI & MOL (Asia Oceania) Pte Ltd for transportation of LPG (Liquified Natural Gas) through barges on National Waterways-1 & National Waterways-2. IWAI HQ: Noida; Formed: 1986



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Schemes

1. Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) approved for the period of next four years starting from 2021-22.

SISFS has been approved for next 4 yrs starting from 2021-22. It will be implemented w.e.f. 1st April 2021. It aims to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry, and commercialization. The scheme is expected to support about 3600 startups.

2. 11 projects of Rs. 2560 lakhs sanctioned under NBHM to achieve the goal of 'Sweet Revolution'

Govt allocated Rs. 500 crore for National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM) for 3 years. NBHM aims for overall promotion & development of scientific beekeeping in India to achieve the goal of 'Sweet Revolution' which is implemented via National Bee Board. World Bee Day is celebrated on May 20.

3. Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani rolls out commercial Jute seed distribution scheme

Jute Corporation of India signed an MoU with National Seeds Corporation for commercial distribution of 1000 Metric Tonne certified jute seeds for the year 2021-22. Currently, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Jute has been kept at Rs. 4,225 in FY 2020-21. Jute is one of the cheapest fibre produced in India.

4. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launches Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan

MoHUA launched a Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan under Jal Jeevan Mission- Urban. It will be conducted in cities to ascertain the equitable distribution of water, reuse of wastewater and mapping of water bodies with respect to quantity and quality of water. In the first step, it will be launched in 10 cities.

5. Cabinet approves PLI scheme for telecom sector worth Rs 12,195 crore

The Union Cabinet approved a Rs 12,195-crore Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for domestic manufacturing of telecom and networking products such as switches, routers, radio access network, wireless equipment and other IoT access devices. With this, the total no. of sectors under PLI becomes 13.

6. 15 states successfully complete Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) reforms

Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand completed Ease of Doing Business reforms. With this, the number of states that have completed the reforms increased to 15. The EoDB reform is an important indicator of the investment-friendly business climate in India. Andhra Pradesh was ranked 1st in EoDB Reforms list 2020.

7. Intensified Mission Indra Dhanush 3.0 launched to expand immunization coverage across country

Health and Family Welfare Minister launched Intensified Mission Indra Dhanush 3.0, (IMI 3.0) to expand immunization coverage across India. It will have 2 rounds and will be conducted in pre-identified 250 districts and urban areas across 29 States and UTs. Immunization Coverage: 22nd of February ' 22nd of March.

8. Centre okays PLI plan for pharma, IT equipment

The Union Cabinet extended the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the pharma and IT hardware sectors, approving '15,000 crore and '7,350 crore worth of incentives, respectively, to encourage domestic manufacturing. The PLI scheme for pharma will be effective over FY21-FY29.

Appointments & Resignations

1. Jay Shah takes over as the president of Asian Cricket Council(ACC)

He is BCCI secretary and replaces Nazmul Hasan Papon, Bangladesh Cricket Board chief. The position is rotated among full members of the Asian boards every two years. At 32, Shah is the youngest administrator to be appointed as the ACC president. ACC consists of 24 member associations; HQ: Dubai, UAE.

2. Anish Shah appointed as chairman of Mahindra Finance

He is the deputy managing director and group CFO of Mahindra and Mahindra (M&M) Ltd and is designated to take over as the managing director and CEO of the company from April 2, 2021. Shah has taken over from Dhananjay Mungale. Mahindra Finance HQ in Mumbai.

3. R S Sharma appointed as new CEO of Ayushman Bharat Scheme

Indu Bhushan, CEO of NHA, would be replaced by RS Sharma, former chairman of TRAI. National Health Authority (NHA) is responsible for implementing the country's flagship public health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat or Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. Sharma was recently named chairperson of Co-WIN committee.

4. Indian-American scientist Bhavya Lal appointed Acting Chief of Staff of NASA

Lal brings extensive experience in engineering and space technology, serving as a member of the research staff at Institute for Defense Analyses Science and Technology Policy Institute from 2005 to 2020. She oversaw NASA's transition under President Biden. Will also serve as senior advisor for budget & finance at NASA.

5. Andy Jassy will replace Jeff Bezos as Amazon CEO in July.

He is currently Amazon Web Services (AWS) chief and he founded the same in 2003. AWS is an Amazon subsidiary which provides on-demand computing platforms to clients. Jassy joined Amazon in 1997 and has an MBA from Harvard Business School

6. Ajay Singh re-elected as President of Boxing Federation of India

Spicejet chairman Ajay Singh defeated Ashish Shelar, former Maharashtra Cricket Association president, 37-27, at the general elections held in Gurugram. Hemanta Kumar Kalita was elected secretary general and Digvijay Singh treasurer. Boxing Federation of India Headquarters Gurugram

7. Labour Ministry appoints L&T CEO S.N.Subrahmanyan as Chairman of National Safety Council

Subrahmanyan, CEO and MD, L&T Ltd, appointed as Chairman of National Safety Council(NSC) for three years. NSC has a major role to play to ensure safety in workplaces under new Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 (OSH Code, 2020). Regulations governing OSH have not been updated for over 50 yrs.

8. Praveen Sinha appointed interim CBI chief

Sinha, a 1988-batch Gujarat cadre IPS officer, who is currently an additional director at CBI, will take charge of the CBI temporarily as the government failed to appoint a new director by the end of the incumbent chief RK Shukla's tenure. Appointments Committee of the Cabinet chaired by PM chose Sinha.

9. Zoho's Sridhar Vembu appointed to National Security Advisory Board

Zoho founder Sridhar Vembu was appointed to the reconstituted National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) led by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. The members of NSAB typically have two-year terms. NSAB was the brainchild of the first NSA Brajesh Mishra. Sridhar Vembu was awarded Padma Shri by the Government of India.

10. IndiGo appoints Jiten Chopra as chief financial officer

IndiGo, an Indian low-cost airline appointed Jiten Chopra as its Chief Financial Officer. Jiten succeeds Aditya Pande. He joined IndiGo as head of governance, risk and compliance. It is the largest airline in India by passengers carried and fleet size. IndiGo HQ: Gurugram, Haryana

11. Suzanne Clark to become first female CEO of US Chamber of Commerce

The US Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing 3+ million businesses appointed Suzanne Clark as its next CEO, the 1st woman to hold the position. Clark, currently the president of US Chamber, will succeed Thomas Donohue. The US Chamber of Commerce is headquartered in Washington.

12. Aegon Life Insurance elevates Satishwar Balakrishnan as the CEO

Aegon Life Insurance, India's 1st digital-only life insurance company, elevated Satishwar Balakrishnan to be the MD & CEO. He joined the company as CFO in July 2019. He will spearhead Aegon Life's transformation into a digital-only life insurance company. Aegon Life Insurance is headquartered in Mumbai. Founded in 2008

13. Nigeria's Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala poised to be first woman and first African Director General of the WTO

Nigerian-American economist Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was poised to become the 1st African and first woman to lead the embattled World Trade Organization after her South Korean rival Yoo Myung-hee withdrew and the United States reversed its previous opposition. Brazil's Roberto Azevedo resigned from the post in August 2019.

14. Puligoru Venkata Sanjay Kumar appointed chief justice of Manipur High Court

Justice Puligoru Venkata Sanjay Kumar was a judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court. He replaces Justice Ramalingam Sudhakar who retired. Appointment done by President as per clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution of India. Manipur: Governor: Dr. Najma Heptulla; CM: N. Biren Singh

15. Tata Motors names Marc Llistosella as new CEO, MD

He is the former President and CEO of Fuso Truck and Bus Corporation and Head of Daimler Trucks in Asia. Appointment with effect from July 1, 2021, he will succeed Guenter Butschek. Llistosella is currently on the board of Swedish transport company Einride. Tata Motors: Chairman: Natarajan Chandrasekaran; HQ: Mumbai.

16. Britain's Karim Khan elected International Criminal Court prosecutor

He is elected for a nine-year term starting on June 16. He replaces lead prosecutor Fatou Bensouda. 123-member court began work nearly 20 years ago, handles war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and crimes of aggression. ICC: HQ: The Hague, Netherlands; President: Chile Eboe-Osuji

17. Assam government appoints Hima Das as DSP

Govt of Assam appointed World Championship sprinter Hima Das as a Deputy Superintendent of Police in Assam. It also decided to amend the integrated sports policy of the state by appointing sportspersons as Class-I & Class-II officers in different depts. Hima Das is also nicknamed as 'Dhing Express'.

18. Kiran Bedi removed as Puducherry LG; Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan given additional charge

Dr. Kiran Bedi has been removed from the post of Puducherry Lieutenant Governor. Telangana Governor Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan has been given additional charge as Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry. Meanwhile, the ruling government was reduced to minority. CM of Puducherry: Velu Narayanasamy.

19. Dr Ajay Mathur becomes the new Director-General of International Solar Alliance (ISA)

ISA announced Dr. Ajay Mathur as its new DG following his election at the first special assembly of ISA members. A coalition of 73 member countries, ISA was established in 2015 to accelerate the demand for and use of safe, sustainable solar energy for all. HQ ISA: Gurugram. Membership: 121.

20. Indian-origin Preeti Sinha to lead UN Capital Development Fund

The UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) appointed Indian-origin investment & development banker Preeti Sinha as its Executive Secretary, whose focus will be on providing

micro-finance assistance to women, youth, SMEs in under-served communities. She succeeds Judith Karl. UNCDF HQ: New York.

21. Cong leader Mallikarjun Kharge is new Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha

Senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge has become the new leader of opposition in the Rajya Sabha following the retirement of Ghulam Nabi Azad. Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu accorded his approval to Congress president Sonia Gandhi's request. Azad have also been appointed as the CM of Jammu & Kashmir.

22. Ajai Malhotra becomes first Indian chairperson of Advisory Committee at Human Rights Council

Ajai Malhotra became the 1st Indian to be elected as the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee of Human Rights Council. Malhotra has served as ambassador to Russia, Kuwait, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, New York & Romania. UN HRC President: Nazhat Shameem HQ: Geneva, Switzerland

23. India's Usha Rao-Monari appointed as Under-Secretary-General and Associate Administrator of UNDP

India's Usha Rao-Monari, a leading investment professional, is appointed by UN chief Antonio Guterres as Under-Secretary-General & Associate Administrator of the UNDP. Monari previously served as Chief Executive Officer of Global Water Development Partners UNDP HQ: New York, USA Head: Achim Steiner

24. Garibashvili Named To Georgian PM Post After Gakharia Resigns

Georgia's ruling party has nominated Irakli Garibashvili to take over as prime minister hours after Giorgi Gakharia handed in his resignation following a court ruling that ordered the arrest of the head of the Caucasus country's main opposition force. Georgia Capital: Tbilisi Currency: Georgian lari

25. Makhtar Diop Appointed IFC First African Managing Director and Executive Vice President

World Bank Prez David Malpass appointed Makhtar Diop as MD & Executive Vice President to head International Finance Corp, an arm of the World Bank Group that advances economic development by encouraging growth of the private sector in developing countries. He served for 6 years as the World Bank's VP for Africa Region.

26. Argentina health minister resigns amid COVID-19 vaccine scandal

Argentina's Health Minister Gines Gonzalez Garcia resigned after the growing scandal around the Covid-19 vaccination. Reports said that the people had been able to use connections to get access to COVID-19 vaccines to which they were not entitled. Argentina Capital: Buenos Aires Currency: Argentine peso

27. UK's Inmarsat appoints former Nokia boss Rajeev Suri CEO

British satellite telecommunications company Inmarsat announced that Rajeev Suri, former Nokia CEO, will join the business and assume the role of CEO and become a Director of Connect Bidco Limited, the holding company for Inmarsat, from 1 March 2021. Andrew Sukawaty, Inmarsat's Chairman.

28. AU Small Finance Bank has named Sharad Goklani as President & CTO

AU Small Finance Bank has named Sharad Goklani as its new President & CTO. Goklani was earlier associated with Equitas Small Finance Bank. AU Financiers converted into AU Small Finance Bank in April 2017 after receiving the license from RBI. Sanjay Agarwal, Managing Director & CEO., AU Small Finance Bank.

29. Indian economist Ligia Noronha appointed as Assistant Secretary-General & Head of the New York Office of the UNEP

Noronha is an economist with over 30 years of international experience in the field of sustainable development. She has served on various boards, expert panels, and advisory committees on ecosystems, natural resources, and minerals and metals. UNEP HQ: Nairobi, Kenya Formed: 1972

Awards

1. Dvara KGFS, a leading NBFC in India won Technology for Financial Inclusion at The Inclusive Finance India Awards 2020.

Award was given to Dvara KGFS in recognition for robust technology offering a suite of financial services & products for the underserved section of the society & for their operational excellence over the last year. It caters to more than million customers. Dvara KGFS: CEO:Joby C O; HQ:Chennai

2. 'Aatmanirbharta' named Oxford Hindi word of 2020

'Aatmanirbharta' implying self-reliance has been named by Oxford Languages as its Hindi word of the year 2020 as it 'validated the day-to-day achievements of the countless Indians who dealt with and survived the perils of a pandemic'. Previous Hindi words:Nari Shakti(2018),Samvidhaan(2019)

3. Bengaluru International Airport Bags ACI World's 'Voice Of The Customer' Award

Bangalore International Airport Limited's, BIAL received Airports Council International World's 'Voice of the Customer' award to attain global recognition. BIAL is listed for the committed services provided during the pandemic. MD & CEO of BIAL: Hari Marar ACI is trade representative of the world's airport authorities.

4. Tamil drama 'Koozhangal' Wins Best Film Award at International Film Festival Rotterdam

Koozhangal(Pebbles)directed by Vinothraj PS, has won the top honour, the Tiger Award for best film, at the 50th International Film Festival Rotterdam.It tells the story of a father-son duo, broken by poverty, as they seek to find their way in life. This is the first Tamil film to win the honour.

5. Australia Zoo's Robert Irwin wins People's Choice Award in Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2020

At just 17,he won the Natural History Museum's Award with a drone image of a raging Cape York bushfire.His image titled 'Bushfire' was selected from a shortlist of 25.Cape York is home to over 30 different ecosystems & is of great ecological significance. His father Steve Irwin was a world-famous conservationist.

6. SERB announces Women Excellence Award 2021 on the International Day of Women and Girls in Science

Shobhna Kapoor,Antara Banerjee,Sonu Gandhi & Ritu Gupta will be provided a grant of Rs.15 lakhs for a 3 year period to pursue their research ideas.This is a one-time award to women scientists below age 40 & who received one or more of National Academies. SERB is a statutory body of Dept of Science and Technology.

7. Andhra Pradesh CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy conferred SKOCH Chief Minister of the Year Award

AP CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy was presented the SKOCH Chief Minister of the Year award, in recognition of his government's revolutionary measures in governance in the past two years. The Award was presented by SKOCH group Chairman Sameer Kochhar personally. Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is the 17th CM of the state.

8. S Theodore Baskaran wins Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award 2020

Sanctuary Nature Foundation honoured conservation hero S Theodore Baskaran with Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award 2020 for his role in wildlife conservation and his continuing legacy of writings in Tamil and English to the conservation discourse. He is a retired Chief Post Master General of Tamil Nadu.

9. WCCB receives Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has received the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020 awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme. WCCB was awarded under the Innovation category. It received the award in 2018 under the same category. WCCB is a statutory body established by the Govt of India.

10. Hyderabad gets recognition as 2020 Tree City of the World

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the Arbor Day Foundation recognized Hyderabad as a 2020 Tree City of World, for its commitment to growing and maintaining urban forests. Hyderabad is the only city in India to get recognition. Most of the other cities were from the US, UK and Canada.

11. Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2021: Deepika Padukone, Akshay Kumar bag 'Best Actor' for Chhapaak, Laxmii

The award function took place in Mumbai with the Maharashtra Minister of Tourism & Environment Aditya Thackrey as its chief guest. The critics conferred the Best Actor title to the late Sushant Singh Rajput for his outstanding contribution to Hindi cinema. Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, popularly known as Dadasaheb Phalke.



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Ranks & Reports

1. India to emerge as most resilient economy after Germany in 2021: PHDCCI International Economic Resilience (IER) Rank

Germany ranks first, followed by India and South Korea, according to the report released by industry body PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Based on analysis of 5 lead macroeconomic indicators like real GDP growth rate, merchandise export growth rate etc. India's real GDP growth rate projected at 11.5% in 2021.

2. UN World Tourism Organization confirms 2020 as 'worst year on record'

International arrivals dropped by 74% & worldwide destinations welcomed 1 billion fewer international arrivals than in 2019. This collapse in travel represents an estimated loss of \$1.3 trillion in export revenues, more than 11 times loss during 2009 crisis. UNWTO: Head: Zurab Pololikashvili; HQ: Madrid, Spain.

3. 15th Finance Commission final report: Tax revenue to States to be kept at 41% for 5 years

Greater focus on grants-in-aid (recommended '2.95 lakh crore to 17 states over 2021-26); '2.38-lakh crore for Defence modernisation; called for a major restructuring of the FRBM Act; Rs 30,757 crore allocated to Jammu and Kashmir and Rs 5,958 crore for Ladakh. Allocates Rs 1.5 lakh crore in grants to urban local bodies.

4. India's EV transition will require \$266 billion (around Rs.19.7 lakh cr) investment over next decade: Report by Niti Aayog & RMI

Report highlights the role of finance in this & also identifies a market size of \$50 billion (Rs 3.7 lakh crore) for financing of EVs in 2030 'about 80% of current size of India's retail vehicle finance industry, estimated to be worth Rs.4.5 lakh crore. Report title: Mobilising Finance for EVs in India.

5. India slips two places to 53rd spot in EIU's 2020 Democracy Index

This was due to 'democratic backsliding' by authorities and 'crackdowns' on civil liberties. Norway took the lead in the report called 'Democracy in sickness and in health?', followed by Iceland, Sweden, New Zealand, and Canada comprising the top five. India classified as a 'flawed democracy' with 51 other countries.

6. India Energy Outlook 2021: India to see largest increase in energy demand over next 20 years

According to India Energy Outlook 2021 by the International Energy Agency, India is set to experience the largest increase in energy demand in the world over the next 20 years and will be the 3rd biggest energy consumer by 2030 overtaking European Union. International Energy Agency HQ: Paris, France.

7. ICICI Lombard launched Corporate India Risk Index; India's Corporate Risk Index in its debut edition stands at 57

The Index covers large, medium & small corporates across 15 key sectors in India. It has worked with Frost and Sullivan, a leading management consulting firm to develop this risk measurement tool. The framework measures risk across four parameters. 4 parameters: Awareness, Probability, Criticality and Preparedness.

8. India tops the world with 11% of global death in road accidents: World Bank report

With just 1% of the world's vehicles, India accounts for 11% of the global death in road accidents, according to a report by the World Bank titled 'Guide for Road Safety Opportunities and Challenges: Low- and Middle-Income Countries Country Profiles'. Cost estimates of a road crash and serious injury ' 7.5% of GDP.

9. India needs \$500-bn investment to reach 450-GW RE target by 2030: IEEFA

According to a recent report by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, India will need to deploy \$500-billion in investments to reach its 450 GW capacity target by

2030. India also received more than \$42 billion in investment since 2014 IEEFA is headquartered in California, USA.



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Important Days

1. Indian Coast Guard celebrates its 45th Raising Day: February 1

With just 7 surface platforms in 1978, ICG has grown into 4th largest coast guard with 156 ships & 62 aircraft in its inventory. The ICG has targeted force levels of 200 surface platforms and 80 aircraft by 2025. Since 1977, ICG has saved over 10000 lives. Director General, Indian Coast Guard K Natarajan

2. 2 February: World Wetlands Day

World Wetlands Day occurs annually on February 2 since 1997, marking the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on February 2, 1971 when a small group of environmentalists signed an international agreement at the Ramsar Convention in Iran. 2021 theme: Wetlands and Water

3. World Cancer Day: February 4

World Cancer Day is observed on 4 February every year to create awareness about cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment. It is led by Union for International Cancer Control and originated in 2000 at first World Summit Against Cancer. The theme for World Cancer Day 2021: I Am and I Will

4. First-ever International Day of Human Fraternity: February 4

International Day of Human Fraternity aims to underline the importance of raising awareness about different cultures and religions, or beliefs, and the promotion of tolerance. In December 2020, UNGA adopted a resolution to declare 4 February as this day. 2021 Theme: A Pathway to the Future

5. International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation: 6 February

In 2012, UNGA designated 6th Feb as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation. UNFPA-UNICEF and the IAC jointly launch the 2021 theme: No Time for Global Inaction, Unite, Fund, and Act to End Female Genital Mutilation. Aim: To amplify & direct efforts on elimination of this practice

6. Safer Internet Day 2021: February 9

Safer Internet Day is observed every year on the second day of the second week of February with an aim to provide safer and better internet. This year marks the 18th edition of Safer Internet Day, celebrated in around 15 countries across the world. The theme for 2021 is 'Together for a better internet'.

7. World Pulses Day 2021: February 10

World Pulses Day is observed on February 10 of every year. Pulses, also known as legumes, are the edible seeds of leguminous plants cultivated for food. In 2019, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 10 February as the World Pulses Day. Theme for 2021: 'Nutritious Seeds for a Sustainable Future.'

8. International Day of Women and Girls in Science History

Every year, International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly is celebrated across the world. This year, it will celebrate 6th International Day on February 11th. Theme for 2021: 'Women Scientists at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19'. Gender equality: Sustainable Development Goal 5.

9. World Unani Day 2021: February 11

World Unani Day is observed on February 11 every year. It is celebrated on the birth anniversary of Unani scholar & social reformer Hakim Ajmal Khan. He was the Unani medical educationist & founder of scientific research in the Unani System of Medicine. The Unani system of medicine was originated in Greece.

10. Darwin Day 2021: February 12

Darwin Day 2021 was celebrated on February 12 to mark the 212th birth anniversary of Charles Darwin. Darwin studied many types of animals and plant specimens, which led to him

writing his theory of evolution and natural selection. Scientific Literature of Darwin: "On the Origin of Species".

11. 13 February: World Radio Day observed with theme "New World, New Radio."

It is observed every year on February 13, to raise greater awareness among the public and the media of the importance of radio. It is also meant to encourage decision makers to establish and provide access to information through radio. This is 10th edition. 3 main sub-themes this year: Evolution, Innovation & Connection.

12. February 13: National Women's Day

Sarojini Naidu's birth anniversary is celebrated as National Women's Day of India every year on February 13. Sarojini Naidu was India's first women governor and also famous as 'Bharat Kokila'. She was born on February 13, 1879. Every year, International Women's Day is celebrated on 8 March

13. World Day of Social Justice 2021: February 20

World Day of Social Justice is dedicated to the advantages & issues that are tackled by Social Justice. It talks about giving equal opportunities in all aspects, especially to those who were denied basic rights and discriminated against on various accounts 2021 Theme: A call for social justice in the Digital Economy.

14. International Mother Language Day: February 21

International Mother Language Day is celebrated every year on February 21 globally to recognise and promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. The theme for 2021: 'Fostering Multilingualism for Inclusion in Education and Society'. International Mother Language Day was proclaimed in 1999.

15. National Protein Day: February 27

The National Protein Day is observed on 27th February every year. It aims to raise awareness about the importance and health benefits of protein. It was first observed in 2020. 'Right to Protein' is a national level health initiative launched on this day. The theme for 2021: 'Powering with Plant Protein'.

16. National Science Day being observed on February 28

The day is celebrated every year on the 28th of February to commemorate the discovery of the 'Raman Effect'. The theme 2021: Future of Science & Technology & Innovation: Impact on Education Skills and Work'. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930. National Science Communication Award will present on this day

17. Guru Ravidas Jayanti 2021 observed on February 27, 2021

It is the 644th birth anniversary of the Bhakti movement saint, Guru Ravidas. His influence on Indian culture is immense, especially in North India (Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, and Punjab). He was born in 1450 CE during the Delhi Sultanate. He was lived in Goverdhanpur, near the current Varanasi.



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Summit & Conferences

1. Smriti Irani inaugurates 8th India International Silk Fair

Fair is considered to be India's biggest silk fair, being held under one roof on Indian Silk Export Promotion Council's virtual platform. India is only country in world to produce all 4 major silk varieties -Mulberry, Eri, Tassar, and Muga. India is the 2nd largest producer of Silk.

2. Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' Launches ASEAN-INDIA Hackathon to further strengthen ties.

He said this Hackathon will provide a unique opportunity to India and ASEAN broad themes of "Blue Economy" and "Education"& will be an enactment of six fundamental virtues of our civilisation: respect, dialogue, cooperation, peace, prosperity & innovation The Hackathon is an initiative taken by Ministry of Education.

3. Chief of Air Staff(CAS) Conclave held at Air Force Station,Yelahanka (Bengaluru)

In a first such gathering,CAS of more than 24 countries(from various countries like Japan, Israel, USA, Australia) attended the conclave physically and 16 virtually.The theme of the 2-day event was "Leveraging Aerospace Power for Security and Stability". Current Chief of Air Staff: Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria

4. Indian Ocean Region Defence Ministers' Conclave held on margins of Aero India 2021.

The broad theme of the conclave is 'Enhanced Peace, Security and Cooperation in the Indian Ocean'.Maldives, Comoros, Iran & Madagascar were represented at ministerial level,ambassadors represented Australia, Kenya, Seychelles, Mauritius, Kuwait & Myanmar. 26 countries participated in the meeting hosted by Rajnath Singh

5. PM inaugurates World Sustainable Development Summit 2021

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated World Sustainable Development Summit 2021 via video conferencing. The theme of the Summit is 'Redefining our common future: Safe and secure environment for all'. It is a flagship event of The Energy and Resources Institute. Director-General of TERI: Dr Ajay Mathur Established in 1974.

6. 40th Indian National Cartographic Association (INCA) International Congress took place in Kolkata

National Atlas & Thematic Mapping Organisation (NATMO), under Ministry of Science & Technology organised 3 days 40th INCA International Congress in Kolkata. INCA is the only professional body of cartographers and geospatial technologists, founded in 1979. Indian National Cartographic Association is located in Hyderabad

7. India-Australia Circular Economy(I-ACE) Hackathon 2021 kick-started by AIM and Australia's national science agency (CSIRO)

I-ACE is supported by Australian Department of Industry,Science,Energy and Resources,AIM Atal Incubation Centre network & various domain experts to enable students,start-ups from Australia & India to address common national issues through tech solutions. Circular economy model is restorative by intent and design.

8. Shri Prahlad Singh Patel inaugurated domestic tour operators' convention at Statue of Unity in Kevadia,Gujarat

2-day Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India(ADTOI)10th annual convention-cum-exhibition is based on theme:Domestic Tourism-Hope for the revival-Dekho Apna Desh.Was jointly organised by Ministry of Tourism & ADTOI with support from Gujarat Tourism 400 delegates attended it.Ekta Marathon was held on 2nd day.

9. International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE II) becomes 1st government event in Kerala to be carbon-neutral

The 2nd edition of ICGE-II became the 1st government event in Kerala to be carbon-neutral by ensuring that the 3-day event met globally acknowledged environmental credentials with accuracy & transparency. It followed PAS 2020 Carbon Neutrality Standards. Gender Park has also been inaugurated in Kozhikode, Kerala.

10. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan addresses Joint Conference of 11th World PetroCoal Congress and World Future Fuel Summit in Ne

Dharmendra Pradhan addressed the Joint Conference of the 11th World PetroCoal Congress and World Future Fuel Summit in New Delhi. He highlighted the increase in LPG coverage from 56% to 99.5%. He also mentioned that India shifted to BS-6 emission standards Constituency of Dharmendra Pradhan: Deogarh, Odisha.

11. PM Modi addressed NASSCOM Technology and Leadership Forum

PM Narendra Modi addressed the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM)'s Technology and Leadership Forum (NTLF). It is the flagship event of the NASSCOM. The theme for the event: 'Shaping the future towards a better normal'. It is the 29th edition of NTLF.

12. India hosting COVID-19 Management: Experience, Good Practices and Way Forward"

India is hosting a regional conclave on management of coronavirus pandemic and nine countries, including Afghanistan Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, have been invited for it. The Health Secretary of India will chair the event. Health Secretary of India: Rajesh Bhushan.

13. 18th Edition Of BioAsia To Focus On COVID-19

Asia's largest life-sciences & healthcare forum BioAsia, in its 18th edition, focussed on Covid-19, Global Health, Pharma, & MedTech. Conference was held between Feb 22 & 23 in Hyderabad. Theme of the event: Move the Needle. CEO of BioAsia: Shakthi Nagappa Telangana is seen as one of the top life sciences destinations.

14. International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) Symposium on Sustainable Development of Dams & River Basins inaugurated

ICOLD in collaboration with Central Water Commission (CWC), Dam Rehabilitation Improvement Project (DRIP) and National Hydrology Project (NHP) is organising Symposium on "Sustainable Development of Dams and River Basins". Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister for Jal Shakti .

15. Piyush Goyal addresses the 6th International Conference on Pharmaceutical & Medical Device Sector

Minister of Railways, Commerce & Industry, & Consumer Affairs & Food & Public Distribution Shri Piyush Goyal called upon the Indian pharmaceutical & health care sector to adopt best practices in terms of quality, facility & commitment to maintain standards. PLI scheme for Pharmaceuticals from FY 2020-21 to 2028-29.

16. Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman attends virtual G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting

First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting under the Italian Presidency. This meeting is to discuss the policy actions for the global economic outlook, financial sector issues, financial inclusion, and sustainable finance. G20 - Founded: 26 September 1999; Leader: Mario Draghi (2021)



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Science & Technology

1. SpaceX to launch first civilian orbital mission aboard Dragon spacecraft in late 2021.

Mission will be commanded by Founder and CEO of Shift4 Payments Jared Isaacman, who is also a trained pilot & will raise support for St Jude Children's Research Hospital. Mission is planned for two to four days. The mission is called Inspiration4. Dragon will do a soft water landing off the coast of Florida.

2. First commercial rocket powered by biofuel, successfully launched

US-based startup bluShift Aerospace has successfully launched its Stardust 1.0 rocket, the first commercial booster rocket powered by biofuel. The rocket, which can carry a payload of 8kgs, reached a height of 4,000 before it parachuted back to Earth. bluShift has been working on Stardust 1.0 since 2014.

3. Bellatrix Aerospace is building a 'space taxi' for satellites

Bengaluru based Bellatrix Aerospace, founded in 2015, is building an Orbital Transfer Vehicle (OTV) that will work as taxi in space to ferry small satellites into multiple orbits. It could be a big development for global operators to reduce time and costs. Founders: Yashas Karanam; Rohan M Ganapathi

4. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to develop unmanned pseudo satellite that can fly unmanned for upto 3 months

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is developing a futuristic high altitude pseudo satellite with a start-up company, a first of its kind in the world. The satellite will be solar energised and become a big asset flying unmanned around 70,000 ft for 2-3 months. The technology is named Combined Air Teaming System (CATS).

5. SpaceX announces its first all-civilian mission to Space

Elon Musk's SpaceX announced the launch of its first all civilian mission to space. It is planning Falcon 9's launch of Inspiration4, the world's 1st all-commercial astronaut mission to orbit. It will be launched from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida Jared Isaacman, a trained pilot will be commanding the mission.

6. IIT Bombay launches fundraising campaign 'Cherish IIT Bombay 2021'

IIT Bombay launched its 1st-ever annual fundraising campaign in India, Cherish IIT Bombay 2021. The funds will be used for the creation of world-class laboratory complexes, modernization of lecture halls & continuation of awards to attract & retain faculty. Donations made to IIT Bombay are 100% tax-deductible.

7. American space agency NASA lands its fifth rover 'Perseverance' on Mars successfully

American space agency NASA successfully landed its 5th rover Perseverance on Mars in a deep crater near its equator called Jezero. The 6-wheeled vehicle will now spend at least next 2 years drilling into the local rocks, looking for evidence of past life. The rover is only the fifth ever to set its wheels down on Mars.

8. In a first, Hydrogen fuel bus service to start on Delhi-Jaipur route

In a first, India's largest energy conglomerate, National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC Ltd) is planning to start a premium hydrogen fuel bus service on Delhi to Jaipur route. This will be the first FCEV bus service used for intercity commute. NTPC HQ: New Delhi
Chairman & MD: Gurdeep Singh

9. IIT Madras-incubated Pi Beam launches PiMo e-bike

IIT Madras-incubated start-up Pi Beam Electric launched sustainable electric 2-wheeler, dubbed as PiMo. This utility e-bike has been developed for personal & commercial use. It does not require licence or registration. The cost of a bike is fixed at '30000 The battery can charge faster than a smartphone.

10. Bengaluru scientists develop material for efficient conversion of waste heat into electricity

The material, called Silver Antimony Telluride, is a material that would be able to convert the heat into electrical energy so that other processes can be undertaken. This feat has been achieved by Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research. Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific, Established: 1989

11. ISRO to launch 19 satellites including Amazonia-1 of Brazil into space

Amazonia-1 satellite of Brazil and 18 Co-passenger satellites through PSLVC51 rocket from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota. Amazonia-1 is the optical earth observation satellite of the National Institute for Space Research (INPE). ISRO:- Founded: 15 August 1969; Director: Kailasavadivoo Sivan



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Defence

1. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates HAL's second Tejas Light Combat Aircraft's production line

The event comes a day before Aero India 2021 opening. Delivery of Tejas LCA to the Indian Air Force under a Rs 48,000-crore deal will begin from March 2024 & around 16 aircraft will be rolled out annually till the completion of the total supply of 83 jets. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited: CMD:R Madhavan; HQ:Bengaluru.

2. Aero India 2021 ' world's first 'hybrid' air show begins in Bengaluru.

This 13th edition will see a combination of both physical and virtual exhibition with 601 exhibitors, including 523 from India and 78 from 14 foreign countries. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited would exhibit its Aatmanirbhar Formation Flight. An American B-1B Lancer heavy bomber will perform a fly-by

3. India-US joint military exercise 'Yudh Abhyas 20' commenced in Bikaner in Rajasthan

India-US joint military exercise Yudh Abhyas 20 commenced in Mahajan Field Firing Range of Bikaner in Rajasthan. It is the 16th edition of annual bilateral joint exercise of both armies. The previous version of the exercise was held at Seattle in the US. It focusses on counter-terrorism operations under UN mandate.

4. Indian Army lays foundation of 100-foot-high national flag in J-K's Gulmarg

Indian Army in collaboration with the Solar Industry India laid the foundation stone of the tallest 'Iconic National Flag' at the ski-resort of Gulmarg in Jammu and Kashmir. The flag will be on a 100 feet-high pole, the highest Tricolour in the Valley. Chief of the Army Staff: Manoj Mukund Naravane.

5. Indian Navy's largest war game, TROPEX 21 under way in the Indian Ocean region to test combat preparedness

The Navy's largest war game, the biennial Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX-21), with the participation of all its operational units as well as those of the Army, Air Force and the Coast Guard has completed the weapon work-up phase. Current Chief of Naval Staff (CNS): Admiral Karambir Singh.

6. Titagarh Wagons wins Rs 174.76 cr contract from Indian Navy

Titagarh Wagons was awarded a contract for construction and supply of five Diving Support Craft (DSC) from the Indian Navy. The value of the order is about Rs. 174.76 crores. As per the contract, the DSC has to be supplied within 30 months approximately. Titagarh Wagons is a railway wagon manufacturer in West Bengal.

7. PM hands over indigenously designed and manufactured Arjun Main Battle Tank to the Army

PM handed over the indigenously designed & manufactured Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A) to Army. It has been indigenously designed and manufactured by the Combat Vehicles Research & Development Establishment of Defence Research and Development Organisation. MK-1A has 54.3% indigenous content against 41% in earlier model.

8. Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021: India joins two-day navy exercise

India joined a two-day navy exercise "Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021" in the northern part of the Indian Ocean. It will include shooting at sea and air targets and liberating hijacked ships, as well as search and rescue and anti-piracy operations. The drill is being held in an area spanning 17,000 sq. km.

9. India successfully conducts joint user trials of indigenously developed Helina, Dhruvastra Anti-Tank Guided Missiles

Joint User Trials for Helina (Army Version) and Dhruvastra (Air Force Version) Missile Systems designed and developed by DRDO were carried out from Advanced Light Helicopter platform in desert ranges. Helina is a third generation Anti-Tank Guided Missile. Chairman of DRDO: G. Satheesh Reddy.

Books & Authors

1. SOUMITRA CHATTERJEE : A Life in Cinema, Theatre, Poetry & Painting book released.

The book written by Arjun Sengupta and Partha Mukherjee, and published by Niyogi Books was released virtually on Soumitra Chatterjee's birth anniversary on 19th January, 2021. It gives extensive & immersive glimpse into the various facets of the actor. The actor passed away in November 15

2. The Little Book of Encouragement book by Dalai Lama

The Tibetan Spiritual leader, his holiness Dalai Lama, has launched his new book 'The Little Book of Encouragement' that comprises of 130 quotes. Renuka Singh has edited the book and Penguin Random House has published the book. He is also known as Tenzin Gyatso and is 14th Dalai Lama.

3. VP Naidu releases book 'Parliamentary Messenger in Rajasthan' authored by Dr K N Bhandari

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu released a book titled Parliamentary Messenger in Rajasthan. It was authored by Dr K N Bhandari. It focusses on the health & education initiatives launched via MPLADS on the recommendation of Dr Abhishek Singhvi. Dr Abhishek Singhvi is a member of the Indian National Congress

4. 'By Many a Happy Accident: Recollections of a Life' authored by M Hamid Ansari

Career diplomat Hamid Ansari, who rose to become Vice-President of India, in which capacity he served from 2007 to 2017, in a conversation with Ashhar Khan over his just-released book By Many A Happy Accident, and the many controversies surrounding it. M. Hamid Ansari served as the 12th Vice President of India.

5. 'Platform Scale: For a Post-Pandemic World' authored by Sangeet Paul Choudhary

Book titled 'Platform Scale: For a Post-Pandemic World' has been authored by Sangeet Paul Choudhary. It is published by Penguin Random House India. It explains the importance of inner workings of platform business models and their ability to scale rapidly. The 1st edition of Platform Scale was published in 2015.

6. Hunter Biden's memoir 'Beautiful Things'

Hunter Biden, son of President Joe Biden has written a memoir called Beautiful Things. It will centre on his well-publicized struggles with substance abuse. Hunter Biden is a lawyer and former lobbyist whose lead the first impeachment of Trump. It was written in collab. with author & journalist Drew Jubera.

7. Global icon and actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas' memoir named 'Unfinished'

Unfinished is a memoir by Priyanka Chopra. Described as a collection of personal essays, stories and observations, it chronicles important moments in her life and her 20-year-long career, such as working as an actress-producer & UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. The book was released by Penguin Random House.

8. Former Union Minister, M.P. Jai Oram Launches book 'Turn Around India: 2020-Surmounting Past Legacy' Authored by R.P. Gupta

Turn Around India: 2020- Surmounting Past Legacy, a book on creating economic awareness among masses authored by R.P. Gupta was launched by Jai Oram. It provides a viable option for reviving Indian economy for creating new jobs and enlarging public income It is published by the Himalaya Publishing House.

9. Meghna Pant's new book "The Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Good News"

Award-winning writer, journalist and speaker Meghna Pant's new book is about a small-town woman, Ladoo, who scandalizes her conservative family when she decides to use a sperm donor to have a baby. A movie Badnam Ladoo is to be made based on that as well. Penguin Random House India is publishing it in April 2021.

10. 35 children's books in Parag Honour List for 2021

The annual list by the Parag initiative of Tata Trusts features best of children's books published in the past one year. This year featured 35 books for children & young adults across fiction, non-fiction and poetry genres by authors in English and Hindi. This is the 2nd edition of the Parag Initiative of Tata Trusts.

11. Filmmaker Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari debuts as an author with her fiction novel 'Mapping Love'

Filmmaker Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari has turned author with her debut fiction novel, titled Mapping Love. The book will be published by Rupa Publications. Tiwari is known for acclaimed films like Nil Battey Sannata, Bareilly Ki Barfi and Panga. Mapping Love is a story of falling in love with writing.

12. Kamala's Way: An American Life written by Dan Morain

Kamala's Way, a new biography of Harris by California journalist Dan Morain, depicts the rise of Kamala Harris to become the U.S.'s first-ever woman Vice-President, and the first of mixed Indian and African American heritage. Harris is the 49th Vice President of the USA.

13. Award winning Author Irwin Allan Sealy's new novel 'ASOCA'

Prizewinning writer Irwin Allan Sealy's new novel 'ASOCA: A Sutra', an imagined memoir of Ashoka The Great, the emperor who ruled Indian sub-continent and played a pivotal role in spreading Buddhism from India to other parts of Asia in the 3rd century BC. It will be published by Penguin Random House India.

14. Home Minister releases book 'Rashtra Pratham - 82 varshon ki Swarnim Gatha' chronicling CRPF's history

Home Minister released a book Rashtra Pratham - 82 varshon ki Swarnim Gatha (Nation First - The Golden Story of 82 Years) chronicling the history of CRPF since its raising in 1939. It hopes to become a source of inspiration for personnel joining the force. CRPF HQ: New Delhi. Director General: A P Maheswari.

15. Peter Mukerjea pens memoir titled Starstruck: Confessions of a TV Executive

Media baron Peter Mukerjea came out with his memoir, which he says is just a personal recollection of his experiences. Starstruck: Confessions of a TV Executive is a story of Indian television industry, authored by the man who was at the forefront of it. The book is published by Westland.

16. Home Minister Amit Shah releases a book chronicling the history of CRPF since its raising in 1939

Rashtra Pratham - 82 Varshon Ki Swarnim Gatha' (Nation First - The Golden Story of 82 Years) "is a detailed and thoroughly researched account of the journey, challenges, successes, and sacrifices of the force". CRPF celebrated its first-ever Veterans Day on Feb 19, 2021.

Miscellaneous

1. President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates museum dedicated to General Thimayya in Karnataka

President Kovind inaugurated a museum dedicated to former Army Chief General Kodandera Subayya Thimayya in Karnataka's Kodagu. Rare photographs of K S Thimayya, his uniform, a mini rocket launcher and arms used by the soldiers are part of the museum. General Thimayya served as the Army Chief from 1957 to 1961.

2. Reliance Industries Ltd receives the world's first 'carbon-neutral' oil from US

Reliance has sourced the world's 1st consignment of carbon-neutral oil from US as it looks to become a net zero-carbon company by 2035. Reliance, which operates world's largest single-location oil refining complex received it from Oxy Low Carbon Ventures. Reliance Industries Ltd CEO: Mukesh Ambani.

Obituary

1. Nobel Prize-winning chemist Paul Crutzen, who warned of ozone hole, dies at 87

Crutzen discovered in 1970 that nitrogen pollution was capable of destroying ozone in the atmosphere, a critical layer of that protects living things from the sun's UV radiation. He shared 1995 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for discovering risk to ozone layer.

Crutzen helped coin and popularize the term Anthropocene.

2. Cicely Tyson, pioneering Black actor, dies at the age of 96

The star gained an Oscar nomination for her role as the sharecropper's wife in 'Sounder' & won a Tony Award in 2013 at age 88. She touched TV viewers' hearts in The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman & won 2 Emmys for playing the 110-year-old former slave. Tyson's memoir is 'Just As I Am'.

3. Ace cinematographer Nivas passes away

Cinematographer-director PS Nivas passed away. He was known for his work in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Hindi cinema. He won the National Film Award for Best Cinematography for Malayalam film Mohiniyaattam (1976). Andhra Pradesh's Nandi award was conferred on him in 1979.

4. Founder of Rang Vidushak, theatre director Padma Shri Bansi Kaul dies

Founder of Rang Vidushak and theatre director Padma Shri Bansi Kaul dies. He was born in a Kashmiri Pandit family. Rang Vidushak, a theatre group that has incorporated folk idioms into its production and evolved a new idiom of clown-theatre. He was awarded Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1995.

5. Veteran Congress MLA, ex-minister Sujan Singh Pathania dies at 77

He was a former minister and sitting legislator from Fatehpur Assembly constituency in Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh. He served in HP Forest Department as a range officer before entering politics. He was first elected to state Assembly in 1977. Pathania was elected seven times as an MLA.

6. Actor-producer Rajiv Kapoor, son of celebrated filmmaker-actor Raj Kapoor, dies at 58

Rajiv Kapoor made his acting debut with 1983 film "Ek Jaan Hain Hum" & first as a leading man in blockbuster "Ram Teri Ganga Maili" (1985). His first production was "Henna", directed by eldest brother Randhir Kapoor and featuring brother Rishi Kapoor.

Made his feature directorial debut with Prem Granth.

7. Carlos Menem, former President of Argentina, dies at 90

Carlos Menem was an Argentine lawyer & served as the 44th President from 1989 to 1999. He promoted laws to reform the govt & the economy after his predecessor, Ral Alfonsn, resigned in the middle of a deep financial crisis caused by hyperinflation. Argentina Capital: Buenos Aires Currency: Argentine peso

8. Eminent jurist and former Governor of Bihar and Jharkhand, Justice (Retd) Rama Jois passed away

Justice (Retired) Rama Jois, eminent jurist and former Governor of Bihar and Jharkhand passed away recently. He was 89. He wrote several books on ancient Indian law, Habeas Corpus law, Raja Dharma and Bharathiya way to lead a purposeful life. Rama Jois was also a writer and historian.

9. Former TRAI chairman Rahul Khullar passes away

Former chairman of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Rahul Khullar passed away. He served TRAI for three years. Before being appointed as TRAI chief, he was a secretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Trade. PD Vaghela, current TRAI chairman.

Person in news

1. Telangana's Manasa Varanasi bags Miss India World 2020 title

Manasa Varanasi, an engineer from Telangana, has bagged the VLCC Femina Miss India World 2020 title. Haryana's Manika Sheokand was declared VLCC Femina Miss Grand India 2020 while Uttar Pradesh's Manya Singh crowned VLCC Femina Miss India 2020 Runner Up. Varanasi will represent India at the 70th Miss World pageant.

2. CEAT roped in Rana Daggubati as brand ambassador for new range of bike tyres

Tyre maker CEAT roped in Rana Daggubati as its brand ambassador for promoting Puncture Safe range of bike tyres. He will also feature in the commercial. The company launched tyres for 5 states' Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu & Kerala. Chairman of CEAT: Harsh Goenka HQ: Mumbai.

3. Actor Darshan roped in as Agriculture Ambassador by the Karnataka government

The Karnataka government has roped in Sandalwood actor Darshan, also known as 'Challenging Star ', as the Ambassador of the State Agriculture Department. The actor will promote programmes and schemes of the Agriculture Department. Karnataka Capital: Bengaluru Governor: Vajubhai Vala



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The advertisement features a purple background with a large smartphone graphic in the center. The phone screen displays a graduation cap, a trophy, and a stack of books. To the left of the phone, a person is sitting at a desk with a laptop. To the right, a person is standing and pointing towards the phone. Various educational icons like a target, a gear, and a lightbulb are scattered around the phone.

Insurance

1. Mashak Rakshak: IRDAI issues guidelines on India's first medical policy for Vector-Borne Disease.

The minimum sum insured under Standard Product shall be '10,000 wherein the amount can be increased in the multiples of '10,000 and maximum limit can go up to '2 lakh. Vector-borne diseases can include Dengue fever, Malaria, Chikungunya, Zika Virus etc. Announced Corona Rakshak & Corona Kavach for coronavirus last yr

2. IRDAI annual report: LIC's claim settlement ratio deteriorated in FY20 to 96.6%

Life Insurance Corp. of India saw its claim settlement ratio deteriorate marginally in FY20 to 96.6% from 97.7% in FY19. The life insurance industry in total paid 8.46 lakh claims on individual policies, with a total pay-out of Rs 18042 crore in the FY20. Max Life had the highest claim settlement ratio at 99.2%.

3. IRDAI panel okays launch of index-linked insurance policies (Ilips)

The returns from Ilips will be linked to benchmark indices. Ilips can be an alternative or complementary option to the current conventional guaranteed products (including annuities and savings products) and unit-linked insurance plans (Ulips). Ilips were banned by the regulator in 2013.

4. Star Health and Allied Insurance partners with PhonePe to offer Digital Health Insurance

Aim is to provide easy accessibility to its Arogya Sanjeevani health insurance policy, especially to the millennials. For a sum insured of Rs 1 lakh, this policy will be available at an annual premium of only Rs 2985, excluding GST. It covers upto to age 65. Star Health & Allied Insurance: CMD: V. Jagannathan; HQ: Chennai

5. ICICI Prudential launches goal-based savings product GIFT

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launched Guaranteed Income for Tomorrow (GIFT) that helps policyholders to achieve long-term financial goals. It enables customers to eliminate the uncertainty of future income streams by providing guaranteed income. ICICI Pru CEO: N. S. Kannan HQ: Mumbai

6. Star Health Insurance partners with PhonePe to offer Digital Health Insurance

Star Health and Allied Insurance launched the Arogya Sanjeevani policy. This policy will be offered on PhonePe, the digital payments platform. For a sum insured of Rs 1 lakh, this policy will be available at an annual premium of only Rs 2985, excluding GST. Policy covers anyone up to 65 years. Sum Insured: Up to '10 Lakh

7. ICICI Lombard partners with Flipkart to offer 'Hospicash' benefit to consumers

Flipkart partnered with ICICI Lombard to offer Group SafeGuard insurance, a group insurance policy to its consumers. With daily cash benefits starting from Rs 500, Hospicash benefit under Group SafeGuard insurance will provide cover to Flipkart consumers. Hospicash ' Coverage for hospitalisation expenses upto 30 days.



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India & World

1. India, Qatar hold fourth Foreign Office Consultations

Foreign Office Consultations provide an opportunity to review the entire gamut of bilateral relations, including political, energy, trade, investments, defence etc. Both sides agreed to convene the first Joint Commission Meeting at Foreign Minister level. Qatar: Capital:Doha; Currency:Qatari Riyal

2. Culture & Tourism Minister co-chairs 8th meeting of ASEAN-India tourism Ministers

Minister of State for Culture & Tourism, Prahlad Singh Patel virtually co-chaired the 8th Meeting of ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers. Ministers reiterated the need for cooperative efforts in mitigating the impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector. Association of Southeast Asian Nations HQs: Jakarta, Indonesia.

3. Bangladesh Film Festival opens in Kolkata

The third Bangladesh Film Festival 2021 opened in Kolkata. The 5-day long Festival will be showcasing 32 Bangladeshi feature films. Film on the life of Prime Minister of Bangladesh 'Hasina-A Daughter's Tale' was the inaugural film of the festival. Bangladesh Capital: Dhaka; Currency: Bangladeshi taka.

4. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal co-chaired the 1st India-EU High Level Dialogue on Trade and Investment

India and EU have agreed to further deepen bilateral trade and investment relationship in the 1st India-EU High Level Dialogue on Trade and Investment. Piyush Goyal and EU Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis co-chaired the 1st India-EU Dialogue. The fifteenth India-EU Leaders Summit was held in July 2020.

5. India, Afghanistan sign MoU to build Shahtoot Dam in Kabul

India & Afghanistan signed an agreement to build the Shahtoot Dam to provide drinking water facility in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. The dam is to be constructed in the Kabul river basin. It aims to provide clean drinking water to two mn citizens. India has committed \$80 mn for various projects in the country.

6. Cabinet approves Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement between India and Mauritius

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister approved the signing of the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) between India & Mauritius. It is aimed at liberalising norms to boost two-way commerce between the countries. CECPA b/w India & Mauritius covers 310 export items for India.

7. Exim Bank Extends LOC Of USD 15 Million To Sierra Leone

The Export-Import Bank on behalf of Govt of India extended Line of Credit of \$15 mn to the Republic of Sierra Leone for the purpose of expansion of ongoing projects for rehabilitation of existing potable water facilities in 4 communities in Sierra Leone. With this, Exim Bank has credit commitments of around \$26.59 bn.

8. India, Nepal sign MoU for reconstruction of six secondary schools in Nepal

India & Nepal signed an MoU for the reconstruction of 6 secondary schools in Nepal. The MoU was for construction schools at a total cost of Nepali Rupees 518 mn. The MoU was signed between Indian Embassy & Nepal's Central Level Project Implementation Unit. Nepal Capital: Kathmandu PM: K P Sharma Oli

9. 11th India-EU Macroeconomic dialogue held through video conferencing. Hopes to forge host of bilateral cooperation arrangements

In the 11th India-EU Macroeconomic dialogue, India & European Union expressed hope to forge a host of bilateral co-op. arrangements with a view to boost bilateral trade. EU is one of India's largest trading partners, one of the largest investors in India. The Indian side was led by Economic Affairs Secretary Tarun Baja

10. India, Ethiopia sign agreements on visa facilitation & leather technology

India, Ethiopia signed two agreements related to visa facilitation and leather technology. The agreements were signed in the presence of Ethiopia Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen Hassen and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. Ethiopia Capital: Addis Ababa Currency: Ethiopian birr

11. India, Maldives sign agreements on wide range of domains including fish processing, public broadcasting

India & Maldives signed agreements on various domains including fish processing, public broadcasting, sustainable urban development, road infrastructure & housing. Agreements were exchanged between EAM Dr S. Jaishankar & his counterpart Abdulla Shahid. Maldives Capital: Male Currency: Maldivian rufiyaa

12. India signs \$50 million Defence line of Credit agreement with Maldives

Reaffirming its commitment to overall development and security of its maritime neighbour, India signed a \$50 million Line of Credit agreement in defence sector with the Maldives. The agreement was signed between Finance Ministry of Maldives and EXIM bank. Maldives Capital: Mal Currency: Maldivian rufiyaa

13. Indian and Brazilian S&T Ministers discuss collaborations in range of areas like health, AI, Environment

The deliberations focused around India- Brazil collaboration in thematic areas such as health, drugs, and vaccine for COVID-19; medicines and vaccines, biotechnology, energy, nanotechnology, ICT, artificial intelligence(AI), cybersecurity among others. Jair Bolsonaro is the 38th and current president of Brazil.



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Environment

1. India's first wetland conservation centre comes up in Chennai

Centre for Wetland Conservation and Management will work as knowledge hub for various stakeholders for conserving wetlands that occupy 4.6% of India's total land area. It has been set up as part of National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management, Chennai. India has 42 sites designated wetlands under Ramsar Convention.

2. India's first fossil of Earth's Oldest Animal Found in Bhimbetka by Geological Survey of India

Researchers unearthed India's 1st fossil of Dickinsonia, which is considered to be the oldest animal that roamed Earth 570 million years ago. They were discovered at the Bhimbetka rock shelters on the roof of the Auditorium Cave. Bhimbetka is in Madhya Pradesh. Geological Survey of India is headquartered in Kolkata.

3. India's first CNG tractor launched; Farmers' annual fuel cost can go down by Rs 1 lakh

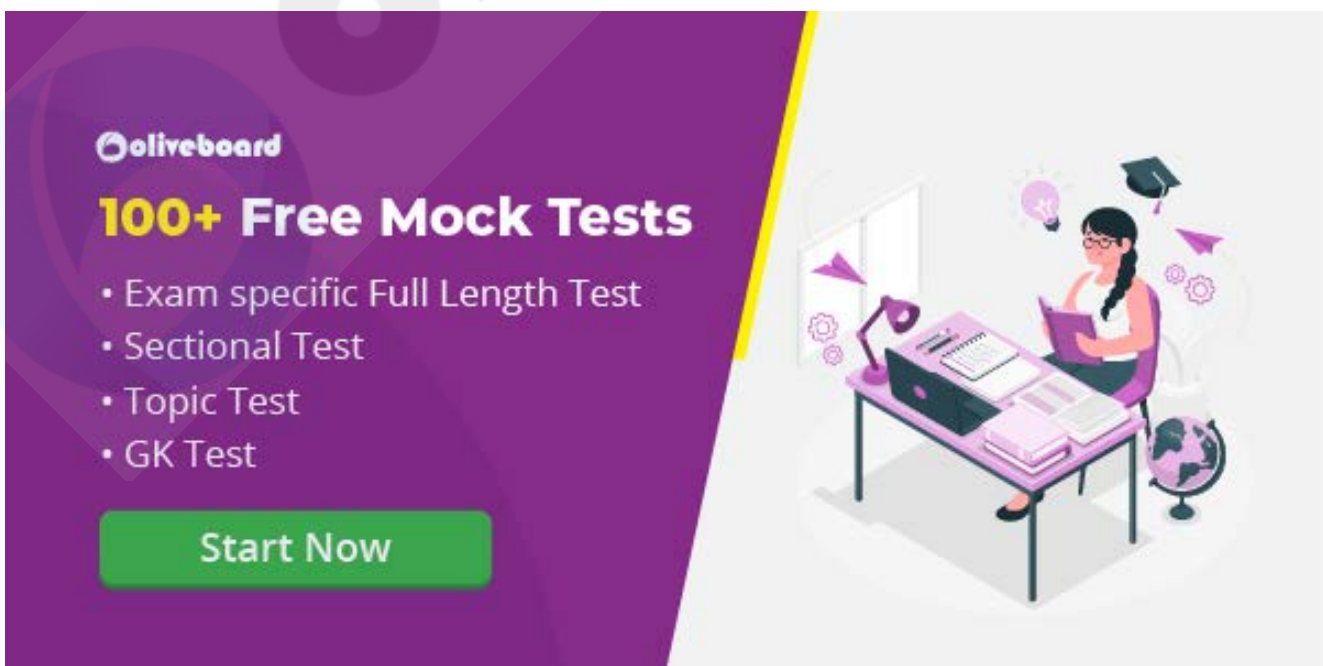
India's first-ever diesel tractor converted to CNG was launched. The conversion carried out by Rawmatt Techno Solutions & Tomasetto Achille India will help farmers increase their income, by lowering costs, & help to create job opportunities in rural India. CNG is a clean fuel with the lowest carbon & pollutant content.

4. UN's FAO calls for sustainable aquaculture, end to illegal fishing

FAO in its first-ever Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, pressed for stronger action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The declaration was a part of the 34th session of FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI34). FAO: Director-General: Qu Dongyu; HQ: Rome, Italy

5. Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar inaugurates Atal Paryavaran Bhavan

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar inaugurated the Atal Paryavaran Bhavan at Lakshadweep. Under this, the Lakshadweep will undergo a comprehensive development, without compromising its commitment to nature. Lakshadweep Capital: Kavaratti.



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Apps & Portals

1. BSE sets up innovation sandbox web portal for fintechs, individuals

Fintech firms and individuals may use the environment for offline testing of their applications in a test environment. This will help in creating an ecosystem which promotes innovation in the securities market. The portal is a workflow-based platform.

2. Visual intelligence tool TEJAS, e-Auction India, 'Work from AnyWhere' portal launched on silver jubilee of NICSI

National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICSI) is a public sector enterprise under National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology. NIC products portfolio was also launched by MeitY Union Minister Ravi Shankar. NICSI: Chairman: Dr. Rajendra Kumar; Location: New Delhi.

3. Union Ministers jointly launch unified web portal for monitoring progress of Gobardhan scheme activities

Gobardhan is an initiative aimed at managing cattle & biodegradable waste and also help enhance farmers income. Various biogas programmes/policies/schemes will now be coordinated by Dept of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen. Jal Shakti Ministry is implementing the Swachh Bharat Mission.

4. 2nd Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) Hackathon and Cyber Challenge 2020-21 of NCRB held.

This hackathon is continuation to Hackathon & Cyber Challenge held in March 2020. Police officials especially those from cutting edge level, academia, industry, students etc participated to improve existing IT apps & create new to help improve CCTNS ecosystem. Mobile App: - 'Locate Nearest Police Station' was also launched.

5. TIFAC launches job portal named 'Saksham' for placing workers in MSMEs

Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council launched a job portal Saksham that will conduct skills mapping exercises of workers as per requirements of MSMEs. It also launched a seaweed cultivation mission on TIFAC's 34th Foundation Day. TIFAC is a think-tank under the Dept of Science and Technology.

6. Dharmendra Pradhan launched Investor Corner under Project Development Cell on MoPNG's revamped Website

This initiative is to dedicate a section showcasing investible sectors and opportunities and an Investors' Corner prominently on the MoPNG's revamped webpage, as a means to channelize investors' interest to Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas PDC Team. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Dharmendra Pradhan

7. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launches e-Chhawani Portal

Defence Minister launched an online portal to provide online municipal services to more than 20 lakh citizens across 62 Cantonment Boards through a multi-tenancy central platform. It aims to provide citizen-centric services to residents of Cantonment areas Kanpur Cantonment is the largest cantonment in India.

8. Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar launches applications for five pan-India surveys

Union Minister of Labour and Employment Santosh Kumar Gangwar launched the software application for 5-pan India surveys which are being conducted by the Labour Bureau. The results of the surveys will be announced in 7 to 8 months. The constituency of Labour Minister: Bareilly, UP.

9. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar launches BRICS 2021 Website

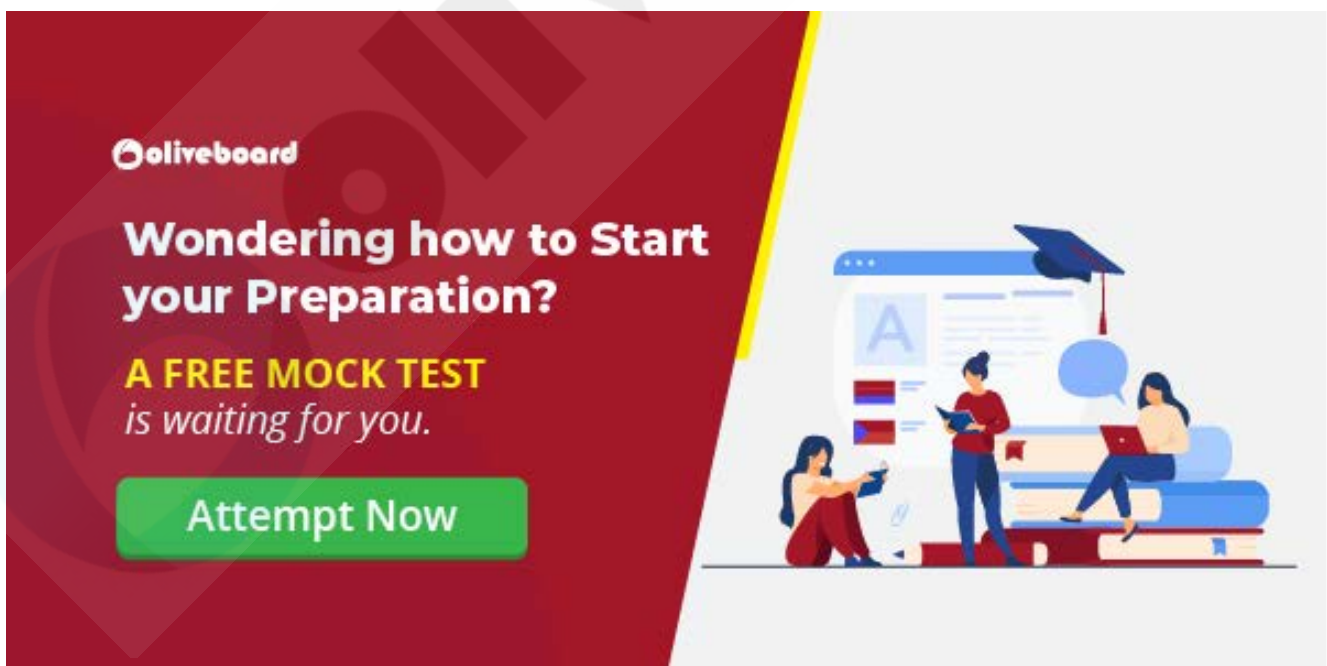
EAM S Jaishankar launched a website for five-nation grouping BRICS. India assumed chairmanship of BRICS this year when the bloc is celebrating its 15th anniversary. BRICS bloc represents over 3.6 billion people and has a combined GDP of \$16.6 billion. BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China & South Africa.


10. India's WhatsApp alternative app: Sandes

The WhatsApp alternative instant messaging app Sandesh Government Instant Messaging system has arrived. The app has been developed by National Informatics Center (NIC) and is currently available on Apple App Store only to download. Dr. Neeta Verma, DG, NIC, MeitY, Govt of India

11. NPCI enables UPI AutoPay live on music streaming platform 'Gaana'

National Payments Corporation of India(NPCI) has announced that UPI AutoPay has now gone live on Gaana.Its integration with UPI AutoPay has made Gaana the 1st player in the Media & Entertainment industry to roll out the innovative e-mandate feature on UPI. Prashan Agrawal, CEO, Gaana.



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Acquisitions & Mergers

1. CCI approves BOI's 49% stake-buy in BOI AXA Investment Managers, BOI AXA Trust

Competition Commission of India approved Bank of India's acquisition of 49% stake each in BOI AXA Investment Managers and BOI AXA Trustee Services. Following the transaction, both the entities ' BAIM and BATS ' will become BoI's fully-owned subsidiaries. AXA IM is an investment arm of AXA Investment Managers.

2. State-owned GAIL acquires Indian Energy Exchange(IEX)'s 5% stake in its arm Indian Gas Exchange(IGX)

Adani Total Gas & Torrent Gas had acquired 5% stake each in IGX earlier. GAIL is the 3rd strategic investor in IGX. Launched on June 15, 2020, as gas trading platform, IGX has since become first gas exchange to receive authorisation from PNGRB. S N Goel is chairman of IEX and director of IGX.

3. Bharti Airtel buys Warburg Pincus' 20% stake in DTH arm for Rs 3,126 crore

Bharti Airtel announced the acquisition of Warburg Pincus's 20% stake in its direct-to-home (DTH) arm. Airtel also set up a committee which would evaluate various options for the re-organisation of businesses and shareholding structure of the company. Bharti Airtel CEO: Gopal Vittal. HQ: New Delhi.

4. Tata Group acquires 68% stake in online grocery major BigBasket for Rs 9,500 crore

Tata group to buy 68% stake in Alibaba-backed online grocery startup Big Basket for about Rs 9500 crore. At present, Chinese billionaire Jack Ma-controlled Alibaba controls a 27.58% stake in the company. Tata's acquisition exited Alibaba & few others. Big Basket is headquartered in Bengaluru.

5. Piramal group gets RBI approval for debt-ridden DHFL's acquisition

RBI cleared the Rs 34250-crore acquisition of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation by Piramal group. Piramal offered upfront cash of Rs 14700 crore, including cash on DHFL's balance sheet, & a deferred component (non-convertible debentures) of Rs 19550 crore. Piramal HQ: Mumbai. DHFL HQ: Mumbai.

6. CCI approves stake purchase by Panatone Finvest in Tata Communications

Competition Commission of India (CCI) on approved acquisition of shares of Tata Communications Ltd by Panatone Finvest Ltd. Panatone Finvest Ltd is a non-deposit taking core investment arm of Tata Sons. Competition Commission of India, Headquarters: New Delhi

External Affairs

1. Exim Bank to provide \$400 million for Maldives project

Mumbai Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) will provide Line of Credit (LoC) of \$400 million to Maldives to fund 6.7 km Greater Male Connectivity Project (Male to Thilafushi Link). The agreement under the line of credit is effective January 28, 2021. Project connects Male with Villingili, Gulhifahu and Thilafushi.

2. India enters CECPA with Mauritius, extends 100 mln defence line of credit

India entered into a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) with Mauritius enabling Indian investors to use the archipelago as a launch-pad for business expansion into continental Africa. The CECPA is India's 1st-such Agreement with an African country.

FinTech

1. NPCI partners with APIX to launch Global Hackathon- 'NPCI PayAuth Challenge

NPCI launched Global Level Hackathon PayAuth Challenge, to find solution for alternatives for authorising UPI transaction through options like Biometrics. It is supported by world's 1st cross-border, open-architecture API marketplace & sandbox platform APIX MD & CEO of NPCI: Dilip Asbe

2. PhonePe partners with Axis Bank on UPI multi-bank model

Digital payments platform PhonePe partnered with Axis Bank on a Unified Payments Interface (UPI) multi-bank model. It aims to provide PhonePe users with the option to create and use multiple UPI IDs with Axis Bank's '@axl' handle. PhonePe in January processed transactions worth ' 1.92 trillion.

3. Kotak Mahindra Bank launches Kotak Remit on mobile to send money abroad directly from phone

Kotak Mahindra Bank launched its outward forex remittance service, Kotak Remit allowing its users to directly send money abroad from their phones. Customers do not have to furnish any physical documents for transactions up to \$25,000 or equivalent. Kotak Mahindra Bank established in 1985. MD & CEO: Uday Kotak.

4. Mastercard and Razorpay to make digital payments more accessible for MSMEs and startups

Mastercard and Razorpay launched a partnership that combines Razorpay's payment processing capabilities with Mastercard's trusted and secure digital banking solutions and card services. It will empower MSMEs in digitizing their operations. CEO of Razorpay: Harshil Mathur. Founded: 2013.

5. Govt to set up digital intelligence unit to tackle pesky calls, financial frauds

To tackle pesky calls and to make digital transactions secure the govt proposed to impose a financial penalty against telemarketers including disconnection of resources. It has also decided to develop a web/mobile application for redressal mechanism. Minister of Electronics and IT: Ravi Shankar Prasad.

6. SBI launches YONO Merchant app to tap retail, enterprise players

SBI Payments, a subsidiary of India's largest lender State Bank of India, will launch YONO Merchant App to provide low-cost digital payments infrastructure to merchants. YONO Merchant will expand the digitization of merchant payments in the country. YONO ' You Only Need One

PSUs

1. NTPC to install early warning system in its projects in hill states

NTPC to install early warning systems in its projects located in hill states prone to natural disasters. Minister of Power announced this after the assessment of the state-run power producer's damaged hydel project at Tapovan in Uttarakhand. Chairman and MD of NTPC: Gurdeep Singh HQ: New Delhi

2. BHEL bags order from Navy to supply 2 Super Rapid Gun Mounts(SRGM) for Indian Navy frontline ships

BHEL has indigenised these guns and has established dedicated, intricate manufacturing and inspection facilities at its Heavy Electrical Equipment Plant, Haridwar. BHEL is also working on an upgraded version of SRGM to cater to future warships requirement. SRGM is the main gun standardised for all warships of the Navy.

States/UTs

Andhra Pradesh

1. State Election Commission launches its own poll app, eWatch, in Andhra Pradesh

State Election Commissioner N. Ramesh Kumar launched an app called 'eWatch' to keep tab on poll-related irregularities in Andhra Pradesh. It was an in-house software application developed by Reliance Jio for use in the ensuing gram panchayat elections. AP Governor: Biswabhusan Harichandan; CM: YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Assam

1. Assam govt to distribute '3000 each to nearly 7.5 lakh people under Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar scheme

Assam government distributed the financial assistance of '3000 each to nearly 7.5 lakh people belonging to tea garden areas under the Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar scheme. So far, '5000 had been deposited to bank account holders in tea garden areas. Assam government has started the scheme in 2017- 18.

2. First heliport of Assam inaugurated in the Majuli district

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the first heliport of the state in Majuli district which has the facility for the simultaneous landing of three helicopters. It was built with an aim to boost tourism in Majuli. Majuli is the world's largest river island.

3. PM Modi launch 'Asom Mala' road project in Sonitpur district of Assam; laid foundation stone of two hospitals

Prime Minister launched 'Asom Mala', aimed at helping improve state highways and major district roads networks in Assam. PM also laid the Foundation Stone of two medical colleges and hospitals, which are being set up at Biswanath and Charaideo. Assam CM: Sarbananda Sonowal; Governor: Jagdish Mukhi.

4. Finance Minister Initiates 3rd Phase of Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar Mela in Guwahati

Union FM Nirmala Sitharaman initiated the ceremonial distribution ceremony of Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar Mela in Guwahati. The main objective of the scheme is to incentivize and strengthen the efforts of financial inclusion of the tea tribe community. Around 7,46,667 beneficiaries of tea gardens covered under this.

5. PM Modi launches 'Mahabahu-Brahmaputra' initiative and several development projects in Assam

PM Narendra Modi launched the Mahabahu-Brahmaputra initiative. It aims to improve connectivity in the eastern states, by inaugurating the Ro-Pax vessel operations between Neamati-Majuli Island, North Guwahati-South Guwahati and Dhubri-Hatsingimari. Assam Capital: Dispur CM: Sarbananda Sonowal

6. Assam CM inaugurates Centre for Perishable Cargo at LGBI Airport

Centre for Perishable Cargo at International Cargo Terminal, LGBI Airport Guwahati was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Assam, Sarbananda Sonowal. It was developed by AIDC acting as a nodal agency for export of perishable cargo through air transport. Assam Industrial Development Corporation Ltd ' AIDC.

7. India, AIIB sign \$304-mn loan agreement for Assam power transmission project

The project aims to strengthen Assam's electricity transmission system by constructing 10 transmission substations and laying transmission lines with the associated infrastructure among others. The \$304 million loan from the AIIB has a 5-year grace period.

Bihar

1. In a first, Bihar in pact with UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to achieve climate resilience & low carbon development by 2040

Over next 2 years, UNEP would lead a multi-stakeholder team to assess carbon footprint of various sectors in Bihar before chalking out a plan to reduce CO2 emissions & increasing

carbon sinks, will assist to prepare State's greenhouse gas inventory etc. Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary is located in Bihar.

Chhattisgarh

1. World Bank Signs \$100 million Project to Support Nutrition-Supportive Agriculture in Tribal-Dominated Areas of Chhattisgarh

CHIRAAAG - Chhattisgarh Inclusive Rural and Accelerated Agriculture Growth Project will be implemented for round-the-year production of diversified & nutritious food in the southern tribal-majority region where a large population is undernourished and poor. The project will benefit over 180,000 households.

Goa

1. Goa becomes the 6th State to complete Urban Local Bodies (ULB) reforms

Goa became the 6th State to successfully undertake Urban Local Bodies (ULB) reforms stipulated by the Dept of Expenditure, Min of Finance. It has become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources of Rs. 223 crore through Open Market Borrowings. Goa Capital: Panaji CM: Pramod Sawant

Haryana

1. Haryana signs MoUs with 3 e-commerce firms to conduct training, workshops for entrepreneurs

Haryana's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) department signed MoUs with eBay, Power2SME and Tradeindia.com. Products manufactured by MSME of Haryana will get to the global market and artisans will also get reasonable price. Haryana: Capital: Chandigarh; Governor: Satyadeo Narain Arya

Himachal Pradesh

1. Himachal Pradesh becomes first State to implement e-cabinet

Himachal Pradesh has become first State to make the end to end processing of the cabinet paperless by implementing e-cabinet application. It will be possible to monitor the status of implementation of cabinet decision more effectively through this app. It is also available as a Mobile App on android devices.

Karnataka

1. Vijayanagara becomes 31st district of Karnataka

The govt of Karnataka in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (4) of section 4 of Karnataka Land Revenue Act, 1964 issued a notification demarcating boundaries of the newly-formed Vijayanagara district. It was carved out from Ballari district. Hosapete is the headquarters of the new district.

2. IETO, Karnataka govt sign MoU for SDGs

An MoU was signed between the Indian Economic Trade Organization (IETO) & Government of Karnataka for working closely to implement the Sustainable Development Goals in the state in much effective manner and expanding the scope of the sustainable future. IETO HQ: Bengaluru President: Dr Asif Iqbal

3. Foxconn of toy world to set up India's first toy cluster in Karnataka at an investment of USD 500 million

Foxconn of the toy world, manufacturing some of the most popular superhero figures & toy dart guns at a factory in Karnataka for some of the biggest names in the global toy industry. Aequs Private Limited is developing a 400-acre toy manufacturing cluster. Manufacturing cluster at Koppal in Karnataka

Kerala

1. Kerala's first Human Milk Bank opened at the Ernakulam general hospital

Kerala's first Human Milk Bank, a state-of-art facility was opened at the Ernakulam general hospital. It was set up with the support of Rotary Club of Cochin Global to ensure breast milk

for newborn babies, who are not being breastfed by their own mothers. The milk can be safely stored up to 6 months safely in the bank.

2. 'Kerala Feeds Regular' to encourage goat farming in state launched

Kerala Feeds Limited (KFL) for the goat feed market launched a low-cost product, as part of the public sector company's effort to encourage goat farming in the state. It aims to promote a farming culture that combines horticulture, fisheries & poultry. KFL Chairman: K S Indusekharan Nair. MD: Dr B Sreekumar.

3. Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan launches Kerala Knowledge Mission to upskill educated youth; digital platform launched.

Also inaugurated the Digital Workforce Management System, a digital platform for the empowerment and engagement of knowledge workers. Platform was created by Kerala Development and Innovation Strategy Council in association of other agencies. Digital platform is expected to create 20 lakh jobs in 5 years.

4. 'Snakepedia' mobile app launched in Kerala to help people, doctors treat snake bites

Snakepedia is a comprehensive android mobile application that documents information on snakes with the help of pictures, infographics and podcasts and analyses its first aid, treatment, myths and superstitions. Over 300 species of snakes are found in India The app aims to help the public & doctors to treat snake bites.

5. Kerala Financial Corporation (KFC) becomes first government-run financial institution in Kerala to launch Debit cards

In a first for a government-run financial institution in the state, KFC will come out with a debit card for loan sanction & repayment. The customers will soon be issued a five-year RuPay Platinum cards, co-branded in association with public sector banks. Chairman and MD of KFC: Tomin J Thachankary. HQ: Trivandrum.

6. PM launches key power and urban sector projects in Kerala

PM dedicated the Pugalur - Thrissur Power Transmission Project. He dedicated the 50 MW Kasaragod Solar Power Project developed under the National Solar Energy Mission. He laid the foundation stone for the Integrated Command and Control Centre at Trivandrum Kerala Capital: Trivandrum CM: Pinarayi Vijayan

7. Kerala Hosts Annual Folk Art Fest 'Utsavam 2021'

Utsavam 2021, a 7-day annual cultural festival brings Kerala's rich and diverse folk and ritualistic art traditions in 30 venues. It. is organised by Kerala Tourism together with Kerala Folklore Academy, Bharat Bhavan, & District Tourism Promotion Councils Utsavam 2021 is the 13th edition of the event.

8. Kerala Governor Inaugurates India's First Digital University

A Digital University is set up in Kerala's Technocity, Mangalapuram. The Governor of Kerala inaugurated India's first Digital University named Kerala University of Digital Sciences, Innovation and Technology. It is developed on a 10-acre campus. The Governor of Kerala: Arif Mohammed Khan.

Madhya Pradesh

1. Madhya Pradesh launches Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully campaign to reduce infant mortality

Madhya Pradesh has launched the Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully ('SAANS') campaign with the aim of reducing infant mortality due to pneumonia. Around 4,000 Health and Wellness Centres have been set for the said purpose. MP Capital: Bhopal; CM: Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

2. World famous Khajuraho Dance Festival held in Madhya Pradesh

In Madhya Pradesh, the 7-day 47th Khajuraho Dance Festival was organized from 20th to 26th of February at the world-famous tourist destination Khajuraho. Significantly, this

ceremony will be held once again in the temple complex after a gap of 44 years. It is organised by the Madhya Pradesh Kala Parishad.

3. Hoshangabad in MP to be renamed as Narmadapuram

Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced that Hoshangabad city in the state would be renamed as Narmadapuram & a proposal to that effect would be sent to the Centre. He made the announcement during the Narmada Jayanti programme held in Hoshangabad. Hoshangabad is located on the south bank of the Narmada river.

4. MP Cabinet approves law to give life imprisonment to food adulterators

Madhya Pradesh Cabinet approved a Penal Law (Madhya Pradesh Amendment) Bill, 2021 to give life imprisonment to food adulterators. It is noteworthy, in December 2019, an awareness rally was held in Bhopal to fight the menace of adulteration. MP- CM: Shivraj Singh Chouhan; Governor: Anandiben Patel

Maharashtra

1. Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray unveils first indigenously built rake to run on Metro 7, 2A

The rake comprises six coaches manufactured by Bharat Earth Movers Limited at its Bengaluru facility. The indigenously-designed rake has a stainless steel body, is equipped with CCTV surveillance and also has a facility for carrying passengers' bicycles. BEML had bagged Rs 3,015 crore order to supply 378 metro cars

2. Maharashtra govt launches scheme for startups to help file IT patents

To boost the startup ecosystem, Maharashtra launched a scheme to provide financial assistance to innovative startups to file for IT patents. Around 125-150 startups will be supported in 1st phase of the scheme with the financial help of '2lakh to '10lakh. Maharashtra was ranked second in the 2020 India Innovation Index

3. Maharashtra govt signs MoU with Flipkart to promote wooden toys, local artifacts, handicrafts

Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Development Corporation & Maharashtra State Khadi & Village Industries Board signed the MoU. It will help bring local artisans, weavers, craftsmen & SMBs of into e-commerce & showcase Khadi, Paithani sarees, wooden toys etc. Done under Flipkart's flagship initiative Flipkart Samarth.

4. India's first undersea tunnel project will complete in 2023

By 2023, Mumbai will be home to India's first undersea tunnel, part of the city's Rs 12,000 crore Coastal Road project. The Coastal Road project is an under-construction 22.2-kilometre freeway that would run along Mumbai's western coastline. The 2.07-kilometer tunnel, which will have two lanes

Manipur

1. Manipur Govt launched a new range of packaged organic products and Loumi Connect App apart

Manipur CM N Biren Singh launched a new range of packaged organic products and Loumi Connect App and distributed Bolero Camper vehicles and nurseries to Farmer Producing Companies. The app aims to connect farmers with Horticulture and Agriculture experts. Nilakuthi Food Park is also located in Manipur.

Meghalaya

1. Meghalaya Police signs MoU with SBI for implementation of e-Challan

Meghalaya Police signed an MoU with the State Bank of India in connection with the implementation of e-challan within the jurisdiction of the Shillong Traffic Police. Imposing penalties on violators of traffic and generating challan will be done digitally. Shillong is the capital of Meghalaya.

Mizoram

1. Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram Statehood Day: February 20

Arunachal Pradesh became a full-fledged state on February 20, 1987. It came into being as the 24th state of India. Similarly, Mizoram became the 23rd state of India on February 20, 1987, with the Fifty-Third Amendment of the Indian Constitution, 1986. Mizoram ' Highest concentration of tribal people in India.

Nagaland

1. Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio announces two new grants

Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio announced two new grants, namely, the Chief Minister's Grant for Journalism and the Chief Minister's Research Grant. Journalism grant will support the strengthening of democracy. Research grant will support advancement of science. Nagaland Capital: Kohima Governor: R N Ravi.

2. World Bank Signs New Project to Improve Quality of School Education in Nagaland

The Government of India, Government of Nagaland and the World Bank signed a \$68 million project to enhance the governance of schools across Nagaland as well as to improve teaching practices and learning environments in select schools. Neiphiu Rio: Chief Minister of Nagaland.

Odisha

1. Odisha To Construct 'COVID Warrior Memorial' in Bhubaneswar

Odisha's Health and Family Welfare Department announced to construct a COVID-19 Warrior Memorial in Bhubaneswar to recognise sacrifice and service rendered by COVID-19 warriors. Biju Patnaik Park in Bhubaneswar is the site selected by the state government. Odisha Capital: Bhubaneswar. CM: Naveen Patnaik.

Punjab

1. Punjab CM launches 'Har Ghar Pani, Har Ghar Safai' mission

Launched as part of the government's campaign to accomplish the goal of 100% potable piped water supply in all rural households by March 2022. The scheme is being funded by the World Bank, Jal Jeevan Mission of GoI, NABARD, and State Budget. Punjab: CM: Captain Amarinder Singh; Governor: V.P. Singh Badnore

2. Punjab becomes the 13th State to complete One Nation One Ration Card system reform

Reform is stipulated by Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance. The scheme was launched in 2019. Punjab has become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources of Rs. 1,516 crore through Open Market Borrowings. Punjab joined 12 other states. Punjab: Capital: Chandigarh; Governor: V P Singh Badnore.

3. Jal Hai Taan Kal Hai" weekly program to now be aired on every Sunday

Punjab govt is running Jal Jeevan Mission to provide potable drinking water to rural households. A weekly TV program Jal Hai Taan Kal Hai is aired to educate participants about objectives of the Jal Jeevan Mission under Har Ghar Nal, Har Ghar Jal campaign. It will be aired on DD Punjabi, AIR & DD Jalandhar.

4. Punjab Cabinet approves mission 'Lal Lakir' in all villages

The Punjab Cabinet approved the implementation of the mission 'Lal Lakir' aimed at facilitating villagers to monetise property rights and availing benefits provided by government departments, institutions and banks in all villages across the state. Punjab Capital: Chandigarh CM: Amarinder Singh

Rajasthan

1. Rajasthan becomes 12th state to complete One Nation One Ration Card system reform

Rajasthan became the 12th state in the country to successfully undertake the 'One Nation One Ration Card system' reform stipulated by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.

Rajasthan joined 11 other states. The scheme was launched in 2019. Rajasthan Capital: Jaipur
Governor: Kalraj Mishra

Sikkim

1. 'Free Gift Milk to Girl Students of Sikkim' initiative to benefit around 1,500 students

Sikkim government launched 'Free Gift Milk to Girl Students of Sikkim' initiative. It will benefit around 1500 students who would be provided 200 millilitres of milk every day. The initiative is a step toward eradicating malnutrition among young generation Sikkim Capital: Gangtok CM: Prem Singh Tamang

2. State Bank of Sikkim under Reserve Bank of India's regulatory purview

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has brought State Bank of Sikkim under its regulatory purview. The bank, established five years before Sikkim acceded to India in 1973, provides treasury operations for the state government. Dal Bahadur Gurung, Chairman, State Bank of Sikkim.

Tamil Nadu

1. Srivilliputhur Megamalai Tiger Reserve to be the 5th Tiger reserve of Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu govt passed an order for creating the 5th tiger reserve in the state. Srivilliputhur Megamalai Tiger Reserve will span the forests of Megamalai wildlife sanctuary & Srivilliputhur grizzled squirrel wildlife sanctuary spread across 3 districts. It will be the 51st Tiger Sanctuary of India.

Uttar Pradesh

1. UP govt announces 16-digit Unicode to identify landholdings

Every piece of land will have its own unique identity that would check cases of land disputes & save people from fraudsters. First 6 digits is based on population of land, next 4 for unique identity of land, 11-14 is division of land & last 2 for category. Uttar Pradesh Governor is Anandiben Patel.

2. UP govt starts training programme for aspirants of various competitive exams under 'Abhyudaya Yojana'

Uttar Pradesh government started a training programme for aspirants of various competitive examinations under 'Abhyudaya Yojana'. Under this, free of cost training will be provided to the candidates who are preparing for various competitive examinations. 5,50,000+ students are selected for training in 1st phase.

3. IKEA to invest Rs 5,500 crore in Noida, signs MoU with UP govt

Uttar Pradesh government signed an MoU with Swedish furniture giant IKEA, sealing an investment deal of Rs 5500 crore in the coming 7 years to generate employment for thousands of people in the state. IKEA will shell out Rs 850 crores for the land purchase. Ikea aims to reach 100 million people in India by 2022.

4. First paperless budget to be presented in Uttar Pradesh Assembly

Yogi Adityanath-led government in UP presented the 1st paperless Budget 2021 in the Legislative Assembly. With this, Uttar Pradesh became the first state in the country to table a paperless budget. State Finance Minister Suresh Khanna presented the budget. 2021's budget is the 5th budget of Adityanath government in UP.

Uttarakhand

1. Uttarakhand sets up one of its largest arboretum to conserve Shivalik range's 210 tree & shrub species

Was inaugurated over an area of 3 acres in Uttarakhand's Nainital district by Ajay Singh Rawat, a noted environmentalist. Trees preserved include: Kafal, Buransh, Tejpat, Sanjeevani etc. Exotic species: Queensland Kauri Pine, Atlas Cedar, Montezuma Cypress etc. Shivalik literally means 'tresses of Shiva'

West Bengal

1. Prime Minister to launch key infrastructure projects in Oil, Gas and Road sector in Haldia, West Bengal

PM lay the foundation stone of the 2nd Catalytic Dewaxing Unit at Haldia Refinery of IOC Ltd. He also inaugurates 3 more projects, BPCL's LPG Import Terminal at Haldia, GAIL's Dobhi-Durgapur Natural Gas Pipeline & NHAI's 4-lane ROB cum flyover at Ranichak. WB Capital: Kolkata; Governor: Jagdeep Dhankhar.

2. Mamata Banerjee launches 'Maa' scheme to provide meals at '5 to poor people

West Bengal government launched 'Maa' canteens for providing subsidised cooked meals for the poor and the destitute at a nominal cost of '5. The govt will give a subsidy of '15 and people have to pay '5. The kitchen will run by Self-Help Groups (SHG). Government allocated ' 100 crores for this project.

Chandigarh

1. India's first amputee clinic launched in Chandigarh

An 'amputee clinic', first of its kind in India, with aim of improving amputation patient care by providing a collection of services under one roof with significant coordination was launched in Chandigarh. It was inaugurated by PGIMER Director Jagat Ram. Chandigarh is the capital of Haryana and Punjab.

Delhi

1. Delhi launched 'Switch Delhi' campaign to promote electric vehicles

Delhi CM launched the "Switch Delhi" campaign to promote electric vehicles and appealed to people to buy such vehicles to combat pollution. Govt has fixed an ambitious target of 25% electric vehicles among total vehicle registrations in Delhi by 2024. Delhi Chief minister: Arvind Kejriwal; Governor: Anil Bajjal.

2. Delhi Cabinet Approves 'Mukhyamantri Vigyan Pratibha Pariksha' Scholarship Scheme

Delhi approved 'Mukhyamantri Vigyan Pratibha Pariksha' in which ' 5000 will be provided to 1000 students of Class 9 in schools of Delhi as a science scholarship. It aims to provide a boost to science education in secondary classes at the school level. Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi: Manish Sisodia.

Jammu and Kashmir

1. Adviser to LG, Baseer Ahmad Khan laid foundation stone of Model Floriculture Centre at Bagh-e-Bhour in Jammu

Model Floriculture Centre would be developed in 3 yrs having different components & would be fitted with a solar plant with a backup and will be installed with high mast lights. It would also be fitted with a hydrant system & poly greenhouse. J&K Capitals: Jammu (W), Srinagar (S); Lt Governor: Manoj Sinha.

2. J&K joins initiative by UK Space Agency for new flood forecasting mechanism in Valley

'Impact-Based Flood Forecasting using Earth Observation (EO)-based Information' project will be undertaken by HR Wallingford in collaboration with Oxford University, Sayers & Partners & D-Orbit (UK) to put in place an effective mechanism to send out alerts. Done under UK Space Agency's National Space Innovation Programme

3. Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 Passed By Parliament

It replaces the ordinance to merge J&K cadre of all-India services officers with Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram, Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre. The move will allow officers posted in these states and UTs to work in J&K and vice versa. Amended Section 88 of the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019.

4. J&K joins hands with UK space agency for impact-based flood forecasting

The national space innovation programme undertaken by HR Wallingford in collaboration with Oxford University, Sayers & Partners (SPL) & D-Orbit, is an initiative that supports

collaborative projects between UK-based organisations & international partners. Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir: Manoj Sinha.

5. Old Kanchoth festival celebrated across J&K's Chenab valley

Kanchoth festival, a symbol of ancient Nag culture, was observed across Chenab valley of J&K. Nag followers who believe that on this day of Gouri Tertiya, Shiva & Parvati got married and the latter insisted on a throne made of snow as her wedding gift. Snow during the festival is considered a good omen.



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Union Budget 2021-22 Highlights

- FM Nirmala Sitharaman in her Union Budget 2021-22 speech in the parliament announced FDI limit in insurance to be increased to 74% from now existing 49%. Govt has allowed foreign ownership in insurance with safeguards.
- The govt will also launch a Securities Market Code which will include SEBI Act, Govt Sec act, Depositories Act. SEBI will be notified as regulator for a gold exchange. FM said that the govt is proposing to strategically divest 2 PSU banks and 1 general insurance company.
- FM Nirmala Sitharaman has also announced measures under Aatmanirbhar Package. She said the early PM garib Kalyan Yojana amounted to almost presenting 5 “mini budgets” in 2020. She proposed strengthening of ‘Sankalp of Aatmanirbhar Bharat’. Focus on 6 pillars, which include – **Health & Well-being, Inclusive Development, Human Capital, Innovation and R&D**. FM added that the govt is fully prepared to support and facilitate economic growth and they are introducing Aatmanirbhar Swastha Bharat Yojana with an outlay of Rs 64,180 crore.
- FM announced that Jal Jeevan Mission Urban will be launched with and outlay of **₹ 2.87 lakh crore** over 5 years which is aimed at universal water supply in all 4,378 urban local bodies, with 2.86 crore household tap connections and liquid waste management in 500 AMRUT cities. She also announced Urban Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 with outlay of ₹ 1,41,678 crore over 5 years from 2021 focused on complete fecal sludge management, waste water treatment, source segregation, management of waste from urban construction, bioremediation of legacy dump sites.
- Announcing major infrastructure boost, FM announced highway works in various states including 3,500 km corridor in Tamil Nadu, 1,100 km in Kerala at investment of Rs 65,000 crore, 675 km in West Bengal at a cost of Rs 95,000 crore and 1,300 km in Assam in the next 3 years. In May 2020, Govt announced the Atmanirbhar Bharat package, to sustain the recovery further we also rolled out two more Atmanirbhar packages. Total financial impact of all packages including measures taken by [RBI](#) was estimated to be about Rs 27.1 lakh crores, Sitharaman added.
- For Railways Budget, the FM announced that [Indian Railways](#) will have a **National Rail Plan** for upto 2030. For aviation sector, FM said that the next lot of airports will be privatized in tier 2 and 3 towns and cities. FM said that in FY22 outlay (budget estimate) for health & well-being is up 138%, and is at Rs 2,23,846 crore. Govt has also allocated Rs 35,400 crore towards COVID vaccines for FY22 and is committed to more if required. She said Modi govt is committed to achieving targets laid out under the national infrastructure pipeline. Ujjwala scheme will be expanded to over 1 crore more beneficiaries. We will add 100 more districts in the next three years to the city gas distribution network. A gas pipeline project will be taken up in Jammu and Kashmir, FM said.



Ankit Kumar
SSC CGL (AIR 32)



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QUICK LEARNERS

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%

INDIAN STATES, CAPITALS, CHIEF MINISTERS & GOVERNORS

STATE	CAPITAL	CHIEF MINISTER	GOVERNOR
Andhra Pradesh	Amaravati	Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy	Biswa Bhusan Harichandan
Arunachal Pradesh	Itanagar	Pema Khandu	Brigadier BD Mishra (retd)
Assam	Dispur	Sarabananda Sonowal	Jagdish Mukhi
Bihar	Patna	Nitish Kumar	Phagu Chauhan
Chhattisgarh	Raipur	Bhupesh Baghel	Anusuiya Uikey
Goa	Panaji	Pramod Sawant	Bhagat Singh Koshyari
Gujarat	Gandhi Nagar	Vijaybhai R. Rupani	Acharya Devvrat
Haryana	Chandigarh	Manohar Lal Khattar	Satyadev Narayan Arya
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	Jai Ram Thakur	Bandaru Dattatraya
Jharkhand	Ranchi	Hemant Soren	Draupadi Murmu
Karnataka	Bengaluru	B S Yediyurappa	Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	Pinarayi Vijayan	Arif Mohammed Khan
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	Shivraj Singh Chauhan	Anandiben Patel
Maharashtra	Mumbai	Uddhav Thackrey	Bhagat Singh Koshyari
Manipur	Imphal	N Biren Singh	Najma Heptulla
Meghalaya	Shillong	Conrad Sangma	Satya Pal Malik
Mizoram	Aizawl	Pu Zoramthanga	P S Sreedharan Pillai
Nagaland	Kohima	Neiphiu Rio	RN Ravi
Odisha	Bhubaneshwar	Naveen Patnaik	Ganeshi Lal
Punjab	Chandigarh	Amarinder Singh	V P Singh Badnore
Rajasthan	Jaipur	Ashok Gehlot	Kalraj Mishra
Sikkim	Gangtok	Prem Singh Tamang (PS Golay)	Ganga Prasad
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	Edappadi K. Palaniswami	Banwarilal Purohit
Telangana	Hyderabad	K. Chandrasekhar Rao	Tamilisai Soundararajan
Tripura	Agartala	Biplab Kumar Deb	Ramesh Bais
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	Yogi Adityanath	Anandiben Patel
Uttarakhand	Dehradun	Trivendra Singh Rawat	Baby Rani Maurya

West Bengal	Kolkata	Mamata Banerjee	Jagdeep Dhankhar
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UNION TERRITORIES, LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS & ADMINISTRATORS

Union Territory	Lt. Governor & Administrator
Andaman and Nicobar Island (UT)	Admiral D K Joshi (Lieutenant Governor)
Chandigarh (UT)	V.P. Singh Badnore (Administrator)
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (UT)	Praful Patel (Administrator)
Delhi (NCT)	Anil Baijal (Lieutenant Governor)
Jammu and Kashmir (UT)	Manoj Sinha (Lieutenant Governor)
Lakshadweep (UT)	Praful Patel (Administrator)
Puducherry (UT)	Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan (Addl. Charge) (Lieutenant Governor)
Ladakh (UT)	Radha Krishna Mathur (Lieutenant Governor)

UNION MINISTERS, PORTFOLIO & CONSTITUENCY

Union Minister	Portfolio	Constituency
Narendra Modi	Ministry of personnel, public grievances and pensions	Varanasi, UP
Rajnath Singh	Ministry of Defence	Lucknow, UP
Amit Shah	Ministry of Home Affairs	Gandhinagar, Gujarat
Nitin Gadkari	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium enterprises	Nagpur, Maharashtra
DV Sadananda Gowda	Ministry of Chemical and Fertilizers	Bangalore North, Karnataka
Nirmala Sitharaman	Ministry of Finance Ministry of Corporate Affairs	Rajya Sabha
Piyush Goyal	Ministry of Commerce and Industry Ministry of Railways Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution	Rajya Sabha (Maharashtra)
Narendra Singh Tomar	Ministry of agriculture and Farmers welfare Ministry of Rural Development Ministry of Panchayati Raj Ministry of Food Processing Industries	Morena, M. P
Ravi Shankar Prasad	Ministry of Law and Justice Ministry of communications Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	Patna Sahib, Bihar
Thaawar Chand Gehlot	Ministry of Social justice and empowerment	Rajya Sabha (M.P)

Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar	Ministry of External Affairs	Rajya Sabha (Gujarat)
Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'	Ministry of Human Resource Development	Haridwar, Uttarakhand
Arjun Munda	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Khunti, Jharkhand
Smriti Zubin Irani	Ministry of Women and child Development Ministry of Textiles	Amethi, UP
Dr Harsh Vardhan	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Ministry of Science and Technology Ministry of Earth Sciences	Chandni Chowk, Delhi
Prakash Javadekar	Ministry of environment, forest and climate change Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprise	Rajya Sabha (M.P)
Dharmendra Pradhan	Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry of Steel	Rajya Sabha (M.P)
Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi	Ministry of Minority Affairs	Rajya Sabha (Jharkhand)
Pralhad Joshi	Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry of coal Ministry of Mines	Dharwad, Karnataka
Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Chandauli, UP
Giriraj Singh	Ministry of Animal Husbandry, dairying and fisheries	Begusarai, Bihar



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