



Monthly Current Affairs October 2020



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Monthly Current Affair Digest: October 2020

Important News: State

Kerala becomes the first state to set floor price for vegetables

- Kerala became the first state in the country to fix the floor price for 16 vegetables.
- The floor price would be 20 percent above the production cost of the vegetables.
- Even if the market price will go below the floor price, the product would be procured at the floor price from the farmers.
- **Tiger reserves in Kerala:**

1. Parambikulam Tiger Reserve

2. Periyar Tiger Reserve

Uttar Pradesh Government to establish anti-human trafficking Police Stations in each and every district

- These Police Stations will be given enough powers to register the case and investigate the matter independently.
- State government is going to establish 40 new anti-trafficking units which will work like police stations in districts and will conduct investigation after registering the cases.
- Earlier, only 35 districts in the state had Police stations of anti human trafficking unit which was established in 2011 and 2018.
- The new Police stations are being established after directives from women safety division of Union Government.

Uttar Pradesh government secures first rank in disbursing loans under the PM Atmanirbhar Nidhi Scheme (SVANidhi Scheme)

- UP State has ranked first in all the categories - Applications, Sanctions and Disbursements of the loans under the scheme. As many as 6,22,167 applications were received under the scheme in the state which is highest in the country, out of which sanctions were given to 3,46,150 applicants while the loans were disbursed to 2,26,728 beneficiaries.
- Seven cities of the state also find place in the list of top 10 cities of the country. Varanasi, Lucknow and Aligarh are the top three cities in the list even as other cities of the state include Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Ghaziabad and Kanpur.
- **About PM SVANidhi:** It was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020 for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown.
- It aims at facilitating working capital loan up to Rs. 10,000 at a subsidised rate of interest.



- **Note:** The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs signed MoU with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) in order to engage SIDBI as the Implementation Agency.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat Launches Integrated Model Agricultural Village Scheme

- Integrated Model Agricultural Village scheme (Ekikrit Adarsh Krishi Gram Yojana) in partnership with NABARD, is a concept which will prove to be a milestone in strengthening the economy of farmers and doubling their income.
- **Note:** The state government will soon introduce an umbrella brand for agricultural products. The chief minister said the limit for interest free loan given to farmers is being hiked to Rs 3 lakh from Rs 2 lakh.
- He said 10,000 people will be deployed to give impetus to water conservation efforts and reduce man-animal conflict which has become a deterrent for people wanting to take up agriculture as a means of livelihood.
- **About National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD):** It is an apex development finance institution fully owned by Government of India. The bank has been entrusted with matters concerning policy, planning, and operations in the field of credit for agriculture and other economic activities in rural areas in India.
 - **Formation:** July 12, 1982
 - **Headquarters:** Mumbai
 - **Chairman:** Govinda Rajulu Chintala

Uttar Pradesh becomes top tourist destination for Indians, third for foreigners in 2019

- Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the top destination for attracting the highest number of domestic tourists in 2019. The Indian Tourism Statistics (ITS) 2020 has announced that as many as 53.6 crore domestic tourists visited Uttar Pradesh in 2019.

List of top three states with domestic tourist visits in 2019

1. Uttar Pradesh - 23.1%
2. Tamil Nadu - 21.3%
3. Andhra Pradesh - 10.2%

- **Uttar Pradesh also secured the third position in attracting foreign tourists** with a record footfall of nearly 47 lakh foreigners visiting last year. **Tamil Nadu got top position** with nearly 68 lakh foreigners visiting last year. **Goa came last** on the list with over 9 lakh foreign tourist visits in 2019.

Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath launched 'Mission Shakti' for security of women in the state



- Uttar Pradesh government launched a six months long women empowerment campaign 'Mission Shakti' to raise awareness and tackle crime against women.
- Under this campaign, various awareness and training programs will be conducted regarding various schemes for the respect, protection and self-reliance of women and girls.

First-ever multi-modal logistic park in Assam

- Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for the first-ever multi-modal logistic park of the country in Assam.
- The 700-crore rupee park at Bongaigaon district will provide direct connectivity to road, air, rail and waterways to the people of Assam and other parts of North East.
- It will be developed under the Bharatmala Pariyojana of the Centre.
- **Note: Bharatmala Pariyojana** is a centrally-sponsored and funded Road and Highways project of the Government of India. It was launched in 2017.

Facts about Assam:

- **World Heritage Sites:** Kaziranga Wildlife Sanctuary and Manas Wildlife Sanctuary
- **State Dance:** Bihu Dance
- **State Bird:** White-winged wood duck
- **State Animal:** One-horned rhinoceros
- **State Flower:** Foxtail orchids
- **State Tree:** Hollong
- People celebrated **Kati Bihu festival** in Assam's Bongaigaon on 17 October 2020.

Haryana government launched "Lab on Wheels"

- It is to test the water quality in the state. The water quality of Haryana state is mainly affected by iron, fluoride, nitrate & alkalinity. It is a mobile laboratory, launched under **Jal Jeevan Mission**.
- The mobile laboratory will test for hardness, alkalinity, chlorine, zinc, turbidity, nitrate, PH and other microbiological tests.
- **Facts about Jal Jeevan Mission:**
- The main objective of Jal Jeevan Mission is to provide piped drinking water to all rural households by **2024**.
- The nodal ministry for the implementation is **Jal Shakti Ministry**.
- Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) envisages supply of 55 liters of water per person per day to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) by 2024.
- The first state in the country to provide clean drinking tap water connection to all the households is the Goa state.

Uttarakhand Government launches "Mukhya Mantri Saur Swarojgar Yojana."

- The aim of this scheme is to encourage the production of green energy and to provide self-employment opportunities to the youth of the State and returning migrants. Under this scheme,



each beneficiary will be allocated solar plants of 25 KW and 10,000 people will get self-employment.

Facts about Uttarakhand:

- **Capital:**Gairsain (summer) Dehradun (winter)
- **Governor:** Baby Rani Maurya
- **Chief Minister:**Trivendra Singh Rawat

Kerala becomes the first State Digital in Public Education

The State of Kerala is the first state in the country to make public education completely digital.

Facts about Kerala:

- Kerala has the highest literacy rate in the country.
- **Capital:**Thiruvananthapuram
- **Chief Minister:** Pinarayi Vijayan
- **Governor:** Arif Mohammad Khan

Kerala forms Welfare Fund Board for Farmers

- For the first time in the country, Kerala government has decided to set up a Welfare Fund Board for the farmers (Kerala Karshaka Kshemanidhi Board) for welfare and uplift of farmers in the state.
- According the Kerala Karshaka Kshemanidhi Act, agriculture includes many things like horticulture, nursery management, medicinal plant cultivation, poultry, ducks, goats, rabbits, livestock, fish, ornamental fish, mussels, bees, silkworms and maintenance as well as use of land for such agricultural purposes.

Gujarat government announces setting up of world's biggest Zinc Smelter Complex in Dosawada in Tapi district

- Memorandum of Understanding for this project was signed by State government with Vedanta Group.
- Vedanta Group's subsidiary – Hindustan Zinc Limited will set up the world's largest zinc smelting complex at Tapi in Gujarat. Hindustan Zinc is India's largest and world's second largest Zinc lead miner company.

Facts of about Gujarat

- **Capital:** Gandhinagar
- **Governor:** Acharya Dev Vrat
- **Chief minister:** Vijay Rupani



Andhra Pradesh Government launches 'Jaganna Vidya Kanuka' scheme for students in government schools.

- Under this scheme, 42,34,222 kits will be distributed to students of government schools studying from class 1 to 10 standard. The kit comprises three pairs of uniforms, a belt, a school bag, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, prescribed textbooks and notebooks.

Goa becomes first 'Har Ghar Jal' state across India to provide tap water connections to every rural household

- **Note:** The aim of Jal Jeevan Mission is to provide piped water to all the rural households by 2024. It was launched on 15 August 2019. It comes under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.

India's first Vulture Conservation and breeding centre in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

- The establishment of the centre dedicated to red-headed king vulture will be under the control of Gorakhpur forest department, Uttar Pradesh and Bombay Natural History Society and technical help will be provided by the Wildlife Research Institute.
- Note: The Red-headed vulture is also known as Pondicherry Vulture, Asian King Vulture and the Indian Black Vulture. According to censuses 2013-14, approximately 900 vultures were found in 13 districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Important News: India

Minister for shipping, Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated the Direct Port Entry (DPE) facility of V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust

- It enables direct movement of containers from factories, without intermediate handling at Container Freight Stations, thus helping the shippers to gate-in exports directly to the container terminal 24x7.
- This is a noteworthy step towards reducing logistics cost and increasing the velocity of the cargo. DPE will help in increasing ease of doing business for the exporters, as the facility will bring efficiency and reduce dwell time, lower tariff cost and improve the competitiveness of shippers in international trade.

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu launches festival of 'Parampara Series 2020-National Festival of Music and Dance'

- It is organized by Natya Tarangini in partnership with the United Nations.
- Natya Tarangini is organising the 'Parampara Series' continuously since past 23 years, and adopting innovative efforts to make it happen for the 24th year, even in difficult times like this.

IIT Kanpur and ASI sign MoU with Italian institutes for restoration of monuments



- The Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K) and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) have signed an agreement with two institutions from Italy, seeking restoration and protection of historical monuments.
- Two institutions from Italy are Ca'Foscari University of Venice and Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti E Paesaggio, Venice.
- **About ASI:** The **Archaeological Survey of India** is an Indian government agency attached to the Ministry of Culture that is responsible for archaeological research and the conservation and preservation of cultural monuments in the country.
 - **Director General:** V. Vidyavathi
 - **Founded:** 1861
 - **Parent organisation:** Ministry of Culture
 - **Headquarters:** New Delhi

MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari launches India's first-ever high quality Khadi Fabric Footwear

- Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME, Nitin Gadkari launched India's first-ever high quality Khadi Fabric Footwear, designed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).
- These footwear are made of Khadi fabric like Silk, Cotton and Wool.
- **Note:** **Khadi and Village Industries Commission** is a statutory body formed in April 1957 by the Government of India, under the Act of Parliament, 'Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956'. Vinai Kumar Saxena is the Chairman.

ECI constitutes committee to examine issues concerning expenditure limits

- Election Commission has constituted a committee comprising Harish Kumar, Ex. IRS and DG (Investigation), Umesh Sinha, Secretary General and DG (Expenditure) to examine the issues concerning expenditure limit for a candidate in view of increase in number of electors and rise in Cost Inflation Index and other factors.
- **About ECI (Election Commission of India)**
 - **Formed:** 25 January 1950 (Later celebrated as National Voters Day)
 - **Headquarters:** New Delhi
 - **Commission executives:** **Sunil Arora, Chief Election Commissioner of India**
 - Rajeev Kumar, Election Commissioner of India
 - Sushil Chandra, Election Commissioner of India

The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Shri Arjun Munda launched two Centers of Excellence (CoE) for Tribal Welfare in collaboration between Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) and Art of Living (AoL)

- **First Centers of Excellence** in the field of training 10000 tribal farmers in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra on sustainable natural farming based on Go-Adharith farming techniques.
- Farmers will be helped in getting the Organic certification and the marketing opportunities will be made available to them to make each of them Atmanirbhar Tribal Farmers.



- **Second Centers of Excellence** in the field of 'Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)' in 5 districts covering 30 Gram Panchayats and 150 villages of Jharkhand.
- Strengthening of tribal Panchayati Raj Institutions will also help to educate them about their constitutional rights. This will empower the PRIs in matters relating to decision making and development of their community.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates three-day National Conference on Vigilance and Anti Corruption

- Theme of this conference is Vigilant India, Prosperous India.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation organizes this National Conference coinciding with '**Vigilance Awareness Week**', which is observed in India every year from 27th October to 2nd November.
- **Note:** Activities in this conference would be focused on Vigilance issues aimed at raising awareness and reaffirming India's commitment to promotion of integrity and probity in public life through citizen participation.

CBSE introduces Facial Recognition System for accessing digital academic documents

- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has introduced a facial recognition system for accessing digital documents on platforms like "Parniaam Manjusha" and DigiLocker.
- Candidates will be able to download their Class 10, 12 mark sheets and certificates from DigiLocker without providing Aadhaar Card or mobile number.
- DigiLocker is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology under the Digital India initiative.
- **About Digital India:** It is a campaign launched by the Government of India in order to ensure the Government's services are made available to citizens electronically by improved online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity or making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology.
- It was launched on 1 July 2015.

Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Shri Prahlad Singh Patel virtually launches "Life in Miniature" project

- It is a collaboration between the National Museum, New Delhi, Ministry of Culture, and Google Arts & Culture.
- Several hundred miniature paintings from the National Museum, New Delhi can be viewed online on Google Arts & Culture.
- **Note:** The project reinforces the comprehensive collaboration between the National Museum and Google Arts & Culture, a partnership that began in 2011.
- **About The National Museum, New Delhi:** The National Museum, New Delhi, under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is the premiere cultural institution of the Nation. The National Museum has in its possession over 2,00,000 antiquities & art objects, both of Indian and Foreign origin covering more than 5,000 years of our cultural heritage.



- **About Google Arts & Culture:** Google Arts & Culture puts the collections of more than 2,000 museums at one's fingertips. It's an immersive way to explore art, history and the wonders of the world.

Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) extends coverage of health insurance scheme to Arunachal Pradesh

- Government of India has now extended the Employees State Insurance (ESI) Scheme for the first time to Arunachal Pradesh, with effect from 1st November, 2020.
- All factories located in the district of Papum Pare of Arunachal Pradesh employing 10 or more persons shall become eligible for coverage.
- **Employees' State Insurance (ESI)** is a self-financing social security and health insurance scheme for Indian workers. The fund is managed by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation according to rules and regulations stipulated in the ESI Act 1948.
- **Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)** is a Statutory and autonomous Body under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.
 - **Industry: Insurance**
 - **Founded: 24 February 1952**
 - **Headquarters: New Delhi, India**
 - **Director General: Ms. Anuradha Prasad**

'Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities' Report

- NITI Aayog, Ministry of Power, Rockefeller Foundation and Smart Power India launched the report.
- According to the report, 92 % of customers reported the overall availability of electricity infrastructure within 50 metres of their premises.
- 87 % of the surveyed customers have access to grid-based electricity. The remaining 13 % either use non-grid sources or do not use any electricity at all.
- The hours of supply have improved significantly across the customer categories to nearly 17 hours per day.
- The report highlights the benefits of government-led schemes such as **Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana** and **Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana**.

FSSAI' s new food safety compliance platform to become operational across India from November 2020

- The system has been operational in 9 States/UTs -Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Odisha, Chandigarh, Manipur, Goa, Puducherry and Ladakh since June.
- FSSAI is launching its cloud based, upgraded new food safety compliance online platform called FoSCoS (URL-<https://foscoss.fssai.gov.in>).
- It will replace the existing FLRS (Food Licensing and Registration System) (URL-<https://foodlicensing.fssai.gov.in>)



- **Note:** FoSCoS is conceptualized to provide one point stop for all engagement of a food business operator (FBO) with the department for any regulatory compliance transaction.
- **Facts about FSSAI** (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India)

Formed: August 2011

Headquarters: New Delhi

Chairperson: Rita Teotia

Under: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launches AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR scheme

- Ayushman Sahakar scheme aims at bringing transformation in the health services primarily in the rural areas.
- This scheme has been formulated by the NCDC (National Cooperative Development Corporation). NCDC would extend term loans to prospective cooperatives to the tune of 10000 crore in the coming years.

Facts: National Cooperative Development Corporation is a statutory corporation set up under an Act of Indian Parliament.

Founded: 13 March 1963

Headquarters: New Delhi, India

Agency executive: Sundeep Kumar Nayak, Managing Director

Under: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

PM Narendra Modi to deliver keynote address at virtual Grand Challenges Annual Meeting

- Grand Challenges Annual Meeting will convene from October 19 to 21.
- The Grand Challenges Annual Meeting, for the last 15 years, has fostered international innovation collaborations to address the biggest challenges in health and development. It will call for deepened scientific collaborations in solving global health problems with great emphasis on COVID-19 with an "India for the World" framing.

Note: The Grand Challenges Annual Meeting 2020 will be co-hosted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, the Indian Council of Medical Research and NITI Aayog, along with the Grand Challenges Canada, the United States Agency for International Development and Welcome.

Government to make India free of Trans fat by 2022



- Health Minister Dr Harsh said that the aim of the government is to make India Trans Fat free by 2022, a year ahead of target set by World Health Organization.
- This year is the elimination of trans-fat from the food supply chain.
- He also launched the '**Eat Smart City**' challenge by **FSSAI** in partnership with Smart City Mission and The Food Foundation, UK to create an environment of right food practices and habits in India's smart cities and can set an example for others to follow.
- **Note: Trans fats** are a form of unsaturated fat associated with a number of negative health effects. Artificial trans fat is created during hydrogenation, which converts liquid vegetable oils into semi-solid partially hydrogenated oil. Trans fat can also be found naturally in meat and dairy.

Union Education Minister launched 'KAPILA' (Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness Education campaign)

- The program was launched on the 89th birth anniversary of former President Late Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
- The Institution Innovation Council (IIC 2.0) annual report was presented and the launch of IIC 3.0 was announced. It has also been decided to celebrate the week of 15th to 23rd October as '**Intellectual Property Literacy Week**'.
- **Note: Institution Innovation Council (IIC)** was established by the Ministry of Education in 2018. It aims to conduct various innovation and entrepreneurship-related activities.
- **National Intellectual Property Rights Policy** was approved by the Indian cabinet on 12 May 2016 to ensure compliance to the Doha Development Round and TRIPS Agreement. With its seven objectives, it aims at creating a "Creative India; Innovative India".

Government launches CuRED, CSIR website on COVID-19 clinical trials

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched a website that gives comprehensive information about the numerous COVID-19 clinical trials that CSIR is engaged in partnership with industry, other government departments and ministries.
- **CuRED (CSIR Ushered Repurposed Drugs)**, the website provides information about the drugs, diagnostics and devices including the current stage of the trials, partnering institutions and their role in the trials and other details.
- **Note: Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)** was established in September 1942 as an autonomous body that has emerged as the largest research and development organization in India. Its Director General is Shekhar C. Mande.

Cabinet approves mutual recognition pact between India's ICAI and Malaysia's MICPA

- The Union Cabinet approved the mutual recognition agreement between the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) and Malaysian Institute of Certified Public Accountants (MICPA). This would enable appropriately qualified chartered accountant members of either institute to join the other by receiving appropriate credit for their existing accountancy qualification.



- Besides, the Cabinet cleared a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the **ICAI and the Certified Practising Accountants, Papua New Guinea (CPA PNG)** to work together in capacity building and strengthening the accounting, financial and audit knowledge base in Papua New Guinea.
- **Note: Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)** is the national professional accounting body of India. It was established on 1 July 1949 as a statutory body under the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949 enacted by the Parliament to regulate the profession of Chartered Accountancy in India.

PM Narendra Modi to inaugurate three key projects in Gujarat on 24th October

(i) Kisan Suryodaya Yojana is to provide day-time power supply for irrigation.

(ii) Paediatric Heart Hospital attached with the U.N Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research Centre and a Mobile Application for tele-cardiology at the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital in Ahmedabad.

(iii) Girnar Ropeway will provide a scenic view of the lush green beauty surrounding the Girnar mountain.

Facts about Gujarat:

State Bird: Greater flamingo

State Animal: Asiatic lion

State Flower: Marigold

State Tree: Banyan

Sardar Patel statue, which is the highest in the world.

New series of consumer price index for industrial workers (CPI-IW) released

- Labour Minister, Santosh Gangwar released the new series of consumer price index for industrial workers (CPI-IW) with 2016 Base Year.
- Earlier the base year for the CPI-IW was 2001. It is an important economic indicator.
- **Note:** CPI-IW is a measure of inflation and used to calculate dearness allowance (DA) for government employees, wages for industrial workers and dearness relief for pensioners.
- India has five consumer price indices (CPIs), three of which are working-class specific. These are **CPI-IW** for industrial workers, **CPI-AL** for agricultural labour and **CPI-RL** for rural labour. There is also **CPI-Urban** and **CPI Rural**. The combined rise in retail prices is captured by **CPI Combined**.

Minister of State for Shipping, Shri Mansukh Mandaviya launched the development of Indigenous Software solution for VTS (Vessel Traffic Services) and VTMS (Vessels Traffic Monitoring Systems)



- VTS and VTMS is software which determines vessel positions, position of other traffic or meteorological hazard warnings and extensive management of traffic within a port or waterway.
- **Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)** contribute to safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and protection of the marine environment, adjacent shore areas, work sites and offshore installations from possible adverse effects of maritime traffic.
- **Vessels Traffic Management Systems** are installed in some of the busiest waters in the world. Data from traffic movements can be stored and used as reference information for port administration, port authorities, coastguards and search and rescue services.

6th India International Science Festival (IISF)

- The 6th edition of IISF 2020 will be held from 22nd to 25th December, 2020.
- IISF is organised jointly by Science & Technology-related Ministries & Departments of the Government of India and Vijnana Bharati (Vibha).
- **Note: IISF** is a festival to celebrate the achievements of India's scientific and technological advancements with students, innovators, craftsmen, farmers, scientists and technocrats from India and abroad.
- The 1st and 2nd IISF were held in New Delhi, the 3rd in Chennai, the 4th in Lucknow, and the 5th was in Kolkata.

RBI conducted the first-ever open market operation (OMO) in state development loans (SDLs), buying Rs 10,000 crore of securities

- SDL holders offered Rs 15,475 crore of bonds against the OMO size of Rs 10,000 crore. The lowest cut-off yield was offered for Karnataka's 9-year bond at 6.4746 per cent, while the highest cut-off was for Jammu Kashmir's 10-year SDL at 6.6813 per cent. Overall, two papers each of 15 states were purchased in the OMO.
- In a separate development, the RBI has also announced OMO purchase of central government bonds worth Rs 20,000 crore on October 29, 2020.
- **Note: State Development Loans (SDLs)** are the securities issued by states to manage their own finances.

Indian government launches 'e-Dharti Geo portal'

- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri, launched the 'e-Dharti GeoPortal' which will integrate legacy drawings such as maps and lease plans in the management information system.
- **Note:** Portal will allow the data to become geographic information system (GIS)-enabled. The ministry issued in a statement that the Land and Development office has developed a property certificate incorporating details and the outline map of the property which is available online on the portal.

NITI Ayog to formulate a national policy on water conservation under 'Buldhana Pattern'



- Union Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari said that Maharashtra's 'Buldhana Pattern' of water conservation has won national recognition and the NITI Aayog is in the process of formulating National Policy on water conservation based on it.
- **Note: Buldhana Pattern-** The synchronization of national highway construction and water conservation was achieved for the first time in Buldhana district, by using soil from the water bodies, nallas and rivers. This consequently led to the increase in capacity of water storage across the water-bodies in Buldhana district.
- By this activity in Maharashtra, 225 lakh cubic metre of soil was used in National Highway construction and the resultant widening / deepening resulted in increase of 22,500 Thousand Cubic Metre (TMC) of water storage capacity with no cost to state government.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) to provide 346 million dollar loan for Power Supply Project in Rural Maharashtra and 177 million dollar loan for Maharashtra Road Improvements

- **Facts: Asian Development Bank (ADB)**
- **Headquarters:** Mandaluyong, Philippines
- **President:** Masatsugu Asakawa
- **Founded:** 19 December 1966
- **Purpose:** Economic development
- **Membership:** 68 countries
- India was a founding member of ADB in 1966 and is now the bank's fourth-largest shareholder.
- Vice-President of ADB is **Mr. Ashok Lavasa**

Rajkiran Rai appointed as IBA chairman

- Presently Mr. Rai is Union Bank of India's CEO. He succeeds **Rajnish Kumar** as the IBA Chairman.
- SBI's chairman **Dinesh Kumar Khara** has been elected as the deputy chairman of the association.
- **Note: IBA (Indian Banks' Association)**, formed on 26 September 1946 as a representative body of management of banking in India is an association of banks, financial institutions and others that deals with resolving generic and industry level issues of its members.

Dinesh Kumar Khara appointed as new Chairman of SBI

- The government-appointed senior banker Dinesh Kumar Khara as chairman of the State Bank of India. Mr Khara was appointed as MD (Managing Director) of SBI in August 2016.
- Note: State Bank of India is an Indian multinational public sector bank and financial services statutory body. SBI got 236th rank in the Fortune Global 500 list of the world's biggest corporations of 2019.

Renaming of Naugarh Railway Station to Siddharthnagar



- Railway Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated the renaming of Naugarh railway station to Siddharthnagar situated at Siddharthnagar district in Uttar Pradesh.

NECHIPHU TUNNEL

- Union Defence minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone of the Nechiphu Tunnel on the Balipara-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) road in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- It will be constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

Facts about BRO:

- **Motto:** Shramena Sarvam Sadhyam (everything is achievable through hard work)
- **Established:** 7 May 1960
- **Headquarter:** New Delhi
- **Director General:** Lt. Gen. Harpal Singh
- **Under:** Ministry of Defence

Zozila Tunnel – the longest tunnel road in Asia

- This tunnel will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar valley and Leh (Ladakh plateau) on NH-1. It involves construction of a 14.15 Km long tunnel at an altitude of about 3000 m under Zojila pass. It will bring about an all-round economic and socio-cultural integration of Jammu & Kashmir.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi to release commemorative Rs 75 coin to mark 75th Anniversary of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization)

- He will also dedicate 17 recently developed bio-fortified varieties of eight crops. These varieties, along with other food ingredients, will transform the normal Indian thali into nutri-thali. These varieties have been produced by utilizing the local landraces and farmer's varieties.
- The production of bio-fortified crop varieties will be upscaled and linked with government schemes of Anganwadi and Mid-Day Meal to reduce malnutrition and make India Kuposhan Mukta through naturally enriched food ingredients.

Facts about Food and Agriculture Organization

It is a specific agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger and improve food security and nutrition.

- **Formation:** 16 October 1945
- **Headquarters:** Rome, Italy
- **Under:** United Nations Economic and Social Council
- **Head:** Qu Dongyu

Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office, Niti Ayog surveyed Data Governance Quality Index.



- Department of Fertilizers under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers got 2nd rank amongst the 16 Economic Ministries / Departments and 3rd rank out of the 65 Ministries / Departments with a score 4.11 on a scale of 5 on DGQI (Data Governance Quality Index).

Note: The purpose of this survey is to assess the performance of different Ministries /Departments on the basis of implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Central Sector Schemes.

There is a Self-assessment based review of data preparedness levels across Ministries / Departments to produce a DGQI. In this survey, an online questionnaire was prepared under six major themes of DGQI: Data Quality; Data Generation; Use of Technology; Data Analysis, Use and Dissemination; Data Security and HR Capacity and Case Studies.

The Government launched the Ambedkar Social Innovation Incubation Mission (ASIIM)

- It was launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- ASIIM aims to promote innovation and entrepreneurship amongst SC students and with special preference to Divyangs in higher education campuses because there is a need to identify innovative ideas and provide focused support to young entrepreneurs who are engaged in working on innovative and technology-oriented business ideas either in educational campuses or Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) to help them set up successful commercial enterprises.
- Apart from that, the Government set up the Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes (VCFSC) and supporting 1,000 innovative ideas till 2024 through a synergetic work with the (TBIs) Technology Business Incubators set up by the Department of Science and Technology among others.

PM Narendra Modi to inaugurate the Atal Tunnel, Rohtang

- Atal Tunnel is the 9.02 Kilometre long which connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley. This is the longest highway tunnel in the World.
- The Tunnel is built with ultra-modern specifications in the Pir Panjal range of Himalayas at an altitude of 3000 Metres (10,000 Feet) from the Mean Sea Level (MSL).
- It reduces the road distance by 46 Kilometre between Manali and Leh and the time by about 4 to 5 hours.

'Tribes India E-Marketplace' will be launched by Tribal Minister Arjun Munda

- It aims to make India Aatmanirbhar and self-reliant, this path-breaking initiative of TRIFED will showcase the handicrafts and produce of tribal enterprises from across the country. It will help them to showcase their products directly to the market.
- Along with this several other TRIFED initiatives that are aimed to support tribal brethren. These include the inauguration of Pakur Honey which is 100 per cent natural honey, gathered by Santhal Tribals from Pakur, Jharkhand and Tribes India's 123rd and 124th outlets in Rishikesh and Kolkata, inclusion of new tribal product ranges from the states of Jharkhand and



Chhattisgarh and partnership of TRIFED and Tribes India with Amazon in their Seller Flex program.

The South Eastern Railway has launched an 'Operation My Saheli (friend)'

- It aims to boost the security of women passengers in trains during their entire journey.
- In this project "Teams of women sub-inspectors (SI) interact with lady passengers in the train at the starting station, tell them about precautions & guideline should be followed and provide the emergency contact numbers in case of emergency.

Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal launched an anti-air pollution campaign

- Under the campaign "Yudh Pradushan ke Virudh", "Polluted air can be life-threatening in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both affect lungs."
- The government is also preparing a "Green Delhi" mobile application.
- "Using it, people can bring pollution-causing activities, such as garbage burning or industrial pollution.

Ravi Chopra Committee: The chairman of an expert committee has alleged violations of the Supreme Court orders in the execution of the Chardham project.

- Ravi Chopra is the Chairman of the High Powered Committee (HPC) appointed by Supreme Court. Supreme Court ruled that the width of the road should not exceed the 5.5 metres that the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) specified in 2018 for construction roads in the mountain.

Note: Chardham Pariyojana: The Chardham road connects the pilgrimage centres of Gangotri, Yamunotri, Badrinath and Kedarnath. This programme is under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for connectivity improvement for Chardham in Uttarakhand. It is a 900-km, ₹12,000-crore enterprise to connect pilgrimage spots in Uttarakhand.

Important News: World

India Released Commemorative Postage Stamp on 75th Anniversary of UN

- Department of Posts (DOP), Ministry of Communications released a commemorative postage stamp on the 75th anniversary of the United Nations Organisations.

India hosts meeting of SCO Ministers handling economy and foreign trade

- India hosted the 19th Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Ministers responsible for Foreign Economy and Foreign Trade Activities on 28 October.
- In the meeting four documents were adopted: 1. Statement on the response to Covid-19, 2. Statement on the Multilateral Trading System of Ministers of SCO Countries who are WTO



Members, 3. Statement on SCO Cooperation on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and 4. Action Plan for Implementation of MOU to stimulate cooperation within the framework of SCO in the field of MSMEs.

- **About SCO (The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) or Shanghai Pact:** It is a Eurasian political, economic, and security alliance.
 - **Headquarters:** Beijing, China
 - **Founded:** 15 June 2001
 - **Secretary General:** Vladimir Norov
 - **Members:** China, India, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Indian Diplomat Dr Neena Malhotra appointed as next Ambassador to Republic of San Marino

- Dr Neena Malhotra, a 1992-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, has been concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of San Marino. Presently, she is serving as the Ambassador of India to the Republic of Italy.

Indian Diplomat Sushil Kumar Singhal appointed as next Ambassador to Solomon Islands

- Sushil Kumar Singhal, a 2000-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, has been concurrently accredited as the next High Commissioner of India to the Solomon Islands. He is presently serving as the High Commissioner of India to the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.

India, US hold 3rd bilateral two plus two (2+2) Ministerial Dialogue in New Delhi

- From the Indian side, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar led the delegation. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Secretary of Defence Mark Esper led the US delegation.
- **India and US signed five agreements in total:**
 1. **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** between the Ministry of Defence, Government of India and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), Department of Defense of the United States of America.
 2. **Memorandum of Understanding for Technical Cooperation in Earth Observations and Earth Sciences** between the Ministry of Earth Sciences of India and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of USA.
 3. Arrangement extending the duration of the Memorandum of Understanding between India and USA concerning cooperation with the **Global Center for Nuclear Energy Partnership**, India.
 4. **Agreement for the Electronic Exchange of Customs Data** between the Postal Operators (India Post and United States Postal Service)
 5. Letter of Intent between the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences, New Delhi, Ministry of Ayush, India and the Office of Cancer Complementary and Alternative Medicine, National Cancer Institute, Department of Health and Human Services, USA for cooperation in the **field of Ayurveda and Cancer Research**.



Note: First 2+2 dialogue was held in New Delhi in 2018. **Second 2+2 dialogue** was held in Washington D.C. in 2019.

6th BRICS Parliamentary Forum

- The 6th BRICS Parliamentary Forum **under the Russian Chairmanship** (Chairman- Vyachaslav Volodin) was held on 27 October. Five members of BRICS- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa participate in this forum.
- The theme was BRICS partnership in the interest of the global stability, general safety and innovative growth: parliamentary dimension.
- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that BRICS countries need to intensify their collective fight against terrorism which poses the biggest threat to humankind.
- **Note: 12th BRICS Summit** is scheduled to be held on 17th November 2020 under the chairmanship of Russia.

Luis Arce declared as Bolivia's president-elect

- Luis Arce, the candidate for the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) party, has won the presidential elections.
- **About Bolivia:**
 - **Capitals:** La Paz, Sucre
 - **Currency:** Boliviano
 - **Continent:** South America

The Principality of Andorra becomes the 190th member state of the IMF

- The Principality of Andorra became the 190th member state of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- **About Andorra:** Located between France and Spain, this principality has only 78,000 inhabitants. Its economy depends on trade and tourism. Not being a member of the European Union, this small state did not benefit from the community recovery plan.
 - **Capital:** Andorra la Vella
 - **Currency:** Euro
 - **Continent:** Europe

Indian-origin Wavel Ramkalawan is elected Seychelles President

- Ramkalawan, a former Anglican priest, defeated President Danny Faure after three decades of runs for the presidency of the East African nation. Wavel Ramkalawan, whose grandfather came from Gopalganj, Bihar.
- **About Seychelles**
 - Capital: Victoria
 - Currency: Seychellois rupee
 - Continent: Africa



Note:

- In June 2018, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India was extending Seychelles a USD\$100 million credit to develop its defence capabilities.
- The Seychelles government has leased the Assumption Island to the Indian Navy to build an overseas base of operations there.
- India and Seychelles have been conducting joint military exercise '**Lamitye**' since 2001 with the aim of enhancing military cooperation and interoperability between the armies of the two countries.

Saad al-Hariri named as Lebanon's new prime minister

Lebanon's President Michel Aoun designated Sunni Muslim politician Saad al-Hariri as Prime Minister to form a new government.

- This will be Hariri's third stretch as prime minister.
- **About Lebanon:** Lebanon, officially known as the Lebanese Republic, is a country in the Levant region of Western Asia.
 - **Capital:** Beirut
 - **Currency:** Lebanese pound
 - **President:** Michel Aoun

Feni bridge connecting India and Bangladesh

- Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari announced that 1.8 kilometre long Feni bridge connecting Sabrum in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh will be completed by December this year.
- This bridge will be built on Feni River. The Feni bridge being built at the cost of Rs. 129 crore will ease the transportation of goods from Chattogram and Kolkata ports. An integrated check post is also proposed to be built near Sabrum.
- **Note:** Feni River flows in southeast Bangladesh and Indian state of Tripura.

India gets Chairmanship of ILO Governing Body after a gap of 35 years

- Labour and Employment Secretary, Apurva Chandra, has been elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Body of the ILO for the period October 2020- June 2021.
- Mr. Chandra belongs to the 1988 batch of the Indian Administrative Service, Maharashtra Cadre.
- The Governing Body is the apex executive body of the ILO which decides policies, programmes, agenda, budget and elects the Director-General.
- **About ILO (International Labour Organization):** It is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social and economic justice through setting international labour standards.
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
- **Head:** Guy Ryder
- **Founder:** Paris Peace Conference
- **Founded:** 1919

- **Parent organizations:** United Nations General Assembly, United Nations Economic and Social Council

Singapore in the world first for facial verification

- Singapore will be the first country in the world to use facial verification in its national identity scheme.
- **Note:** London-based biometric and facial authentication company, iProov, provides this technology. The technology will be integrated with the country's digital identity scheme SingPass and allows access to government services.

Vishal V. Sharma has been appointed as India's next permanent representative to UNESCO

- **Facts about UNESCO** (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
- **Formation:** 1945
- **Headquarters:** Paris, France
- **Head-Director General:** Audrey Azoulay

Pakistan to remain on “Grey List” of FATF

Facts about FATF:

- It is an inter-governmental body established in **1989** under the **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development** (OECD) & headquarter is in **Paris**.
- The main aims of the FATF are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.
- **Member Countries:** 37 countries (including India).

Two lists of FATF:

Grey List: Those Countries that are considered safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering. It serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the blacklist.

Black List: Those Countries known as Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories are put in the blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities. The FATF revises the blacklist regularly, adding or deleting entries.

India to attend Seventh Justice Ministers Meet of SCO

- The Union Minister of law and Justice Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad attended the seventh meeting of ministers of justice of Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
- The ministers during the meet will share the knowledge on creating a conducive environment to promote dispute resolution mechanism, forensic activities and other legal services. Also, the



ministers will discuss the action plan of the working groups of experts on legal services and forensic activities.

Facts about SCO:

- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), or Shanghai Pact, is a Eurasian political, economic and security alliance.
- **Formed:** 15 June 2001
- **Members:** China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India & Pakistan.
- **Headquarter:** Beijing, China

IMF's World Economic Outlook Report, October 2020

- International Monetary Fund predicted a deep global recession this year and the world growth to be - 4.4 percent, asserting that the global economic crisis is far from over mainly due to the impact of the corona virus pandemic.
- **India's economy** is projected to contract by -10.3% in FY21 which is 5.8% lower than the June projections. The economy is expected to recover to 8.8% in FY22. In June 2020, IMF had projected the Indian economy to contract by 4.5% in FY21.
- **Note: International Monetary Fund** is an organization to promote global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty. Created in 1945, the IMF is governed by and accountable to the 189 countries that make up its near-global membership. India Joined on December 27, 1945.

India Gets Re-elected As President of International Solar Alliance

During a virtual meeting of the International Solar Alliance, India was re-elected as the President of the organization for a term of two years with France as the Co-President.

Note: International Solar Alliance (ISA) is an association of 121 countries initiated by India, most of them being sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. It aims to work for efficient consumption of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

Facts about International Solar Alliance

Headquarters: Gurugram, Haryana, India

Director General: Upendra Tripathy

Founded: 30 November 2015

Membership: All members of UN

Facts about IMF



- **Managing Director:** Kristalina Georgieva
- **Chief Economist:** Gita Gopinath
- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C. U.S

On 17th November, 12th BRICS Summit to be held virtually.

- The theme of this summit is “BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth”.
- The Summit is being held under Russia's Chairmanship and aims at multifaceted cooperation between the member countries. The five-member countries have continued close strategic partnership on all the three significant pillars of peace and security, economy and finance, cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

Note: BRICS is an association of five countries: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The BRICS members are known for their significant influence on regional affairs.

Award and Honor

Swachh Bharat Awards 2020 announced: Gujarat bags first position under Swachh Sundar Samudayak Shouchalaya category

- The Swachh Bharat Awards-2020 was given to States, Districts, Blocks and Village Panchayats.
- The awards were given particularly under drinking water and cleanliness categories.
- The Government had earlier launched three missions under Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya, Samudayik Shouchalaya Abhiyan and Gandagi Mukth Bharat.
- Under the Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya category, Gujarat bagged the first position at state level whereas Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu got the Award for cleanliness at District Level.
- Khachrod block in Ujjain district in Madhya Pradesh was awarded the first position and Chinnanur Village in Tamil Nadu bagged the top slot at Gram Panchayat level.
- Under the Samudayik Shouchalaya Abhiyan, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh were awarded as the best performing states whereas Prayagraj and Bareilly got it for being the best performing districts. Under the Gandagi Mukth Bharat Mission, Haryana and Telangana were awarded the top slot.

The Nobel Prize in Medicine 2020

- Nobel Prize in the field of Physiology or Medicine was awarded jointly to Americans Harvey J. Alter and Charles M Rice, and British scientist Michael Houghton for the discovery of the Hepatitis C virus.
- Note: The Prize Money of 1,118,000 USD for the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine also comes with a gold medal.
- Hepatitis: According to the WHO (World Health Organization), there are more than 70 million cases of Hepatitis in the world. Over 400,000 deaths occur due to the disease. The disease is



chronic, and it causes liver inflammations and cancer. Hepatitis C is caused by the hepatitis C virus. It is a liver infection that can lead to serious liver damage.

- Nobel Prize is international awards bestowed in a number of categories by Swedish and Norwegian institutions in recognition of academic, cultural, and scientific advances. The will of the Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel established the prizes in 1895. The prize ceremonies usually take place annually in Stockholm, Sweden. Each recipient, or laureate, receives a diploma, gold medal and a sum of money that has been decided by the Nobel Foundation.

Scientist, Dr. Satish Mishra bags "Dr. Tulsi Das Chugh Award-2020" given by National Academy of Medical Sciences (India)

- The Orations & Awards Committee of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), has selected Dr. **Satish Mishra, Principal Scientist, Division of Molecular Parasitology and Immunology, CSIR-CDRI, Lucknow** in recognition of **his research work on Malaria parasite's life cycle**

Himachal Pradesh: Mandi district bags top position for implementation of PMGSY

- Union Ministry of Rural Development has declared the list of top performing 30 districts in the country for implementing the PMGSY programme.
- Himachal Pradesh's Mandi district has bagged top position among 30 districts of the country in successful implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana of maximum length in 2020-21.
- Another districts of Himachal Pradesh have also secured position among top 30 best performing districts, which include Chamba, Shimla, Kangra, Una, Sirmour, Hamirpur and Solan.
- Himachal Pradesh has also secured second position at the national level for construction of roads under PMGSY.
- **Note: PMGSY (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana)** is a nationwide plan in India to provide good all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages.
 - **Launch year:** 2000
 - **Sector:** Rural development
 - **Ministry:** Ministry of Rural Development

The Nobel Prize 2020 in Literature is awarded to the American poet Louise Gluck.

- "For her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal".
- She is an American poet who has won many major literary awards such as the National Humanities Medal, Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award, National Book Award and Bollingen Prize.

The Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020 awarded jointly to Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna "For the development of a method for genome editing."



- Note: Jennifer A. Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier have discovered one of gene technology's sharpest tools: the CRISPR/Cas9 genetic scissors. Using this method, researchers can change the DNA of animals, plants and microorganisms with extremely high precision. This is contributing to new cancer therapies and may make the dream of curing inherited diseases come true.
- Genome editing, or genome engineering, or gene editing, is a type of genetic engineering in which DNA is inserted, deleted, modified or replaced in the genome of a living organism.
- CRISPR-Cas9 (Clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats and CRISPR-associated protein 9). The CRISPR-Cas9 system has generated a lot of excitement in the scientific community because it is faster, cheaper, accurate, and efficient than other existing genome editing methods.

United Nations (UN) World Food Programme wins Nobel Peace Prize 2020 for 'combating hunger.'

- The World Food Programme (WFP) was awarded the prize for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict.
- **Note:** The World Food Programme(WFP) is the food-assistance branch of the UN (United Nations) and the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.

Defense

Indian Navy gets first batch of women pilots for Maritime Reconnaissance missions

- Lieutenant Shubhangi Swaroop, Lt Divya Sharma and Lt Shivangi graduated as fully operational Maritime Reconnaissance (MR) pilots on October 22.
- Indian Navy got its first batch of women pilots for Maritime Reconnaissance (MR) missions on Dornier aircraft. The pilots completed Dornier Operational Flying Training (DOFT) on October 20 at INS Garuda in Kerala's Kochi. They were operationalised by the Southern Naval Command (SNC).

Science & Technology

ISRO-NASA Satellite NISAR scheduled to be launched by 2022

- The NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite is expected to be launched by 2022 as India and the US have decided to share Space Situational Awareness Information, which will catalyse efforts to create the conditions for a safe and sustainable space environment.
- The space agencies of the two countries had signed an agreement in 2014 to conduct the joint NISAR mission to co-develop and launch a dual-frequency synthetic aperture radar on an Earth observation satellite.
- **About ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation):** It is the national space agency of India. It operates under the Department of Space.
- **Founded:** 15 August 1969



- **Headquarters:** Bengaluru
- **Director:** Kailasavadivoo Sivan
- **About NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration):** It is an independent agency of the U.S. Federal Government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and space research.
 - **Founded:** 1 October 1958
 - **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C.

NASA's SOFIA discovers water on surface of moon

- NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) has confirmed, for the first time, water on the sunlit surface of the Moon. This discovery indicates that water may be distributed across the lunar surface, and not limited to cold, shadowed places.
- SOFIA has detected water molecules (H₂O) in Clavius Crater, one of the largest craters visible from Earth, located in the Moon's southern hemisphere.

IFSCA introduces Framework for Regulatory Sandbox to tap into innovative FinTech solutions

- The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), with an objective to develop a world class FinTech hub at the IFSC located at GIFT City in Gandhinagar (Gujarat, India), endeavours to encourage the promotion of financial technologies ('FinTech') initiatives in financial products and financial services across the spectrum of banking, insurance, securities and fund management.
- IFSCA has introduced a framework for "**Regulatory Sandbox**". Under this Sandbox framework, entities operating in the capital market, banking, insurance and financial services space shall be granted certain facilities and flexibilities to experiment with innovative FinTech solutions in a live environment with a limited set of real customers for a limited time frame.
- **Note:** An IFSC enables bringing back the financial services and transactions that are currently carried out in offshore financial centers by Indian corporate entities and overseas branches / subsidiaries of financial institutions (FIs) to India by offering business and regulatory environment that is comparable to other leading international financial centers in the world like London and Singapore.
- The **first IFSC** in India has been set up at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in Gandhinagar.

Anti-Tank Guided Missile Nag passes final trial

- The long-awaited 3rd generation **Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM), Nag**, successfully completed its final user trial in Pokhran, Rajasthan and Nag will enter into the production phase.
- The missile is launched from the NAG missile carrier (NAMICA). The missile will be produced by Defence PSU Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), whereas Ordnance Factory, Medak will produce the NAMICA.



- **Note:** The Nag missile has been developed by DRDO to strike and neutralize highly fortified enemy tanks. It also has night strike capabilities. It has a minimum range of 500 meters and maximum range of 4 kilometers. Nag uses an imaging infra-red seeker to lock on to the target before launch.

Australia to join Malabar Naval Exercise-2020 with India, US & Japan

- In the 24th **edition** of Malabar exercise, Australia will join the Malabar naval exercise involving India, US and Japan.
- The exercise showcases the deep trust between four major Indo-Pacific democracies and their shared will to work together on common security interests in the maritime domain.
- Exercise Malabar-2020 is expected to be held in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea later this year.
- **Note:** The **Malabar** series of Naval exercises started in 1992 as a bilateral Indian Navy-US Navy exercise and Japan joined the Naval exercise in 2015. Past non-permanent participants are Australia and Singapore.
- The **23rd edition of the MALABAR Exercise** was scheduled among the navies of India, Japan and USA from 26 September to 04 October 2019 off the coast of Japan.

India, US to sign geospatial pact BECA during 2+2 dialogue to deepen military cooperation

- **BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement)** for Geo-Spatial Cooperation will be signed with the US to further tighten the strategic clinch between the two countries during the 2+2 dialogue held on 26 and 27 October.
- **Note:** **BECA**, which will enable the US to share advanced satellite and topographical data for long-range navigation and missile-targeting with India, is expected to be inked during the two-plus-two dialogue.
- BECA will be a very significant development as it would allow India to use global geospatial maps of the US for accuracy of stand-off weapons like cruise and ballistic missiles.
- India inked the General Security of Military Information Agreement (**GSOMIA**) with the US in 2002, which was followed by the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (**LEMOA**) in 2016, and then the Communications, Compatibility and Security Arrangement (**COMCASA**) in 2018.

INS Kavaratti to be commissioned into Indian Navy

- The last of four indigenously built Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) stealth corvettes INS Kavaratti under Project 28 (Kamorta class) will be commissioned into the Indian Navy by Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Naravane, at Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam.
- INS Kavaratti has up to 90% indigenous content. The use of carbon composites to build it has been described as a 'commendable feat achieved in Indian shipbuilding.'
- It has state-of-the-art weapons and a sensor that can detect and take action against hostile submarines. It also has a good endurance for long-range deployments.



- **Note:** 'Project 28' was approved in 2003. The other three warships under this project are **INS Kamorta** (commissioned in 2014), **INS Kadmat** (2016) and **INS Kiltan** (2017).

India-Sri Lanka begin their 8th edition of annual Navy bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-20

- The 8th edition of the annual Indian Navy (IN) and Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-20 starts from October 19 to October 21, 2020, in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.
- **Note:** The interaction between the navies of both nations has grown in recent years. It is in agreement with India's 'neighbourhood first' policy and PM Modi's vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for all the Region).
- **The previous edition of SLINEX was conducted off in Visakhapatnam, India in September 2019.**

India successfully test-fires SANT Missile with 'Lock-On after Launch' & 'Lock-On before Launch' capabilities

- **SANT missile (Stand-off Anti-Tank Guided Missile)**, the air to ground version, has been successfully tested, at the Integrated Test Range in Odisha's Chandipur.
- **Note:** The **SANT missile** has been developed by DRDO's research centre Imarat, in association with Indian Air force, and is an upgrade of Helina's missile, which had a range of 7-8 km.
- The new missile has a range of 15-20 km and is equipped with a new nose-mounted active radar seeker, to help keep the launch platform at a safe distance, to evade defensive fire from the target area.

India conducts successful night trial of nuclear-capable Prithvi-2 missile

- India successfully conducted a night trial of the indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-2 missile as part of a user trial by the Army from a test range in Odisha.
- **Note:** The state-of-the-art surface-to-surface missile blasted off from launch complex 3 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur near Balasore.
- The trial of the missile, which has a strike range of 350 km, was carried out from a mobile launcher. The Prithvi-2 missile is capable of carrying 500-1,000 kg of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines.

BrahMos Supersonic Missile Successfully Test Fired From Navy's Stealth Destroyer

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) test fired BrahMos supersonic cruise missile successfully from the Indian Navy's indigenously-built stealth destroyer INS Chennai, hitting a target in the Arabian Sea.
- BrahMos as "prime strike weapon" will ensure the warship's invincibility by engaging naval surface targets at long ranges, thus making the destroyer another lethal platform of Indian Navy.

India to Deliver Kilo Class Submarine INS Sindhuvir to Myanmar Navy



- This will be the first submarine of the neighboring country. The step is in accordance with India's vision of SAGAR and also in line with India's commitment to building capacities and self-reliance in the neighboring countries.
- **Note: SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)** is India's policy of maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean region. It was unveiled in 2015.

DRDO test-fires Nirbhay Cruise Missile

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation launched the 800-km range Nirbhay cruise missile from Odisha's test facility into the Bay of Bengal.
- **Note:** Nirbhay is a subsonic missile, flying at a speed of 0.7 Mach, with sea-skimming and terrain-hugging capability that helps the missile stay under the enemy radar to avoid detection. The missile's launch is powered by a solid rocket booster developed by DRDO's Advanced Systems Laboratory.

Facts about DRDO:

- **Formed:** 1958
- **Headquarter:** New Delhi
- **Motto:** "Strength's Origin is in Knowledge"
- **Chairman of DRDO:** Dr G. Satheesh Reddy

India's DRDO successfully tests indigenous combat drone Rustom-II

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) tested the Rustom-2 medium altitude long endurance indigenous prototype drone. It achieved 8 hours of flying at an altitude of 16,000 feet at Chitradurga in Karnataka.
- **Note:** Rustom-2 is capable of carrying different combinations of payloads, which includes electronic intelligence systems, situational awareness systems and also synthetic aperture radar.

DRDO successfully flight tests SMART (Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo)

- Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo was successfully flight tested from Wheeler Island off the coast of Odisha.

Note: SMART is a missile assisted release of lightweight Anti-Submarine Torpedo System for Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) operations far beyond Torpedo range. The launch and demonstration are significant in establishing Anti-Submarine warfare capabilities.

The technology required for SMART has been developed by several laboratories, including the Hyderabad-based Defence Research Development Laboratory (DRDL) and Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Agra-based Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) and Visakhapatnam-based Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL).



India-Bangladesh Naval Forces to Hold Exercise Bongosagar

- The 2nd edition of India-Bangladesh Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar begins on October 3 and will end on October 5 in the Bay of Bengal.
- Note: This edition of the joint naval exercise between Bangladesh and India will include surface warfare drills, seamanship evolutions and helicopter operations
- The exercise Bongosagar is aimed at developing interoperability and joint operational skills through the conduct of maritime exercises and operations.
- The Exercise Bongosagar will be followed by the 3rd edition of IN-BN Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT). This joint exercise will take place in the Northern Bay of Bengal from October 4-5. India and Bangladesh's navy will patrol along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) during the CORPAT exercise.

India test-fires new version of nuclear-capable 'Shaurya' Missile

- India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear-capable hypersonic missile 'Shaurya' with a strike range of around 1,000 kilometres. 'Shaurya', which is the land variant of India's K-15 missile, is capable of carrying payloads of 200 kg to 1000 kg and has a strike range of 700 km to 1000 km.
- The surface-to-surface tactical missile was blasted off from a canister strapped to the ground launcher from launch complex 4 of ITR (Integrated Test Range) in the APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha by DRDO.
- According to DRDO, Shaurya is one of the top 10 missiles in the world with its high-performance navigation and guidance systems, sophisticated control technologies, efficient propulsion systems and canisters launch.

Science and Technology

INtel AI(INAI) initiative

- During the **Artificial Intelligence 2020** virtual Summit held on October 13, 2020, the **Telangana Government** along with **Intel India** will launch an artificial intelligence research centre in **Hyderabad**. The research centre is to be launched in collaboration with International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad (IIIT-H) and Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI). The centre has been named INAI.
- INAI is an initiative to apply AI to population scale problems in the Indian context, with a focus on identifying and solving challenges in the healthcare and smart mobility segments through strong ecosystem collaboration.
- **Note: Artificial Intelligence (AI):** It describes the action of machines accomplishing tasks that have historically required human intelligence. It includes technologies like machine learning, pattern recognition, big data, neural networks, self-algorithms etc.
- NITI Aayog has published the National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence wherein it has identified five core areas (**Healthcare, Agriculture, Education, Smart Cities and Infrastructure,**



Bandicoot robot) for the application of Artificial Intelligence. Committee on Artificial Intelligence task force headed by **V. Kamakoti** to explore possibilities to leverage AI for development across various fields.

ISRO to Launch Venus Mission In 2025

- Indian Space Research Organization will launch the Venus mission in 2025 with the participation of French space agency CNES.
- ISRO has selected The VIRAL (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gases Linker) instrument co-developed with the Russian's & France space agency.
- Note: Venus is the second planet from the Sun. It is the hottest planet in the Solar System. It is also called Earth's "sister planet" because of their similar size, mass, proximity to the Sun, and bulk composition. Venus has no moons and no rings. The atmosphere consists mainly of carbon dioxide 96.5% and 3.5% nitrogen with traces of other gases, most notably sulfur dioxide. The surface temperature of the planet is about 900 degrees Fahrenheit (465 degrees Celsius).

Indian start-up AgniKul Cosmos rocket to be test-launched from US facility

- AgniKul Cosmos Private Limited (It is an Indian aerospace start-up) is a Chennai-based start-up incubated at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras.

World's first asteroid mining robot into space will be launched by China in last 2020

- The main aims of the mission will be to know the asteroid mining robot's capabilities and to find out how well it can extract and identify valuable resources.
- The robot has been named 'asteroid mining robot' launched into space by a Chinese Long March series rocket.
- Objective: The robot will not be engaging in any mining work but it will be testing the technologies and to verify and demonstrate multiple functions such as stimulated small celestial body capture, spacecraft orbital manoeuvre, intelligent spacecraft identification, and control.

"India PV EDGE 2020" on Solar Manufacturing

- To catalyze cutting-edge PV manufacturing in India, NITI Aayog, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, and Invest India, are organizing a global symposium, 'India PV EDGE 2020', on October 6, 2020.
- Note: India has become the third-largest solar capacity country in the world and set an ambitious target of 450 GW of renewable capacity by 2030, in which 300 GW is of solar capacity. Cutting-edge giga-scale solar manufacturing stands on three pillars:
- (i) Disruptive PV chemistries (ii) Manufacturing by custom-engineered advanced production equipment (iii) Utilization of innovative BOM components like special glasses and coatings.
- That is why companies involved in all the three pillars are invited to present and engage the Indian industry in the symposium, which will catalyze the momentum for further discussions and collaborations.



- India's NDC document of the Paris Agreement in 2015 called for extraordinary vision, leadership, compassion, and wisdom to combat climate change.

Environment & Ecology

India's Global Himalayan Expedition wins UN award for efforts to fight climate change

- An Indian organisation that leverages tourism and technology to help remote community's access solar energy has won a prestigious UN award for its efforts to combat climate change amid the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The recipients of the 2020 United Nations Global Climate Action Awards, bring focus to the best examples of what people across the globe are doing "to combat climate change in a year that has cast darkness upon so many."
- According to a statement on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, **GHE is the one of the world's first outfits using tourism and technology to bring solar energy to remote communities** as recognised by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

Asan Conservation Reserve gets Ramsar site tag - a first for Uttarakhand

- Asan Conservation Reserve has become the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be included in the prestigious Ramsar sites list.
- Besides Asan, Kabartal Wetland from Bihar was the second new site to get included in this list.
- On the fresh inclusion, the Ramsar website stated that "India has named two new Wetlands of International Importance, bringing its total number of 'Ramsar Sites' to 39."
- Asan attracts a big population of migratory birds in winters. The man-made wetland possibly attracts the biggest number of Brahminy Duck or Ruddy Shelduck in the entire India.
- **About Ramsar Convention:** Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the Convention was signed in 1971.
 - **Location:** Ramsar, Iran
 - **Effective:** 21 December 1975
 - **Signed:** 2 February 1971

Kaleshwaram irrigation project got environmental clearance 'ex post facto' in violation of law: NGT

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) held that environmental clearance was granted to the Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project in Telangana "ex post facto" in violation of legal requirement, and formed a committee to assess the extent of damage caused and identify the restoration measures.
- **About Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project:** It is a multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River in Kaleshwaram, Bhupalpally, Telangana, India. Currently the world's largest multi-stage lift irrigation project, its farthest upstream influence is at the confluence of the Pranhita and Godavari rivers.



NSS (National Sample Survey) REPORT: TIME USE IN INDIA- 2019

- NSO (National Statistical Office) conducted the first Time Use Survey in India during January – December 2019.
- The survey measures the time spent and participation rate on paid activities, unpaid activities, care activities etc.

Note: The primary objective of Time Use Survey (TUS) is to determine the participation of women and men in paid and unpaid activities. TUS is an essential source of information on the time spent in unpaid caregiving activities, volunteer work and unpaid domestic service-producing activities. TUS also provides information on time spent on leisure activities, learning, socializing, self-care activities, etc., by the household members.

Features of the Survey:

1. Coverage: This survey covered 1,38,799 households (urban: 55,902 and rural: 82,897).
2. Data collection: In this survey data on time use was collected through a personal interview method.
2. Presentation of the estimates: The results have been presented here considering all the activities in the time slots instead of considering only the primary activity.

India's first 5 Animal bridges to come up on Delhi-Mumbai Greenfield Expressway

- The Delhi-Mumbai expressway will have five animal bridges or animal overpasses with a combined length of over 2.5 km.
- The upcoming expressway project will have India's first animal bridges that will be designed keeping in mind not to disturb the environment and wildlife section that comes up on the way of over 1,200 km long expressway.
- These bridges have been planned to abide by the concerns of not disturbing the wildlife movement on a section of Ranthambore Wildlife Corridor that comes on the way connecting Ranthambore and Mukundra (Darah) wildlife sanctuaries in Rajasthan.

Note: Wildlife crossings or animal bridges are a practice in habitat conservation, allowing connections or reconnections between habitats, combating habitat fragmentation. And also assist in avoiding collisions between vehicles and animals.

Ranking & Index

NTPC ranks 1st among Indian PSUs in Forbes' 'World's Best Employer 2020'

- NTPC Limited, formerly known as National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, is an Indian Public Sector Undertaking, engaged in the business of generation of electricity and allied activities. It is a company incorporated under the Companies Act 1956 and is promoted by the Government of India.
 - **Founded:** 1975
 - **Headquarters:** New Delhi, India



- **Chairman and Managing Director:** Gurdeep Singh

Global Hunger Index 2020

- India ranks 94 out of 107 countries.
- As per the report, 14 % of India's population is undernourished. Country recorded a child stunting rate of 37.4 %. Stunted children are those who have a "low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition".
- At present, India lags behind Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia among others on the Global Hunger Index. Only 13 out of 107 countries, including Rwanda, Liberia, Afghanistan and Chad among others have fared worse than India.
- **Note:** The Global Hunger Index is an annual report, jointly published by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at the global, country and regional levels.

State of Global Air (SoGA) 2020 Report: India recorded highest air pollution exposure globally in 2019

- Indians have the **highest exposure** to hazardous PM 2.5 particulate matter and the **third-highest exposure to ozone**.
- It is the State of Global Air 2020 Report for 2019 by the US-based Health Effects Institute. The findings are based on the latest Global Burden of Disease study published in The Lancet.
- India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal among top 10 countries with highest PM 2.5 exposure; India leads the tally.
- In 2019, air pollution caused 6.67 million deaths globally, with India accounting for 1.67 million of these.
- 476,000 newborns worldwide died in 2019 due to air pollution; India alone saw over 116,000 such deaths.
- **Note: PM stands for particulate matter** (particle pollution): the term for a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. **PM10:** inhalable particles, with diameters that are generally 10 micrometers and smaller.
- **PM2.5:** fine inhalable particles, with diameters that are generally 2.5 micrometers and smaller.
- **India is also among the top ten countries with highest ozone (O3) exposure** in 2019.

Government released Anemia Mukh Bharat (AMB) Index 2020

- This information came to light during the 8th Governing Body Meeting of the State Health Society of the National Health Mission (NHM) in Chandigarh.
- Haryana was ranked at the top slot (1st) with an AMB Index of 46.7 among 29 states in the country.
- West Bengal got 2nd, Orissa got 3rd and Uttar Pradesh got 29th rank.
- **Note: Anemia Mukh Bharat**, an initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and UNICEF, has been launched to reduce the prevalence of Anemia all over India.



44th OECD International Migration Outlook 2020 Report

- As per the report, **India ranked second** in terms of the “total” inflow of new migrants to OECD countries during the year 2018 as well as in the number of Indians obtaining citizenship of these countries.
- China continued to retain the top position as the largest source country.
- Romania got third position.
- **Note:** Migration from India to OECD countries climbed significantly by 10% and hit 3.3 lakh and it accounted for about 5% of the overall migration to OECD countries.

Facts:

- **The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**
- **Headquarters:** Paris, France
- **Founded:** 1961
- **Membership:** 37 Countries
- **Secretary General:** Jose Angel Gurría

World Bank's Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report 2020

- As per the report, The COVID-19 pandemic is estimated to push an additional 88 million to 115 million people into extreme poverty this year (2020), with the total rising to as many as 150 million by next year (2021), depending on the severity of the economic contraction.
- Extreme poverty, defined as living on less than \$1.90 a day, is likely to affect between 9.1% and 9.4% of the world's population in 2020.
- The new poor being added will be mainly from countries that already have high poverty rates. The significant numbers will be seen in middle-income countries. India belongs to the category of lower-middle-income country.

Facts about World Bank:

- The World Bank (WB) is an international financial institution. It provides loans and grants to the governments of low and middle-income countries.
- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C., United States
- **Founded:** July 1944
- **President:** David R. Malpass

United Nations report on Stillbirths

- A report, a **Neglected Tragedy: The Global Burden of Stillbirths** was released by the UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the World Bank and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
- Almost two million babies are stillborn every year – one every 16 seconds, warning that the COVID-19 pandemic could add another 200,000 deaths to a toll is described as



devastating. Some 84 % of stillbirths, take place in low and middle-income countries, as a result of a lack of midwives and poor-quality healthcare.

- In 2019, an estimated 1.9 million babies were stillborn at 28 weeks of pregnancy or later, with a global stillbirth rate of 13.9 stillbirths per 1,000 total births.
- Stillbirths were concentrated in a few countries, with the greatest number found in **India, followed by Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and China.** These 6 countries accounted for half of the estimated global number of stillbirths and 44 % of global live births.
- The report said that without urgent action, the world will have suffered 20 million more stillbirths by 2030.
- **Note:** Stillbirths mean a baby born with no signs of life at or after 28 weeks' gestation.

Facts about United Nations:

- **Formation:** 24 October 1945
- **Headquarter:** New York, USA
- **Secretary General:** Antonio Guterres
- The UN has six principal organs: the General Assembly; the Security Council; the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); the Trusteeship Council; the International Court of Justice; and the UN Secretariat.

Important Days

October 24: United Nations Day

- 75th anniversary of UN Day
- UN day is observed on October 24, every year since 1948.
- **Note:** India elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, will serve as the president of the powerful 15-nation UN body for the month of August, 2021.

October 24: World Development Information Day

- **The theme of this Day is** Information and Communications Technologies: New Solutions to Development Challenges.
- **Note:** The General Assembly in 1972 established World Development Information Day to draw the attention of the world to development problems and the need to strengthen international cooperation to solve them.

October 24: World Polio Day

- World Polio Day was established by Rotary International over a decade ago to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop the vaccine against the disease.
- In the last three decades, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), led by national governments and the WHO, has been monitoring the disease situation globally.
- **Note:** As per the WHO, since 1980, the cases of wild poliovirus have decreased by over 99.9 per cent as a result of vaccination efforts made around the world.



- **India's situation with regard to the disease:** India was declared polio-free in January 2014, after three years of zero cases, an achievement widely believed to have been spurred by the successful pulse polio campaign in which all children were administered polio drops.

October 23: World Snow Leopard's Day

- 'International Snow Leopard Day is observed on to raise awareness on protection of endangered snow leopards.
- This started from October 23, 2013, when political leaders from 12 countries endorsed the on the conservation of snow leopards'.
- These are distributed across 12 countries in central Asia and are usually found in high, rugged mountain landscapes.
- **Government of India** has been conserving snow leopard and its habitat through the Project Snow Leopard (PSL). The PSL was launched in 2009.
- India is also party to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection (GSLEP) Programme since 2013. India has identified three large landscapes, namely, Hemis-Spiti across Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh; Nanda Devi – Gangotri in Uttarakhand; and Khangchendzonga – Tawang across Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

WORLD STATISTICS DAY, 20 October 2020

- This is the 3rd World Statistics Day.
- The theme is “**Connecting the world with data we can trust.**” This theme reflects on the importance of trust, innovation, authoritative data and the public good in national statistical systems.
- **Note:** World Statistics Day is an international day to celebrate statistics which is created by the United Nations Statistical Commission. It was first celebrated on 20 October 2010. The day is celebrated every five years.

Facts about National Statistics Day in India:

- Every year, the Statistics Day is celebrated on 29th June, the birth anniversary of Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, to recognise his invaluable contribution in establishing the National Statistical System.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 17 October

- The theme is “**Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all.**”
- A research done by The World Bank has revealed that, as of 2020 around 1.89 billion people or nearly 36 percent of the world's population is living in extreme poverty. And nearly half of the populations in developing countries have been living on less than \$1.25 a day.
- **Note:** In 1992, the United Nations (UN) declared to dedicate October 17 as International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.



October 10: World Mental Health Day

- The theme of this international awareness day is “Mental Health for All” and an increased investment in mental health. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as a health issue associated with thoughts, behavior, emotions, and relationship with others.

10 October, World Migratory Bird Day 2020

- World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) is celebrated on the second Saturday of October and May every year. The day is celebrated as an awareness-raising campaign highlighting the need for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. Its objective is to draw attention to the threats faced by migratory birds, their ecological importance, and the need for international cooperation to conserve them.
- World Migratory Bird Day’s theme is “Birds Connect Our World.”

Indian Air Force Day: 8th October

- The Indian Air Force, also known as Bhartiya Vayu Sena, was officially established by the British Empire, as India was under the rule of Britishers at that time. The Indian Air Force (IAF) is the air arm of the three Indian armed forces, and their primary mission was to secure the Indian airspace and conduct aerial activities during the times of conflict.

International Day for Disaster Reduction: 13 October

- The United Nations General Assembly has designated October 13th as the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction to promote a global culture of disaster risk reduction.
- Its basic objective was to decrease the loss of life, property destruction and social and economic disruption caused by natural disasters such as earthquake, tsunami, floods, landslides, volcanic eruption, droughts locust infestations, and other disasters of natural origin.
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan in March 2015.

World Food Day 16 October

- World Food Day 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization).
- World Food Day is celebrated in honor of the date of the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 1945. Many other organizations concerned with food security, including the International Fund for Agricultural Development and World Food Programme also celebrate this day.

World Space Week, 4-10 October

- By resolution of 6 December 1999, the General Assembly proclaimed World Space Week, to celebrate the contributions of space science and technology to the welfare of the human condition.



- World Space Week is the largest annual space event in the world. The weeks helps build up the workforce of tomorrow by inspiring students; demonstrates visible public support for the space programme; educates the public about space activities; and fosters international cooperation in space outreach and education.
- Note: The 2020 theme is “Satellites Improve Life.” The World Space Week will show the importance of satellites in daily life and how our lives are affected by satellites such as in communications, environmental monitoring, transportation, weather forecasting, telemedicine, science, and in many other ways.

October 1, International Day of Older Persons

- This year (2020) marks the 30th Anniversary of the United Nations International Day of Older Persons (UNIDOP) 2020: “Pandemics: Do They Change How We Address Age and Ageing?”
- In view of the higher risks confronted by old age persons during the outbreak of pandemics such as COVID-19, policy and programmatic interventions must be targeted towards raising awareness of their special needs. Recognizing older person’s contributions to their own health and the multiple roles they play in the preparedness and response phases of current and future pandemics is also important.
- Note: The United Nations General Assembly designated October 1 as the International Day of Older Persons on 14 December 1990.

International Day of Non-Violence 2 October

- This Day is observed on 2 October on account of the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. He was the great leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.
- According to the UNGA (United Nations General Assembly) resolution of 15 June 2007, which established the commemoration, the International Day is an event to "disseminate the message of non-violence, including through public awareness and education".

World Habitat Day 2020, October 05

- The 2020 theme is Housing For All: A better Urban Future. This day will be hosted by the city of Surabaya, in Indonesia.
- Note: In 1985 the (UN) United Nations designated the first Monday of October as World Habitat Day. It aims to reflect on the state of our cities and towns and the basic right of all to adequate shelter. It intends to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat.
- The Habitat Scroll of Honour, most prestigious human settlements award, was launched by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in 1989.

Wild Life Week 2020 is observed from the 2nd of October to 8th of October in India.

- Wildlife Week is celebrated in the country with the view to preserve the fauna, which means the animal life of India.



- The Government has established an Indian Board of Wild Life, whose purpose is to improve the consciousness as well as the awareness of the Indian people towards wildlife preservation.

Objectives of Wild Life Week:

- To create awareness of the protection and conservation of wildlife.
- To focus the people's attention towards the importance of conservation of wildlife.
- To implement more services to preserve wildlife.
- To discuss all the issues related to the preservation of wildlife.

Obituaries

Former Gujarat CM Keshubhai Patel passes away

- Keshubhai Patel was Gujarat's CM from March 1995 to October 1995 and from March 1998 to October 2001. He launched a new political outfit named 'Gujarat Parivartan Party' in 2012.

Playback singer, music director and actor K J Mohammed Babu passed away

- He popularly known as '**Zero**' Babu. He was a recipient of the **Sangeetha Nataka Akademi Award**.

Veteran Gujarati Singer Mahesh Kanodia passes away

- He was Gujarati film musician, singer and former Lok Sabha MP from Patan constituency.
- He was known for singing in 32 different voices including female voices.

Former Telangana Home Minister Nayani Narasimha Reddy passed away

- The 86-year-old, a founder leader of the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), was the first Home Minister of the state.

The first female officer of the Indian Air Force, Dr. Vijayalakshmi Ramanan passed away

- She was commissioned as an officer in the Indian Air Force on August 2, 1955. She became the Wing Commander on 22 August 1972. She served as a Gynecologist.

Bhanu Athaiya, India's first Oscar winner passes away

- Athaiya was India's first Academy Award winner and won the Oscar for Best Costume Design for Lord Richard Attenborough's 'Gandhi' in 1983.
- **Nobel Prize 2020 in Economics awarded to Paul R. Milgrom and Robert B. Wilson.**
- **Note:** The award is also known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences.



- The prize was awarded jointly to Milgrom and Wilson "**for improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats.**"
- They designed new auction formats for goods and services that are difficult to sell in a traditional way, such as radio frequencies. Their discoveries have benefitted sellers, buyers and taxpayers around the world.

Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan passed away

- He was the Cabinet Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution in the government and the founder of the Lok Janshakti Party.

Former CBI Director Ashwani Kumar passed way

- He was the former Governor of Manipur and Nagaland.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the premier investigating agency of India under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

Syeda Anwara Taimur, Assam's only woman Chief Minister, died.

She passes at the age of 84 due to cardiac arrest. She was the first Muslim woman Chief Minister of any state in independent India.

Sports

Visnu Shivaraj Pandian wins gold in 10-meter air rifle event of International Online Shooting Championship

- Visnu won the 10m air rifle event of the International Online Shooting Championship at the fifth edition.
- The 16-year-old Pandian shot 251.4 to win the title by a clear margin of two points.

Sports

Portuguese Grand Prix 2020

- British **Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)** won the **Portuguese Grand Prix 2020** Formula One F1 held at **Algarve International Circuit, Portugal**.
- Finland **Valtteri Bottas** (Mercedes) got **second position** and Netherland **Max Verstappen** (Red Bull) got **third position**.

Cologne Tennis Tournament 2020 (bett1HULKS Championship)

- **Singles**
 - Winner: Alexander Zverev
 - Runner-Up: Diego Schwartzman
- **Doubles**



- Winner: Raven Klaasen, Ben McLachlan
- Runner-Up: Kevin Krawietz, Andreas Mies

DANISA Denmark Open 2020

- **Location:** Odense Sports Park
- The **Denmark Open**, or formerly known as **Danish Open**, is an annual badminton tournament held in Denmark and organized by Danmarks Badminton Forbund.
- **List of winners**

Men's singles	Women's singles	Men's doubles	Women's doubles	Mixed doubles
Winner- Anders Antonsen	Winner- Nozomi Okuhara	Winner- Marcus Ellis, Chris Langridge	Winner- Yuki Fukushima, Sayaka Hirota	Winner- Mark Lamsfuss, Isabel Herttrich
Runner-up- Rasmus Gemke	Runner-up- Carolina Marin	Runner-up- Vladimir Ivanov, Ivan Sozonov	Runner-up- Mayu Mastsumoto, Wakana, Nagahara	Runner-up- Chris Adcock, Gabrielle Adcock

Sheikh Russel International Air Rifle Championship 2020

- Bangladesh Shooting Sport Federation (BSSF) organized the championship.
- **Winners List:**

Medal	Men's Event	Women's Event
Gold	Naoya Okada (Japan)	Elavenil Valarivan (India)



Silver	Shahu Tushar Mane (India)	Shiori Hirata (Japan)
Bronze	Baki Abdullah Hel (Bangladesh)	Vidya Toyyiba (Indonesia)

Rafael Nadal wins French Open Men's Singles Final 2020

- Rafael Nadal Defeats Novak Djokovic to win 13th French Open Men's Singles Final.
- He has won the Wimbledon twice, Australian Open once and the US Open four times.

Polish teenager Iga Swiatek becomes the new French Open Champion

- In Tennis, Polish teenager Iga Swiatek has become the new French Open Champion.
- She beats the American Australian Open winner Sofia Kenin in the Women Singles final.

Books and Authors

A book titled 'Night of the Restless Spirits' authored by Sarbpreet Singh

- The book is based on the Sikh massacre of 1984 and published by Penguin Publication.

Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister, launched a book written by Dr Krishna Saksena—"A bouquet of flowers".

- The book has been designed to allow the readers to travel their own journey and arrive at their own very personal realization and be inspired by it.



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