

Monthly Current Affairs November 2020 English

Monthly Current Affair Digest: November 2020

Important News: State

Centennial Foundation Day of University of Lucknow

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the celebration of Centennial (100th) Foundation Day of University of Lucknow on November 25 via video conferencing.
- The Prime Minister unveiled the University's Centennial Commemorative Coin on the occasion. He also released a special Commemorative Postal Stamp issued by India Post and its Special Cover during the event.

Vijay Kumar Sinha elected as Bihar Legislative Assembly Speaker

- This is the first time that any BJP leader was elected as Vidhan Sabha speaker.
- Total 126 votes have been polled in his favour.

Pilibhit Tiger Reserve gets global award for doubling tiger population

- The Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (PTR) and the Uttar Pradesh Forest department have bagged the first-ever international award, TX2, for doubling the number of tigers in four years against a target of 10 years.
- PTR was the first to receive the award among 13 tiger range countries.
- It achieved this goal in just four years from 2014, when it had 25 tigers which went up to 65 in 2018.
- **Note:** The global target of doubling the tiger population was set in 2010 by the partners in TX2 award-UNDP, Global Tiger Forum, International Union for Conservation of Nature, World Wide Fund for Nature, Conservation Assured/Tiger Standards and the Lion's Share.
- The *International Tiger Days* celebrated on *July 29* every year.
- 13 tiger range countries are India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia, Nepal, Russia, Vietnam & Thailand.

Forest produce based Food-park will be developed in Umaria district.

- It will be a first ever Food-park established in Shahdol sub-division of Umaria, Madhya Pradesh.
- All forest villages will be transformed into Revenue villages.

Uttar Pradesh govt. brings Vidhi Virudh Dharma Samparivartan Pratishedh Adyadesh 2020

- Recently, Uttar Pradesh Cabinet cleared a draft ordinance to check “unlawful religious conversions” and “inter-faith marriages with the sole intention of changing a girl’s religion”, with provision for jail term of up to 10 years.
- According to the “Uttar Pradesh Vidhi Virudh Dharma Samparivartan Pratishedh Adhyadesh 2020” (prohibition of unlawful religious conversion), a marriage will be declared “shunya” (null and void) if the “sole intention” was to “change a girl’s religion”.
- Those getting the conversion done in violation of the provisions of the proposed law would have to face jail term of up to 10 years.



- If it is found that the conversion is done “forcibly, through atrocity or cheating”, the offence will be non-bailable.
- The proposed law has provision for jail term of 1 to 5 years, and a minimum fine of Rs 15,000. However, in case the woman is from the Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe or a minor, the person can be jailed for 3 to 10 years, with a minimum fine of Rs 25,000.
- In case of mass conversions done forcibly or through cheating, the jail term would range from 3 to 10 years, with a minimum fine of Rs 50,000.
- Apart from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh have also sought to bring a law to check what they say is “love jihad”.

India’s first ‘Moss Garden’ comes up in Uttarakhand

- The Uttarakhand forest department dedicated the newly-built Moss Garden to the people, claiming that it is the country’s first such garden, spread over 10 hectares at Khurpatal in Nainital district.
- Approved in July last year under the CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority) scheme by the Research Advisory committee of Uttarakhand Forest Department, the moss garden was inaugurated by renowned water conservation activist Rajendra Singh.
- Moss Garden, Khurpatal houses around 30 different species of moss and certain other bryophyte species.
- Two of the moss species found here- Hyophila involuta (Cement Moss) and Brachythecium Buchanani- figure in the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s red list.
- **About Moss Garden:** Mosses are non-vascular plants that belong to the Bryophyta division. They are small flowerless plants that typically grow in damp and shady locations. They play a very important role in maintaining and developing the ecosystem and biodiversity.

Asia's second beautiful Church is located in Sihor (Madhya Pradesh).

- It is an 186 years old church which was built by JW Osborne in 1834.
- It took around 27 years in its construction.

25th November is celebrated as Dungarpur establishment day.

- In 1339, Raval Vir Singh Dev constructed Juna Mahal along with the establishment of Dungarpur (Rajasthan).

The remains of Buddha era building found in Banka district

- The remains are found near Chandan river in Bhadariya village of Amarpur block in Banka. The archeologists said that the bricks used for construction are handmade.

Jitan Ram Manjhi sworn in as pro-tem speaker of newly elected 17th Bihar Legislative Assembly

- In Bihar, former Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi sworn in as pro-tem speaker of the newly elected 17th Bihar Legislative Assembly. Governor Phagu Chauhan administered him the oath of office at a function organized at Rajbhavan in Patna.

- Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) Chief Jitan Manjhi who has been elected from Imamganj assembly constituency is among the senior most members of the house.

Kolkata gets world's first children's library on wheels

- The West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) in association with Apeejay Anand Children's Library has launched the "world's first tram library for children".
- The initiative was a tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru whose birth anniversary on November 14 is celebrated as Children's Day.
- The tram would run on Shyambazar-Esplanade and Esplanade-Gariahat routes, spanning across north and south Kolkata. The books have been arranged by Oxford Bookstore for children.

Nitish Kumar took oath as Chief Minister of Bihar for the seventh time

- Nitish Kumar sworn in as the CM of Bihar for the seventh time—his fourth consecutive term.
- Tarkishore Prasad and Renu Devi also took oath as the Deputy Chief Ministers of Bihar.
- **Note:** Nitish Kumar is on course to becoming the longest-serving Chief Minister of the state. As CM, he had a continuous run since November 2005, except for the period in 2014-15.

Tourist Facilitation Centre facility in Kerala

- Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel inaugurated Tourist Facilitation Centre at Guruvayur, Kerala under PRASHAD Scheme.
- **Note: PRASHAD (The Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive) scheme** was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2014-15 with the objective of integrated development of identified pilgrimage and heritage destinations. The scheme is aimed at infrastructure development such as entry points, last mile connectivity, basic facilities like information centers, eco-friendly modes of transport, area lighting and illumination with renewable sources of energy, drinking water, toilets, cloak room and waiting rooms.

UNESCO allots Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh 'Biosphere Reserve' status

- This is 12th Biosphere Reserve from India and after Panchmarhi and Amarkantak, this is 3rd from Madhya Pradesh which are a part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.
- **Panna National Park to Tiger Reserve**
 - The Panna 'National Park' was initially set up in 1981. It received the status of a tiger reserve in the early 1990s under "Project Tiger."
 - **Note:** There are currently 714 biosphere reserves across the world, located in 129 countries, which form the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

India's first 'Tyre Park' to come up in West Bengal

- West Bengal will soon feature India's first 'Tyre Park' where artworks made from scrap and defective parts will be on display.
- The West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) will launch this Tyre Park soon.
- Scrap tyres, lying as waste in various bus depots, have been reworked and converted to colourful shapes.



Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel released a 'sciencetoon' book (Bye Bye Corona) published by Vigyan Prasar of the Department of Science and Technology

- The book has been written by **Pradeep Srivastava**, former Senior Principal Scientist at CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), Lucknow.
- **Note:** The book contains comprehensive information on the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A 'sciencetoon' is a cartoon communication based on science.

India's First Solar-Powered Miniature Train launched in Kerala

- A solar energy-driven miniature train, billed as the country's first of its kind, was inaugurated at the Veli Tourist Village in Thiruvananthapuram by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
- The train, which would be an attraction for children especially, was part of a string of projects totally worth ₹ 60 crore taken up to elevate the facilities at the panoramic destination to international standards.

Important News: India

Constitution Day of India

- Constitution Day is celebrated in our country on 26th November every year to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India. The day is also known as National Law Day.
- On 26th November 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India, which came into effect from 26th January 1950.
- **Note:** The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 19th November 2015 notified the decision of Government of India to celebrate the 26th day of November every year as 'Constitution Day' as a tribute to Dr B R Ambedkar who played an important role in its framing as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee.

PM Modi releases book on the life and ideals of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji

- The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi released a book on the life and ideals of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji, the founder of Sikhism and first of its ten gurus.
- The book has been written by Kirpal Singh, who is based in Chandigarh.

'National Portal for Transgender Persons' and 'Garima Greh'

- Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot e-launched a 'National Portal for Transgender Persons' and e-inaugurated a 'Garima Greh: A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons' in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- National Portal for Transgender Persons has been developed within 2 months of Notification of Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020 on 29 September, 2020.
- This highly useful Portal would help a transgender person in applying for a Certificate and Identity card digitally from anywhere in the country.
- Garima Greh: A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons, e-inaugurated in Vadodara, Gujarat will be run in association with Lakshya Trust, a Community based organisation entirely run by the Transgenders.
- The purpose of the Shelter Home is to provide shelter to Transgender persons, with basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and recreational facilities.



- The Nodal Ministry has identified 10 cities to set up the 13 Shelter Homes and extend the facilities to Transgender persons, in association with selected 13 CBOs (Community Based Organisation) in the country on pilot basis.
- The cities include Vadodara, New Delhi, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Jaipur, Kolkata, Manipur, Chennai, Raipur, Mumbai, etc. The scheme will rehabilitate a minimum of 25 transgender persons in each homes.
- This is a pilot project and after its successful completion, similar schemes will be extended to other parts of the country.
- Note: The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 came into effect on 10th January 2020 which is the first concrete step towards ensuring welfare of Transgender persons.
- To implement the provisions of the Act the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment issued the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020 which have been notified in the Gazette of India.

UMANG's international version launched

- In coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs, UMANG's international version was launched by Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad during the online conference for select countries that include USA, UK, Canada, Australia, UAE, Netherlands, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.
- It will help Indian international students, NRIs and Indian tourists abroad, to avail Government of India services, anytime.
- To mark the milestone of 2000+ services on UMANG and its 3 year journey, Shri Prasad also launched an e-Book which presents major milestones of UMANG.
- **UMANG Awards:** In the Central Department category, EPFO was bestowed the Platinum Partner award, followed by DigiLocker as the Gold Partner while ESIC and Bharat Gas services were declared the Silver Partner; the Bronze Partner award was announced for HP Gas, Doordarshan, National Consumer Helpline, CBSE, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban, Jeevan Pramaan & Jan Aushadhi Sugam.
- For the services of State Governments, the top 3 States based on average monthly transactions were - Gujarat, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh.
- **About theUMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance):** It is a Government of India all-in-one single, unified, secure, multi-channel, multi-lingual, multi-service mobile app. providing access to high impact services of various Government of India Departments and State Governments.

Food Processing Projects worth Rs 234.68 Crores approved

- Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, chaired the Inter-Ministerial Approval Committee (IMAC) meeting on 24.11.2020 to consider the proposals received under the Scheme for Creation of Infrastructure for Agro-Processing Cluster of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana.
- IMAC approved 7 proposals with a total project cost of Rs. 234.68 Crores including grants-in-aid of Rs. 60.87 Crores in the States/UTs of Meghalaya, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra.



- **Note:** The scheme for Creation of Infrastructure for Agro-Processing Cluster (APC) has been approved on 03.05.2017 under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY) to incentivize the setting up of agro processing clusters in the country.
- This scheme aims at development of modern infrastructure to encourage entrepreneurs to set up food processing units based on cluster approach. These clusters will help in reducing the wastage of the surplus produce and add value to the horticultural / agricultural produce which will result in increase of income of the farmers and create employment at the local level.

Government of India blocks 43 mobile apps from accessing by users in India

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India issued an order under section 69A of the Information Technology Act blocking access to 43 mobile apps including AliSuppliers Mobile App, Alibaba Workbench, AliExpress, Alipay Cashier, CamCard.
- This action was taken based on the inputs regarding these apps for engaging in activities which are prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order.
- **Note:** Earlier on 29th June, 2020 the Government of India had blocked access to 59 mobile apps and on 2nd September 2020, 118 more apps were banned.

LIC launches digital application 'ANANDA'

- Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has launched a digital application for agents for onboarding to get a life insurance policy.
- The Digital Application is called "**ANANDA**", which is an acronym for **Atma Nirbhar Agents NewBusiness Digital Application**.
- "The Digital application is a tool for the onboarding process to get the life insurance policy through a paperless module with the help of the agent or intermediary.
- It is built on a paperless KYC process using Aadhaar-based e-authentication.
- **About Life Insurance Corporation of India:** It is an Indian state-owned insurance group and investment corporation owned by the Government of India.
 - **Headquarters:** Mumbai
 - **Chairperson:** M R Kumar
 - **Founder:** Government of India
 - **Founded:** 1 September 1956

Petroleum Minister inaugurates Seismic Survey Campaign in Mahanadi Basin in Odisha

- Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel, inaugurated the seismic survey campaign of Oil India Limited (OIL), India's second largest National Exploration & Production Company, at Kakatpur in Puri District, Odisha in the Mahanadi Basin.
- The Government of India since 2014 has launched a number of policy reforms in the hydrocarbon E&P sector, chief among them being Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP).
- The Government also is implementing the National Seismic Programme (NSP) for appraising unappraised areas of Indian sedimentary basins. Seismic data acquired under NSP in the



state of Odisha led to an offer of five blocks by DGH and OIL won all the five blocks for hydrocarbon exploration under OALP-II and III rounds.

- The total envisaged expenditure on the entire exploration campaign in the five blocks in Mahanadi Basin (Onshore) is Rs. 1248.00 Crores of which Rs. 220.00 Crores is for Seismic survey.
- The blocks are spread in eleven districts of Odisha namely Puri, Khurda, Cuttack, Jagatsingpur, Kendrapara, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Baleshore, Maurbhanj and Keonjhar.

Union Minister of Education inaugurates 46 online ATAL Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) organised by AICTE

- Union Education Minister, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' inaugurated 46 online **AICTE Training and Learning (ATAL) Academy** Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) to train teachers of higher education institutions associated with All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) in thrust and emerging areas in technology.
- ATAL Academy is to be included in the Book of World Records. London-based organization has recognized the FDPs as a world record, under which 1,000 online FDPs in over 100 emerging areas will benefit one lakh faculty members across premier institutions like IITs, NITs, and IIITs.
- In the year 2020-21, new thrust areas in the field of Engineering, Management, Life Skills, Design & Media have been incorporated.
- **Note:** Out of 1000, 499 FDPs have already been completed with more than 70,000 faculty members already trained.
- In 2019-20, 185 five-day face-to-face FDPs in nine thrust areas -- Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Block-chain, Robotics, Quantum Computing, Data Sciences, Cyber Security, 3D Printing & Design, and Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality -- benefited around 10,000 participants.

MoU (Memorandum of understanding) signed to set up 900 CBG plants

- To boost availability of affordable and clean transport fuels, a MoU was signed between the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and leading oil & gas marketing companies & technology providers to establish Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plants across India under the **Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT)**
- In the presence of Union Minister of petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, MoUs were signed with energy companies viz. JBM Group, Adani Gas, Torrent Gas and Petronet LNG for setting up of Compressed Biogas (CBG) plants, and with technology providers in CBG sectors Indian Oil, Praj Industries, CEID Consultants & Bharat Biogas Energy for facilitating availability of technology for the projects.
- Letter of intent for 600 CBG plants has already been given and with signing of MoUs for 900 plants, a total of 1500 CBG plants are at various stages of execution.
- Rs 30,000 Cr of investment is envisaged in these 900 plants. A total of 5000 CBG plants with approximate investment of Rs. 2 lakh crores are envisaged.
- **Note: SATAT** (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) initiative for boosting production and availability of CBG as an alternative and affordable clean fuel for the transportation sector was launched by the Government of India on 1.10.2018. The scheme envisages setting up of 5000 CBG plants by FY 2023-24.



Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge

- Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, MoS, I/C, Housing, and Urban Affairs launched the Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge across 243 Cities.
- Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge was launched on the occasion of World Toilet Day- 19 November, is aimed at preventing hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and promotes their mechanized cleaning.
- An independent agency will assess participating cities in May 2021 and on 15 August 2021, results of the same will be declared. Award will be given to cities in three sub-categories – with a population of more than 10 lakhs, 3-10 lakhs and up to 3 lakhs, with total prize money of Rs 52 crores to be given to winning cities across all categories.
- **Note:** The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act (2013) and various judgments of Hon'ble Supreme Court expressly prohibit hazardous cleaning, i.e. manual entry into a septic tank or sewer without protective gear and observing operating procedures.

Union Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar unveils e-books 'The Republican Ethic Volume III' and 'Loktantra Ke Swar'

- Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shri Prakash Javadekar unveiled ebook versions of two books 'The Republican Ethic Volume III' and 'Loktantra Ke Swar'.
- The hard copy versions of the books were unveiled by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh.
- **About the Book:** The Republican Ethic, Volume 3, is a collection of selected speeches of the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind during the third year of his presidency.
- Divided into 8 sections, the 57 speeches covered in this volume reflect the thoughts and vision of Shri Kovind for building a new India that is forward-looking, growing, and also strongly rooted in its historical and cultural value systems.
- **Note:** The 'Loktantra Ke Swar' and 'The Republican Ethic', published by the Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

EESL Signs MoU with DNRE Goa to implement the country's first Convergence Project

- Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and Department of New & Renewable Energy (DNRE), Goa, have signed a memorandum of understanding to discuss rolling out of India's first Convergence Project in the State.
- The project will carry-out the feasibility studies and subsequent implementation of decentralized solar energy projects. It will accelerate the usage of renewable energy sources, especially for agricultural and rural power consumption in the State.
- EESL shall implement the solar energy projects, establishment of 100 MW of decentralized ground mounted Solar Power projects on government lands to be used for agricultural pumping, replace approximately 6,300 agricultural pumps with BEE (Bureau of Energy Efficiency) star rated energy efficient pumps and distribute approximately 16 Lakh LED bulbs for rural domestic households.
- **About EESL:** A joint venture of NTPC Limited, Power Finance Corporation, Rural Electrification Corporation and POWERGRID, Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) was set up under the Ministry of Power to facilitate implementation of energy efficiency projects.



- EESL is a Super Energy Service Company (ESCO) that seeks to unlock the energy efficiency market in India, estimated at Rs. 74,000 crore that can potentially result in energy savings of up to 20 percent of current consumption, by way of innovative business and implementation models.

Reserve Bank of India places South Indian centered Lakshmi Vilas Bank Ltd. under moratorium

- In view of its weak financials, the Reserve Bank has placed the Lakshmi Vilas Bank Limited under moratorium with immediate effect.
- RBI has capped all cash withdrawals from the bank to twenty five thousand rupees.
- RBI has appointed the former Non Executive Chairman of Canara Bank, T. N. Manoharan as the banks' administrator for the moratorium period.
- RBI has also announced the draft scheme of amalgamation of Lakshmi Vilas Bank with Delhi based DBS Bank India Limited - DBIL.
- **Note:** According to The Reserve Bank, in the absence of a credible revival plan, with a view to protect depositors' interest and in the interest of financial and banking stability, there is no alternative but to apply to the Central Government for imposing a moratorium under section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. Accordingly, after considering the Reserve Bank's request, the Central Government has imposed a moratorium for thirty days.

RBI names 2 startups as a part of its regulatory sandbox programme

- Reserve Bank of India has announced the names of two startups that have been selected as a part of its regulatory sandbox programme.
- First company is Jaipur based Natural Support Consultancy Services Private Limited and second is New Delhi based Nucleus Software Exports Limited.
- The first company has named its product 'eRupaya', which will facilitate offline Person-to-Merchant transactions and offline digital payments in remote locations;
- The second company's product 'PaySe', proposes to help in digitisation of payments in rural areas, starting with Self Help Groups, through an offline payment solution and a digitised SHG-centered ecosystem.
- **Note:** Regulatory sandbox is a framework set up by a regulator that allows FinTech startups and other innovators to conduct live experiments in a controlled environment under a regulator's supervision.

PM Modi's address at 3rd Annual Bloomberg New Economy Forum

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered an address at the Third Annual Bloomberg New Economy Forum on 17th November 2020. The forum witnessed conversations centered on refueling the economy and charting a course for the future, in the wake of the corona virus pandemic.
- **Note: Bloomberg New Economy Forum** was established in 2018 by Michael Bloomberg. It seeks to build a community of leaders to engage in real conversations leading to actionable solutions about the critical challenges facing a world economy in the throes of a historic transition.

- The inaugural Forum was held in Singapore and the Second Annual Forum was hosted in Beijing. These covered a range of topics, including global economic management, trade and investment, technology, urbanization, capital markets, climate change and inclusion.

Kris Gopalakrishnan appointed first chairperson of Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH)

- The Reserve Bank has appointed Senapathy (Kris) Gopalakrishnan, co-founder and former co-chairman, Infosys, as the first Chairperson of the RBIH.
- Gopalakrishnan is currently the Chief Mentor of Start-up Village, an incubation hub for start-ups.
- **Note:** In August 2020, RBI had announced that it will set up the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub to promote innovation across the financial sector by leveraging on technology and creating an environment that would facilitate and foster innovation.
- The RBIH shall create an ecosystem that would focus on promoting access to financial services and products and this will also promote financial inclusion.

First solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia

- In Maharashtra, the first solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia is coming up in Parbhani district.
- The Jai Bhawani women's cooperative textile mill will be the first in Asia that will operate on solar power.
- Chairman of the textile mill Dr. Sampriya Rahul Patil said that the finest quality cotton will be procured from Parbhani itself.
- **Note:** Parbhani is the leading cotton producing district in Maharashtra.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled 'Statue of Peace' to mark 151st Birth Anniversary celebrations of Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj

- The Statue unveiled in the honour of the Jain acharya, has been named as 'Statue of Peace'. The 151 inch tall statue has been made from Ashtadhatu i.e. 8 metals, with Copper being the major constituent, and is installed at Vijay Vallabh Sadhana Kendra, Jetpura, in Pali, Rajasthan.
- **Note:** The Jainacharya established many institutions for girl children and brought women to the mainstream. Bird Hospital and many gaushalas are running in the country today.

India's first Sandalwood Museum

- This first of a kind museum has been set by the Mysuru Forest Division at the Sandalwood Depot in Aranya Bhavan, Mysuru, Karnataka.
- Visitors can learn about sandalwood classification, varieties of sandalwood, its farming methods, etc. It will also display posters with information about sandalwood growth and its role in prevention of diseases.
- Later, the museum might get shifted to the Mysuru Palace.

'Project Air Care' launched in Gurgaon to control pollution

- Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar unveiled 'Project Air Care' in the district, as part of which 65 Wind Augmentation Air Purifying Units (WAYU) will be installed across the district.



- The air purification project is the result of a public-private partnership between the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) and GSK Consumer Healthcare. Created by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute and IIT, Bombay, the air purification units convert pollutants like PM2.5 and PM2.10 particles, volatile organic compounds, and carbon monoxide, into carbon dioxide using a filter.
- The creators of the devices, which can provide purified air in an area of 500 square metres, claim these can reduce PM10 by 60-70 % and PM2.5 by 30-40 % at traffic junctions.

The 15th Finance Commission submits its Report for 2021-22 to 2025-26 to the President of India on 9 November 2020

- Shri N K Singh is the chairman of Fifteenth Finance Commission.
- The Commission was asked to give its recommendations on many unique and wide-ranging issues in its terms of reference-the vertical and horizontal tax devolution, local government grants, disaster management grant, examine and recommend performance incentives for States in many areas like power sector, adoption of DBT, solid waste management etc., examine whether a separate mechanism for funding of defence and internal security ought to be set up.
- **Note:** As per the terms of reference (ToR), the Commission was mandated to give its recommendations for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 by 30 October, 2020. Last year, the Commission had submitted its report containing recommendations for the year 2020-21 which was accepted by the Union Government and tabled in the Parliament on 30 January 2020.

Saffron bowl of India extends to the North East

- The saffron bowl, which was so far confined to Kashmir, may soon expand to the North East of India. Plants from seeds transported from Kashmir to Sikkim and acclimatized there are now flowering in Yangyang in the Southern part of the North-East state.
- **North East Centre For Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR)**, an autonomous body under the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India supported a pilot project to explore the feasibility of growing saffron in North East region of India, with the same quality and higher quantity.
- **The Botany and Horticulture department of Sikkim Central University** carried out tests to understand the soil and actual pH conditions of Yangyang of Sikkim and found it comparable to saffron growing places of Kashmir.
- **Note: Saffron** is a spice derived from the flower of *Crocus sativus*, commonly known as the "saffron crocus". It is used in cosmetics and for medicinal purposes.

“HunarHaat” returns after a gap of seven months

- Union Ministers Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and Kiren Rijiju inaugurated the “HunarHaat”, being organised at Delhi Haat, Pitampura from 11th to 22nd November, 2020.
- **Note:** “HunarHaat” is available at virtual and online platform also. Products of artisans are also available on <http://hunarhaat.org>. Union Minority Affairs Ministry is registering these artisans and their indigenous products on “GeM” (Government e Marketplace).

India's first solar-based water supply project launched in Arunachal Pradesh

- India's first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP) was dedicated to the people of Arunachal Pradesh by Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- The solar-based lift water supply project for 39 villages in Lower Dibang Valley district in northeastern Arunachal Pradesh was commissioned at a cost of Rs 28.50 crore.
- The project is designed to provide drinking water to 17,480 people and has been conceived as an integrated project with an element of drinking water, green energy and tourism component in it.
- **Note:** The Chief Minister Pema Khandu launched the "Arunachal Jal Sankalp", a state government dedicated flagship programme to supplement the Jal Jeevan Mission and to sustain the drinking water systems.

First of its kind policy consultations with Indian Diaspora on STIP (Science Technology and Innovation Policy) 2020

- In a first of its kind policy consultation, Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan interacted with the highly-skilled Indian diaspora to facilitate channels for them to contribute to India's STIP 2020.
- Country aims to connect the diaspora with Indian scientific and economic ecosystem to accelerate the growth in Science technology and innovation.
- It is important to build policy level mechanisms that enable creation of suitable opportunities for attracting best talents back home.
- **Note:** The VAIBHAV Summit and the recently launched dedicated, one-stop platform for S&T diaspora engagement, "PRABHASS" (Pravasi Bharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark) are some proactive steps of the Government towards this engagement.

Shaktikanta Das Chairs 40th SAARCFINANCE Governors' Group Meeting

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das inaugurated and chaired the 40th meeting of the SAARCFINANCE Governors' Group.
- The group took stock of the macroeconomic situation in the SAARC region and discussed the current SAARCFINANCE initiatives.
- Mr. Das is also the chairperson of the SAARCFINANCE, which is a network of central bank governors and finance secretaries of the SAARC region.
- **Note:** The meeting was attended by the Governors from SAARC Central Banks- Bangladesh Bank, Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, Maldives Monetary Authority, Nepal Rastra Bank, State Bank of Pakistan, Central Bank of Sri Lanka and Da Afghanistan Bank.

Former Delhi chief secretary M M Kutty to be first chairperson of Air Quality Commission

- The Centre has notified the Commission for Air Quality Management for the National Capital Region (NCR) to set up the new agency with sweeping powers to monitor and act against sources of air pollution across five north Indian states (Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan).
- The ordinance empowers the agency to make rules, set emission standards, and slap fines of up to Rs1 crore or imprison violators for up to five years.



- **Note:** The Commission replaces all ad hoc committees and bodies created as per court orders. They include the Supreme Court-appointed Environment Pollution Control Authority that was formed to oversee measures to check air pollution in NCR in 1998.

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting constitutes a committee to review guidelines on Television Rating Agencies in India

- The Chairman of the Committee shall be **Shri Shashi S. Vempati, CEO, Prasar Bharti.**
- The present guidelines issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) on Television Rating Agencies in India were notified after detailed deliberations by the Parliamentary Committee, Committee on Television Rating Points (TRP) constituted by the MIB and recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority.
- A committee has been hereby constituted to study different aspects of the television rating system in India.

Chacha Chaudhary becomes the Brand Ambassador for Namami Gange Project

- The iconic Indian superhero, Chacha Chaudhary, whose brain works faster than a computer has now come forward to join hands with the Namami Gange Programme. Diamond Toons will conceptualize and publish this new 'Talking Comics' with Chacha Chaudhary spreading awareness on the cultural and spiritual significance of River Ganga and deploy best available knowledge across the masses for Ganga rejuvenation. **The teaser was released during Ganga Utsav 2020.**
- **Note:** The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) organised three-day Ganga Utsav 2020 from Nov 02 to 04.

Ministry of Shipping renamed Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, a branch of the Government of India, is the apex body for formulation and administration of the rules and regulations and laws relating to ports, shipping and waterways.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates Ro-Pax terminal at Hazira and Flags off Ro-Pax ferry service between Hazira and Ghogha in Gujarat

- There will be several wide-ranging benefits of the Hazira-Ghogha Ro-Pax ferry service.
- It will work as a Gateway to South Gujarat and Saurashtra region. It will reduce the distance between Ghogha and Hazira from 370 Km to 90 Km.
- The reduced cargo travel time from 10 to 12 hours to about 4 hours will result in huge savings of fuel and lower the maintenance cost of vehicles drastically.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Chaired Virtual Global Investor Roundtable (VGIR) 2020 Conference

- The VGIR 2020 was organised by the Union Ministry of Finance and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund.
- It is an exclusive dialogue between leading global institutional investors, Indian business leaders and the highest decision-makers from the Government of India and Financial Market Regulators.



- VGIR 2020 focuses on discussions around India's economic and investment outlook, structural reforms and the government's vision for the path to a USD 5 trillion economy.
- Note: The roundtable witnesses participation from 20 of the world's largest pension and sovereign wealth funds with a total Assets Under Management of about US\$6 trillion. These global institutional investors represent key regions including the US, Europe, Canada, Korea, Japan, Middle East, Australia, and Singapore.

India's first-ever E-resource centre 'Nyay Kaushal' in Nagpur

- Chief Justice of India, Sharad Arvind Bobde inaugurated India's first-ever E-resource centre Nyay Kaushal. The centre was inaugurated at Judicial Officers Training Institute in Maharashtra's Nagpur. Nyay Kaushal will facilitate e-filing of cases in Supreme Court, any High court and district courts across the country.
- **Note:** Delhi was the first to start **virtual traffic courts** across India.

Hardeep Singh Puri to inaugurate 13th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference 2020

- This UMI Conference is being organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on 9th November 2020.
- Theme is "Emerging Trends in Urban Mobility" with focus on innovative measures taken at national and international level to address the challenges posed by Covid-19 pandemic to provide accessible and convenient transport to the people.
- **Note:** Till date, 12 events have been organized from 2008 to 2019.
 - The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India issued the National Urban Transport Policy, 2006 (NUTP). The objective of the policy is to ensure safe, affordable, quick, comfortable, reliable and sustainable access for the growing number of city residents to jobs, education, recreation and such other needs within our cities.
 - As part of the NUTP enunciations, the Ministry has taken the initiative to organize an annual international Conference-cum-Exhibition on Urban Mobility India popularly known as UMI.

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inguarated Mansar Lake Development Plan in Jammu

- Dr. Jitendra Singh said that after its implementation, the number of Tourists/pilgrims will increase from 10 lakhs to 20 lakhs per year in Mansar region. Mansar Rejuvenation Plan will lead to employment generation of about 1.15 crore man-days and will generate more than Rs 800 crore of income per year.

Kiren Rijju inaugurates SAI Regional Centre in Zirakpur, Punjab

- Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijju inaugurated Sports Authority of India's (SAI) new Regional Centre in Zirakpur, Punjab which will now act as one of the main SAI centres for the northern belt of India.
- The northern belt of India covers a huge region, right from Jammu and Kashmir and Leh to Himachal Pradesh.

ESSCI (The Electronics Sector Skill Council of India) announced appointment of PVG Menon as its chief executive officer (CEO)

- Menon will be responsible for overseeing the operations of ESSCI and work closely with its governing Council on strategic issues related to the growth of the electronic systems design and manufacturing industry in India.
- **ESSCI (Electronics Sector Skill Council of India)** works with industry, the National Skill Development Corporation, and the Ministry of Electronics and IT to provide skilling and re-skilling services to the industry.
- **ESDM (Electronic Systems Design and Manufacturing)** industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the Indian economy. It will be an important contributor to achieving the vision of a trillion dollar manufacturing economy for India.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) hands over Lucknow airport to Adani group on lease for 50 years

- The central government in February 2019 privatized six major airports of the country -- Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, and Guwahati. After a competitive bidding process, the Adani group won the rights to run all of them for 50 years.
- The AAI had signed concession agreements with the Adani group on February 14 for operations, management and development of the Mangaluru, Lucknow and Ahmedabad airports.

Paul Zacharia selected for Ezhuthachan Puraskaram

- Noted Malayalam writer Paul Zacharia was chosen for his contribution to Malayalam literature during the past five decades.
- **Note: Ezhuthachan Puraskaram** is the highest literary honour that is given by the Kerala Sahitya Akademi, Government of Kerala. The award is named after Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan, the father of the Malayalam language and consists of a cash prize of ₹5,00,000 and a citation.

Ayush Ministry and Invest India to jointly set up “Strategic Policy & Facilitation Bureau” (SPFB) for planned and systematic growth of Ayush sector

- This Bureau will support the Ministry in strategic and policy making initiatives that shall help pave the way to reach the full potential of the sector and stimulate growth and investment.
- M/S Invest India would collaborate extensively with the Ministry to frame the work plan of the Bureau and define its short-and long-term targets. Invest India would deploy highly trained and expert resources to implement and execute the plans of the Ministry.
- **About Invest India:** As the national investment promotion and facilitation agency, Invest India focuses on sector-specific investor targeting and development of new partnerships to enable sustainable investments in India.
- Invest India, set up in 2009, is a non-profit venture under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.

Indian Railways launches 'Meri Saheli' initiative

- Indian Railways has launched “Meri Saheli” initiative which aims for focused action on the security of women across all zones.

- An initiative of RPF (Railway Protection Force), the Strategy entails interaction for security with lady passengers especially those travelling alone by a team of young lady RPF personnel at the originating station.
- **Note:** “Meri Saheli” initiative was started as a pilot project in South Eastern Railway in September 2020.

SBI raises 1 billion USD untied loan with JBIC

- The State Bank of India signed a loan agreement amounting to up to one billion US Dollars with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).
- The loan is intended to promote the smooth flow of funds for the whole range of business operations of Japanese automobile manufacturers in India.
- **Note:** As part of the agreement, 600 million US Dollars will be financed by JBIC while the remaining amount will be financed by other participating banks. The facility will be co-financed by SMBC, MUFG Bank, Mizuho Bank, Shizuoka Bank and Bank of Yokahama.

NITI Aayog, Quality Council of India (QCI) Launch National Program and Project Management Policy Framework (NPMPF) Initiative to Transform Infrastructure Sector in India

- Union Minister, Nitin Gadkari unveiled the *Indian Infrastructure Body of Knowledge (InBoK)*, a book on the practice of program and project management in India.
- **Note:** NPMPF will help to build a stronger India, in which we would need good quality infrastructure; we would need to reduce costs and waste material, without compromising on the environment and ecology. This framework aims to formulate radical reforms in the way large and mega infrastructure projects are managed in India.

NTPC Ltd. enters into foreign currency loan agreement with Japanese Government's financial institution for JPY 50 billion under GREEN initiative

- In the first funding for NTPC Ltd under Japan Bank for International Co-operation (JBIC)'s GREEN or Global Action for Reconciling Economic growth and Environment preservation initiative, India's largest power producer entered into foreign currency loan agreement with Japanese Government's financial institution for JPY 50 billion.
- The facility is extended under JBIC's outreach for projects, which ensure conservation of global environment.
- **Note:** The loan proceeds will be utilized by NTPC Ltd for funding its capex for Flue Gas Desulphurization (FGD) & Renewable Energy projects.

The Prime Minister inaugurated Water Aerodrome at Kevadia and the Sea-plane service connecting Statue of Unity in Kevadia with Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad

- **Note:** Seaplanes have the ability to land and take-off from water thus offering access to areas that do not have landing strips or runways. It can help in connecting the geographies/regions that have challenges owing to its topography and bring the remotest parts of India into the mainstream aviation network without the high cost of building airports and runways.

The Prime Minister inaugurated 'Aarogya Van' near the Statue of Unity in Kevadiya village of Gujarat's Narmada district

- **Note:** 'Aarogya Van' (health forest) is spread over an area of about 17 acres, displaying a wide range of medicinal plants which play an important role in the well-being of human beings. Five lakh plants of 380 selected species have been grown in the sprawling garden.

Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman leads Indian delegation in 10th Round of Ministerial UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD)

- India-UK are two of the world's top seven economies with a combined GDP of over \$5 trillion. India-UK trade has more than doubled since the first EFD, with bilateral investment supporting over half a million jobs across both countries.
- The topics which were discussed in EFD are:
 - Financial Services Collaboration with special emphasis on Fin-Tech and GIFT City.
 - To establish bilateral India- UK Sustainable Finance Forum
 - International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure
 - 2.6 million pound for joint research projects on the future of UK-India trade and investment.
 - UK-India Fast-Track Startup Fund backed by SIDBI and the UK government for early-stage tech startups.
- **The next EFD will be held in London in 2021.**

Public Affairs Index-2020

- The Public Affairs Index-2020 was released by the Public Affairs Centre, headed by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman K. Kasturirangan. The states were ranked on governance performance based on a composite index in the context of sustainable development defined by three pillars of equity, growth and sustainability.
- **In the large state category in terms of governance**
 - Kerala (1.388 PAI Index point), Tamil Nadu (0.912) and Andhra Pradesh (0.531) stood in the first three ranks.
 - Uttar Pradesh (-1.461), Odisha (-1.201) and Bihar (-1.158) were at the bottom of the ranking.
- **In the small state category in terms of governance**
 - Goa ranked first with 1.745 points, followed by Meghalaya (0.797) and Himachal Pradesh (0.725).
 - Worst performers are Manipur (-0.363), Delhi (-0.289) and Uttarakhand (-0.277).
- **In the category of union territory in terms of governance**
 - Chandigarh emerged the best governed with 1.05 points, followed by Puducherry (0.52) and Lakshadweep (0.003).
 - Dadar and Nagar Haveli (-0.69), Andaman, Jammu and Kashmir (-0.50) and Nicobar (-0.30) were the least performers.

Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha to be next Chief Information Commissioner

- Sinha was appointed as information commissioner in the CIC on January 1, 2019. A former diplomat, Sinha has served as high commissioner of India to the United Kingdom and Sri Lanka.

Annual State of Education Report (ASER) 2020

- As per ASER, survey conducted in September across the country, about 20% of rural children have no textbooks at home. About one in three rural children had done no learning activity at all. About two in three had no learning materials or activity given by their school, and only one in ten had access to live online classes.
- It found that 5.3% of rural children aged 6-10 years had not yet enrolled in school this year, in comparison to just 1.8% in 2018. Among 15-16-year-olds, however, enrolment levels are actually slightly higher than in 2018. Enrolment patterns also show a slight shift toward government schools, with private schools seeing a drop in enrolment in all age groups.
- **Note: ASER** is a nationwide survey of rural education and learning outcomes in terms of reading and arithmetic skills that has been conducted by the **NGO Pratham** for the last 15 years.

15 States identified for implementing centrally sponsored pilot scheme on Fortification of Rice & its distribution through Public Distribution System

- Department of Food & Public Distribution has approved the pilot scheme for a period of three years beginning 2019-2020. Fifteen State Governments have identified their respective districts (1 district per state) for implementing the pilot scheme.
- Already 5 states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh have started the distribution of fortified rice in their respective identified districts.
- **Note: The fortified rice** is a mixture of iron, vitamin B-12 and folic acid enriched fortified rice kernel (FRK), which meet the nutritional requirements in the diet and thereby help in controlling malnutrition and anemia.

COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge Award

- Six women led startups have won COVID-19 Shri Shakti.
- The Jury selected top 3 entries as winners, 3 additional entries as Promising Solutions.

Top 3 winners:

- (i) Dr. P. Gayatri Hela (Bengaluru-based Resada Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd).
- (ii) Romita Ghosh (Shimla-based iHeal HealthTech Pvt. Ltd).
- (iii) Dr. Anjana Ramkumar and Dr. Anushka Ashokan (Kerala based Thanmatra Innovations Pvt. Ltd).

Top 3 Startups identified as 'Promising Solutions':

- (i) Vasanthi Palanivel (Bengaluru-based Seragen BioTherapeutics Pvt. Ltd).
- (ii) Shivi Kapil (Bengaluru-based Empathy Design Labs).
- (iii) Jaya Parashar and Ankita Parashar (STREAM Minds).

Note: COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge was launched by **MyGov** in collaboration with **UN Women** in April 2020. It aims to encourage and involve women led startups to come up with innovative solutions that can help in the fight against COVID19 or solve problems that impact a large number of women.

Important News: World

Scotland becomes first nation to make sanitary pads, tampons free

- Scotland became the first country to make sanitary products free.
- It is the first nation in the world to take a step against period poverty, which refers to the prevalent phenomena of being unable to afford products such as pads or tampons to manage menstrual bleeding.

UNDP and Invest India launch the SDG Investor Map for India

- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and Invest India have launched the SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) Investor Map for India, laying out 18 Investment Opportunities Areas (IOAs) in 6 critical SDG enabling sectors.
- This is the first-ever SDG Investor Map for India.
- Key highlights of the SDG Investor Map:
- Of the 18 IOAs identified, 10 are already mature investable areas that have seen robust Private Equity and Venture Capital activity, and feature companies that have been able to unlock scale and demonstrate profitability. The remaining 8 IOAs are emerging opportunities, which have seen traction from early-stage investors.
- The map has also identified 8 White Spaces, which have seen investor interest and have the potential to grow into IOAs within a 5-6-year horizon. However, these require further policy support and private sector participation to mature into commercially attractive IOAs.
- By mapping the overlaps and gaps between public sector priorities and private sector interest, the SDG Investor Map lays out pathways that can bring together private-sector investment and public sector support for 6 SDG-enabling sectors including Education, Healthcare, Agriculture & Allied Activities, Financial Services, Renewable Energy & Alternatives and Sustainable Environment.
- About Invest India, the national investment promotion agency, is a non-profit venture under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, the Ministry of Commerce & Industry. It was set up in 2009.

APEC Summit 2020

- APEC 2020 (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation)'s Economic Leaders meetings were held under the chairmanship of Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin.
- This is Malaysia's second time hosting an APEC meeting, having hosted one in 1998.
- After the virtual summit held on 20 November 2020, the APEC leaders issued the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 and Kuala Lumpur Declaration.
- The theme of the APEC Malaysia 2020 was "Optimising Human Potential Towards a Resilient Future of Shared Prosperity: Pivot. Prioritise. Progress".
- **About Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC):** The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation is an inter-governmental forum for 21 member economies in the Pacific Rim that promotes free trade throughout the Asia-Pacific region.
 - **Headquarters:** Singapore
 - **Founded:** November 1989

India to host G20 Summit in 2023



- India is set to host the G20 summit in 2023, instead of 2022 — the 75th year of Independence.
- Indonesia will assume the G20 presidency in 2022 after a swap with India.
- Indonesia would also chair the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2023.
- **Note:** Now the G20 Summit is set to be hosted by Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.

15th G20 Summit

- Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, participated in the 15th G20 Summit convened by Saudi Arabia, on 21-22 November 2020.
- The theme of the summit was "Realizing Opportunities of 21st Century for All" which has assumed greater importance in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- The agenda of the Summit was focused on overcoming the pandemic, economic recovery and restoring jobs, and building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future.
- **Facts about G20:**
 - **Formation:** 26 September 1999
 - **Members:** 20 (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, and European Union)
 - **Note:** It is the second G20 meeting this year (2020). The first G20 Extraordinary Leaders' summit was held in March this year (2020).
 - Italy will assume the Presidency of G-20 in December 2021 followed by India in 2022.
 - India will enter the **G20 Troika**, along with Saudi Arabia when Italy will take over the Presidency of the G-20 on 1st December 2020.
 - In order to sustain continuity and consistency, a system called the '**troika**' is designed where three countries – previous, present and future presidency holders, work in close cooperation and in dialogue with one another.

World's Best Cities: Only one Indian city features in the ranking

- The top 10 cities for 2021 in the world are – London, **2.** New York, **3.** Paris, **4.** Moscow, **5.** Tokyo, **6.** Dubai, **7.** Singapore, **8.** Barcelona, **9.** Los Angeles, and **10.** Madrid, as per a list revealed by Resonance Consultancy Ltd
- **India has only one city in the list. Delhi is ranked 62 on the list.**
- Resonance Consultancy ranks the world's best cities with populations of more than a million, using a combination of statistical performance and qualitative evaluations by locals and visitors in 25 areas grouped into six core categories. It identifies cities that are most desirable for locals, visitors, and business people.

PMs of India and Bhutan launched RuPay Card phase-2 in Bhutan

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with his Bhutanese counterpart Lotay Tshering virtually launched RuPay card Phase-II on 20th November.
- The phase-2 will now allow Bhutanese cardholders to access RuPay network in India.
- **Note:** The two Prime Ministers had jointly launched **phase-1** of the project during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bhutan in August last year. Phase-1 of RuPay cards in

Bhutan has enabled Indian visitors in Bhutan to access ATMs and points of sale terminals across Bhutan.

- The **RuPay card** is an Indian debit and credit card payment network, with acceptance at ATMs, POS devices and e-commerce websites.

India – Luxembourg Virtual Summit 2020

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a Bilateral Summit with Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister of Luxembourg on November 19, 2020.
- This is the first stand-alone summit between India and Luxembourg in the past two decades.
- The two Prime Ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation on realizing effective multilateralism and combating global challenges like the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in the areas of financial technology, green financing, space applications, digital innovations and start-ups, terrorism and climate change.
- **Note:** ISRO recently launched Luxembourg's four satellites and Prime Minister welcomed Luxembourg's announcement to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA), an global initiative led by India.

World Economic Forum selects 4 Indian cities to pioneer roadmap for smart cities

- The World Economic Forum has selected 36 cities out of 22 countries and 6 continents for pioneering a new global policy roadmap for the smart cities that are developed by the G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance.
- The four Indian cities are Indore, Faridabad, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad.
- Other cities London, Toronto, Moscow, Dubai, Brasilia and Melbourne have also been selected.
- The pioneer cities launched their activities on November 17 at a global event broadcast by the Smart City Expo World Congress which is the world's premier smart cities event.
- The 36 pioneer cities that have been recruited will be collaborating with the global experts for enhancing their city policies in areas ranging from cyber security and privacy protection to better services for the differently-abled people as well as better broadband coverage.
- Note: The G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance- It was established in June 2019 during the G20 Summit in Osaka, Japan.
- Pioneer of Change Summit 2020: This summit (16-20 November, 2020) has been inaugurated by the World Economic Forum (WEF) to discuss digital business, sustainable production, health, infrastructure, financial innovation, new work models and frontier technologies.

12th BRICS summit 2020

- The 12th BRICS summit, hosted by Russian President Vladimir Putin, was also attended by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa on Nov 17, 2020.
- The theme was BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that terrorism is the "biggest problem" facing the world, there is a need to ensure that countries supporting and assisting terrorists are held guilty.



- BRICS is known as an influential bloc that represents over 3.6 billion people, or half of the world's population. The BRICS countries have a combined GDP of \$16.6 trillion.
- **Note: India will host the 13th BRICS Summit next year. Since its inception, it would be the third BRICS Presidency for India, after 2012 and 2016.**

DIPAM signs an agreement with World Bank for advisory services on Asset Monetization

- **Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)** has signed an agreement with World Bank. Under the agreement, World Bank is to provide advisory services to DIPAM for asset monetization.
- DIPAM is mandated with facilitating monetization of non-core assets of government CPSEs (Central Public Sector Enterprises) under strategic disinvestment or closure and enemy property of value of INR 100 crores and above.
- The World Bank advisory project, approved by the Finance Minister, is aimed at analyzing public asset monetization in India and benchmarking its institutional and business models against international best practices as well as supporting development of operational guidelines and capacity building for their implementation.

15th East Asia Summit

- External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar represented India at the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) on 14 November 2020.
- The Summit was chaired by the Prime Minister of Vietnam H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc in his capacity as ASEAN Chair. All the eighteen EAS countries participated in the virtual Summit.
- EAM noted the growing interest in the Indo-Pacific as an integrated and organic maritime space, with ASEAN at its centre. He appreciated the synergy between the ASEAN Outlook and India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.
- The Summit discussed ways to strengthen the EAS platform and to make it more responsive to emerging challenges on its 15th anniversary and adopted the Ha Noi Declaration. The Leaders underlined the importance of cooperation in ensuring safe, effective and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines.

RCEP: Asia-Pacific countries form world's largest trading bloc

- Fifteen countries have formed the world's largest trading bloc, covering nearly a third of the global economy.
- **The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** is made up of 10 Southeast Asian countries, as well as South Korea, China, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.
- The pact is seen as an extension of China's influence in the region.
- Negotiations over the new RCEP deal began in 2012 and it was finally signed on the sidelines of a 37th meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- The RCEP is expected to eliminate a range of tariffs on imports within 20 years. It also includes provisions on intellectual property, telecommunications, financial services, e-commerce and professional services.
- **Note:** India was also part of the negotiations, but it pulled out last year over concerns that lower tariffs could hurt local producers.

1st BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting

- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the 1st BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting under the BRICS Russian Chairmanship on 09 November.
- The agenda of the meeting included discussions on the outcomes of G20 Saudi Presidency in 2020, a digital platform to encourage infrastructure investments and expansion of the membership of the New Development Bank (NDB)
- **Note:** The Finance Minister observed that the G20, of which all BRICS countries are members, has delivered some very significant initiatives this year including the G20 Action Plan in response to COVID-19 which has provided broad guidance to navigate a collective global response to the crisis.

8th BRICS STI (Science, Technology and Innovation) ministerial meeting

- The Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Russia organized the meeting on November 13.
- The Meeting unanimously adopts BRICS STI Declaration 2020 and calendar of BRICS STI activities 2020-21.
- The Science, Technology and Innovation Ministers of the BRICS grouping (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) discussed Science & Technology cooperation among the member countries.
- From India, Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan attended the meeting. Indian Research and Development are working relentlessly to develop effective interventions for combating the pandemic. More than 100 startups have developed innovative products for COVID-19.

Armenia, Azerbaijan sign Russia brokered peace deal

- Armenia and Azerbaijan have signed an agreement to end military conflict over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.
- It follows six weeks of fighting between Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenians.
- The peace deal which was signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.
- Under the deal, Azerbaijan will hold on to areas of Nagorno-Karabakh that it has taken during the conflict.
- Armenia has also agreed to withdraw from several other adjacent areas over the next few weeks.
- **Reason for Dispute: Nagorno-Karabakh: the border region claimed by both Armenia and Azerbaijan**

Aung San Suu Kyi's Democratic Party wins majority in Myanmar Election

- Aung San Suu Kyi's political party National League for Democracy (NLD) has secured a victorious majority in the 2020 Myanmar election, securing enough seats to form the next government.
- The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), the military-backed party was, Suu Kyi's main opposition party.

- **Note:** With this win in Myanmar's second only general election since 50 years of oppressive military rule, NLD is set to serve its second term in Parliament. Nobel Laureate Suu Kyi has gained another five years as State Counsellor of Myanmar.

First-ever virtual Indo-Africa Summit 2020

- The **IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry** organized a three-day long Indo-Africa Virtual Summit 2020.
- The inaugural day of this Summit was graced by the presence of Hon'ble Union Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal and Hon'ble Cabinet Secretary (Minister) Kenya, Dr. Amina Mohamed.
- *Its mission is to enhance ties to 100*100 matrix by 2025, i.e. A target of 100 billion USD of Bilateral Trade and 100 billion USD of Investment between India and Africa.*
- **Note:** The combined markets of India and Africa encompass 2.5 billion people and GDP of 5.5 trillion USD.
- *The African continental free trade came into force in 2019. Indian companies can benefit from setting up industry in Africa. As of June 2020, India had extended 121 lines of credit to 41 African countries to set up businesses there.*

20th Summit of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) Council of Heads of State held on November 10, 2020

- The Meeting was chaired by the President of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir Putin.
- SCO summit was attended by the Heads of States of all 8 SCO Member States- Russia, India, China, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. The Heads of States of 4 observer states of SCO- Iran, Afghanistan, Mongolia and Belarus are also participated in the summit.
- The summit focused on regional peace, security and prosperity, against terrorism, smuggling of illegal weapons, drugs and money-laundering.
- **Note:**
 - India had become a full member of the SCO in 2017. Prior to that, India had an observer status, which was granted to it in 2005.
 - 21th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of State will be chaired by the Republic of Tajikistan next year.
 - India will host summit of SCO Council of Heads of Government on November 30, 2020.

4th India – Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation

- The 4th Meeting of the India-Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation, co-chaired by Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister and Mr. Teodoro Locsin Jr., Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Philippines, was held on 06 November 2020.
- The meeting focused on expanding trade and investment links, to work towards strengthening cooperation in agriculture, health and pharmaceuticals, tourism, energy, ICT, and science & technology
- Commitment to a multifaceted partnership in line with India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and the ASEAN's Outlook on Indo-Pacific to achieve shared security, prosperity and growth for all in the region.

Indian diplomat Vidisha Maitra elected to United Nations Advisory Committee



- In a significant victory for India at the United Nations, Indian diplomat Vidisha Maitra was elected to the UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly.
- The victory comes as India gets ready to sit in the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member for a two-year term beginning January 2021.

Indian Army Chief General M M Naravane conferred honorary rank of General of Nepali Army by President of Nepal, Bidya Devi Bhandari

- He was honoured at a special ceremony at the President's official residence 'Shital Niwas' in Kathmandu. He was also presented with a sword and scroll during the function.

John Magufuli won a second term as Tanzanian President

- He got more than 84% of the vote in this election. His main opponent, Tundu Lissu, earned 13% of the vote.
 - **Facts about Tanzania**
 - Country in East Africa
 - **Capital:** Dodoma
 - **Currency:** Tanzanian shilling

India-Italy Virtual Summit

- A Virtual Bilateral Summit between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Italy Prof. Giuseppe Conte was held on 6th November, 2020.
- The leaders discussed a wide range of issues including political, economic, scientific & technological, space and defence cooperation. On regional and international issues, both sides agreed to coordinate closely at multilateral fora especially G-20.
- 15 MoUs/Agreements in various sectors such as energy, fisheries, ship building, design etc. were signed coinciding with the Summit.
- **Note:** Italy will assume the Presidency of G-20 in December 2021 followed by India in 2022. Together, India and Italy will be part of the G20 Troika from December, 2020.

Joe Biden to be next US President; Kamala Harris becomes first woman in American history to be elected as Vice President

- Democrat Joe Biden beat Republican Donald Trump to become the 46th President of the United States.
- Indian-origin Kamala Harris, the first Black American and the first Asian American will become Vice President.

8th Meeting of the India-UAE High Level Joint Task Force on Investments

- The High Level meeting (Joint Task Force) was hosted by India. The meeting was co-chaired by Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways, Government of India and His Highness Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Member of the Executive Council of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- **Note:** The Joint Task Force, created in 2012 as a crucial forum for economic ties between the UAE and India. The mechanism has assumed greater importance as the two countries entrench the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement signed in January 2017.



- Both sides reviewed the existing UAE special desk ('UAE Plus') and the Fast Track Mechanism created in 2018 to facilitate investments and to resolve any challenges experienced by UAE investors in India.

Mission Sagar-II

- Indian government is providing assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries to overcome natural calamities and COVID-19 pandemic and towards the same INS (Indian Naval Ship) Airavat is carrying a consignment of 100 Tonnes of food aid for the people of Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea.
- **Note: 'Mission Sagar-I'** undertaken in May-June 2020, wherein India provided food and medicines to Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros.
- **Mission Sagar** is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her maritime neighbours and further strengthens the existing bond.

Duarte Pacheco of Portugal has been elected the new President of IPU (Inter Parliamentary Union) for the period 2020-2023

- **Note:**
 - **206th Session** of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union is being held from November 1 to 4, 2020.
 - **About The Inter-Parliamentary Union:** It is an international organization of national parliaments. Its purpose is to promote democratic governance, accountability, and cooperation among its members.
 - **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
 - **President:** Gabriela Cuevas Barron
 - **Founded:** 1889

8th joint commission meeting between India and Mexico

- India and Mexico on October 29, 2020, held their 8th Joint Commission Meeting and reviewed the bilateral cooperation in several areas including agriculture, education, trade, health and investment.
- The meeting was co-chaired by the External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, H.E. Marcelo Ebrard.
- **Facts about Mexico**
 - Mexico, officially the United Mexican States, is a country in the southern portion of North America.
 - **Capital:** Mexico City
 - **President:** Andrés Manuel López Obrador

India extends \$1 billion credit line to Central Asian countries for priority projects

- The priority projects are connectivity, energy, IT and health care, with the move being perceived as part of New Delhi's efforts to boost its role as a transparent development partner.



- The line of credit was welcomed by ministers of Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan during the second meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue held under the chairmanship of external affairs minister S. Jaishankar.

Dilip Rath elected to International Dairy Federation board (IDF)

- National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB) Chairman Dilip Rath has been elected to the board of global dairy body International Dairy Federation.
- Rath has been associated with IDF for the last 10 years as Member Secretary of Indian National Committee and as a member of the Standing Committee on Dairy Policy and Economics.
- **Note: International Dairy Federation (IDF)** is an international non-governmental, non-profit association having members from national committees constituted by dairy organisations in each country.

Awards and Honours

Jallikattu is India's entry for 93rd Academy Awards

- Malayalam film Jallikattu, directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery, has been selected as India's official entry for the Best International Feature Film category for the 93rd Academy Awards.
- Jallikattu is the third Malayalam film after *Guru* (1997) and *Adaminte Makan Abu* (2011) to be chosen as the country's official entry for the Oscars.
- Note: The Academy Awards, popularly known as the Oscars, are awards for artistic and technical merit in the film industry. Given annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), the awards are an international recognition of excellence in cinematic achievements.
- The first Academy Awards presentation was held on May 16, 1929.
- The 93rd Academy Awards is scheduled for April 25, 2021.

Delhi Crime wins Best Drama Series at the International Emmy Awards 2020

- Netflix web series Delhi Crime won the award for Best Drama Series at the 48th International Emmy Awards 2020.
- Other Indian shows like Made in Heaven and Four More Shots Please were also nominated but did not score any wins.
- Delhi Crime is an Indian crime drama web television series written and directed by Richie Mehta.
- **About Emmy Award:** An Emmy Award, or simply Emmy, is an American award that recognizes excellence in the television industry.

Naseeruddin Shah honoured with Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar

- Veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah received the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar at Sangit Kala Kendra Awards.
- Two emerging stars, Neel Choudhary and Irawati Karnik were also honoured with the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalakiran Puraskars.
- "Theatre is the central theme for this year's awards.



- **Note:** The Sangit Kala Kendra's 'Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar' and the 'Kalakiran Puraskar' were instituted in 1996 which was founded in 1973 by Aditya Vikram Birla (former Chairman of Aditya Birla Group).

Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' conferred with Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award

- Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' was conferred with the **Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award** at a virtual ceremony.
- **Vatayan International Awards** are presented by the Vatayan-UK organization in London to honor poets, writers, and artists for their works in the respective fields.
- **Note:** Pokhriyal has earlier received several awards in the field of literature and administration including the Sahitya Bharati Award by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Sahitya Gaurav Samman by Former President APJ Abdul Kalam, among others.

Karnataka Governor presents Doctor of Science honorary doctorate upon ISRO Chairman

- Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala presented Doctor of Science honorary doctorate upon ISRO Chairman K Sivan.
- The Visvesvaraya Technological University has conferred the doctorate to him.
- **Note:** Sivan joined ISRO in 1982 to participate on the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) Project. He was appointed as the director of ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre on 2 July 2014. On 1 June 2015, he became the Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre.
- Sivan was appointed the chief of ISRO in January 2018 and he assumed office on 15 January. Under his chairmanship, ISRO launched Chandrayaan 2, the second mission to the moon on July 22, 2019.

Scottish writer Douglas Stuart wins Booker prize 2020 for novel Shuggie Bain

- Scottish writer Douglas Stuart, 44, has won the 2020 Booker Prize for fiction with his debut novel Shuggie Bain, which described a boy growing up in Glasgow in the 1980s with a mother battling addiction. He won the 50,000 Pound prize.
- The Booker Prize shortlist also included Indian-origin writer Avni Doshi's novel 'Burnt Sugar'.
- **Note:** The **Booker Prize for Fiction**, formerly known as the **Booker-McConnell Prize**(1969–2001) and the **Man Booker Prize** (2002–2019), is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original novel written in the English language and published in the United Kingdom.

The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) confers four awards to Assam for success in fishery sector

- NFDB has conferred four awards to Assam for the success in the fishery sector.
- Assam has got the best state award under the category of best hilly and North Eastern state.
- Assam Apex Cooperative Fish Marketing and Processing Federation Limited (FISHFED) has been selected under the category of best hilly and North eastern government organization.
- Nagaon district has been selected under best hilly and North Eastern district category.
- Nalbari based farmer Amal Medhi is selected under hilly and North Eastern fish farmer category.
- **Note:** The awards will be given on 21st of this month in New Delhi.



Lilavati Award-2020: AICTE's Innovative education program to empower women

- Union Minister of Education Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal, “Nishank” launched Lilavati Award-2020: AICTE's Innovative education program to empower women.
- With women empowerment as the theme, the objective of the award is to create awareness about issues like sanitation, hygiene, health, nutrition, literacy, employment, technology, credit, marketing, innovation, skill development, natural resources and rights among women.
- **Note:** Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Government has launched several welfare schemes for the overall development of girl child and women such as Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, CBSE Udaan Scheme, and many more.

Dr. K S Subramanian wins national award ‘Fertiliser Association of India Golden Jubilee Award’

- Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) professor, Dr. K S Subramanian has been chosen for the Fertiliser Association of India Golden Jubilee Award.
- The award carries a cash prize of Rs. one lakh and a gold medal, which would be presented in New Delhi next month.
- Note: Subramanian, who is also director of research and NABARD chair, got the award for his contribution to the field of nano-fertilisers and its role in improved use while ensuring environmental safety.

Bangladeshi teen wins International Children’s Peace Prize

- A Bangladeshi teen Sadat Rahman has been awarded the International Children’s Peace Prize for his work to stop cyber bullying of teens.
- The award was given away by the Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai during a ceremony in the Netherlands.
- He has created the anti-cyber bullying app ‘Cyber Teens’ to help teenagers who are sufferers of cyber bullying. The app provides information to the young people about internet safety. It also provides them a channel to safely report the cyber bullying confidentially.
- **Note:** The prize was launched by KidsRights during the 2005 World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates in Rome. Since then, the prize has been presented every year by a Nobel Peace Laureate.

S. Hareesh wins the JCB Prize for Literature 2020

- Malayalam author S. Hareesh has won for his novel, *Moustache* which been translated into English by Jayasree Kalathil and published by HarperCollins India.
- The JCB Prize for Literature is regarded as the richest literary prize in India. As per the norm, the Malayalam author will receive a ₹25 lakh cash prize and the translator will receive an additional ₹10 lakh.

Hariharan wins JC Daniel award for lifetime contributions in Malayalam cinema

- Noted filmmaker **Hariharan** has been selected for the **JC Daniel Award**, the Kerala state government’s highest honour for **lifetime contributions to Malayalam cinema**. The award carries a purse of Rs 5 lakh, a citation, and a sculpture.

Dr. Dinesh Katre Wins Prestigious 2020 Emmett Leahy Award

- Dr. Katre, Senior Director and Head of Human-Centered Design & Computing Group at the Centre for Development of Advance Computing (CDAC) has won the prestigious 2020 Emmett Leahy Award.
- **Note: Emmett Leahy Award**, which was constituted in 1967 in the USA, honours a pioneer in the field of information and records management and recognizes the outstanding contributions that have a major impact on this profession.

Dr. Susanta Kar honoured with “Prof. A N Bhaduri Memorial Lecture Award-2020”

- **Dr. Kar** is a Senior Scientist, Molecular Parasitology and Immunology, CSIR-CDRI, Lucknow.
- This award is given by Society of Biological Chemists (India) for his work of defining the survival tactics of *Leishmania donovani*.
- **Note: Society of Biological Chemists (India) SBC (I)** has instituted many awards, in order to recognize the meritorious and significant contributions made by the researchers/scientists on the development of biological sciences in the country, SBC (I) was founded in 1930, with its Head Quarters at Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.

Defense

Varunastra: The heavy weight torpedo delivered to Indian Navy

- India's Defence Research and Development (DRDO) chairman and Department of Defence R&D secretary G Satheesh Reddy has flagged off the first Varunastra heavyweight torpedo (HWT) production unit.
- Varunastra is a heavy weight, electrically propelled anti-submarine torpedo. It can be launched from ships that can fire heavyweight torpedoes to engage quiet submarines in deep and shallow waters.
- First Production unit of Heavy Weight Torpedo, Varunastra, is being produced by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) Vishakhapatnam for Indian Navy.
- BDL is also the production agency for quick reaction surface-to-air missile (QRSAM) and Astra air-to-air missile system.

India successfully test-fires land-attack version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

- India successfully fired the surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile BrahMos in the Andaman and Nicobar as part of a series of planned trials of the weapon, known for its precision strike capabilities.
- The range of the new land-attack version of the missile has been extended to 400 km from the original 290 km but its speed has been maintained at 2.8 Mach or almost three times the speed of sound.
- According to official sources, in the next few days, the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Indian Navy are scheduled to carry out separate test-firing of the new version of the air-launched and naval versions of the supersonic cruise missile respectively.
- BrahMos Aerospace, an India-Russian joint venture, produces the lethal weapon that can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft, or from land platforms.

India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20



- Indian Navy hosts the 27th edition of India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20 (23 to 25 November) in Andaman Sea.
- Indian Navy ships including destroyer Rana with integral Chetak helicopter and indigenously built corvettes Kamorta and Karmuk participated in the 2020 edition of SIMBEX.
- In SIMBEX-20, two navies participated in advanced surface, anti-air warfare and anti-submarine warfare exercises including weapon firings, over three days of intensive joint operations at sea.
- **Note:** The SIMBEX series of exercises between Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore Navy being conducted annually since 1994, are aimed at enhancing mutual interoperability and imbibing best practices from each other.

Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20

- Indian Navy Ships including indigenously built ASW corvette *Kamorta* and missile corvette Karmuk have participated in the 2nd edition of India, Singapore, and Thailand Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20, from 21 to 22 November in the Andaman Sea.
- The 2020 edition of the exercise is hosted by the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).
- The SITMEX series of exercises are conducted to enhance mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices between the Indian Navy (IN), Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), and Royal Thai Navy (RTN).
- The two days of maritime drills witnessed the three navies participate in a variety of exercises including naval maneuvers, surface warfare exercises, and weapon firings.
- **Note:** The **first edition** of SITMEX, hosted by the Indian Navy, was conducted off Port Blair in September 2019.

Indo-Thai Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT)

- The 30th edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy was conducted from 18 – 20 November 2020.
- Indian Naval Ship (INS) *Karmuk*, an indigenously built Missile Corvette and His Majesty's Thailand Ship (HTMS) *Kraburi*, a Chao Phraya Class Frigate along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both the navies participated in the CORPAT.
- **Note:** To reinforce maritime links, the two navies have been carrying out CORPAT along their International Maritime Boundary Line twice a year since 2005, with the aim of keeping this vital part of the Indian Ocean safe and secure for commercial shipping and international trade.

Second phase of Malabar naval exercise in Arabian Sea begins

- The navies of India, the US, Australia and Japan on 17 November began the second phase of the Malabar naval exercise in the northern Arabian Sea involving two aircraft carriers and a number of frontline warships, submarines and maritime reconnaissance aircraft.
- The major highlight of the four-day exercise is participation of Indian Navy's Vikramaditya carrier battle group and the Nimitz strike group of the US Navy. The USS Nimitz is the world's largest warship.
- **Note:** The first phase of the Malabar exercise took place in the Bay of Bengal from November 3 to 6.



- The Malabar exercise started in 1992 as a bilateral drill between the Indian Navy and the US Navy in the Indian Ocean. Japan became a permanent member of the exercise in 2015. In the 2020 edition, Australian Navy has also participated.

QRSAM Missile System achieves major milestone

- Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) System has achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on a Banshee Pilotless target aircraft at medium range & medium altitude.
- DRDO launched the missile from ITR Chandipur off the Odisha Coast. The missile is propelled by a single stage solid propellant rocket motor and uses all indigenous subsystems. The Missile is canisterised for transportation and launch using a mobile launcher capable of carrying 6 canisterised missiles.
- The system is capable of detecting and tracking targets on the move and engaging target with short halts.

UNGA (United Nations General Assembly) adopts two India sponsored resolutions on Nuclear disarmament

- The first committee of the UNGA has adopted two India-sponsored resolutions on nuclear disarmament which aim to reduce risk of nuclear accidents and call for a prohibition on the use of nuclear weapons.

Two resolutions- Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons and Reducing Nuclear Danger under the Nuclear weapons cluster

- **Note:** The UNGA first committee deals with the issue of disarmament and works in close cooperation with the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, the other two bodies to deal with the nuclear issue.
- The resolution on Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons was backed by a majority of UN Members and was tabled by India since 1982.
- The resolution on Reducing Nuclear Danger which was tabled since 1998 puts focus on unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons and underscore the need for a review of nuclear doctrines.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh unveils Anti -Satellite (ASAT) Missile model in DRDO Bhawan

- 'Mission Shakti' was country's first ever ASAT missile test successfully conducted on 27th March 2019. This was a highly complex mission, conducted at extremely high speed with remarkable precision.
- The successful conduct of Mission Shakti made India the fourth nation in the world with the capability to defend its assets in outer space.
- **Note:** Earlier Shri Rajnath Singh and Shri Nitin Gadkari witnessed the demonstration of Fire Detection and Suppression System (FDSS) for Passenger Buses. Demonstrations were given on Water Mist Based FDSS for Passenger Compartment and Aerosol Based FDSS for engine fire.

Tri-service exercise 'Bull Strike' conducted at Nicobar Islands

- The armed forces conducted a joint tri-service exercise 'Bull Strike' at the Teresa Island in the Nicobar group of islands located close to the strategic Strait of Malacca.
- The exercise was conducted by the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) from November 3 to 5 involving the three Services components of ANC, elements of the Army's Parachute Brigade, Navy commandos MARCOS and Special Forces.

Two-Day Joint Coastal Security Exercise 'Sagar Kavach'

- A two-day joint coastal security exercise, "Sagar Kavach" was launched at Paradip Coast from 5 to 6 November.
- The exercise is being carried out by a joint effort of the state of Odisha and West Bengal governments. More than 10 such departments, including the Indian Navy, the Indian Coast Guard, the Odisha Police, the local fishermen, the forest department, and the port marine department, have joined the joint exercise.

The Bangladesh and US Navies launched the 'Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Bangladesh-2020'

- The exercise demonstrates US's continuing commitment to work with the Bangladesh military to address shared maritime security concerns in the region and strengthen partnership to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Malabar-20 Phase-1 Naval Exercise begins in Bay of Bengal

- The First Phase of the 24th edition of the Malabar Naval Exercise has begun in Visakhapatnam, Bay of Bengal on 03 November. Indian Navy, United States Navy, Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force and Royal Australian Navy are taking part in the Naval Exercise. It will continue till 6th of this month.
- **Note:**
 - Malabar series of maritime exercises commenced in 1992 as a bilateral Indian Navy-United States Navy exercise. Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force joined Malabar in 2015 and the 2020 edition will now witness participation of the Royal Australian Navy in this joint maritime exercise.
 - **Malabar-20 Phase-2** is scheduled to be conducted in the Arabian Sea in mid-November.

Indian Coast Guard ship C-452 to be commissioned

- Rajan Bargotra, Additional Director General (Western Seaboard), will commission Indian Coast Guard's ship C-452 in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra.
- The ship was indigenously designed and built by Larsen & Toubro, Surat.
- Earlier in May, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had commissioned Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Sachet and two interceptor boats (IBs) C-450 and C-451 in Goa. The ICGS Sachet has been designed and built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) and is fitted with state-of-the-art navigation and communication equipment.

Indian Army develops messaging application 'Secure Application for Internet (SAI)'

- Indian Army has developed a simple messaging application named the Secure Application for Internet (SAI). The application supports end to end secure voice, text and video calling



services for Android platforms over the internet. The model is similar to applications like Telegram, Whatsapp, SAMVAD and GIMS and utilises end to end encryption messaging protocol.

- **Note:** The indigenous messaging application has been vetted by CERT-in empanelled auditor and Army Cyber Group and the process for filing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) hosting the infrastructure on NIC and working on iOS platform for the app is currently in progress.

India test-fires air launched version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

- The Indian Air Force successfully test-fired an air launched version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from a Sukhoi fighter aircraft in the Bay of Bengal.
- **Note:** The missile hit a sinking ship with deadly accuracy and the test-firing produced desired results.
- The BrahMos missile provides the Indian Air Force a much desired capability to strike from large stand-off ranges on any target at sea or on land with pinpoint accuracy by day or night and in all weather conditions.

Indian Navy successfully test fires anti-ship missile as part of military drill in Bay of Bengal

- The Indian Navy successfully test fired its anti-ship missile (AshM) in the Bay of Bengal from its Guided Missile Corvette INS Kora and hit the target at max range with precise accuracy.

Enhanced version of PINAKA rocket system successfully flight tested

- Enhanced PINAKA rocket, developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has been successfully flight tested from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- Development of Enhanced Pinaka system was taken up to achieve longer range performance compared to earlier design with reduced length.
- **Note:** A total of six rockets were launched in quick succession and the tests met complete mission objectives. Enhanced version of the Pinaka rocket would replace the existing Pinaka Mk-I rockets.

Science and Technology

India becomes 4th nation to get IMO nod for navigation satellite system

- India has become the fourth country in the world to have its independent regional navigation satellite system recognised by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) as a part of the World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS).
- The other three countries that have its navigation systems recognised by the IMO are the US, Russia and China.
- The **Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS)** was designed to provide accurate position information services to assist in the navigation of ships in Indian Ocean waters.
- IRNSS was a modern and more accurate navigation system and at any given time, there are at least 2,500 merchant vessels in Indian waters that will now be able to use the system.



- The IRNSS will be used to assist in the navigation of ships in ocean waters within the area of approximately 1,500 km from the Indian boundary.
- **Note:** The Maritime Safety Committee of IMO during its recent meeting held from 4 to 11 November 2020 has approved the recognition of the IRNSS as a component of the World-wide radio navigation system.

India's Artificial Intelligence supercomputer Param Siddhi has achieved 63rd rank among top 500 most powerful non-distributed computer systems in the world

- According to the Ministry of Science and Technology, the AI (Artificial Intelligence) system will strengthen application development of packages in areas such as advanced materials, computational chemistry and astrophysics.
- Several packages are being developed under the National Supercomputing Mission for drug design and preventive health care system, flood forecasting package for flood prone metro cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Patna and Guwahati. This will accelerate Research and Development in war against COVID-19 through faster simulations, medical imaging, genome sequencing and forecasting and will be a boon for Indian masses and for start-Ups and MSMEs in particular.

Indian astronomers collaborated with Nobel laureate, Andrea Ghez on Thirty Meter Telescope Project

- 2020 Physics Nobel Laureate Prof. Andrea Ghez had worked closely with Indian astronomers on the design of back-end instruments and possible science prospects of the Thirty Meter Telescope project being installed at Maunakea in Hawaii, which can revolutionized the understanding of the universe and the enigmas in it.
- The Thirty-meter telescope (TMT) project is an international partnership between CalTech, Universities of California, Canada, Japan, China, and India.

Virgin Hyperloop completes first passenger ride successfully

- In the Nevada desert, Virgin Hyperloop tested human travel in a hyperloop pod for the first time.
- The Richard Branson's Virgin Hyperloop has successfully trialed its first journey with two humans sitting in a pod across an airless tube at nearly a speed of 160 kilometers per hour.
- **Note:** The hyperloop is a high-tech way of transportation. This technology aims to make the transport faster than conventional methods but without being a burden on the environment.

AIM (Atal Innovation Mission) and Russia's SIRIUS (Scientific International Research In Unique Terrestrial Station) launch 'AIM-Sirius Innovation Programme 3.0'

- The first Indo-Russian bilateral youth innovation initiative, the AIM-Sirius programme seeks to develop technological solutions (both web- and mobile-based) for the two countries.
- Over a two-week programme, from 7-21 November 2020, 48 students and 16 educators and mentors will create 8 virtual products and mobile applications addressing global challenges across a range of areas such as culture, distance education, applied cognitive science, health and well-being, sports, fitness, and games training, chemistry, artificial intelligence, and digital financial assets in the wake of the covid-19 pandemic.



- **Note: Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** is a flagship initiative set up by the NITI Aayog to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the country, based on a detailed study and deliberations on innovation and entrepreneurial needs of India in the years ahead.

India's latest Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 launched successfully by ISRO

- India's workhorse rocket PSLV-C49 has successfully launched India's latest Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 and placed into its intended orbit.
- Nine satellites, including four each from the US and Luxembourg and one from Lithuania, have been launched in the Mission.
- The successful PSLV mission has resulted in increased capacity for the user agencies of the nation in viewing the surface of the earth seamlessly for agriculture, forestry and disaster management applications.
- **Note:** Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 will form part of a family of such payloads that will enhance the capacity of the nation to view the earth from above in a seamless fashion irrespective of the weather or atmospheric conditions.

IISc, IOCL sign MoU for hydrogen-generation technology

- The Bengaluru based Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Research and Development Centre of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) have signed an MoU to develop and demonstrate biomass gasification based hydrogen generation technology for producing fuel cell-grade hydrogen at an affordable price.
- The technology is crucial for the fuel cell operated buses being conceived by Indian Oil towards ushering in the country's hydrogen economy.

Dynamatic Technologies Ltd. and CSIR-CSIO sign MoU for joint development of futuristic solutions

- Bengaluru-headquartered Dynamatic Technologies Ltd and Central Scientific Instruments Organisation (CSIR-CSIO) have signed a MoU for jointly designing, developing and manufacturing futuristic solutions for the defence and aerospace, healthcare and agriculture industry.
- The MoU was inked to develop collaborative activities in the research areas of Multi-spectral surveillance payloads of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), spraying technologies including electrostatic techniques for agricultural purposes using UAS, Instrumentation for ventilators and for homeland security applications.

DST (Department of Science and Technology) launches schemes for women scientists, researchers in science and engineering

- Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan launched the SERB – POWER schemes that aim to encourage women researchers to undertake R&D activities in frontier areas of science and engineering.
- The schemes will promote women researchers in regular service in academic and research institutions to take up R&D at the highest level through two categories of research support: SERB – POWER Fellowship and SERB – POWER Research Grants.
- **Note:** The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) is a body under the Department of Science and Technology.



- Globally, just 30 per cent of the world's researchers are women while 18.6 per cent of India's full-time R&D personnel are women.

IBM, Indian Oil Corporation collaborate for digital services

- IBM (International Business Machines Corporation) has collaborated with Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) to transform the latter's customer experience using digital tools.
- The Indian Oil One mobile app and portal are part of Indian Oil's Project ePIC, an integrated platform for Customer Relationship Management and Distribution Management System.
- This platform ensures real-time updates to inventory, orders, and invoices, thereby reducing the time to order fulfillment.
- 'Project ePIC' (Electronic Platform for Indian Oil customers) is the most prominent digital transformation project managed by IBM globally, in terms of its scale, in the chemicals and petroleum industry.

Environment and Ecology

International Crops Research Institute permitted to use drones for agricultural research activities

- Civil Aviation Ministry and Directorate General of Civil Aviation have granted conditional permission to the International Crops Research Institute for the deployment of drones for agricultural research activities.
- **Note:** Drones are poised to play a big role in the agriculture sector especially in areas like precision agriculture, locust control and improvement in crop yield. The government is encouraging young entrepreneurs and researchers to look at low-cost drone solutions for more than 6.6 lakh villages in the country.

Lonar Lake in Buldana district of Maharashtra and Sur Sarovar, also known as Keetham lake, in Agra, Uttar Pradesh declared as a wetland area under 'Ramsar Convention'

- India has 41 wetlands, the highest in South Asia, with two more added to the list of recognised sites of international importance under the treaty of Ramsar Convention.
- **Note:** Recently, Kabartal in Bihar's Begusarai district was recognised as a wetland of international importance, the first such wetland in the State, under the Ramsar Convention.
- The Asan Conservation Reserve in Dehradun, the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be recognised by Ramsar convention, was added to the list in October this year.
- **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.

US (United States) formally exited the Paris Climate Agreement

- The US is the only country to withdraw from the global pact.
- The US is the second leading producer of all carbon dioxide emissions globally, behind China.
- **The Paris Agreement** is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, dealing with greenhouse-gas-emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance.
 - **Signatories:** 195



- **Signed:** 22 April 2015
- **Effective:** 4 November 2016
- **Location:** Paris, France

NCAER Report on “Estimating the economic benefits of Investment in Monsoon Mission and High Performance Computing Facilities”

- The report was released by the Union Minister of Science and Technology, Health and Family Welfare and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan.
- **Main highlights of the report:**
 - The NCAER report refers to economic benefits as direct monetary gains to crop farmers, livestock rearers, and fishermen in the country. According to the report, India’s investment of nearly 1,000 Crores in the National Monsoon Mission and High-Performance Computing (HPC) facilities would provide benefits worth rupees 50 thousand Crores to nearly 1.07 Crore below poverty line (BPL) agricultural households and 53 Lakh BPL fisher-folk households in the country.
 - **Note: National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)** is an independent, not for profit, economic policy research and think tank based in New Delhi.

Super Typhoon Goni

- Super Typhoon Goni, the world's most powerful storm in four years, crashed through the Philippines, smashing buildings, toppling trees, and causing floods and mudslides.
- **Note:** A **typhoon** is a mature tropical cyclone that develops between 180° and 100°E in the Northern Hemisphere. This region is referred to as the Northwestern Pacific Basin, and is the most active tropical cyclone basin on Earth, accounting for almost one-third of the world's annual tropical cyclones.

Important Days

Department of Fisheries celebrated ‘World Fisheries Day’ on 21st November

- The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India celebrated the ‘World Fisheries Day’.
- World Fisheries Day started in 1997 where “World Forum of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers” met at New Delhi leading to formation of “World Fisheries Forum” with representatives from 18 countries and signed a declaration advocating for a global mandate of sustainable fishing practices and policies.
- India is the leading fish producing country and second major producer of fish through aquaculture in the world.
- Centrally Sponsored Scheme “**Blue Revolution**” was launched in December, 2015.
- This year, on 10th September, 2020, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the “**Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana**” (**PMMSY**) at an estimated investment of Rs. 20,050 crores for a period of five years, i.e., from 2020-21 to 2024-25. It aims to achieve fish production to 22 million metric tonnes (MMT) by 2024-25.
- **Note:** During the event, for the first time in the Fisheries Sector the Government of India will **award best performing States** for 2019-20 namely, Odisha (amongst Marine states), Uttar Pradesh (amongst Inland states) and Assam (amongst Hilly and NE states).



Harsh Vardhan launches the National Newborn Week 2020

- Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare chaired an event to mark the National Newborn Week 2020, observed from 15th through 21st November to reinforce the importance of newborn health as a key priority area of the health sector and to reiterate the commitment at the highest level.
- The theme of National Newborn Week this year is '**Quality, Equity, Dignity for every newborn at every health facility and everywhere**'.
- **Note:** In 2014, India became the first country to launch the India Newborn Action Plan (INAP), in alignment with the Global Every Newborn Action Plan towards eliminating preventable deaths of new-borns and stillbirths.

November 21, World Television Day

- The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 November as World Television Day in December 1996.
- On 21 and 22 November 1996, the first World Television Forum was held by the United Nations to discuss the increasing importance of television in today's changing world and its ability to enhance their mutual cooperation.
- **Television History in India:** Television programming has created a huge impact on Indian culture ever since its introduction in 1959. Television was launched in India with the assistance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation. During the initial thirty years, government-owned Doordarshan stayed the only national channel.

November 19, World Toilet Day

- This year the theme remarks the importance of "Sustainable sanitation and climate change".
- World Toilet Day celebrates toilets and raises awareness of the 4.2 billion people living without access to safely managed sanitation. It is about taking action to tackle the global sanitation crisis and achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.
- **Note:** The resolution declaring the Day titled "Sanitation for All" was adopted on 24 July, 2013, and urged UN Member States and relevant stakeholders to encourage behavioural change and the implementation of policies to increase access to sanitation among the poor, along with a call to end the practice of open-air defecation, which it deemed extremely harmful to public health.
- **In India,** the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) in the Ministry of Jal Shakti is celebrating 'World Toilet Day' under 'Swachh Bharat Mission - Grameen (SBMG)'.

Two National Premier Ayurveda Institutions to the nation on the 5th Ayurveda Day

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated two national premier Ayurveda institutions to the nation to mark the celebration of the **5th Ayurveda Day**.
- First is the **Institute of Teaching & Research in Ayurveda (ITRA), Jamnagar** as an Institution of National Importance (INI), and second is the **National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Jaipur**.
- **Note:** Director General of World Health Organisation (WHO), Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus announced the setting up of the Global Centre of Traditional Medicine in India.



- The Ministry of AYUSH has been observing 'Ayurveda Day' every year on the occasion of Dhanwantari Jayanti (Dhanteras) since 2016.

November 14, World Diabetes Day

- The theme for World Diabetes Day 2020 is **The Nurse and Diabetes**.
- **World Diabetes Day (WDD)** was created in 1991 by IDF (International Diabetes Federation) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in response to growing concerns about the escalating health threat posed by diabetes.
- World Diabetes Day became an official United Nations Day in 2006. It is marked every year on **14 November**, the birthday of Sir Frederick Banting, who co-discovered insulin along with Charles Best in 1922.
- **Note:** On World Diabetes Day, WHO announces the **Global Diabetes Compact**, a comprehensive and inclusive approach to support countries in implementing effective programmes for the prevention and management of diabetes.

National Education Day

- The birth anniversary of India's first Education Minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is celebrated across the nation as National Education Day on November 11.
- Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin served as the first education minister of independent India from 1947 to 1958. He was awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1992.
- **Note:** The Ministry of Human Resource Development (now Ministry of Education) on September 11, 2008, announced, "The ministry has decided to commemorate the birthday of this great son of India by recalling his contribution to the cause of education in India."

November 10, World Science Day for Peace and Development

- The theme of this day is "Science for and with Society in dealing with COVID-19".
- World Science Day for Peace and Development is an international day that highlights the important role that science has in society and is celebrated each year on November 10.
- World Science Day was proclaimed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2001 and celebrated for the first time in 2002.

November 7, National Cancer Awareness Day 2020

- In 2014, Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan had first announced the National Cancer Awareness Day with an aim to create awareness on early detection and educate people against living a cancer-causing lifestyle.
- According to the WHO, in India every year since 2018, over 1 million cases of cancer have been brought to light.
- **Note:** World Cancer Day is an international day marked on February 4.

November 5: World Tsunami Awareness Day 2020

- A report on the United Nations official website reveals that in the past 100 years, 58 Tsunamis have claimed more than 260,000 lives, but the highest number of deaths during a Tsunami occurred in the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004.
- In December 2015, the UN General Assembly designated 5 November as World Tsunami Awareness Day.



- In 2020, World Tsunami Awareness Day will promote target (E) of the "Sendai Seven Campaign," which encourages countries and communities to have national and local disaster risk reduction strategies in place to save more lives against disasters by the end of 2020.
- **Sendai Framework** for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan in March 2015.

Three-day 'Ganga Utsav 2020'

- The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) organises three-day Ganga Utsav 2020 from Nov 02 to 04.
- Ganga Utsav 2020 is a cultural and educational festival to celebrate the glory of holy river Ganga.
- **Note:** On 4th November 2008, Ganga was declared "**National River**".
- Since 2016, every year on 4 November the National Mission for Clean Ganga has been celebrating Ganga Utsav, with an objective to promote stakeholder engagement and ensure public participation under the aegis of Ganga Knowledge Center.

October 31, National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas)

- This year National Unity Day is celebrated to commemorate 145th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhai Patel.
- It was introduced by the Government of India in 2014.

Summits & Conference

Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS) 2020

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated Bengaluru Tech Summit (19 – 21, November 2020).
- The summit is organised by the Government of Karnataka along with Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society, Karnataka government's Vision Group on Information Technology, Biotechnology & StartUp, Software Technology Parks of India and MM Activ Sci-Tech Communications.
- The theme of the summit is "Next is Now".
- Note: The Bangalore IT.com established in 1998 and Bangalore BIO in 2000 are the two events of the Government of Karnataka that has positioned Bengaluru as one of the most dynamic cities in the world. In the year 2017, these two leading events were brought together under one umbrella event Bengaluru Tech Summit at iconic Bangalore Palace. Since then BTS has become the place of convergence for the leading cross-sector tech companies to startups, technocrats to young innovators, policymakers to investors, researchers to academia, facilitating dialogue and collaborations.

Ranking & Index

Stanford University's list of top 2 percent scientists

- In the list of 1,59,683 persons, 1,492 Indians have found a place, with a majority of them being from IITs and IISc and other top institutes.



- This database includes the top 2 percent of scientists of the world from different fields on the basis of standardized citation indications.
- The results were published in PloS Biology recently and they have been classified into 22 scientific fields and 176 sub-fields in the report.
- There are 16 Scientists from Indian who are ranked 30 or higher in the world.
- In the field of Nuclear & Particle Physics, there are two Indians: Ashoke Sen (ranked 13) and T. Padmanabhan (ranked 24).
- There are two Indian in the field of Inorganic and Nuclear Chemistry: Prof. Gautam Desiraju (ranked 2) and CNR Rao (ranked 3).
- Biotechnology has two names: Dr. Ashok Pandey (ranked 8) and Dr. S Venkata Mohan (rank 29).
- The remaining 10 Indians are distributed as one each in different subjects, defined by a somewhat subjective classification
- .

Obituaries

Argentinian football legend Diego Maradona dies at the age of 60.

- He was best known for leading Argentina to the 1986 World Cup title.
- He was popularly known as 'Hand of God'.

Congress veteran Ahmad Patel dies at the age of 71.

- Patel was currently a member of the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat.
- He was an eight-time parliamentarian -- five times in the Rajya Sabha, three times in the Lok Sabha.

Former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi dies at 86

- Tarun Gogoi was an Indian politician who served as the Chief Minister of Assam from 2001 to 2016. He completed 15 consecutive years as Chief Minister of Assam on 18 May 2016 as the longest-serving Chief Minister of the state.
- Gogoi has served six terms as a Member of Parliament (MP) from the Lok Sabha.

Mridula Sinha, first woman Governor of Goa, passes away at 77

- Former Governor of Goa and senior BJP leader Mridula Sinha passed away. A renowned Hindi writer, Sinha was also the former president of BJP Mahila Morcha and also the former chairperson of Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Master Bhanwarlal Meghwal, dies at the age of 72

- Rajasthan Cabinet Minister Bhanwarlal Meghwal, dies at the age of 72 due to cardiac arrest.
- He was the minister for social justice and empowerment.
- He was elected to the Rajasthan assembly from Sujangarh in Churu district.

Actor Soumitra Chatterjee passed away at 85



- Legendary actor Soumitra Chatterjee, star of some of Bengali cinema's finest films, has died.
- He was a recipient of the Padma Bhushan, Dadasaheb Phalke Award, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, besides winning three National Film Awards and many more.

Veteran author & Gujarati columnist Father Carlos Gonzalez Valles SJ passed away

- A Jesuit priest born in Spain, he was a Mathematics teacher in Gujarat. He wrote extensively in Gujarati, English and Spanish. He translated many mathematical concepts into Gujarati and coined terms for them. He was popularly known as Father Valles.

Legendary violinist T. N. Krishnan passes away

- He was 92. The eminent violinist is a recipient of several coveted awards and titles including Padma Vibushan.

Tamil Nadu Agriculture Minister R. Doraikannu passed away

- Doraikannu worked with dedication for the upliftment of the downtrodden and welfare of farmers.

Sean Connery dies at 90

- Sean Connery, the Scottish actor best known for his portrayal of James Bond. He won numerous awards during his decades-spanning career, including an Oscar, three Golden Globes and two Bafta awards.

Former Bihar Chief Minister Satish Prasad Singh passed away

- Singh had served as the state chief minister for five days, between January 28 and February 1, 1968.

Books and Authors

A Promised Land, a memoir by Barack Obama

- It was published on November 17, 2020. It is the first of a planned two volumes that Obama has written following his tenure as President of the United States from 2009 to 2017.
- **Note:** Barack Obama was the 44th president of the United States, elected in November 2008 and holding office for two terms. He is the recipient of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize.

Maharashtra Governor releases former minister Rajendra Darda's book

- Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari released the book "**Majhi Bhint**" authored by former Maharashtra Minister of Education Rajendra Darda at Raj Bhavan.
- The book is a compilation of Darda's selected Facebook posts pertaining to a range of issues written over the last four years.

A New Book on Gulzar "Boskiyana"

- This book has been published by Radhakrishna Prakashan.



- It portrays the life of Gulzar through his films, poetry, philosophies, lifestyle, likes and dislikes. The book is edited and compiled by Yashwant Vyas. 'Boskiyana' is the name of the house of Gulzar in Mumbai.

Sonu Sood's Autobiography titled 'I Am No Messiah' to release in December

- Titled *I Am No Messiah*, it will be published by Penguin Random House and written with journalist and author Meena K Iyer.
- **About the Book:** Sonu Sood will narrate stories of the miseries and atrocities that were faced by the people during the lockdown which in return made him more dedicated to helping them. In the autobiography, the actor will also share his experience of how his perception towards life changed after he encountered people amid the lockdown.

Anupam Kher's new book "Your Best Day Is Today!"

- Kher shared his experiences during the coronavirus-induced countrywide lockdown in this book.
- **Note:** Kher's previous two books are "Lessons Life Taught Me Unknowingly" published last year and another is "The Best Thing About You is You!", which released in 2011.

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launched the book titled "Thavaasmi: Life and Skills through the lens of Ramayana"

- The author of this book is Shri Rallabandi Srirama Chakradhar and co-author is Smt. Amara Sarada Deepthi. The book is in four volumes.
- It presents the story of Ramayana as a dialogue between a father and daughter with a number of exercises making it an interesting learning experience.

A book titled 'Pandemonium: The Great Indian Banking Tragedy' by Tamal Bandyopadhyay

- It will be released on November 09, 2020. This book reveals the inside story behind a spate of banking scandals and provides an understanding of the challenges and economic potential of India.

Sports

New Zealand's Greg Barclay Elected ICC Chairman

- New Zealand's Greg Barclay was elected as the new independent chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC). He succeeds India's Shashank Manohar who stepped down in July 2020 and will replace Imran Khwaja, who is currently the interim chairman.
- Note: Barclay, an Auckland-based commercial lawyer, has been a director of New Zealand Cricket (NZC) since 2012 and is currently NZC's representative on the board of the International Cricket Council.

ATP Finals 2020

(Men's tennis tournament- London, Great Britain, November 15 - November 22)

- **Singles**

Winner: Daniil Medvedev

Runner-Up: Dominic Thiem

- **Doubles**

Winner: Wesley Koolhof, Nikola Pietrangeli

Runner-Up: Jurgen Melzer, Edouard Roger-Vasselin

Djokovic honoured with 2020 year-end No. 1 Trophy

- Novak Djokovic was honoured at the Nitto ATP Finals, receiving his ATP Tour No. 1 trophy from ATP Chairman Andrea Gaudenzi for finishing as the year-end No. 1 in the FedEx ATP Rankings for sixth time.
- The Serbian finishes as World No. 1 for the sixth time in the past 10 years (also in 2011-12, 14-15 and 18).
- Before this, only American Pete Sampras, who ended six straight years at the pinnacle of men's professional tennis between 1993 and 1998.

F1 Turkish Grand Prix 2020

- British **Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)** won the Turkish Grand Prix 2020 at Istanbul Park.
- Sergio Perez (**Racing Point**) got second position and Sebastian Vettel (Ferrari) got third position.

2020 Masters Tournament

- **Dustin Johnson** won the 84th Masters Tournament with a record-shattering performance at the Masters golf tournament Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia.
- He was ahead of Australia's Cameron Smith and Sungjae Im of South Korea.

Dishang 2020 ITTF (International Table Tennis Federation) Women's World Cup

- World No.1 Table Tennis player Chen Meng defeated Chinese compatriot Sun Yingsha to bag her first ITTF Women's World Cup title in Weihai, China.

13th IPL (Indian Premier League) 2020

- **Winner:** Mumbai Indians
- **Runner Up:** Delhi Capitals
- **Orange Cap:** KL Rahul (Kings XI Punjab)
- **Purple Cap:** Kagiso Rabada (Delhi Capitals)
- **Player of the series:** Jofra Archer (Rajasthan Royals)
- **Venue:** United Arab Emirates
- **Number of teams-** 8 (Chennai Super Kings, Delhi Capitals, Kings XI Punjab, Kolkata Knight Riders, Mumbai Indians, Rajasthan Royals, Royal Challengers Bangalore, Sunrisers Hyderabad)
- This is the fifth IPL title for the Mumbai Indians

2020 Women's T20 Challenge

- **Winner:** Trailblazers
- **Runner Up:** Supernovas
- **Player of the series:** Radha Yadav (Supernovas)
- **Venue:** Sharjah Cricket Stadium in the United Arab Emirates.
- **Number of teams-** 3 (Supernovas, Trailblazers and Velocity)

Rolex Paris Masters: Paris, France, November 02 – 08, 2020

Singles

- Winner: Daniil Medvedev
- Runner-Up: Alexander Zverev

Doubles

- Winner: Felix Auger-Aliassime, Hubert Hurkacz
- Runner-Up: Mate Pavic, Bruno Soares

Gyanendo Ningomban elected as Hockey India president

- Manipur's Gyanendo Ningombam was elected unopposed as the President of Hockey India while former President Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad is back in the Hockey India Executive Board after being Elected Unopposed for the Senior Vice President post.
- Gyanendo becomes the first President from the north east India to spearhead Hockey India. He was Senior Vice President of Hockey India, Senior Vice President of Manipur Hockey, and also Chief Executive Officer of Manipur Hockey.
- **About Hockey India:** It is recognized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. of India as the sole body responsible towards promoting Hockey in India.
- **Founded:** 20 May 2009
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Affiliation:** International Hockey Federation (FIH)

Rafael Nadal becomes fourth man to win 1,000 ATP Tour matches

- Spaniard Rafael Nadal defeated his countryman Feliciano Lopez in the first round of the Rolex Paris Masters to achieve what was his 1000th victory.
- Note: Nadal joins Jimmy Connors (1,274), Roger Federer (1,242) and Ivan Lendl (1,068) in the elusive 1,000 wins club.

Astana Open-2020, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan

Singles

- Winner: John Millman
- Runner-Up: Adrian Mannarino

Doubles

- Winner: Sander Gille, Joran Vliegen
- Runner-Up: Max Purcell, Luke Saville

Jio as title sponsor of Women's T20 Challenge 2020



- Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced Reliance Jio as the title sponsor of the Women's T20 Challenge 2020. This is the first time a sponsor is partnering with the BCCI exclusively for the women's counterpart to the IPL.
- **Note:** The women's T20 challenge is scheduled to run from November 4-9 in Sharjah.
 - **BCCI president:** Sourav Ganguly
 - **Reliance Foundation's Founder and Chairperson:** Nita Ambani

Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2020

- British **Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)** won the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2020 Formula1 in Imola, Italy.
- **Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes)** got second position and **Daniel Ricciardo (Renault)** got third position.

Alexis Vastine International Boxing Tournament

- Amit Panghal (52kg), also an Asian Games champion besides being Commonwealth Games silver-medallist, won a gold medal.
- Sanjeet (91kg), a former India Open gold-medallist, won a gold medal.
- Ashish Kumar (75 Kg), Asian silver-winner, won a gold medal.
- Kavinder Singh Bisht (57kg), Asian silver-medallist, won a silver medal.

Ritu Phogat wins third straight MMA title at ONE Championship Inside the Matrix Event

- Phogat defeated Cambodia's Nou Srey Pov with a technical knockout.

Adille Sumariwalla elected as Athletics Federation of India (AFI) president

- Adille Sumariwalla was elected as the AFI president for the third time.
- Former athlete Anju Bobby George was elected as the senior vice-president.



SaarLorLux Open 2020 (Germany)

List of winners

Men's singles	Women's singles	Men's doubles	Women's doubles	Mixed doubles
Winner- Toma Junior Popov	Winner- Kirsty Gilmour	Winner- Jeppe Bay, Lasse Moelhede	Winner- Gabriela Stoeva, Stefani Stoeva	Winner- Mathias Christiansen, Alexandra Boje
Runner-up- Mark Caljouw	Runner-up- Yvonne Li	Runner-up- Daniel Lundgaard, Mathias Thyri	Runner-up- Amalie Magelund, Freja Ravn	Runner-up- Mark Lamsfuss, Isabel Hertrich



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