

**1. Madhu Sharma appointed as Joint Secretary of Amateur Baseball Federation of India.**

- Treasurer of Baseball Association of Bihar Ms. Madhu Sharma appointed as Joint Secretary of Amateur Baseball Federation of India.

**2. Retd. IAS Utpal Kumar Singh appointed as General Secretary of Lok Sabha**

- He is the 1986 batch IAS officer of Uttarakhand cadre and will replace Snehlata Srivastava.
- **Note:** The post of Lok Sabha General Secretary is equivalent to the rank of Cabinet Minister.

**3. India hosts SCO Council of Heads of Government (SCO CHG) meet**

- Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India chaired the 19<sup>th</sup> SCO Council of Heads of Government on 30 November.
- This is the first time that a Summit-level Meeting was held under India's Chairmanship, since India gained full-membership of the organization in 2017.
- India considers the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as an important regional organization to promote cooperation in the areas of peace, security, trade, economy and culture. India is committed to deepening its cooperation with SCO by playing a proactive, positive and constructive role in the organization.
- **Note:** Next SCO Council of Heads of Government in 2021 will be chaired by Kazakhstan.
- **Facts about SCO:** Shanghai Cooperation Organisation or Shanghai Pact, is a Eurasian political, economic and security alliance.  
**Formed:** 15 June 2001  
**Members:** China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India & Pakistan.  
**Headquarter:** Beijing, China

**4. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India launches the first ever SCO online exhibition on shared Buddhist Heritage, during the 19th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government**

- This SCO online International exhibition, first ever of its kind, is developed and curated by National Museum, New Delhi, in active collaboration with SCO member countries.
- The exhibition deploys state of the art technologies like 3D scanning, WebGL platform, virtual space utilization, innovative curation and narration methodology etc.
- **Note:** The exhibition can be accessed at <https://nmvirtual.in/> for worldwide viewing.

**5. Capital infusion into NIIF Infrastructure Debt Financing Platform**

- The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the proposal for equity infusion by Government of Rs 6000 crores in **NIIF Debt Platform** sponsored by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF), comprising of **Aseem Infrastructure Finance Limited (AIFL)** and **NIIF Infrastructure Finance Limited (NIIF-IFL)**.
- This was one of the twelve key measures made by the Union Minister for Finance, as part of Government of India's stimulus to the economy, under AatmaNirbhar Bharat.
- Rs 6,000 crores will be invested as equity in the NIIF Debt Platform over two financial years, i.e., 2020-21 and 2021-22.F
- NIIF Infrastructure Debt Financing Platform is expected to contribute nearly Rs 1 lakh crores in debt to the infrastructure sector over the next 5 years.



- This will act as a catalyst in attracting more investments into the infrastructure sector as envisaged in the National Infrastructure Pipeline.
- As per the National Infrastructure Platform (NIP), investment in infrastructure sector is targeted at Rs.111 lakh crore over the next 5 years across various sub-sectors, creating substantial need for debt financing. This would require at least Rs 60 to 70 lakh crores in debt financing.
- **Note:** This current environment requires well-capitalized specialized infrastructure focused financial institutions, such as the ones being developed by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF), which can focus on lending across the project life cycle with a strong capital base and expertise driven approach.

#### 6. Brain Fingerprinting for interrogation

- The brain fingerprinting method is to be conducted on all the four accused in the Hathras Rape Case. A team of forensic experts are to work along with the CBI team to prepare probe short questions for the test.
- **Note: The Brain Fingerprinting or Brain Electrical Oscillation Signature** is a neuro psychological method used to interrogate an accused in the crime by studying his or her brain responses. The test is carried out through a process called Electroencephalogram that studies the electrical behaviour of the human brain.
- The consent of the accused is first taken in order to perform the test. The accused then has to wear a head cap with dozens of electrodes attached to it and is then showed with visuals or audio clips that are related to the case in order to check if there are triggering neurons in their brains generating brain waves.
- However, the test can only be used as an aid to question the accused in the Hathras case. The accused cannot be convicted based on the test. The conviction has to be done based on interrogation and other traditional legal practices of CBI.

#### 7. 'Blue tide' spotted at Juhu beach

- **The blue tide phenomenon was observed in several stretches of Maharashtra coast- such as Juhu Beach.** According to Coastal Conservation Foundation director Shaunak Modi, the 'blue tide' was spotted at Juhu Koliwada.
- The 'blue tide' producing a fluorescent blue hue is a beautiful sight to behold. This phenomenon is called bioluminescence.
- **Note:** Bioluminescence has been observed across the coastline of many beaches in the world such as Indonesia, the USA, the Maldives, Vietnam, Australia and many other countries.
- This is a recurring phenomenon which is caused by bioluminescent plankton called *Noctiluca scintillans*, commonly known as sea sparkle. While smaller blooms may be harmless, slow-moving larger blooms may cause severe hypoxic conditions that result in fish die-offs in an area.
- **Bioluminescence** is the production and emission of light by a living organism. According to the National Ocean Service, bioluminescence in the ocean is not as rare as you might think. "In fact, most types of animals, from bacteria to sharks, include some bioluminescent members."

#### 8. Banned catfish Thai Mangur

- A shocking incident came to light in Maharashtra, where almost thousands of tons of banned catfish, Thai Mangur are illegally being bred in over 125 artificial ponds in rural Thane.
- Thai Mangur has been banned by the National Green Tribunal in 2000 as they destroyed the local ecosystem and were considered harmful for human consumption too.



- **About Thai Mangur:** Ranging from Rs 100-150 per kg, Thai Mangur is easy and cheap to rear. The carnivorous species was introduced to India in the 1990s and it is originally from Africa and the Middle East.
- Artificial tanks are constructed in large farmlands by the local cultivators. It aggressively devours all organisms in any natural pond, thereby damaging the local ecosystem and biodiversity.
- The banned catfish species is a low-maintenance investment for cultivators as it can feed on anything and can even survive in hostile conditions, even staying alive outside water for a long time.

#### 9. Hornbill Festival

- Nagaland hosts the first virtual celebration of Hornbill Festival 2020 from 1 to 5 December.
- It showcases the rich cultural heritage and tradition of the Nagas in one platform at Naga Heritage Village Kisama under Kohima District.
- However, due to Coronavirus pandemic, the state is holding its 21st edition of Hornbill festival 2020 completely in virtual mode.
- **Note:** The Hornbill Festival is a celebration held every year from 1 to 10 December, in Nagaland, Northeast India. It is also called the 'Festival of Festivals'. The *Festival is named after the Indian Hornbill, the large and colourful forest bird which is displayed in folklore in most of the state's tribes.*
- The start of the festival marks the Nagaland statehood day i.e. December 01.

#### 10. F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2020

- British **Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)** won the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2020 held at Bahrain International Circuit.
- **Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing)** got second position and **Alexander Albon (Red Bull Racing)** got third position.

#### 11. Bata promotes India CEO Kataria as global head.

- Recently, Bata Shoe Organization named Sandeep Kataria as its first Indian CEO.
- He will replace Alexis Nasard.

