

Important News: State

Central Zoo Authority recognition to zoo in UP and Bihar

- CZA has given recognition to shaheed Ashfaq ullah khan prani udyan which is located in Gorakhpur and Rajgir Zoo Safari in Nalanda.
- It is the second largest zoo in UP after the Kanpur zoological park.

Gwalior and Orchha included in UNESCO's world heritage cities list

- The historical fort cities of Gwalior and Orchha in Madhya Pradesh have been included in the list of UNESCO's world heritage cities under its urban landscape city programme.
- Note: Gwalior was established in the 9th century and ruled by Gurjar Pratihara Rajvansh, Tomar, Baghel Kachvaho and Scindias. Gwalior is known for its palaces and temples.
- Orchha is popular for its temples and palaces and was the capital of the Bundela kingdom in the 16th century.

Uttarakhand gets its first Eco-Bridge for small animals

- In an attempt to save reptiles and small animals from vehicular accidents while crossing the road, the Ramnagar Forest Division of Uttarakhand has constructed the state's first eco-bridge across Kaladhungi-Nainital highway.
- It is 90-feet-long and 5-feet-wide. No cement or iron was used in the construction of the bridge. It's made of eco-friendly items like bamboo, rope, and grass.
- Note: Eco-Bridges or Eco-Ducts are constructed to enhance the wildlife connectivity that is usually disrupted due to logging or highways.

Uttar Pradesh's Dandupur railway station to be renamed as 'Maa Barahi Devi Dham'

- The Dandupur railway station situated between Pratapgarh and Badshahpur on Lucknow-Varanasi rail section will now be named Maa Barahi Devi Dham

Important News: India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivers keynote address at IIT-2020 Global Summit on 04 December

- IIT2020 focuses on the global economy, technology innovation, health infrastructure, habitat conservation, food innovation and universal education.

- Note: The conference is facilitated by PanIIT USA (PanIIT Inc.), an organization of IIT alumni in the United States, so as to carry out its mission of branding IITs and keeping IITians connected. Since 2003 this conference has been held every couple of years and is run by an all-volunteer team of IITians, celebrating successes in corporate leadership.

International Sand Art Festival

- The 9th edition of the International Sand Art Festival has begun at the Chandrabhaga Beach of Konark in Odisha's Puri district.
- Sudarsan Pattnaik, world-renowned sand artist and Padmashree Awardee, has been appointed as Chief Curator of the festival.
- This year, the main themes of the sculptures are 'Environment' and 'Covid-19'.
- **Note:** Every year, the festival is celebrated with great fervour in the **first week of December as part of the Konark Dance Festival** that is organised during the same time.

10th National Science Film Festival of India (NSFFI) 2020

- It has been jointly organized by VigyanPrasar, an autonomous agency under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and the Tripura State Council of Science and Technology from 24 to 27 November 2020.
- A total of 115 shortlisted films selected by the ten-member jury have been screened during the festival. These include films in Hindi, English, Urdu, Malayalam, Kashmiri, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi and Tamil.
- **Note:** NSFFI is India's first of its kind of film festival where documentaries and short films on popular science, technology, health & environmental issues have been screened.

India Mobile Congress 2020

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2020 on 08 December 2020. IMC 2020 was organised by the Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, and the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI). It is scheduled for 8th -10th December.
- The theme for IMC 2020 is "Inclusive Innovation - Smart, Secure, Sustainable".
- About IMC 2020: It aims to promote Digital Inclusivity, Sustainable development, entrepreneurship & innovation. It also aims to drive foreign and local investments, encourage R&D in the telecom and emerging technology sectors.
- IMC 2020 will see the participation from various Ministries, the telecom CEOs, global CEOs, and domain experts in 5G, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Data Analytics, Cloud and Edge computing, Blockchain, Cyber-security, Smart Cities and Automation.

9 states successfully complete implementation of 'One Nation One Ration Card' system

- The Ministry of Finance has informed that as many as 9 states have completed the reforms in Public Distribution System (PDS) and have successfully implemented the 'One Nation One Ration Card System'.
- These 9 states are Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, and Gujarat.
- Note: This was aimed to ensure that the beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and other welfare schemes, especially the migrant workers and their families, get ration from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) across the country.

Important News: World

India and the US sign MoU on Intellectual Property cooperation

- Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India signed the MoU with US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), Department of Commerce of the US.
- The MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) will facilitate exchange and dissemination of best practices, experiences and knowledge on IP among the public, and between and among the industry, universities, research and development organizations.
- Note: Recently India signed MoU with Denmark on Intellectual Property cooperation.

UN removes cannabis from 'most dangerous drug' category

- At its ongoing 63rd session, the 53-member CND (The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs) has chosen to affirm a World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendation from 2019 to remove cannabis from its 'most dangerous' category.
- Note: Currently in India, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, illegalises any mixture with or without any neutral material, of any of the two forms of cannabis-charas and ganja-or any drink prepared from it.

Mt Everest is now 86 cms taller

- China and Nepal jointly announced that the new height of Mt Everest, the world's highest peak, is 8,848.86 meters.
- The new height is 86 cms more than the previous measurement. According to the measurement done in 1954 by Survey of India, the height of Mount Everest is 8,848 metres.

Economy

FM Nirmala Sitharaman releases the ‘Smuggling in India Report 2019-20’

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the 63rd Founding Day Celebrations of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI).
- On the occasion, Mrs Sitharaman released the Smuggling in India Report 2019-20 which analyses organised smuggling trends on Gold and Foreign Currency, Narcotic Drugs, Security, Environment and Commercial Frauds.
- On the occasion, Bravery Awards were conferred upon Najimudheen T S of DRI Cochin Zonal Unit and Sumer Sen, an independent witness of a case booked by DRI, Jaipur.
- The DRI Utkrisht Seva Samman, 2020 was awarded to B. Sankaran, an officer of the Indian Revenue Service.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of AYUSH decides to set up an AYUSH Export Promotion Council (AEPC)

- This decision was taken recently in a joint review of AYUSH trade and Industry by Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Shri Shripad Naik, Minister of AYUSH.
- **Note:** The entire AYUSH sector will work together to achieve price and quality competitiveness to boost AYUSH exports.
- AYUSH will figure appropriately in the “Brand India” activities being presently undertaken.

Award and Honor

Global Teacher Prize 2020

- Ranjitsinh Disale, a government school (Zilla Parishad Primary School) teacher from Solapur, Maharashtra, won the Global Teacher Prize 2020 with prize money of 1 million dollar.
- It is an annual prize founded by the Varkey Foundation in partnership with UNESCO in 2014 to recognise an exceptional teacher who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession.
- **Note:** Disale is best known for embedding QR codes in textbooks which was adopted by NCERT.

Police Station Award 2020

- Top 3 police stations:
 - 1st- Nongpok Sekmai in Manipur’s Thoubal district
 - 2nd- AWPS-Suramangalam in Tamil Nadu's Salem district
 - 3rd - Kharsang in Arunachal Pradesh's Changlang district

- **Note:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 sought the laying down of parameters for grading police stations on the basis of their performances and citizens' feedback to rank the top 10 among them annually.

Gitanjali Rao, Time's first-ever 'Kid of the Year'

- Selected from more than 5,000 nominees as Time Magazine's first-ever 'Kid of the Year', 15-year-old Indian American, Gitanjali Rao was chosen for her "astonishing work" and using technology to tackle issues from contaminated drinking water to opioid addiction and cyber bullying.
- **Note:** Last year, Rao was featured in Forbes' '30 Under 30' list for her innovations. In 2017, she won the Discovery Education 3M Young Scientist Challenge and was awarded USD 25,000 for creating a device called Tethys.

United Nations declares Invest India the winner of the Investment Promotion Award 2020

- The United Nations (UNCTAD-United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) has declared Invest India as a winner of the 2020 United Nations Investment Promotion Award.
- **Note:** UNCTAD is a central agency that monitors performance of Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) and identifies global best practices. Germany, South Korea and Singapore have been some of the past winners of the award.
- **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.

ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) wins the International King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award 2020

- This announcement was made on a virtual function by the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) on World Soil Day (5th December 2020).
- **Note:** ICAR is the organization responsible for the coordination, guidance and management of agricultural research and education in India as well as in the world.

Defense

Passage Exercise (PASSEX) between Russian Federation Navy and Indian Navy in Eastern Indian Ocean Region from 4 to 5 December

- The exercise involved participation of Russian Federation Navy guided missile cruiser Varyag, large anti-submarine ship *Admiral Panteleyev* and medium ocean tanker *Pechenga*. Indian Navy has been represented by indigenously constructed guided missile frigate *Shivalik* and anti-submarine corvette *Kadmatt* along with integral helicopters.

- **Note:** The two navies have built a robust relationship through regular exercises such as INDRA Navy conducted biennially, with the last edition held in the Northern Indian Ocean Region from 4 to 5 September 2020.

Akash missiles test fired successfully

- The Indian Air Force has successfully test fired the Akash Missiles at Suryalanka test firing range in Andhra Pradesh during the Combat Guided Weapons Firing 2020 exercise.
- This exercise was aimed at practising different scenarios during conflicts to shoot down enemy planes.
- **Note:** Designed and developed by the DRDO, Akash is one of the most successful, indigenously-made missiles inducted into the Indian Army and Air Force.

New Appointment

Radhakrishnan Nair appointed as chief coach of Indian athletics

- Athletics Federation of India (AFI) appointed Radhakrishnan Nair as its full-time chief coach, filling the post left vacant after the resignation of Bahadur Singh in July.
- **Note:** Nair, who is also a certified Technical Official and World Athletics Level-5 coach, has been instrumental in enhancing the coaches education system in India.
- He is the first Indian to have an International Coaching Enrichment Programme Certificate of the International Olympic Committee.

Uday Shankar named FICCI president for 2020-21

- Shankar will succeed Sangita Reddy.
- He is the first-ever media and entertainment executive in India to lead a national industry chamber such as FICCI (The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry).

World Health Organisation (WHO) has appointed Indian-origin Anil Soni as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the WHO Foundation

- WHO Director-General Adhanom Ghebreyesus described Soni as a proven innovator in global health who has spent two decades in service of communities affected by HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.
- **Note: WHO Foundation**, an independent grant-making agency headquartered in Geneva, was launched in May 2020 to work alongside the WHO and the global health community.

Science & Technology

DRDO's new laboratory named 'Defence Geo-Informatics Research Establishment'

- DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) has created a new laboratory named Defence Geo-Informatics Research Establishment by merging two existing labs.
- **First** is the Manali-headquartered Snow and Avalanche Studies Establishment (SASE) and the **second** is the Delhi-based Defence Terrain Research Laboratory (DTRL).
- **Note:** The new lab will focus on research on terrain and avalanches along the border with China from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh.
- The SASE has been very actively engaged in the study of snow and avalanches in the operational areas. It has prepared an avalanche atlas of almost 3,000 on-road locations in different parts of the country where the armed forces are deployed. The DTRL had been working on different terrains where the armed forces are deployed.

NHSRCL adopts aerial LiDAR Survey technique to conduct the ground survey for Delhi-Varanasi High Speed Rail Corridor

- National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL) will be adopting Light Detection and Ranging Survey (LiDAR) technique using Laser enabled equipment mounted on a Helicopter for conducting ground survey for the preparation of Detailed Project Report for the proposed Delhi-Varanasi HSR corridor.
- **Note:** The aerial LiDAR survey technique, for the first time for any railway project in India, was adopted for the Mumbai- Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Corridor primarily because of its high accuracy. The ground survey using aerial LiDAR for MAHSR alignment was done only in 12 weeks against the 10-12 months if had been done through traditional survey methods.

Environment & Ecology

Researchers discovered a new frog species

- The researchers from multiple India Institutions and one from France, has found a new species of burrowing frog and named it Sphaerotheca Bengaluru, outside its natural habitat in a barren tract of land near Rajankunte, outskirts of Bengaluru.
- The new species was described based on the morphological differences and molecular approach with known species of the burrowing frogs.
- **Note:** The new species is a part of the team's effort in documenting the 'Amphibians in the Deccan Plateau parts of Karnataka'.

Summits & Conference

2nd The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA) 2020 Conference

- Dr Harsh Vardhan, the Minister of Science and Technology and Vice President of Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), virtually inaugurated the 2nd TCGA 2020 conference on 04 December.
- The Conference brings together scientists and clinicians from across the globe to build Indian Cancer Genome Atlas (ICGA) which has been initiated by a consortium of key stakeholders in India led by CSIR, Government of India.
- Note: TCGA is a landmark cancer genomics program that molecularly characterized over 20,000 primary cancers and matched normal samples spanning 33 cancer types. This joint effort between the US- National Cancer Institute and the National Human Genome Research Institute began in 2006, bringing together researchers from diverse disciplines and multiple institutions.

Ranking & Index

Kotak Wealth Hurun India list: Wealthiest women in 2020

India's top 3 wealthiest women 2020:

1. Roshni Nadar Malhotra (HCL Technologies)
2. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (Biocon)
3. Leena Gandhi Tewari (USV)

Note: Kotak Wealth Management, a division of Kotak Mahindra Bank (Kotak) and Hurun India has announced its 2020 list of India's 100 richest women.

Reliance Industries tops Fortune India-500 list second year in a row

Top 3 companies on the 2020 Fortune India-500 list:

1. Reliance Industries
2. Indian Oil Corporation
3. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation

Note: Fortune India-500 list was published by Fortune India, which is part of the Kolkata-based RP Sanjiv Goenka Group.

Global Terrorism Index 2020

- 1st rank- Afghanistan
- 2nd rank- Iraq
- 3rd rank- Nigeria
- **8th rank- India**
- **Note:** The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) is a report published annually by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).
- The GTI is based on data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) which is collected by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland. It covers 163 countries.

India's Amul is now world's 8th largest milk processor

- Amul, a brand of dairy cooperative major Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMF), is ranked 8th in the list of top 20 global dairy processors report 2020 released by the International Farm Comparison Network (IFCN).
- **Note:** US's 'Dairy Farmers of America' topped the global list of dairy processors.

Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2021

- None achieved 1-3 rank
- 4th rank- Sweden
- 5th rank- UK
- **10th rank- India**
- While China is ranked 33rd, US 61st and Russia 52nd.
- **Note:** CCPI is prepared after assessing the performances of 57 countries and the European Union. These 57 countries and the European Union collectively are responsible for about 90 percent of the global GHG emissions.
- **The Climate Change Performance Index** is developed by not-for-profit organisations Germanwatch and NewClimate Institute (Germany) together with the Climate Action Network (CAN International).

Important Days

December 7, Armed Forces Flag Day

- The Armed Forces Flag Day or the Flag Day is a day dedicated towards collection of funds from people of India for the welfare of the Indian Armed Forces personnel. It has been observed annually in India on December 7 since 1949.
- **Note:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the Centre, states and union territories will celebrate the current month of December as “Gaurav Maah” (pride month) to honour the contributions of the armed forces and their veterans to the nation.

December 9, International Anti-Corruption Day 2020

- The theme of this year is 'United Against Corruption'.
- As per UN statistics, every year USD 1 trillion is being paid as bribes while USD 2.6 trillion are stolen due to corruption measures. As per the United Nations Development Programme, it is estimated that there are 10 times the funds lost due to corruption in the developing countries.
- **Note:** The United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Corruption on October 31, 2003. The General Assembly also designated December 9 as World Anti-Corruption Day to raise awareness about corruption and of the role of the Convention in battling and preventing it. The Convention came into force in December 2005.

December 10, Human Rights Day

- The theme of Human Rights Day 2020 is 'Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights'.
- **Note:** Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December — the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

December 11, UNICEF Day 2020

- UNICEF works in 190 countries and territories aiming to save children's lives, to defend their rights, and to help them fulfill their potential, from early childhood through adolescence.
- **Note:** The United Nations General Assembly created UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) on December 11, 1946, as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.
- The organisation was originally named United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. However, in 1953, it became a permanent agency of the UN, and the words 'International' and 'Emergency' were dropped from the official name but the acronym (UNICEF) continued.

Obituaries

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu releases commemorative postage stamp in honour of late Prime Minister, Indra Kumar Gujral

- **Note:** Indra Kumar Gujral was an Indian politician and freedom activist who served as the 12th Prime Minister of India from April 1997 to March 1998.

Dineshwar Sharma, Administrator of Lakshadweep passes away

Note: Sharma, a former director of the Intelligence Bureau, was appointed as the Administrator of Lakshadweep in October 2019. Prior to this, he was an

interlocutor for Jammu and Kashmir.

Noted Hindi poet and journalist Manglesh Dabral passes away at 72

- Dabral was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2000 for his poetry collection 'Ham Jo Dekhte Hain'.
- He worked with several newspapers, including Jansatta and Pratipaksha.

Books and Authors

Vice President Shri M Venkaiah Naidu releases a book named '40 years with Abdul Kalam-Untold Stories'

- Book is based on the life of the Former President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
- Dr Sivathanu Pillai is the author of this book. He received Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awards.

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank presented the first copy of his book "Pioneer of Humanity: Maharshi Arvind" to President Ram Nath Kovind

- Shri Arvind was a person fully devoted to Indian culture, Indian values, Indian nationalism and Indian philosophy.
- The book is in Hindi with the title 'Manavta ke Praneta: Maharishi Arvind'.

Sports

Kuldeep Handoo appointed as 'Fit India Movement' Ambassador

First Dronacharya Awardee from Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in 2020, Wushu Coach of Team India, Kuldeep Handoo has been appointed as the Ambassador of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Fit India Movement'.

Sakhir Grand Prix 2020

- Jehan Daruvala creates history, becomes first Indian to win a Formula 2 race
- Yuki Tsunoda got second position and Daniel Ticktum got third position.

Parthiv Patel announces retirement from all forms of Cricket

- Wicketkeeper-batsman Patel, made his international debut in 2002 at the age of 17 in an away Test series against England
- He last wore Indian jersey in 2018 during a Test match against South Africa in Johannesburg.

Mondo Duplantis and Yulimar Rojas win '2020 World Athlete of the Year'

- Swedish pole vaulter Mondo Duplantis and Venezuelan triple jumper Yulimar Rojas are the 2020 Male and Female World Athletes of the Year.
- They are their countries' first recipients of the prestigious athletics award announced during the virtual World Athletics Awards.

gradeup