

Monthly GK Digest

August 2020



Monthly Digest August -2020

Dear readers,

This **Monthly GK Digest** is a **complete docket** of important news and events that occurred in a month of **August 2020**. This file is important for, **CDS, NDA and other Defence exams**.

Important News – India

1. Recently, the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has launched an incubator capabilities enhancement program 'AIM-iCREST' in collaboration with **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wadhvani Foundation**.
Note: This is a first of its kind initiative for advancing innovation at scale in India. Under the initiative, the AIM's incubators will be provided requisite support to foster the incubation enterprise economy in order to enhance their performance.
2. 6th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting was held under the presidency of **Russia**.
Note: Prakash Javadekar, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) participated in the meeting. The BRICS nations called the initiative to improve the environment and promote the circular economy in national plans for economic recovery after COVID-19
3. Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs, Nitin Gadkari upstream carriageway of Mahatma Gandhi bridge in **Bihar**.
Note: Over 5.5 km, this four lane bridge at NH-19 between Patna and Hajipur is being renovated to replace its existing concrete superstructure by new steel deck superstructure, consisting of about 6600 metric steel.
4. **Narendra Singh Tomar** released a booklet on 'Best Practices in Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)'.
Note: The booklet is prepared by Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development. It is based on the presentations made by states during regional and national workshops since inception of the programme. This book is a collection of different best practices that focus on addressing various issues, challenges, and threats to the implementation of DILRMP.
5. **CREDAI Awaas App** has been launched by Housing minister Hardeep Puri to market residential properties.
Note: Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Hardeep Singh Puri released the Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs. ARHC as a sub scheme under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. Objective of the scheme is to provide dignified and affordable rental accommodation to the urban poor and migrant workers.
6. As per the recommendation by the Parliamentary Committee on Labour, the minimum eligibility period for gratuity payable to an employee on termination of his employment -- **One year**.
Note: The Committee made this recommendation in its report on Social Security Code, which has been evolved subsuming nine Central Labour laws. The committee, which is headed by Biju Janta Dal MP Bharatruhari Mahtab, submitted the report to Speaker Om Birla.
7. **Dr. Harsh Vardhan** has launched "Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan 2020-21", a national level programme for popularizing science among school students of class sixth to Eleventh.
Note: Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan is an initiative of Vijnana Bharathi (VIBHA) in collaboration with Vigyan Prasar, Government of India and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). It is India's largest Science talent search examination for New India using Digital Devices.
8. **SEBI** is planning to set up a virtual museum of securities market to highlight achievements and milestones in the Indian capital market.
Note: SEBI has invited Expression of Interest (EoI) from agencies to develop the virtual museum. The museum is intended to be a visual online organised collection of history of evolution, achievements and milestones in the Indian securities market over the decades in terms of market infrastructure, regulation and enforcement, among others.
9. Union Minister of Education **Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank** has laid the foundation stone of Indian

Institute of Management (IIM) Sirmaur at Dhaula Kuan in **Himachal Pradesh**.

Note: IIM Sirmaur was operationalised by IIM Lucknow from August 2015 as the mentor Institution with the commencement of the first batch of post graduate programme for 20 students from its temporary campus at Paonta Sahib, Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh. The complete full-fledged permanent campus at Dhaulakuan has been envisaged for a student strength of 1170. The Union Government has sanctioned an amount of Rs 531.75 Crore out of which Rs 392.51 Crore is for construction works.

10. A New initiative by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) the Sahakar Cooptube NCDC Channel has been launched by **Narendra Singh Tomar**.
Note: The channel is a new initiative by National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC). During the launch event, the minister also rolled out guidance videos made by NCDC on 'Formation and Registration of A Cooperative' for 18-different states in Hindi and regional languages.
11. **Pradip Shah** is the head of the 7-member committee formed by International Financial Services Centre Authority for developing plans on international retail business.
Note: The committee will make strategies enhancing IFSC position for international financial services drawing a roadmap for the growth of international retail at the IFSC. The report will be submitted in 3 months
12. **DD Assam** has been launched by Minister of Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar recently.
Note: It is a 24 x 7 satellite channel which will work on the message of unity in diversity. The channel will showcase rich history of Assam and other north East States.
13. India's first Kisan Special Parcel Train or Kisan Rail was from flagged off between two stations **Devlali to Danapur**.
Note: The train is making its first move from Maharashtra's Devlali to Bihar's Danapur Railway station with various stoppages carrying fruits and vegetables. It will cover a distance of 1,519 km in 32 hours. Kisan rail was announced in Budget 2020
14. The Government of India has extended Line of Credit of worth 18 million USD to **Maldives** to expand fishing facilities.
Note: The funds granted to Maldives are to be used for the following. To develop 50-tonne ice plant in Gemanafushi. Also, a 100-tonne ice storage facility is to be developed. The funds will be used to set up tuna

cooked plant and fishmeal plant. Investments towards fish collection.

15. The Ministry of Education organized the "Conclave on Transformational Reforms in Higher Education under National Education Policy (NEP)" in association with **University Grants Commission (UGC)**.
Note: The event was inaugurated by the PM Narendra Modi. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Union Minister of Education, Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Communications along with Chairman and Members, Committee for Draft NEP participated in the virtual event.
16. NHAH signs MoU with which **IIT Delhi** to set up Center of Excellence for Advance Data Management System for Highways.
Note: Under the agreement IIT Delhi will work with NHAH to develop advanced analytics based on Artificial Intelligence, prepare simulation models, enhance data storage and retrieval capacities to strengthen data-driven decision making.
17. National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) joined hands with Global digital skills training provider to support the continuity of digital skilling of the Indian workforce -- **Simplilearn**.
Note: Under this collaboration, Simplilearn will host more than 1,000 hours of free learning in digital skills and technologies for learners across India under the categories of AI and Machine Learning, Big Data, Data Science & Business Intelligence, Cyber Security, Software Development, Project management, and Digital marketing.
18. A new Platform, "Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste" to support the global reduction of food loss and waste has been launched by **FAO**.
Note: The official launch of the platform will be on the first International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLW) which will be observed on 29th September 2020.
19. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has signed an agreement with **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)** for collaborative research and information dissemination in the area of food and nutrition.
Note: The agreement was signed during a ceremony which was presided Health Minister Harsh Vardhan. The collaboration between these two premier institutions of India will contribute in fulfilling the vision of New Food System 2050.
20. The global conference on "Reimagining and Transforming the University: Confluence of Ideas during and Beyond the COVID-19 Disruption" was hosted by Indian university **O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU)**.

- Note:** The event was inaugurated by Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Union Minister for Education. The conference provided a platform to discuss to reimagine and transform the idea of university that will impact the lives of the students, academics and nations all across the globe.
- 21.** The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) will open the Silk Training cum Production Center in **Arunachal Pradesh**.
Note: This would be the first Silk Training cum Production Center in the state. Machinery like handlooms, Charkha, Silk reeling machines and warping drums would be installed in the training cum production Center. KVIC has transformed the dilapidated school building into the training cum production center for Eri Silk, and has also selected the first batch of 25 local artisans of Chullyu village to begin the training with.
- 22.** Website portal **My Handloom** has been launched by the Union Minister of Textiles and Women & Child Development, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani, for the individual weavers and organization.
Note: The Union Minister of Textiles and Women & Child Development, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani launched a website portal, 'My Handloom' for the individual weavers and organization on the occasion of the 6th National Handloom Day on 7th August, 2020, virtually.
- 23. Delhi International Airport Limited** has developed AIR SUVIDHA, a first-of-its-kind portal allowing international arriving passengers to fill a mandatory self-declaration form and eligible passengers to apply for exemption from compulsory institutional quarantine for coronavirus.
Note: It will make passengers' journey more convenient and comfortable in a contactless way as they won't have to fill the physical copies of the forms on arrival. The online forms have been developed in collaboration with various state governments, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
- 24.** In a push for 'Make-in-India', **Rajnath Singh** has launched 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat Saptah' to focus more on the vision of the government to shift to local manufacturing.
Note: The main idea behind this is to emphasize the importance of domestic defence production in the country. The ministry is pushing for domestic manufacturing of defence items very aggressively.
- 25.** National portal **SURAKHSYA** is being launched by the Ministry of Environment and Forest on Human-Elephant conflict to collect real-time information and will also manage conflicts on a real-time basis.
Note: He will also launch portal on Human Elephant Conflict on the eve of World Elephant Day, 2020. The World Elephant Day is observed every year on 12th August to spread awareness about the animal.
- 26. Mumbai** become the first city in India to have women symbols on traffic signals and signage.
Note: Mumbai's Dadar has become the first city in India to have women symbols on traffic signals and signage. Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has installed traffic signals that display female icons sporting triangular frock, a shift from the default representation of men.
- 27. 121** Police personnel have been awarded the "Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Investigation" for the year 2020.
Note: A total of 121 Police personnel have been awarded the "Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Investigation" for the year 2020. The award of "Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Investigation" seeks to encourage high professional standards of investigation of crime and to recognize such Excellence in Investigation by investigating officers.
- 28. Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)** has organized the "India@75 Summit – Mission 2022".
Note: The summit was focused on 'reinventing technology in India'. The MSME Ministry and Industries should be made import substitutes, cost-effective, pollution-free and indigenous.
- 29.** Niti Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has rolled out second edition of Student Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP 2.0) in collaboration with **Dell Technologies**.
Note: The Student Entrepreneurship Programme has been launched for the young innovators of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) as it will enable them to work closely with Dell volunteers. The young innovators who are part of SEP 2.0 will get mentor support, prototyping and testing support, end-user feedback, intellectual property registration along with patenting of ideas, processes, and products.
- 30.** Festive sweet dish 'Khaje', spicy Harmal Chilli and Myndoli Banana (Moirra Banana) of **Goa** has obtained Geographical Indication (GI) tag from the Geographical Indications Registry.
Note: The Bicholim based All-Goa Khaje Producers Association (AGKPA) applied for the GI tag of Khaje through the department of science and technology in 2019. Myndoli Banana Growers Association, Ibrampur, Pernem applied for the GI tag of Moirra bananas.
- 31.** Krishi Megh is the data recovery centre of **ICAR** organization.
Note: Krishi Megh is the data recovery centre of ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research). The data recovery centre has been set up at National Academy

- of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM), Hyderabad.
- 32.** Tribal freedom fighter museums are under development by ministry of tribal affairs -- **9.**
Note: The nine museums are being developed in Gujarat(Rajpipla), Jharkhand(Ranchi), Andhra Pradesh(Lambasingi), Chhattisgarh(Raipur), Kerala (Kozhikode), Madhya Pradesh (Chhindwara), Telangana (Hyderabad), Manipur (Senapati) and Mizoram (Kelsi).
- 33. Swachh Bharat Mission Academy** is an IVR based mobile online learning course launched by Union Jal Shakti Ministry.
Note: The IVR based free mobile online learning course on ODF Plus will be crucial in achieving goals underlined in Phase - 2 of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin). Swachh Bharat Mission Academy, with its mobile based technology will significantly boost the capacity building efforts in training of Swachhagrahis as well as community-based organizations, NGOs and others associated with phase 2 of the mission.
- 34.** Indian Railways is constructing the world's tallest pier bridge across river Lajai in **Manipur**.
Note: The bridge which is being constructed across river Ijai near Noney is an engineering marvel because the tallest pier height will be 141 meter. It will surpass the existing record of 139 meter of Mala - Rijeka viaduct, Montenegro in Europe.
- 35. NASSCOM** Association with organization 'Atal Innovation Mission' has launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) based Step-up module for school students.
Note: The module was launched in a virtual platform attended by CEO NITI Aayog Mr Amitabh Kant, Mission Director Atal Innovation Mission Mr R Ramanan and NASSCOM President Debjani Ghosh. The AI Step-up module is expected to drive AI education and innovation to the next level in the young minds in schools across the country.
- 36.** As per the draft plan prepared by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), the "One Sun, One World, One Grid" (OSOWOG) initiative will **140 countries** through a common grid that will be used to transfer solar power.
Note: As per the draft plan prepared by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), the OSOWOG will connect 140 countries through a common grid that will be used to transfer solar power. "The vision behind the OSOWOG mantra is "the Sun never sets" and is a constant at some geographical location, globally, at any given point of time.
- 37. IIT Bombay** has secured top position in the 'Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements,' (ARIIA) 2020 for being the best centrally funded institution in India.
- Note:** The top five centrally funded institutions in the list are 1. IIT Madras; 2. IIT Bombay; 3. IIT Delhi; 4. IISc Bengaluru; 5. IIT Kharagpur. The ARIIA ranking was launched in 2019 by the Innovation Cell of the Ministry of Education. The objective of ARIIA is to rank higher education institutions and universities in India as per Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Startup, and Development amongst faculty and students.
- 38.** Quality Control Lab has been set up by the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) in **Porbandar, Gujarat**.
Note: The Quality Control Lab will offer tests for seafood processors as well as exporters to confirm to product safety as per international regulatory requirements. Quality Control Lab is empowered with advanced testing instruments to evaluate antibiotic residues, heavy-metals, namely cadmium, lead, mercury and arsenic in seafood samples and histamine in fish such as tuna and mackerel.
- 39.** The Central Water Commission (CWC) of India has launched the flood forecasting initiatives across India in association with tech giant **Google**.
Note: The Central Water Commission is the first governmental partner of Google to measure water levels on an hourly basis using around 1000 stream gauges across India. Under the flood forecasting initiatives, Google has sent out numerous public alerts to people in flood-impacted regions of India.
- 40.** With the vision of going one step further towards self-reliance or "Atma Nirbhar Bharat" **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** has launched 'Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge'.
Note: The initiative aims at designing microprocessors for the development of various technological products. Students from all levels and startup companies can participate in the challenge. Prize money of total Rs. 4.30 crore will be provided by the government in the following way. Total of 1 crore to 100 semi-finalists. For 25 finalists, a total of 1 crore and Rs. 2.3 crore for the top 10 teams.
- 41. Delhi Police** has signed an MoU with All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) for extending ayurvedic mode of preventive and promotive health services in the residential colonies of the force.
Note: The MoU will offer Ayurveda Preventive and Promotive health services in the residential colonies of Delhi Police through a mobile unit named 'Dhanwantari Rath' and Police Wellness Centres. These sources would be catered by AIIA, supported by Ministry of AYUSH. "Dhanwantari Rath" is a mobile unit of Ayurveda health care services which comprises a team of Doctors who would be visiting Delhi Police colonies on regular intervals.

- 42.** The Speaker of Lok Sabha, Om Birla attended the virtual mode of Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (5WCSP) organized jointly by International Parliamentary Union and the Parliament of **Austria**.
Note: The two days long event was organized jointly by Geneva headquartered Inter Parliamentary Union and the Parliament of Austria with the assistance of the United Nations. The second part of the conference is scheduled to be held next year in Vienna, Austria which is expected to be a physical mode of meeting.
- 43.** Central government departments has launched its new official logo displaying three goals of the department, Accuracy, Validity, and Reliability -- **Labour Bureau**.
Note: The newly launched logo displays the three goals of the Labour Bureau i.e. Accuracy, Validity, and Reliability. It also indicates the Labour Bureau as a data-based organization that deals in data pertaining to workers and work.
- 44.** To improve the production and productivity of raw Jute in the country Jute Corporation of India (JCI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **National Seeds Corporation (NSC)**.
Note: The MoU was signed virtually in the presence of Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar and Union Minister for Textiles, Smriti Zubin Irani. Around 10, 000 quintals of certified jute seeds of JRO-204 variety to be distributed to the farmers through JCI in the 2021-22 crop year.
- 45.** The Bureau of India Standards (BIS) signed with an MoU with **IIT Roorkee** for collaboration in areas of Standardization and Conformity Assessment based on equality and reciprocity.
Note: In Accordance with the agreement, the collaboration will include several fields like Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Chemical, Earthquake Engineering, Development and Management of Water Resources and Renewable Energy Projects, Infrastructure Development, Medical Biotechnology and Nanotechnology biomaterials. IIT Roorkee and BIS will participate in the standardisation activity through technical committees of BIS at the national and international levels.
- 46.** India's rank in the 2nd edition of global research "Digital Quality of Life (DQL) Index 2020" released by online privacy solutions provider SurfShark -- **57th**.
Note: The DQL Index 2020 analyzes 85 countries around the world covering 6.3 billion people or 81% of the global population in terms of five core pillars: internet affordability, internet quality, e-infrastructure, e-security, and e-government, and results are premised on 12 different factors.
- 47.** **TL Alamelu** will head the ten-member committee set up by IRDAI to recommend setting up loss prevention entities for non-life insurers.
Note: The ten-member committee headed by Irda member T L Alamelu has recommended the regulator and industry participants to join hands in establishing this company.
- 48.** **Tata Steel** has launched the FerroHaat App, a first-of-its-kind mobile application (App) in the world to source steel scrap from the traders.
Note: The new app is a major step by the company to organise India's scrap market while also providing a reliable source of scrap metal for the steel Industry.
- 49.** **Nitin Gadkari** has launched the mobile app named 'Harit Path' to monitor plantation along national highways.
Note: Under this initiative, the NHA planted over 25 lakh plants in 25 days along the stretches of the national highways between July 21 and August 15, 2020. The minister launched 'Harit Path', a mobile app to monitor the plantations through geo-tagging and web-based GIS-enabled monitoring tools.
- 50.** **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has constituted the National Council for Transgender Persons, a requirement under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
Note: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has set up this council to cater to the transgender community with various essential needs. The Union Minister of social justice will be the head of the commission.
- 51.** As per the recent data published by the Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), India filed **Less than 1 per cent** of the global patent applications.
Note: The recent data published by the Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has shown that India filed less than 1% of the global patent applications with total filings of 2,053 in 2019.
- 52.** The Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, Arjun Munda has e-inaugurated "Tribes India Showroom" in **Mumbai**.
Note: The showroom has been inaugurated in Indian Globe Chambers of LIC Western Zonal Office, Fort, Mumbai. "Tribes India Showroom" is an initiative of TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs to promote the livelihood of the tribal people marketing. "Tribes India on Wheels" is also launched by TRIFED to boost the sales and enhance tribal income in these challenging times.
- 53.** Ministry of Tourism has signed an MoU with **Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI)** and FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) with primary objective of women empowerment.
Note: The signed MoU will enable FLO & TAAI to focus on personal and hospitality skills, a more flexible work balance and greater options for entrepreneurship with lower capital. The partnership between the three aims

- to increase the participation of women in the tourism sector and enable them to become an integral part of the tourism workforce of India.
- 54. APEDA functions under Ministry of Commerce and Industry** has signed two MoUs with AFC India Limited and National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) for working together in the interest of agriculture and allied sectors.
Note: It has signed two MoUs one each with AFC ((formerly Agricultural Finance Corporation Ltd) India Limited, and National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), Delhi for working together in the interest of agriculture and allied sectors.
- 55. Ramesh Chand will** head the task force constituted by the NITI Aayog that recommended linking of Sugarcane prices to sugar rate.
Note: The Niti Aayog task force has recommended linking sugarcane prices to sugar rates to keep the industry in sound financial health. It has also pitched for a one-time increase in minimum sugar price to Rs 33 per kilo to help sugar mills cover the cost of production.
- 56. IT majors Tech Mahindra** joined hands with NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) to support Indian women entrepreneurs.
Note: WTI awards is an initiative of the WEP to recognise women leaders in entrepreneurship across various sectors like healthcare and life sciences, agritech and education, among others.
- 57. ReNew Power** signed a partnership agreement with **UNEP** to promote increased access to renewable energy and improved energy efficiency.
Note: This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a part of progressive strategies that India has adopted to realise its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. The aim is to shift the heating and cooling sector to an energy efficient one.
- 58. Greenko Energies Private Limited** entered into an MoU with NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam (NVTN) to explore renewable energy power supply solution and energy storage.
Note: This comes under the framework of India's World largest clean energy programme, a part of global climate change commitments, which aims to have 175 GW of clean energy by 2022. NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam (NVTN) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NTPC limited.
- 59. National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** has developed the '**Vendor Performance Evaluation System**' to establish a transparent and comprehensive performance rating system for its consultants, contractors and concessionaires.
Note: The portal-based objective assessment of vendors was initiated to track the vendor performance for various NHAI projects. The vendors are required to conduct a self-assessment and upload the documents related to the project activities executed by them on the portal.
- 60. Central Railway** has introduced a drone-based surveillance system to protect railway assets.
Note: The Mumbai Division of Central Railway zone has recently procured Ninja UAVs. RPF has procured as many as nine drones at a cost of Rs 31.87 lakh at Central Railway, South Eastern Railway, South Western Railway, Modern Coaching Factory, and Raebareli.
- 61. Rajnath Singh** has launched the Directorate General National Cadet Corps (DGNCC) Mobile Training App.
Note: The Mobile Training App will support in conducting countrywide online training of NCC cadets as it has been affected adversely due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19. The DGNCC Mobile Training App seeks to offer entire training material to the NCC cadets on one platform.
- 62. National e-Governance Division (NeGD)** is working under **MeitY** that signed an MoU with Common Service Center e-Governance Services India Limited to facilitate delivery of UMANG app services to citizens.
Note: This will benefit those citizens who either do not have access to smartphones or are not comfortable accessing app based e services on their own. Notably, all the UMANG services at CSCs are available at zero cost and will be provided by CSC operators Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs).
- 63. Piyush Goyal** has launched the National GIS (Geographic Information System)-enabled Land Bank system.
Note: The system is developed by the integration of the Industrial Information System (IIS) with State GIS systems. The platform will provide a database of industrial areas/clusters across the country and will serve as a one-stop solution to the free and easy accessibility of all industrial information.
- 64. Mahindra & Mahindra** has partnered with Israel's REE Automotive to develop commercial EVs .
Note: The corner modular architecture of REE integrated with the design, engineering, sourcing, ecosystem and production capacity of Mahindra will provide zero emission vehicles, including the autonomous vehicles. This will improve the mahindra's capabilities in the Electric Vehicle (EV) sector.
- 65. Valipe Ramagopal Rao** will chair the 5-member committee constituted by DRDO to review charter of duties of 57 DRDO labs on the basis of current and futuristic defence and battlefield needs.
Note: The five-member committee will be chaired by Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi director V Ramagopal Rao. The committee will submit its report in 45 days.

- 66.** Three-member committee headed by **DB Shekatkar** has been to review the effective utilisation of the Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Services (AFHQ CS) cadre.
Note: This is in line with the recommendation of the Lt. Gen. DB Shekatkar (ret'd) committee on enhancing the military's combat potential and rebalancing defence expenditure.
- 67.** In partnership with **UNDP**, Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) has launched the Sustainable Finance Collaborative (SFC) to Promote Sustainable Finance in India.
Note: In this regard, a three days consultation centered on the broad scope of Sustainable Finance architecture in India was held to accelerate green finance by bringing together leading experts and organizations.
- 68.** Next-generation startup Challenge contest has been launched by the Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Ravi Shankar Prasad - **Chunauti**.
Note: This contest is a part of Rs 95 crore programme, spanning over 3 years, will hunt for around 300 startups working in identified areas and to provide them seed funds of up to Rs 25 lakh and other support from government through the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI).
- 69.** **Piyush Goyal** represented India in the virtual 8th East Asia Summit Economic Ministers' Meeting (EAS-EMM) chaired by Vietnam.
Note: It was attended by Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States, Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, the Russian Federation and the United States. The Meeting was chaired by Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam.
- 70.** The Union Government is planning to come up with Mega Bamboo Industrial Park in **Ghati**.
Note: Apart from this government is also planning to set up a Mega Bamboo Industrial Park at Ghati near Jammu and Bamboo Technology Training Centre will also come up in the region. This was announced by the Minister of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Dr Jitendra Singh.

Important News – State

- 1. Madhya Pradesh** state government has launched a public awareness campaign "Ek Mask-Anek Zindagi" from August 1-15.
Note: The Scheme will spread awareness about wearing masks as prevention from Covid-19 infection. Establishment of Mask Banks, where people can donate masks which in turn will be distributed free to poor people. Citizens can also donate masks through NGOs in every district/urban body.
- 2. Maharashtra** government approved MagNet project worth Around Rs 1,000 crore to Help Farmers.
Note: The project aims to help farmers across all districts in the state for the next 6 years. This will boost the fruit and vegetable production and will improve processing and minimise the losses in the sector of perishables.
- 3. Andhra Pradesh** state government has signed an MoU with Hindustan Unilever Ltd, P&G and ITC to Support Economic Empowerment of Women.
Note: The MoU was signed in the presence of Y S Jaganmohan Reddy at his camp office in Tadepalli. The state government of Andhra Pradesh is set to launch two schemes YSR Cheyutha and YSR Asara to support the empowerment of women.
- 4. Union territories Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu** has launched E-Gyan Mitra mobile application for online education.
Note: Through the app, the students from primary till the higher secondary can take online classes along with attempting. The app will have lectures and quizzes posted by teachers along with a system of monitoring in which teachers can monitor students' progress
- 5. 'Thenzawl Golf Resort' project** has been inaugurated in **Mizoram**.
Note: The project will develop Golf Tourism attracting both national and international tourist in the country. It will have an international standard of 18 holes Golf Course with a total cost of Rs 92.25 crore. Designed by: Canadian based Golf Course Architect Firm Graham Cooke & Associates and 30 Eco Log Huts.
- 6. 'E-Raksha Bandhan' awareness programme** launched by Andhra Pradesh is related to **Cybercrime**.
Note: It is a month-long online campaign that will create awareness on Cyber crimes across the State with slogan 'Let us make August a month of e-freedom and e-safety. It will be organised by various organisations including Crime Investigation Department (CID), FM Radio, Cyber Crime Prevention Against Women and Children (CCPWC), Cyber Peace Foundation and other organisations.
- 7. Haryana** state government has launched "Parivar Pehchan Patra" to enable the citizens to get the benefits of various central and state government schemes.

- Note:** This is to monitor each family (around 54 Lakh) living across Haryana. PPP each family will be considered as a single unit and will be allotted a 8 digit unique identification number. The 8-digit number will enable seamless delivery of state government services.
8. **Andhra Pradesh** state government has entered into an MoU with the Indian School of Business (ISB) for setting up a Policy lab to spur growth with special focus on economic development and job creation.
Note: The MOU will nurture a think tank by setting up a Policy lab called the GoAP-ISB Policy Lab, a public policy laboratory to drive evidence-based policy decisions.
9. **Uttarakhand** state is set develop India's first Snow Leopard Conservation centre.
Note: The main aim of the centre is to conserve and restore Himalayan ecosystems. It also aims to conserve elusive snow leopards and other endangered Himalayan species. A number of snow leopards have been spotted in the districts of Pithoragarh and Uttarkashi. However, the actual figures are unknown. So far, the state government has concluded that there are 86 snow leopards in the state.
10. **Haryana** state government has launched "Mahila Evam Kishori Samman Yojana" to provide free sanitary napkins to girls and women of below poverty line (BPL) families.
Note: This scheme was launched by Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar through video conferencing. This scheme focusing on adolescent girls and women between 10 to 45 years of age of about 11,24,871 BPL families will provide a 6 piece packet of free sanitary napkins every month for a year.
11. **Haryana** state government has launched "Mukhya Mantri Doodh Uphar Yojana" to provide fortified flavoured skimmed milk powder to women and children.
Note: This scheme was launched by Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar through video conferencing. This scheme was initiated under the aegis of Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD).
12. **Chhattisgarh** government has launched "Shaheed Mahendra Karma Tendupatta Sangraha Samajik Suraksha Yojana" for tendu leaves collectors.
Note: Used for making bidis (leaf-wrapped cigarettes), these are collected by forest dwellers and from them it is purchased by the state government. Mahendra Karma was popularly known as Bastar tiger for his tough stand against Naxals. He was among 29 people, including senior Congress leaders, who were killed in a Naxal attack in Jhiram valley of Bastar district on May 25, 2013.
13. **Maharashtra** became the first state in India to collaborate with Google India for state-wide distribution of G suite for Education and Google Classroom.
Note: Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Uddhav Thackeray announced the partnership with Google which will blend google's learning programmes that integrate the classroom approach with online learning, over a virtual launch event. The aim of the partnership is to progress Maharashtra in education with effective use of online resources, platforms and technology and to bridge the gap in education amid COVID-19 pandemic.
14. India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, Flipkart has signed an MoU with One District, One Product (ODOP) scheme of **Uttar Pradesh** government.
Note: The MoU will bring the artisans, weavers and craftsmen under the ODOP scheme into the scope of the "Flipkart Samarth" initiative. This will provide artisans, weavers and craftsmen under the ODOP scheme a momentum to expand their business online as they face social and economic challenges.
15. The Ministry of Railways has inaugurated a dedicated museum for railways in **Hubballi, Karnataka**.
Note: This is the first of its kind museum in Northern Karnataka and second in South Western Railways after the historic railway museum at Mysore, Karnataka. The main objective of the museum is to preserve and portray the glorious heritage of various branches of Railways and displays the gradual evolution of advanced systems in all spheres of Railway.
16. US Based IT Firm "Boston Group" has signed an MoU with **Andhra Pradesh** government to set up an IT company.
Note: The new IT company stated to be installed in the state according to the MoU is expected to create 250+ jobs in the IT sector. The employees of this centre would be deployed in the R&D on Learning platforms and leverage advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Cyber Security and Human Resources.
17. **Gujarat** state government has launched Mukhya Mantri Kisan Sahay Yojana.
Note: The yojana has been announced for the current Kharif season and all farmers of the state will be covered under this scheme. Farmers would not have to pay any premium or registration process for the scheme.
18. **Goa** state government has signed an MoU with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for setting up a World-Class Skill Development Institute to

- provide Advanced Skills Training under “Skill India Mission.
- Note:** The institute is proposed to be set up at the heritage building of Old Asilo Hospital, Mapusa, North Goa. The institute will provide Advanced Skills training in highly specialized areas across sectors like healthcare, tourism and hospitality and other emerging business domains to meet industry demands.
- 19. Assam** state government has started “Orunodoi Scheme” for women’s empowerment.
- Note:** Under the “Orunodoi” scheme, Rs 830 per month aid would mean an additional annual income of Rs 10,000 to the poor households to meet their medical, nutritional, and academic needs besides to meet the additional spending during various festivals.”.
- 20. Arunachal Pradesh** government has formed a nine-member committee to discuss and arrive at a possible solution to the touchy issue of creation of two autonomous councils in the State.
- Note:** The panel headed by Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein has seven Cabinet colleagues, including Home Minister Bamang Felix and Tribal Affairs Minister Alo Libang, as members. The ninth member is Home Commissioner Kaling Tayeng.
- 21.** The Madhya Pradesh state government has announced to name Gwalior-Chambal Expressway after **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**.
- Note:** The Gwalior Chambal Expressway is a 6 lane expressway connecting Madhya Pradesh with Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, through the ravines of Chambal region. The expressway will go parallel to the Chambal river via Shivpuri, Bhind, Morena to Kota (Rajasthan).
- 22. Nagaland** state government has launched “YellowChain” centralized e-commerce platform.
- Note:** Yellow Chain will act as an integrated platform for the people of the state, where any Seller/Service Provider/Individual/Group can register themselves and upload their products, trades, skills, services etc. to enable the citizens/buyers to have access to their Service or Product.
- 23. Chhattisgarh** state government has launched a student centric scheme named as “Padhai Tuhar Para” .
- Note:** Chhattisgarh government has announced to launch a student centric scheme named as “Padhai Tuhar Para”. The scheme will enable the school students to study with the help of community in their localities and villages, in view of the suspension of classes due to coronavirus outbreak.
- 24. Madhya Pradesh** state top in implementing PM SVANidhi Scheme.
- Note:** Madhya Pradesh is the leading state in implementing the Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors Atma-Nirbhar Scheme (PM SVANidhi). The state has sanctioned interest free loans of Rs 10000 to more than 58000 street vendors, so far. Identity cards are distributed to the registered vendors.
- 25. Madhya Pradesh** has launched the ‘Ek Sankalp – Bujurgo ke naam’ campaign for the elderly people living alone in homes during the global pandemic COVID-19.
- Note:** This unique campaign is proving to be a boon for the **Elderly People** living alone in homes during the global pandemic COVID-19.
- 26. Madhya Pradesh** has launched the ‘Ek Sankalp – Bujurgo ke naam’ campaign for the elderly people living alone in homes during the global pandemic COVID-19.
- Note:** In this campaign, the police are taking care of the elderly people from the food to their health. Renowned social activist Anna Hazare has also praised this initiative of Chhatarpur Police.
- 27. Delhi** state government has launched the Niraman Mazdoor Registration Abhiyan for construction workers from August 24 to September 11.
- Note:** Special camps would be set up for construction workers to register themselves and take advantage of nearly 18 different assistance schemes. Delhi government will set up camps at 70 schools—one each in all the 70 assembly constituencies of Delhi—to help workers who are not tech-savvy.
- 28.** Uttar Pradesh government has signed a ‘plan of cooperation’ with **Israel** to resolve water crisis in Bundelkhand region.
- Note:** The partnership between the two governments seeks to address water crisis in drought hit regions of Bundelkhand. It will support regional farmers with latest farming technologies such as drip irrigation, meant for water deficient regions like Bundelkhand
- 29. Odisha** government is working on a mobile-based application to enable farmers to upload picture of grievances such as water availability in canals and their redressal in a fixed timeframe.
- Note:** The application being developed through Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) will use command area of projects as geo-fencing region to forward the grievance to the authority concerned.
- 30. Maharashtra** government has extended a ₹50 lakh insurance cover to private doctors who die of COVID-19.
- Note:** The Maharashtra government has extended ₹50 lakh insurance cover to private doctors who die of coronavirus infection during the pandemic. In a circular issued, director of state Health Services Dr Sadhana Tayde said the insurance cover, which is being given to doctors in government and semi- government services, has now been extended to private medical practitioners who succumb to the infection.

31. Kerala is to host the first-ever State Dragonfly Festival 2020.

Note: The festival has been christened as Thumbimahotsavam 2020. 'Pantalu' is the official mascot of the festival. As part of the festival, various programmes will be rolled out in the coming months to reach out to various sections of society.

32. The longest river ropeway of India has been inaugurated in **Assam**.

Note: The ropeway will be operated from Kachari Ghat in Guwahati to Dol Govinda temple in North Guwahati. The new ropeway service empowered with state-of-the-art technology will decrease the travel time between Guwahati and North Guwahati.

33. Odisha has launched a new scheme for promoting intensive aquaculture through Biofloc technology in fisheries.

Note: The scheme will provide livelihood support to entrepreneurs, unemployed youth and interested progressive fish farmers and will also increase fish production in the state.

34. Nitin Jairam Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways inaugurated and laid foundation stones for 45 highway projects in **Madhya Pradesh**.

Note: He also announced that Rs.700 crore from the Central Road Fund (CRF) will be utilised for the road sector of Madhya Pradesh. The aim was to complete

projects worth Rs 50,000 crore out of Rs 1.25 lakh crore by 2023.

35. Haryana government has inked a MoU with the M3M Foundation to facilitate online preparation, training and mentoring for government jobs to students.

Note: Through this MoU, a program will be implemented to select 50,000 candidates for online training based on their past performance in government examinations in the state. Under the MoU, M3M Foundation will finance the initiative, identify, select and hire suitable students and undertake a periodic review of the implementation of the program.

36. Kerala state will establish the first international women's trade centre (IWTC) of India.

Note: The IWTC seeks to accelerate the women entrepreneurship and secure gender parity. It will also offer a safe place away from home to women to start new businesses, set up or expand, and get their products marketed globally.

37. Uttar Pradesh government has launched 'Major Dhyan Chand Vijaypath Yojana' scheme under which 19 International Players will get road connectivity to their homes.

Note: The initial list includes 19 International Players from the state, and later on more players are expected to be added to the list. The list includes Indian Cricketers Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Praveen Kumar, Piyush Chawla and Mohammad Kaif.

Important News – World

- India collaborated with **Israel** country to develop rapid testing for COVID-19 in under 30 seconds.
Note: They have started to conduct trials at a special testing site at Dr Ram Manohar Lohiya (RML) Hospital on a large sample of patients for 4 different kinds of technologies namely, Voice test, Breath analyser test, Isothermal testing and Polyamino acid testing. The rapid testing has been developed jointly in cooperation with the Directorate of Defence Research and Development (DDR&D) of the Israeli Ministry of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- Former king of **Spain** Juan Carlos decided to leave his country to protect the monarchy after a barrage of corruption allegations surfaced against him.
Note: The once-popular, now scandal-ridden, king left Spain before Monday's announcement, local media said, with no indication of where he may have gone. The bombshell move stunned Spaniards and left them divided over whether the 82-year-old, who keeps the title of King Emeritus, was right to depart or should have stayed to face justice.

- Great Britain** is considering minting a coin to remember Mahatma Gandhi.
Note: Rishi Sunak Britain's current Finance Minister issued an order in a letter to the Royal Mint Advisory Committee (RMAC) to pursue recognition of individuals from the BAME community. Taking a step ahead in following the order RMAC will mint a coin to commemorate Gandhi.
- Barakah Nuclear Plant of **UAE** has achieved first criticality and successfully started up is located in which country.
Note: The announcement, coinciding with the Muslim holiday of Id al-Adha, comes hot on the heels of the UAE's launch of the Arab world's first probe to Mars. The new plant is part of the UAE's graph to become less reliant on oil and gas, the current source of the vast majority of its energy. UAE is among the world's biggest fossil fuels producers.
- Russia** becomes the first country to officially register a coronavirus vaccine and declare it ready for use.
Note: The Russian vaccine will be called "Sputnik V" in homage to the world's first satellite launched by the Soviet Union. The vaccine developed by the Gamaleya

- Institute in Moscow uses a different virus -- adenovirus -- that's been modified to carry genes for the "spike" protein that coats the coronavirus, as a way to prime the body to recognise when a real COVID-19 infection comes along.
6. Indian origin senator **Kamala Harris** named as US Vice Presidential candidate for Democratic party.
Note: In the United States, Democratic Presidential nominee Joe Biden has named Indian-origin senator Kamala Harris as his Vice-Presidential running mate. Joe Biden made history by selecting the first black woman to compete on a major party's presidential ticket. Kamala Harris is currently the US Senator from California. Former US President Barack Obama has often described her as a trailblazer.
 7. **Reliance Foundation** has launched the "W-GDP Women Connect Challenge" across India in association with US Agency for International Development (USAID).
Note: The "W-GDP Women Connect Challenge" has been launched to bridge the gender divide as well as the digital divide in India. The Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) challenge supports private sector-led approaches that close the gender digital divide, expand business opportunities and empower women.
 8. India announced a \$500 million package to fund a project in **Maldives**.
Note: An air connectivity "bubble" for travel, a direct ferry service, a submarine cable for telecom connectivity; and assistance for the Greater Male Connectivity project (GMCP) to connect Male to three neighbouring islands. India has sought to regain diplomatic influence in the islands after a new administration led by President Ibrahim Solih took power following the defeat of the pro-China strongman Abdulla Yameen in elections in 2018.
 9. The Dragon Endeavour is the spacecraft of space company **SpaceX**.
Note: NASA astronauts Robert Behnken and Douglas Hurley are aboard the SpaceX Crew Dragon Endeavour spacecraft as it is lifted onto the SpaceX GO Navigator recovery ship shortly after landing in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Pensacola, Florida, Sunday, Aug. 2, 2020.
 10. **Israel** has successfully tested its advanced missile defence system, "Arrow-2" ballistic missile interceptor.
Note: The Missile test was conducted in the test site in Central Israel over the Mediterranean Sea. The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) of the United States of America along with Israeli Air Force and Israel Aerospace Industries conducted the testing.
 11. Intergovernmental organization **European Union** has launched project 'Nirmanshree' for enhancing the women skill towards housing construction sector.
Note: This is the first-of-its-kind sustainable housing on a large scale in India with 1-million-euro. The project will be implemented in Beed and Osmanabad districts of Maharashtra and the Dhenkanal and Jajpur districts of Odisha.
 12. **United Kingdom** has launched £3 million "Innovation Challenge Fund" in India to support scientists in academic arena and industry to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.
Note: The fund invites tech innovators with connections to the AI-Data cluster in Karnataka and the future mobility cluster in Maharashtra to submit research and development proposals for tackling COVID-19 or which promote a greener planet.
 13. Recently, India has signed a cultural agreement with **Israel** that outlines a three-year programme of cooperation to further strengthen their strategic bilateral relations.
Note: India and Israel signed a cultural agreement that outlines a three-year programme of cooperation to further strengthen their strategic bilateral relations today. It aims to promote greater people-to-people exchanges.
 14. **UAE** became the first Gulf Arab country to have active diplomatic ties to Israel.
Note: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, and Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates, have agreed for the Israel-United Arab Emirates peace agreement, or the Abraham Accord to establish full diplomatic ties. It is expected that the peace accord will be signed in the White House, US in early September, 2020.
 15. The first meeting of the National Coordination Committees for monitoring implementation of mutually agreed projects between India and **Uzbekistan**.
Note: Both nations reexamined the activities of bilateral economic and trade cooperation which are in operation or planned for the future. The Committee was set up under the supervision of the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev.
 16. Tech giant **Google** has launched 'The Anywhere School' initiative in more than 250 countries around the world.
Note: Under the initiative, Google will roll out over 50 new features across products like Google Meet, Classroom, G Suite and other products. Google will launch custom and blurred backgrounds in Google Meet to provide 'extra privacy' to the users.

- 17. China** has launched its New Optical Remote-Sensing Satellite “Gaofen-9 05” along with 2 Smaller Payloads.
Note: The satellite, Gaofen-9 05, was sent into orbit by a Long March-2D carrier rocket. A multifunctional test satellite and another satellite named Tiantuo-5 were also launched via the rocket.
- 18.** A pair of gold-rimmed spectacles worn by Mahatma Gandhi were sold in an auction for £260,000 (over Rs 2.5 crore) in **UK**.
Note: The iconic spectacles were sold to an American collector within six minutes of bidding at an auction in Bristol. The glasses had been dropped in their letter box by a man who claimed that they were originally gifted to his uncle by Gandhi himself.
- 19.** Indian Institute of Technology’s (IIT) Alumni Council has signed an agreement with **Russia** to build the world’s largest and fastest hybrid quantum computer in India.
Note: The most promising areas for Indo-Russian joint projects are Information and Communications Technology, space exploration, climate change, quantum technology and data security.
- 20.** Global telecom company **Ericsson** has partnered with United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to help map school internet connectivity in 35 countries by the end of 2023.
Note: This joint initiative is a part of the Giga initiative launched by UNICEF and International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in September 2019 to provide internet connection to every school and their surrounding communities.
- 21. Singapore** will offer free coronavirus tests to community groups such as taxi drivers, food delivery workers and hawkers as part of efforts to expand the COVID-19 testing regime.
Note: Singapore will offer free coronavirus tests to community groups such as taxi drivers, food delivery workers and hawkers as part of efforts to expand the COVID-19 testing regime.

Honor & Awards

- 1. Sunil Ydv SS** has been conferred with the Karmaveer Chakra Award instituted by the United Nations and International Confederation of NGO (iCONGO).
Note: He received the award for his relentless contribution to society through his Telegram channel “SS Motivation.” He addresses social issues and motivates people every day through his channel. The awards he won last year include Rastra Prerna, Iconic Personality of India, Incredible Indian Icon and Humanitarian Excellence.
- 2. Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT)** has won the first prize in the Smart India Hackathon (SIH) 2020, a national-level digital product building competition.
Note: It was jointly organized by MHRD and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) at Noida Institute of Engineering & Technology (NIET), Uttar Pradesh. The team of DIAT named as ‘Age of Ultron’ had six members under Dr. Sunita Dhavale . Prize Money: Rs 1 Lakh
- 3. Moothon** film has won the Best Film Award in the 20th edition of New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF) of Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC).
Note: It was conducted as a virtual event with the celebrities of the film industries and award winners participating from all across India and the United States. Nivin Pauly starring film Moothon was directed by Geetu Mohandas. The movie portrays the story of a 14-year-old who travel in search of Moothon (elder brother) Akbar who left Lakshadweep for Mumbai”.
- 4.** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recognized Venkatrapur and Noliyasi, villages of **Odisha** as ‘Tsunami Ready’ for their overall preparedness to face the tsunami.
Note: With this recognition, Odisha became the first state in the India and India became the 1st Country in the Indian Ocean region to achieve the honour from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.
- 5.** The researchers from **IIT Kharagpur** institutions has won the Gandhian Young Technological Innovation (GYTI) Awards 2020 for developing a mechanism for generating electricity from wet clothes left under sunlight to dry.
Note: The work has been published in Nano Letters, a high-impact journal in the field, and the innovation has been patented by them. The same award was presented separately to another team of the IIT Kharagpur for addressing the problem of energy conservation and thermal management in wearable and flexible electronic devices.
- 6. Nitin Sethi** has won the Asian College of Journalism’s award 2019 for investigative journalism.
Note: The awards ceremony was conducted online due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Sethi won in the investigative journalism category for his six-part series

- titled "Paisa Politics" published by The Huffington Post India.
7. **Shiv Sahay Singh** has won the Asian College of Journalism's award 2019 the K P Narayana Kumar Memorial Award for social impact journalism.
Note: He won the inaugural social impact journalism award for his story titled "Death by digital exclusion: On faculty public distribution system in Jharkhand" published in The Hindu.
 8. **Akshay Kumar** is the only Indian actor to be listed among the top 10 world's highest-paid actors of 2020.
Note: Akshay is placed at sixth place in the list. Most of his income came from product endorsements. The list takes into account the earnings between June 1, 2019, and June 1, 2020. The list has been topped by Wrestler-turned-movie star Dwayne Johnson, for a second straight year, with the total earning of \$87.5 million. Johnson is also known by his ring name The Rock.
 9. Indian origin physician **Ravi Solanki** is among 19 winners of the UK's Royal Academy of Engineering President's Special Awards for Pandemic Service.
Note: Ravi Solanki, a physician working on neurodegenerative diseases, along with Raymond Siems, an engineer working in machine learning, were awarded for their volunteer work to help build a secure and fully functioning website for a new National Health Service (NHS) charity HEROES.
 10. Rohit Sharma, Vinesh Phogat, Manika Batra and M Thangavelu were recommended for **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award 2020** award by the National Sports Awards selection committee.
Note: Rohit Sharma will be the fourth cricketer after legendary Sachin Tendulkar, MS Dhoni and Virat Kohli to be conferred the award. Tendulkar was awarded the Khel Ratna in 1998, Dhoni got it in 2007 and Kohli received in 2018. In a first, this year's National Sports Awards ceremony is likely to be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 11. St Christopher School of **Nagaland** has won the Gold Award along with cash prize of Rs.1 Lakh from the first ever Pallikkutam National Award for Innovation in Education instituted by Rajagiri Media.
Note: The St Christopher School won the award for ensuring a seamless class for the students with the limited infrastructure and resources in the rural area. The Prize money for Gold Award is Rs.1,00,000. The rural school provided a balanced online and offline activities for the students over the whatsapp. The award was sponsored under the CSR initiative of the Federal Bank Ltd.
 12. **Indore** city became India's cleanest city for the fourth year in a row in the Swachh Survekshan 2020 awards.
Note: Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri announced the Swachh Survekshan 2020 result at the Award Ceremony 'Swachh Mahotsav' in the national capital being organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoUHA). This is the fifth edition of the annual cleanliness survey of the country. A total of 129 awards will be handed out to the top-performing cities and states.
 13. Water technology company **VA Tech Wabag Ltd.** has won the prestigious Global Water Award for its 45 million liters a day Tertiary Treatment Reverse Osmosis Plant.
Note: The plant has won the distinction award under the category of 'wastewater project of the year'. The plant is one of the largest and technologically advanced water treatment plants in India.
 14. **NLCI** has bagged the "Swachhta Hi Seva award" for transforming Neyveli Township into a plastic-free, green campus.
Note: The award was conferred to three units of the PSU - Township administration office (First rank), Thermal Power Station -I (second rank) and Mines Sub-stores (third rank). NLCIL implemented the Swachhta Hi Seva programme in two phases -- the first phase from September 11 to November 2, 2019 and the second phase from October 3 to 27, 2019.
 15. **Neelakantha Bhanu Prakash** has won the first ever Gold Medal for India in Mental Calculations World Cup (MCWC).
Note: Bhanu Prakash had secured the gold medal with a score of 167, Lebanese contender Mohammed El Mir secured the Silver Medal with a score 102 and Asmita Pal from the UAE bagged the Bronze medal with a score of 100 points.
 16. **Tenzin Priyadarshi and Zara Houshmand** has authored the book titled 'Running Toward Mystery: The Adventure of an Unconventional Life'.
Note: The book provides an account of how the Dalai Lama traced his Spiritual Teacher Khunu Lama in India. Tenzin Priyadarshi is the President and CEO of The Dalai Lama Center for Ethics and Transformative Values at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Zara Houshmand is an Iranian American author and literary translator.
 17. **Marieke Lucas Rijneveld** has been adjudged as the winner of the International Booker Prize 2020.
Note: The book was first published in Dutch in 2018 and eventually translated into English by Michele Hutchison. The £50,000 prize (\$66,000) will be split equally between the author and translator to give equal recognition to both.
 18. "Nayi Disha" is the HR initiative of **SBI** bank has been awarded with **Brandon Human Capital Management (HCM) Excellence Award 2020**.
Note: The award is also known as the Academy Awards of Learning & Development 2020. The SBI has

been awarded with the global recognition for its HR initiative, "Nayi Disha". The award winners will be honored at Brandon Hall Group's annual HCM

Excellence Conference, January 26-28, 2021 at the Hilton West Palm Beach, Florida.

Sports News

1. **German** Famous footballer Benedikt Howedes retired recently.
Note: He was one of the 3 players who had played every minute for the team in the tournament. Benedikt Howedes has played 44 times for German National Team from 2011-17. In September 2007, German Football Association honored him with the Fritz Walter Medal, under-19 Gold Medal which is given to the best youth players.
2. The **Indian Government** has provisionally granted permission for the 13th edition of **Indian Premier League's (IPL's) 2020** to be rescheduled in **UAE**.
Note: BCCI has also decided to host a Women's T20 Challenge to be held from November 1 to 10 in UAE. Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah will be the three venues of the tournament. No spectators to be allowed in the initial phase of the tournament
3. India has withdrawn from the women's world team **Squash championship** scheduled to be held in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**.
Note: India has withdrawn from the **women's world team Squash championship** scheduled in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 15th to 20th December, due to lack of preparation, time and match-readiness of its players. Squash Rackets Federation of India (SRFI) has decided to withdraw from the championship.
4. **Lewis Hamilton** won the **British Grand Prix (GP) 2020**.
Note: It is officially known as the Formula 1 Pirelli British Grand Prix 2020. The tournament was held at the Silverstone Circuit in Silverstone, United Kingdom (UK). This is his 7th time to win this title. He is the only racer to win most in British GP.
5. **Sports Authority of India** with CISCE and CBSE, will host an online program for training of Physical Education (PE) Teachers on "Khelo India Fitness Assessment of School Going Children".
Note: The program will target 7500 participants across 2615 CISCE schools. It will assess the fitness levels of the school children and identify potential future champions. Khelo India Fitness Assessment through Khelo India Mobile App (KIMA) will be done. The session is titled 'Whole School Approach to Fitness'.
6. Indian umpire **KN Ananthapadmanabhan** has been included in ICC's international panel of umpires.
Note: Ananthapadmanabhan played 105 First-Class and 54 List A games for Kerala, taking 344 and 87 wickets respectively. Ananthapadmanabhan has officiated in all major domestic events including the IPL.
7. **INOX** company will be the official sponsor Indian team for the rescheduled Tokyo Olympic.
Note: The Tokyo Olympics was rescheduled to next year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It will be held from July 23 to August 8 in 2021. As part of the partnership the Group will also support team's promotions through its entertainment company -- INOX Leisure Limited, which owns a chain of multiplexes in the country.
8. "Fit India Freedom Run" would be organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports from **15th August to 02nd October 2020**.
Note: The ministry is organising "Fit India Freedom Run" to mark the 74th Independence Day of India on August 15 to 151st birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on October 2. This would be the largest country-wide run, targeted to encourage fitness among the masses while following the COVID-19 protocols.
9. **Max Verstappen** has won the 70th Anniversary Grand Prix.
Note: His victory ended Mercedes dominant Formula 1 season. 70th Anniversary Grand Prix 2020 was the 5th race of 2020 Formula 1 season and was held at Silverstone, United Kingdom
10. **India** will host the ICC Men's T20 World cup 2021.
Note: While the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2020 that was postponed due to Covid-19 will be held in Australia in 2022. Cricket's governing body has also decided to postpone the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2021 in New Zealand till February – March 2022 because of the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on cricket globally.
11. Suresh Raina announced his retirement from **Cricket** sport.
Note: He made his international debut against Sri Lanka in 2005 and represented India in 226 ODIs, 78 T20Is and 18 Tests in his cricketing career that spanned over 13 years. He scored 7,787 runs across all the formats in international cricket. He also claimed 167 catches in his international career, setting the bar high with his athleticism on field. Suresh Raina is the first Indian batsman who has scored a century in all three formats of the game.

- 12. Lewis Hamilton** has won the Formula One Spanish Grand Prix 2020 held at Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, Spain.
Note: Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) has won the Formula One Spanish Grand Prix 2020 held at Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, Spain. This was his 4th win of the season and the 88th win of his career. Max Verstappen (Red Bull-Netherlands) came second followed by Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes-Finland) at third.
- 13.** The Asian Boxing Championship has been postponed to next year owing to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the tournament was scheduled to be held in **India**.
Note: India last hosted the men's Asian meet back in 1980 in Mumbai before conducting the women's event in 2003 in Hisar. The tournament became a combined event for men and women last year. The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown sporting calendars haywire the world over with several big events, including the Olympics and the T20 World Cup of cricket, postponed.
- 14. Dream 11** has bagged the title sponsorship rights of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020.
Note: Dream 11 has bagged the rights as Expression of Interest (EOI) was invited by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for IPL 2020's title sponsorship after the Chinese mobile phone brand, Vivo, pulled out of it. The title rights bagged by the fantasy gaming start-up "Dream 11" are valid till December 31, 2020.
- 15.** Famous cricketer Laura Marsh of **England** has announced her retirement from all forms of cricket.
Note: In her international career, Marsh played 9 Tests, 103 ODIs and 67 T20Is. She managed to score 1,588 runs across all formats and also registered 217 wickets. The 33-year-old announced her retirement from international cricket in December and has now decided to call time on her domestic career as well.
- 16. All India Football Federation (AIFF)** has signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with International Professional Scouting Organization (IPSO) to conduct online Scouting Workshops throughout India.
Note: Under the agreement, IPSO will conduct online workshops which will provide a number of courses and webinars with regards to scouting in India. The workshop will be a starting point to become a scout or an analyst and will also help anyone to understand the foundations and protocols in talent identification, scouting & analysis.
- 17.** Football team **Sevilla** has won the Europa League for a sixth time.
Note: Italy's wait for a first European trophy in a decade, and Inter's nine-year trophy drought, goes on after Lukaku could not stop Carlos's spectacular strike. It is Europe's secondary club football tournament organised by UEFA, and the 12th season since it was renamed from the UEFA Cup to the UEFA Europa League.
- 18. Table tennis player** Manika Batra has been selected for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award 2020.
Note: The government has announced the National Sports Awards 2020. Rohit Sharma (Cricketer), Mariyappan Thangavelu (Para-Athlete), Manika Batra (TT player), Vinesh Phogat (Wrestler) and Rani Rampal (Hockey) will receive the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award.
- 19.** Former cricketer Lisa Sthalekar has been inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame, she held from **Australia**.
Note: Former Australian captain Lisa Sthalekar were inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame in a virtual ceremony along with Legendary South African all-rounder Jaques Kallis and Pakistan batting great Zaheer Abbas. Pune born Sthalekar represented Australia in eight Tests, 125 ODIs and 54 T20s. Sthalekar is the 27th from Australia and the ninth woman player in the list, which includes five from her country.
- 20. Sophia Popov** has won the Women's British Open 2020 title in Golf.
Note: German Golfer Sophia Popov won the Women's British Open 2020 title (rebranded as 2020 AIG Women's Open) by defeating Thailand's Jasmine Suwannapura by two strokes at Royal Troon in Scotland. Sophia has now become the first female golfer from Germany to win the LPGA Tour's major title.
- 21.** Football club **Bayern Munich** has won the UEFA Champions League 2019-20 title.
Note: Bayern Munich has become the first European Cup winners who won all their matches during the tournament. This is the sixth European Champions League title for Bayern Munich.
- 22.** Famous all-rounder Cameron White was playing for **Australia** announced his retirement from all forms of professional cricket.
Note: He represented Australia in 4 Test matches, 91 ODIs and 47 T20Is. He also led the Australian limited-overs team in 7 international games. He amassed 146 runs in tests, 2072 runs in ODIs and 984 runs in T20Is.
- 23. Table Tennis** player Poulomi Ghatak announced her retirement.
Note: Poulomi Ghatak belongs to the state of West Bengal. She won three junior national championships as well as seven senior national championships between 1996 and 2016.
- 24. James Anderson** became the first-ever fast bowler to take 600 wickets in Test Match Cricket.
Note: Overall, he is the 4th bowler to take 600 test wickets after 3 spinners Muttiah Muralitharan, Shane

Warne, and Anil Kumble. Anderson, who made his Test debut in 2003 against Zimbabwe, had become the highest wicket-taker among seamers in 2018 when he dismissed Mohammed Shami against India at The Oval to go past Glenn McGrath's tally of 563 Test wickets.

25. India will host BRICS Games 2021.

Note: This announcement came after Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju attended a meeting of Sports Ministers of the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and

South Africa). India will get the chairmanship of the five-nation independent international group in 2021.

26. Brothers pair, Mike Bryan and Bob Bryan have announced their retirement from the sport. They are associated with **Tennis** sport .

Note: They are the most successful men's doubles pair in tennis history. The brother's pair captured an Open Era record with 119 trophies in 26 seasons which comprises all four Grand Slams, all nine ATP Masters 1000s as well as the Olympic gold medal.

Books and Authors

1. Matthew McConaughey has authored the book titled 'Greenlights'.

Note: 'Greenlights' the debut book authored by Oscar-winning actor Matthew McConaughey published by Crown Publishing Group is set to be released on 20th October 2020. The book was described as "not a traditional memoir but a playbook" based on the adventures and life experiences of McConaughey.

2. Vijay Kumar Choudhary has authored the books titled "Siyasat Mein Sadasyata".

Note: The book is a compilation of the author's views, three dozen articles on different important issues and his life journey. The book was published by Bihar Assembly Secretariat. The Book was released by Bihar Chief Minister, Nitish Kumar.

3. Nirupama Yadav has authored the book titled "Vishesh: Code To Win".

Note: The book is set to be released on August 29, the National Sports Day. The book narrates the inspirational story on the life of Vishesh Bhargavanshi, India's youngest basketball team captain.

4. Yatish Yadav has authored the book titled "RAW: A History of India's Covert Operations".

Note: The book will give a detailed account of real spies and reveals hitherto unknown aspects of their life, trauma and temptation, triumphs and setbacks in executing each of their 'Mission Impossible'. RAW, whose founder was spymaster Rameshwar Nath Kao, was established in 1968 to satisfy the need for increased intelligence that was identified during the 1962 Sino-Indian Border War and during the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965.

5. Neena Rai has authored the book 'Amazing Ayodhya' that will shed light on the history of Ayodhya.

Note: The book will be published by the publishing house Bloomsbury.

6. The book titled 'Connecting, Communicating, Changing' has been released by Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Prakash Javadekar that chronicles years of office of -- **M Venkaiah Naidu.**

Note: This book is regarding the years spent by the Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu in office. The first copy of the book has been provided to the Vice President only. The e-version of the book has been launched by the Union Minister Prakash Javadekar.

7. Dalai Lama has authored the book titled "Our Only Home: A Climate Appeal to the World".

Note: The Dalai Lama in the book calls on political decision-makers to fight against deadlock and ignorance on the issue of climate change and to stand up for a different, more climate-friendly world and for the younger generation to assert their right to regain its future. It follows his 2019 publication dedicated to children, "The Seed of Compassion: Lessons from the Life and Teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama", his autobiography and a book on philosophy.

8. Bijal Vachharajani has authored the book titled "A Bend in Time : Writings by Children on the COVID 19 Pandemic".

Note: The book is published by Talking Cub (children's imprint of Speaking Tiger). The book showcased the emotions and thoughts of children and young adults, from across the country and social groups, about the greatest global crisis in recent times: the COVID-19 pandemic

9. Arjun Subramaniam has authored the book titled "Full Spectrum: India's Wars, 1972-2020".

Note: It is the sequel to his 1st book, 'India's Wars: A Military History, 1947-1971'. The book portrays the comprehensive account of war and conflict in contemporary India over the past five decades next month. It will be published by HarperCollins Publishers India Pvt. Ltd.

10. Chetan Bhagat has authored the book titled "One Arranged Murder".

Note: Published by Westland Publications, it is slated to release on September 28, 2020. The plot revolves around a man coming home to his wife on Karvachauth only to not find her anywhere.

- 11. Pradeep Chhibber & B. Harsh Shah** has authored the book titled “India Tomorrow: Conversations with the Next Generation of Political Leaders”.
- Note:** The book will attempt to unravel the personalities, aspirations, ideologies, interests, passions and motivation of the next generation leaders. It will include personalities of the likes of Rahul Gandhi, Smriti Zubin Irani, Varun Gandhi, Omar Abdullah and Akhilesh Yadav.
- 12. Sudha Murthy** has authored the book titled ‘Grandparents’ Bag of Stories.
- Note:** This was announced by the publishing house Penguin Random House India on the 70th birthday of award-winning author. The book, scheduled to be released in November, is a sequel to Murthy’s last release Grandma’s Bag of Stories and will feature 20 stories.
- 13.** The book titled “The Beauty of Living Twice” is a Memoir of which Hollywood Actor to be release in March 2021 -- **Sharon Stone**.
- Note:** She unveiled the cover of the book on Twitter. The Book will reflect on her journey from painful childhood in Pennsylvania to her experience in acting in films like Martin Scorsese’s mobster epic ‘Casino’ which earned her an Academy Award nomination and a Golden Globe award. The book is set to be published by Alfred A Knopf, and is set to release both in hardcover and ebook.
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- 15. Dr Ashok K. Vaid** has authored the book on cancer titled “Gastric Cancer”, released by Union Minister, Jitendra Singh.
- Note:** The book was launched during a special session organized during the 3-day virtual conference on Oncology. The book is published by Springer Healthcare Education. Ashok K. Vaid is a Noted Oncologist and was awarded Padma Shri in 2009 for his outstanding work in the field of medicine.
- 16. Sree Iyer** has authored the book titled “Who painted my lust red”.
- Note:** The book is something about when Bollywood meets Cricket meets Politicians. This is the second book in this series of Sree Iyer’s Money Trilogy series. The first book was “Who painted my money white?”.
- 17. Anand Vasu & Jatin Paranjpe** has authored the book titled “Cricket Drona” on the life of one of India’s most renowned cricket coaches, Vasudev Jagannath Paranjpe.
- Note:** The book is published by Penguin. The book talks about the impact of Paranjpe on shaping the careers of India’s greatest cricketers like Gavaskar, Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and Rohit Sharma.
- 18.** The book titled “National Security Challenges: Young Scholars’ Perspective” has been authored by **Group of Journalist**.
- Note:** The book contains various themes pertaining to national security. It aims to develop strategic thinking among the youth of this country. The book is a tribute to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, the strategist of 1971 Indo-Pakistan War, that resulted in the liberation of Bangladesh.
- 19.** Cricket coach **Gurcharan Singh** has co-authored his memoir titled “Pitching It Straight” with sports journalist MS Unnikrishnan.
- Note:** The book portrays the personal and professional life of Gurcharan Singh, who trained numerous young talents. The 186-page memoir covers the period when cricket was patronised by royal families and the life incidence of Gurcharan Singh during the 1947 partition.

Science and Defence

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)- **Madras**. has developed device to remotely monitor the vital signs of patients, including those infected by COVID-19 in association with healthcare startup Helyxon.
Note: The device has been deployed in some hospitals in Chennai. It can monitor temperature, oxygen saturation, respiratory rate and heart rate. According to the institute, the device is being used on 2,000 patients in public and private hospitals and homes too.
- Indian Institute of Technology **Kanpur** has entered into a tripartite agreement with Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DAR & PG) to develop Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) Technique.
Note: The MoU was to conduct exploratory and predictive analysis of Public Grievances received on the web based Centralized Public Grievances Redress & Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) pertaining to the MoD. The project will help the Ministry of Defence to take corrective measures in time, before a problem becomes large.
- COVID19BWM App** developed by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to track the daily biomedical waste.

- Note:** The directions came on July 30, 2020, on recommendations made in a report by Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA). It had suggested that the application be made mandatory so that the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) can track biomedical waste and ensure it is sent for treatment.
4. Inspection app has been launched by the Indian Railways which will help in minimizing the train delays and long waits due to technical snags -- **Overhead Equipment (OHE)**.
Note: The app has been rolled out on a Pan India basis. The Overhead Equipment (OHE) app will monitor the overhead wire in real-time and if there are any defects in it, it will alert the Indian Railways.
 5. India's first mobile RT-PCR COVID lab has been launched in **Karnataka**.
Note: Karnataka's Medical Education Minister Dr. K Sudhakar inaugurated India's first Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT- PCR) COVID-19 mobile Lab approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). The mobile lab is called the Mobile Infection Testing and Reporting lab (MITR) which was developed by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru and handed over to Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) in Bengaluru.
 6. India will take part in the multilateral military "Kavkaz 2020" hosted by **Russia**.
Note: The Indian contingent includes 150 Army personnel and a smaller number of personnel from the Navy and Air Force. The invitation for participation to Kavkaz 2020, also referred to as Caucasus-2020, has been extended to at least 18 countries including China, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey apart from other Central Asian Republics part of the SCO.
 7. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) **Guwahati** has developed nanoparticles 'meta-grid' of metamaterial grid' in association with Imperial College London, United Kingdom.
Note: It was jointly developed by Dr. Debabrata Sikdar, assistant professor at IIT Guwahati along with Prof. Sir John B. Pendry and Prof. Alexei A. Kornyshev from Imperial College London. Meta-grid is a specifically patterned array of nanoparticles acting as metamaterials and it is capable of exhibiting extraordinary optical properties.
 8. Serum Institute of India (SII) Private Limited has entered into a partnership with International Vaccine Alliance, Gavi and which foundation to Accelerate the manufacture and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines for India -- **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**.
Note: This is as a part of the Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), a mechanism within the COVAX Facility. The vaccines will be made available to the 92 countries included in Gavi's COVAX AMC. SII has set a ceiling price of USD 3 per dose. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, through its strategic investment fund, will provide at-risk funding of USD 150 million to GAVI.
 9. The Ministry of Defence has announced to ban import of how many weapon systems and platforms from abroad to boost "Atmanirbhar Bharat -- **101**".
Note: The government has prepared a list 101 items on which there would be an embargo on import to give a push to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan" (Self Reliant India Movement). It is estimated that contracts worth almost Rs 4 Lakh crore will be placed upon the domestic industry within the next six to seven years.
 10. **IIT Kanpur** has developed indigenous seed balls named 'BEEG' in collaboration with Agnys Waste Management Private Limited that will help to safeguard people and farmers in plantations during the COVID-19 times.
Note: This will help to safeguard people and farmers in plantations during the COVID-19 times. The initiative is guided by Prof. J. Ramkumar. The initiative provides employment opportunities to unemployed workers and gardeners (due to the COVID-19 lockdown).
 11. Aerospace company **Skyroot Aerospace** has successfully test fired an upper stage rocket engine "Raman".
Note: With this, Skyroot Aerospace has become the first Indian private firm to exhibit the potential to build a homegrown rocket engine. "Raman" is a 3-D printed rocket engine which has been named after Nobel laureate CV Raman.
 12. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) **Ropar** has developed a room disinfection device in collaboration with Momentum India Private Limited.
Note: The indigenous device harnesses the germicidal effects of ultraviolet (UV-C) radiations to inactivate viruses and bacteria. The device ensures 360-degree disinfection through its prismatic body and foldable wings.
 13. To boost self-reliance in the defence manufacturing sector, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched which of the following organizations --- **Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO)**.
Note: The twin aspects of innovation and indigenisation would be brought together by the Naval Technology Acceleration Council (N-TAC), which will also offer apex level directives. It also includes a working group under the N-TAC, which will be responsible for the implementation of the projects.
 14. Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV) for the Indian Coast Guard has been launched -- **Sarthak**.

- Note:** Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) has designed and developed the Offshore Patrol Vessel 'Sarthak' which is the 4th in the series of five OPVs. 'Sarthak' has been built indigenously and is designed in such a way that it carries a twin-engine helicopter, four high speed boats along with one inflatable boat for swift boarding and Search & Rescue operations.
15. With the support of Department of Science and Technology's Clean Air Research Initiative who has developed as indigenous Air Unique-quality Monitoring (AUM) Photonic System -- **Prof. Rao Tataavarti**.
Note: The system has been developed by Prof. Rao Tataavarti, Director of Gayatri Vidya Parishad-Scientific and Industrial Research Centre & GVP College of Engineering, Visakhapatnam along with the support of Department of Science and Technology's Clean Air Research Initiative.
16. **Nokia** plans to set up robotics lab at Indian Institute of Science for 5G research.
Note: The centre will promote engagement and cooperation between academia, start-ups and industry ecosystem partners in research and development of use cases. The centre supports and aligns with the government's initiatives of Start-up India.
17. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited deployed two Light Combat Helicopters (LCH) for operations -- **Ladakh**.
Note: The LCH successfully demonstrated its quick deployment prowess to forward locations in extreme temperatures. The other features of LCH include its ability to operate in the complete Area of Responsibility (AOR) and altitudes.
18. Team of researchers of **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru** have developed a sustainable process for making brick-like structures named "Space Bricks" on the surface of the moon in association with ISRO.
Note: The process uses the lunar soil, bacteria and guar beans to make the space brick. The process uses the Urea – sourced from human urine and lunar soil as the raw materials for the construction on the lunar surface which reduces the overall expenditure.
19. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the proposal of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) to be expanded across **173** border and coastal districts.
Note: Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the proposal of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) to be expanded across 173 border and coastal districts. As many as 1 lakh cadets from the area will be inducted to the NCC with Girl cadets covering one-third of the count.
20. Flipkart signed an MoU with **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Patna** to support the industry focused applied research in the fields like Artificial Intelligence, Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning.
Note: This is to create industry focused applied research to support the reach of e-commerce to more consumers and sellers. Under this MoU, IIT Patna will undertake joint research activities, writing research papers, organising seminars, internships and mentorship opportunities.
21. Technology company **Google** has launched an employment application named 'Kormo Jobs' in India.
Note: Google had first launched the employment application in Bangladesh in 2018 and further expanded it to Indonesia in 2019. In 2019, Google had also tested this app in India but under the brand 'Spot' on Google Pay app, which saw more than 2 million verified jobs posted on the platform, including from companies like Zomato and Dunzo.
22. **DRDO** institution has developed a UV disinfection tower for sanitizing coronavirus-prone areas.
Note: The equipment named UV Blaster is "useful for high tech surfaces like electronic equipment, computers and other gadgets in laboratories and offices that are not suitable for disinfection with chemical methods. The product is also effective for areas with large flow of people such as airports, shopping malls, metros, hotels, factories and offices
23. A newly built Interceptor boat of the Indian Coast Guard built by Larsen and Toubro was launched in **Surat**.
Note: A newly-built "Interceptor" boat of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) was launched in Surat. Interceptor Boat 'ICGS C-454', built by Larsen and Toubro, was launched into the service of the Coast Guard.
24. '**MY IAF**' has been launched by the **Indian Air Force** to provide career-related information and details to the aspirants who wish to join the Indian Air Force (IAF).
Note: The application was launched by the Chief of the Air Staff, Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria. The app launched as a part of the Digital India initiative has been developed in association with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).
25. The India Pavilion at the Army-2020 International Military and Technical Forum was inaugurated in **Russia**.
Note: The forum will also host discussions among global military officials, researchers and defence industry experts about the application of 3D technologies in designing, manufacturing and operating weapons and military equipment. The forum was organised by the Russian Defence Ministry will be held from August 23-29 at the Patriot Park near Moscow, which has been the venue since 2015.
26. ISRO has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **Veer Surendra Sai University of**

Technology to set up the first of its kind innovation cum incubation centre to promote space research.

Note: Under the MoU ISRO and VSSUT will collaborate to develop high-end simulation tools, miniature test facilities like Static test facility and solid propulsion research lab and establishment of testing facilities for the scaled-down model. ISRO will offer technical consultancy support and financial assistance of Rs.50 lakhs for the development of infrastructure of VSSUT.

27. CISF has created and launched an in-house mobile Application (app), 'Pensioners Corner' to get in touch with the pensioners and to bring them to the digital platform as a one stop solution.

Note: It will also cater to the needs of its pensioners. It is a part of its 'e-karyalay', an electronic office app launched in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Banking & Financial Awareness

1. The National Digital Conference on "Easing Doing Business for Atmanirbhar Bharat" organised by **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**.
Note: Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, inaugurated the National Digital Conference on "Easing Doing Business for Atmanirbhar Bharat". The conference is to improve the business environment of India.
2. **SIDBI** in association with **TransUnion CIBIL Limited** launched a comprehensive financial education and one-stop knowledge platform for micro, small and medium enterprises "MSMESaksham" for MSMEs.
Note: The portal is focused on two key pillars of financial knowledge and access to credit. The portal will have a consolidated list of all the schemes launched by the Centre and state governments for MSMEs. It will be a knowledge hub with informative articles, business insights to help entrepreneurs and business owners start or grow businesses.
3. Craft Silicon has entered into a strategic partnership with **PayU** entity to innovate and accelerate the digital loan repayment solutions for small finance banks, MFI and NBFCs.
Note: The partnership focuses on redefining a secured digital payment platform. The association offers a consolidated settlement across multiple apps and payment gateway.
4. Payment system **MobiKwik** has launched **mpay.me**, a UPI payment link service that allows users to send and receive money from any UPI payment app.
Note: Through mpay.me, users and merchants can set up a personalized link using their mobile number. The link can be created through the MobiKwik app or the MobiKwik website and can be shared anywhere with anyone over chat, SMS, email etc.
5. Indian power company **Reliance Power** and Japanese energy major **JERA** have inked a pact with a group of banks for financing their new gas-fired thermal power generation project in Bangladesh.
Note: Both partners will develop a new 745 MW natural gas combined-cycle power project in Meghnaghat in Bangladesh. In September, 2019

6. As per the revised Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules, 1957, listed entities will get **3 years** to meet criteria of minimum public shareholding of 25 per cent.
Note: listed entities get one more year to comply with the rules of MPS, benefitting more than three dozen PSUs (public sector undertakings) who have been unable to meet this requirement amid COVID-19.
7. Public sector bank **Canara Bank** has partnered with New India Assurance Company Ltd, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Co Ltd and HDFC ERGO Health Insurance to offer individual short-term Corona Kavach policy.
Note: The premium of the policy starts from Rs 300. Purchase can be made on an individual basis and family floater basis. The policy will be available for a maximum period of 9 and half months (or 285 days).
8. Country's national bank **Bahrain, National Bank of Bahrain (NBB)** has decided to adopt the Finacle Cash Management Suite of Infosys Finacle to digitally transform its transaction banking business.
Note: This partnership is a part of NBB's digital transformation, with the upgrades provided by the suite to equip the bank with a modern system that will provide simple and seamless service to the clients.
9. AI-powered multilingual voice bot **AXAA** has been launched by Axis Bank to resolve customer queries.
Note: The BOT has been launched in collaboration with Bengaluru startup Vernacular.ai, an AI-based SaaS voice automation platform. AXAA will optimise voice AI solutions and help automate customer interactions through intelligent human-like dialogue.
10. **Bharti AXA General Insurance** has entered into a partnership with General Insurance company for financial protection of the bank's retailers and merchants.
Note: The policy will provide financial protection in case of damage to assets inside the shop due to fire and

allied perils and burglary, among others, as covered in the product. Notably, a large number of bank's retailers and merchants are small- and medium-size shop owners who are totally dependent on their shops for their livelihood.

11. **Mozambique**, Export-Import (EXIM) Bank has to improve the power supply quality of the country.
Note: The Agreement was signed through exchange between Saroj Khuntia, General Manager of EXIM Bank and Adriano Isaias Ubisse, National Directorate of Treasury, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Mozambique. With the signing of this agreement, India has extended 14 Lines of Credit to Mozambique taking the value to USD 772.44 million.
12. Life Insurance Corporation of India(LIC) has acquired 4.23% Stake of **YES Bank**.
Note: With this acquisition, the hold of LIC in YES Bank has increased from 0.75%(19 crore shares) to 4.98%(125 crore shares).Period of acquisition is between September 21, 2017, and July 31, 2020.
13. **International Financial Corporation (IFC)** entities committed to invest Rs 75 crore in Endiya Partners Fund II.
Note: In addition to this, IFC has also committed an additional USD 10 million for direct co-investments. The partnership will provide financial and strategic support to Endiya portfolio companies, resulting in increased access to growth opportunities and sustainable scalability.
14. **SBM Bank India** has collaborated with InstaReM to enhance the existing outbound remittance service offerings from India.
Note: Through this partnership, SBM Bank India will be the licensed banking partner for InstaReM and gain access to United States, Canada, Australia, Europe, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. SBM Bank India will also utilise the payment rails of InstaReM to facilitate last mile outbound transfer deliveries for the users in India.
15. **National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI)** has launched 'nth Rewards', a business intelligence and analytics enabled omni-channel multi-branded loyalty platform.
Note: This platform enables users to earn 'nth' (denoting infinite possibilities) points through various bank transactions and redeem them instantly on various products, such as e-vouchers, donations, hotel and flight bookings. The platform aims to become a one stop shop for the bank which will enable them to retain and grow their customer base.
16. **Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Maharashtra-based bullion trade and industry associations 'Akola Sarafa Association and Akola Sarafa Va Suvarnakar Yuva Sangh'.
Note: The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) will conduct various activities such as seminars and awareness programmes on price-risk management for bullion traders and jewellers. These programmes will help them in shifting to more organised forms of trading.
17. **Paytm** has launched India's 1st Pocket Android POS (Point of Sale) Device for contactless ordering and payments in India.
Note: It is an effort to digitise and empower a large number of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The company aims to issue over 2 lakh devices within the next few months which will generate over 20 million transactions per month.
18. **South Indian Bank** has obtained in-principle approval from the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** to set up a wholly owned non- financial subsidiary for undertaking activities permitted by RBI.
Note: After SIB completes the relevant formalities and receives final approval from the regulators the subsidiary will commence its operations. The establishment of the subsidiary is a further step in consolidating the position of SIB "as a Retail Banking Power House".
19. Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has launched the platform "Honoring the Honest" for **Transparent Taxation**.
Note: In a major reform the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has carried out several major tax reforms in direct taxes in recent years. Last year, the Corporate Tax rates were reduced from 30 per cent to 22 per cent and for new manufacturing units, the rates were reduced to 15 per cent. Dividend distribution tax was also abolished.
20. The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has announced to introduce a mechanism of 'Positive Pay' feature for all cheques of value of **Rs 50,000 and above**.
Note: This feature helps to avert cheque frauds. The limit of Rs 50,000 will cover approximately 20 per cent of transactions by volume and 80 per cent by value. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced to introduce a mechanism of 'Positive Pay' feature for all cheques of value Rs 50,000 and above.
21. **Volvo Eicher** will acquire Volvo Bus India in Rs 100 crore deal.
Note: A new bus division will be formed at VECV to house both Eicher and Volvo bus businesses. It will be headed by Volvo Bus Corporation's Akash Passey, who will repatriate to India and move to VECV. The bus manufacturing plant of Volvo at Hoskote in Karnataka and its 500 employees would be transferred to VECV.

- 22. The National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP)** was funded by Government of India and **World Bank (WB)**.
Note: The Government of India-World Bank-funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project is designed for strengthening the national agricultural education system in the country. The overall objective to provide more relevant and high-quality education to the agricultural university students that are in tune with the New Education Policy – 2020.
- 23. Punjab National Bank** has launched 'DIGITAL APNAYEN' campaign to encourage customers to use digital banking channels.
Note: The campaign launched by the bank's Managing Director S S Mallikarjuna Rao on the occasion of Independence Day is till March 31, 2021. PNB encourage customers to use digital channels and participate in the noble cause of donating to the PM CARES Fund for COVID-19.
- 24. Reserve Bank of India** has decided to transfer as dividend **Rs 57,128 crore**. to the central government accounting year 2019-20.
Note: It has decided to maintain a contingency risk buffer of 5.5 percent at the minimum threshold recommended by the Jalan committee to review RBI's capital framework. The central board approved the dividend at its 584th meeting through video conferencing to discuss the financial operations and the balance sheet for the financial year 2019-20 .
- 25. The National Stock Exchange of India** jointly developed and launched Platform for Investor Education (PIE), an online investor education resource centre with **IIM Bangalore**.
Note: The PIE was launched in a virtual meet attended by Mr. Nagendraa Parakh, Executive Director of SEBI, Mr. Vikram Limaye MD & CEO of NSE and Professor Rishikesh T Krishnan, Director of IIM Bangalore. PIE will serve as a unique platform to impart investor education in a simpler way through video, audio and other digital media formats.
- 26. Private sector banks Yes Bank** has garnered Rs 15,000 crores under its qualified institutional placement (QIP).
Note: Investors were allocated 41.89 crore shares at an issue price of Rs 358 per equity. During the share sale, Monetary Authority of Singapore picked up 4.6 crore shares, representing 11.06 per cent of the QIP size. Other prominent investors included Morgan Stanley Investment Funds Global Opportunity Fund and Societe Generale-ODI picking up 7.31 per cent and 5.55 per cent, respectively.
- 27. Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX)** exchanges is going to launch India's first bullion index named "Bulldex".
Note: Bullions, viz. gold and silver are already being traded as individual commodities on the country's premier commodity exchange. With gold and silver as underlying, Bulldex will have a market lot size of 50 and be cash-settled futures contract. MCX had tested bullion index futures trade in mock trading exercises in July.
- 28. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has lifted restrictions on the remuneration of the Bandhan Bank's MD & CEO **Chandra Shekhar Ghosh**.
Note: The RBI had lifted restrictions on the remuneration of the bank's MD & CEO Chandra Shekhar Ghosh at the existing level. The curbs were withdrawn after the lender met RBI norms to reduce promoters' stake to 40%. All regulatory restrictions imposed by the RBI on the lender are now withdrawn.
- 29. Indian company Biological E** announced the acquisition of Akorn India, a subsidiary of U.S. firm Akorn Inc.
Note: The acquisition, for an undisclosed sum, comes days after BE entered into an agreement with Johnson & Johnson firm Janssen Pharmaceutica, whose COVID-19 vaccine candidate (Ad26.COV2.S) is undergoing clinical trials.
- 30. Fino Payments Bank** has launched an Aadhaar Authentication based digital savings account Jan BachatKhata (JBK).
Note: Under the JBK, customers can transact at a Fino branch or merchant point with fingerprint and OTP combination, while at non-Fino points they need Aadhaar authentication. Earlier, Fino Payments Bank had introduced Shubh and Bhavishya, subscription-based savings accounts targeted at specific customer segments.
- 31. Asian Development Bank** has approved a total of 1 billion USD loan to provide assistance for the construction of modern, high-speed Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System.
Note: ADB'S finance will include the construction of railway tracks, station buildings, maintenance facilities, and traction, and power supply. The project aims at smoothening regional connectivity by establishing transit options across the densely populated sectors of the National Capital Region connecting Delhi to Meerut in the state of Uttar Pradesh.
- 32. Muthoot Finance** has partnered with **Kotak Mahindra General Insurance** to offer COVID-19 insurance cover of up to Rs 1 lakh under the initiative Muthoot Finance Ayush Gold Loan.
Note: The cover will be available only for the customers who avail gold loan from Muthoot Finance under the Muthoot Super Loan (MSL) scheme. Along with this cover Muthoot Finance is also offering a

- higher per gram lending rate for Gold Loan for its MSL scheme gold loan customers. This cover is as a part of Muthoot Finance ongoing customer loyalty programme and social commitment.
- 33. Yes Bank** has launched 'Loan against Securities' is a unique digital solution under its loan in seconds platform.
Note: 'Loan against Securities' is an unique digital solution launched by the YES Bank under its loan in seconds platform. "Loan against Securities" will enable customers to avail loan facility against the securities that they hold. The customers are required only to pledge the securities and not selling them.
- 34. Reliance Retail Ventures Limited** has acquired majority equity stake in Chennai-based Vitalic Health Pvt. Ltd. as well as in its subsidiaries.
Note: Total transaction costed approximately Rs 620 crores. Vitalic Health Pvt. Ltd. is engaged in the business of pharma distribution, sales, and business support services, while its subsidiary runs an online pharmacy platform "Netmeds" which connects customers to pharmacists and offers door step delivery of medicines, nutritional health as well as wellness products
- 35.** As per the "Framework for authorization of pan-India Umbrella Entity for Retail Payments" released by RBI **Rs 500 crore.** should be the minimum paid-up capital of the umbrella entity.
Note: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the "Framework for authorisation of pan-India Umbrella Entity for Retail Payments" on the lines of the feedback received on the "draft framework for authorisation of a pan-India New Umbrella Entity for Retail Payment Systems" which was placed on Reserve Bank's website on February 10, 2020 for public comments. In this regard, the apex bank has invited applications from eligible companies by February 26, 2021, the scrutiny of which will be undertaken by an External Advisory Committee (EAC).
- 36.** Bharti AXA Life Insurance has entered into bancassurance partnership with **SBM Bank.**
Note: Under this agreement, Bharti AXA Life Insurance will offer its entire suite of life insurance products, including protection, health, savings and investment plans, to the customers of SBM Private Wealth, the retail banking arm of SBM Bank India. Through this alliance the customers of SBM Bank India will be empowered with protection and comprehensive financial planning solutions from the product portfolio of Bharti AXA Life Insurance.
- 37. Universal Sompo General Insurance** has collaborated with BSE EBIX Insurance Broking Private Limited (BSE EBIX) to sell General Insurance products.
Note:The partnership was initiated with the issuance of the recently launched Corona Kavach cover of Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Ltd through certified Point of Sales Persons (PoSPs) of BSE EBIX. The partnership will enable more people to avail insurance plans and protect themselves and their families from COVID-19.
- 38. Lakshmi Vilas Bank** has launched 'DigiGo', a digital initiative to enable the opening of savings account instantly.
Note: LVB's new initiative will help people to avail the most required banking services instantly through the website. As a Lakshmi DigiGo customer, one can visit the nearest LVB Branch and convert his/her "Lakshmi DigiGo", account to a fully-featured regular account of choice and avail cheque book, debit card and a host of other facilities.
- 39.** The Asian Development Bank has approved **USD 1 billion** package to support the construction of the modern, high-speed Delhi-Meerut regional rapid transit system, a first of its kind in India.
Note: The transit system project aims to help decongest the city and improve regional connectivity by establishing transit options through densely populated sections of the NCR connecting Delhi to Meerut in Uttar Pradesh.
- 40.** The Bharti AXA's non-life insurance business has been merged with **ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company.**
Note: The deal would result in the emergence of the third largest non-life insurer in India. The merger would result in an entity with a combined annual premium of Rs 16,447 crore and a market share of nearly 8.7 per cent.
- 41. Axis Bank** has launched a new initiative named 'Gig-a-Opportunities' to attract skilled talent that can work with the bank remotely.
Note: The initiative aims to attract skilled talent that can work with the bank remotely, from anywhere in the country. This hiring model comprises two working patterns.
- 42.** The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the proposed acquisition of C&S Electric Limited by **Siemens Limited.**
Note: The proposed combination envisions acquisition of 100% of the share capital of C&S Electric Limited (C&S) by Siemens Limited (Siemens India).
- 43.** The Government of India and the **Government of Maharashtra** has signed a loan agreement of \$500 million with **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** Mumbai Urban Transport Project-III.
Note: The aim of the project is to improve the network capacity, service quality and safety of the suburban railway system in Mumbai. With a population of 22.8

million (2011), Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) is the most populous metropolitan region in India and is expected to reach 29.3 million by 2031 and 32.1 million by 2041.

44. As per the **new announcement** made by the Finance Ministry of the Government of India, the annual turnover for the Businesses to enjoy GST exemption -- **40 lakh**.

Note: Previously the threshold limit was Rs 20 lakh. During the commemoration ceremony of the first death anniversary of former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, the Finance Ministry of GoI released a series of statements. GST has reduced the tax rate as well as increased the number of taxpayers.

45. The **Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture** (CMIA) partnered with **UNDP** to set up a help desk for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Note: The help desk will provide information on various government safety guidelines, regulatory norms, schemes and support measures during the Covid-19 pandemic. The help desk will be active till January 2021.

46. **Tata Group** has launched “super app”, an e commerce app with an aim to take on Amazon and Reliance Industries in the country's booming e commerce sector.

Note: The app will offer food and grocery ordering, fashion and lifestyle, consumer electronics and consumer durables, insurance and financial services, education, healthcare and bill payments. The app will put the conglomerate in competition with giants of the region like Reliance Industries and global titans like Amazon.

47. **ICICI Bank** become the first bank in India to use satellite data to assess the creditworthiness of farmers.

Note: The satellite data with demographic and financial details provides strong information on the land asset of the farmers. Usage of this technology will help farmers with existing credit to expand their eligibility and help new-to-credit farmers to get better access to formal credit.

48. **SBI General Insurance** has launched a first-of-its-kind insurance product called ‘Shagun – Gift an Insurance’, which is a unique gift of Personal Accident policy.

Note: The unique feature of this policy is that it can be gifted to anyone, which means it is not necessary for the policy buyer to be related to the insured. A Gift giver (policy buyer) can gift this product to anyone like family, friends, extended family and even domestic helpers, chauffeurs, drivers, cook, etc.

49. **NABARD** has introduced, ‘Structured Finance and Partial Guarantee Program for Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFC)-Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs).

Note: It is a dedicated debt and credit guarantee product to ensure uninterrupted flow of credit to the last mile in rural areas hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

50. Payment technology company **VISA** tied up with Goals101.ai to create targeted and personalized offers for Bank cardholders.

Note: Through this alliance, Goals101.ai connects merchants and issuers using big data, AI and automation to create targeted and personalized offers for Bank cardholders. Through this partnership, Mastercard and Goals101.ai will launch a section within the platform called ‘For You’ which will unify all the bank channels and properties into one.

51. **Axis Bank** to acquire 17% (17.002%) of the equity share capital in Max Life Insurance (Max Life) instead of 29%.

Note: After the transaction, the total ownership of Axis bank in Max Life will be 18%. Axis Bank and Max Life will approach the respective regulatory authorities, with revised applications for their consideration and approval.

52. **Axis Bank** has ‘Liberty Savings Account’ for the Indian Youth, to address the ever-changing lifestyle needs of young and digitally interested Indians.

Note: It offers a complimentary hospital cash insurance cover of up to Rs 20,000 per year, which covers hospital expenses incurred under COVID -19, which makes this a 1st of its kind savings account to cover the pandemic.

53. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its Annual Report for 2019-20 projected India's growth at what percent for 2020-21 -- **minus 4.5%**.

Note: It is the Report of the Central Board of Directors on the working of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the year ended June 30, 2020 submitted to the Central Government in terms of Section 53(2) of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. In the report, RBI projected that India's growth at minus 4.5% for 2020-21.

54. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its Annual Report for 2019-20 has decided to dissolve **Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI)**.

Note: It was set up in February 2006 as an independent and autonomous body for formulating codes of conduct to be adopted by banks voluntarily for ensuring fair treatment of customers. BCSBI, in collaboration with the Indian Banks' Association (IBA), has evolved two codes – Code of Bank's Commitment to Customers and the Code of Bank's Commitment to Micro and Small Enterprises.

55. **HSBC India** has launched Omni Collect, a one-stop solution in India for businesses to offer multiple payment options on a single platform.

Note: It is designed for businesses to easily collect payments through various digital methods, thereby

allowing them to easily adapt to the changes in consumer spending.

- 56. HDFC Bank** has announced a strategic partnership with Adobe to enhance the Digital Experiences of its Customers.

Note: The partnership is powered by Adobe Experience Cloud Solutions and will help HDFC Bank to deliver personalised digital experiences to existing as well as new customers, at anytime and anywhere.

- 57.** The Innoviti Payment Solutions Pvt. Ltd. has partnered with **Visa** to develop an installment platform, which will enable the issuers to extend credit to their cardholders at face-to-face Point of Sale (PoS) in India.

Note: The installments platform with the suite of platform capabilities leveraging Innoviti's uniPAYNEXT platform and Visa's APIs, provides shoppers the ability to choose how they pay during the purchase.

- 58. Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company Limited** has launched 'Smart Assist', a 1st of its kind technology service in the insurance industry.

Note: It helps the customers to know about product details while enjoying virtual assistance and maintaining social distance protocol. It is the latest in the series of initiatives by Bajaj Allianz Life to enhance the customer experience by digitizing its operations, making them easy-to-use and completely secure

Obituaries

1. Renowned personality Sonam Tshering Lepcha passed away recently, he was a veteran **Folk Musician**.
Note: He played a major role in reviving and promoting the Lepcha Culture which is one of the indigenous culture of Sikkim. Sonam Tshering Lepcha started his career as a soldier. He composed songs with traditional musical instruments collected from various parts of Sikkim and became the first Lepcha to feature on the All India Radio (AIR) in 1960.
2. Lee Teng-hui dubbed as "Mr. Democracy" passed away recently. He was former president of **Taiwan**.
Note: He was popularly known as "Mr. Democracy" for eradicating the dictatorial rule in favour of unbiased pluralism in Taiwan. He was educated under Japanese colonial rule in 1945 in Japan's culture. He was a fluent Japanese speaker. He served in the Japanese army and the surrender of the army after World War II put him in Kyoto University in Japan.
3. Famous personality Anil Murali passed away recently. He was a veteran **Malayalam Actor**.
Note: Anil Murali started his acting career as a part of the malayalam tele serials. He first starred in the film Kanyakumariyil Oru Kavitha in 1993. His most known works in malayalam include Ivar, Lion, Babakalyani, Nasrani, Puthiya Mukham, Pokkiri Raja, City of God and his Tamil and Telugu films include Nimirndhu Nil, Thani Oruvan, Ragile Kasi and Janda Pai Kapi Raju.
4. Former **Uttar Pradesh** education minister of Kamal Rani Varun passed away due to coronavirus.
Note: Uttar Pradesh's Technical Education Minister Kamal Rani Varun, has passed away due to a novel coronavirus. Kamal Rani Varun, who served as Minister of Technical Education, is the first minister in Uttar Pradesh to die after contracting coronavirus.
5. **Writer and Singer** Vangapandu Prasada Rao passed away recently.
Note: Prasada Rao who has been associated with Jana Natya Mandali since 1972 enthralled audience with his

thought provoking songs and speeches. His famous song 'Emi pillado Eldamostava' brought laurels.

6. Renowned personality Sunnam Rajaiah passed away recently.

Note: A native of Sunnamvaari Gudem village, V.R. Puram mandal, in East Godavari district, Mr. Rajaiah served as Bhadrachalam MLA for three times. He participated in many tribal agitations, protecting tribal lands and their rights in the Agency areas in Bhadrachalam, East and West Godavari districts.

7. **Politician** Shivajirao Patil Nilangekar passed away recently.

Note: The 88-year-old minister who had been suffering from several co-morbidities including diabetes and high blood pressure, and had been tested positive for the novel coronavirus in Pune was admitted at a private hospital. The former CM is survived by wife, three sons, a daughter and grandchildren. His last rites are to be performed in Nilanga his birthplace in Latur district.

8. Renowned **Theatre Director** Ebrahim Alkazi passed away.

Note: He was considered as the father of modern Indian theatre. He was the first Director of National School of Drama (NSD). Also an art connoisseur, collector and gallery owner, he founded Art Heritage Gallery in New Delhi.

9. Nobel Peace Prize winner, John Hume passed away.

Note: He was a founding member of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) in 1970 and led the party from 1979 until 2001.

10. **Politician** Ram Pradhan passed away recently.

Note: He served as the governor of Arunachal Pradesh during Rajiv Gandhi government. He was an IAS officer of Maharashtra cadre. He also headed 2-member committee set up in December 2008 to probe the security forces' response to the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack.

11. Renowned personality Sameer Sharma passed away recently, he was a veteran **Actor**.
Note: He was known for her role in TV serials: Geet – Hui Sabse Parayi, Left Right Left, Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii, Ssshhhh....Koi Hai Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, Jyoti, Iss Pyaar Ko Kya Naam Doon – Ek Baar Phir. He was also seen in Siddharth Malhotra and Parineeti Chopra starrer ‘Hasee Toh Phasee’ movie and Sonakshi Sinha starrer movie ‘Ittefaq’.
12. Renowned politician Shyamal Chakraborty passed away due to COVID-19 infection, he was a former governor of **West Bengal**.
Note: He served as the Transport Minister of West Bengal thrice from 1982 to 1996. Shyamal Chakraborty was also elected twice as Rajya Sabha member. He was also a member of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly from 1981 to 1996. He was also the state President of Centre of Indian Trade Unions, (CITU), the trade union arm of CPM.
13. Renowned personality Shirley Ann Grau passed away recently, she was a veteran **Environmentalist**.
Note: The famous fiction writer and Pulitzer Prize-winner, Shirley Ann Grau, died at the age of 91 due to stroke in New Orleans, Louisiana, United States. She wrote six novels and four short stories which are all set in the Deep South, from New Orleans to north Louisiana and Alabama.
14. Renowned personality Sadia Dehlvi passed away recently, she was a veteran **Writer and Activist**.
Note: She was born in 1957, came from the royal ‘Shama’ family, edited the Urdu women’s journal Bano. Dehlvi, writing focuses on women, minorities, Islamic spirituality, and Delhi’s heritage and culture.
15. Renowned personality Mukund Lath passed away recently, he was a veteran **Culture Historian**.
Note: A prominent culture historian and exponent of Mewati Gharana, Mukund Lath passed away at the age of 82 on 6th August, 2020 in Jaipur. He was awarded India’s fourth highest civilian honour, the Padma Shri, in 2010 for his contributions to the field of arts and cultural history.
16. Renowned personality Nandi Yellaiah passed away recently, he was a veteran **Politician**.
Note: He was first elected to the Lok Sabha from Siddipet in 1979. He was elected to Lok Sabha six times and Rajya Sabha twice from 2002 to 2014. Nandi Yellaiah commenced his political career as a corporator of Hyderabad Municipal Corporation.
17. Famous personality Maniombi Singh passed away, he was a veteran **Sportsman**.
Note: He played for Mohun Bagan and was part of the Hindustan FC team that won the Delhi Soccer Association league title in 2010. Maniombi played for India in the 2002 LG Cup in Vietnam.
18. Renowned personality PK Muthusamy passed away recently, he was a veteran **Songwriter**.
Note: Veteran Tamil film songwriter, PK Muthusamy passed away. He had penned memorable Tamil film lyrics like ‘Mannukku Maram Baaramaa ?’ – which means ‘are the trees a burden on the earth?’. His other famous songs composed by Muthusami include ‘Mapilai vandar’ and ‘Chinna Chinna nadai nadandu’ etc.
19. Noted personality Rahat Indori passed away recently, he was a veteran **Urdu Poet**.
Note: With a 50-year career in poetry, Indori, an Urdu scholar of great repute, was one of the biggest mushaira (poetry symposiums) stars in the country and someone who fearlessly called a spade a spade. He was also a bollywood lyricist and known for the lyrics of songs like “M Bole to” from Munnabhai MBBS (2003), and “Neend Churai Mei” from Ishq (1997).
20. Renowned personality GK Menon passed away, recently he was a veteran **Journalist**.
Note: He played cricket at the club level and also was an active member of the Shivaji Park Gymkhana in Dadar, central Mumbai. He was manager of the 1952-53 Bombay University team which won the Rohinton Baria Trophy by beating Delhi in the final at Bengaluru.
21. Chunnakara Ramankutty passed away recently he was a famous poet and film and drama lyricist of **Malayalam** language.
Note: Popular Malayalam poet and film and drama lyricist Chunnakara Ramankutty passed away at a private hospital in Thiruvananthapuram. Starting from 1978 he wrote lyrics for Malayalam films, till a few years back.
22. Famous sportsperson Chetan Chauhan passed away recently, he was associated with **Cricket**.
Note: He was Minister for youth and sports in the state of Uttar Pradesh Cabinet in 2018 and has also served as Minister of Sainik Welfare, Home Guards, PRD and Civil Security in the UP Cabinet.
23. Noted Carnatic musician Dr B Siva Kumar passed away recently, he was proficient in **Veena** musical instrument.
Note: Dr Siva Kumar, a science graduate of Loyola College Chennai has also taken MA in Music from Bharathi Dasan university and followed it up with a PhD in Music. He has won several awards including the Tamil Iyal Isai Nataka sangam award and the award for Ragam Tanam Pallavi presentation from the Tamil Isai Sangam.
24. Renowned personality Nishikant Kamat passed away, he was a veteran **Film Director**.
Note: Nishikant had directed some popular Bollywood movies like Force, Drishyam and Madaari. He made his

- silver screen debut in 2004 with the Hindi movie Hava Aney Dey. In 2008, Kamat helmed his first Bollywood film Mumbai Meri Jaan. As an actor, he was known for his performances in Daddy, Rocky Handsome, Julie 2 and Bhavesh Joshi. He was also the creative producer of the web series The Final Call and Rangbaaz Phirse.
25. Renowned personality Pandit Jasraj passed away recently, he was a veteran **Vocalist**.
Note: Pandit Jasraj was a recipient of India's fourth-highest civilian award, Padma Shri in 1975; Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1987 and Padma Bhushan in 1999. In the year 2000, the government of India conferred him with Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian honour in the country.
26. Legendary sportsperson Angela Buxton passed away recently; she was associated with **Tennis** sports.
Note: Buxton won the women's doubles alongside Althea Gibson at both Roland Garros and Wimbledon in 1956. Buxton also reached the singles final at Wimbledon 1956 but lost to American Shirley Fry.
27. Renowned personality Russell A. Kirsch passed away recently, he was a veteran **computer scientist**.
Note: Russell Kirsch, a computer scientist credited with inventing the pixel and scanning the world's first digital photograph, passed away at his home in Portland. Pixels, the digital dots used to display photos; video and computer screens were invented by Russell Kirsch in 1957. He scanned the world's first digital photograph.

Important Days

- World Lung Cancer Day** is being observed on **1st August** to raise awareness about the causes and treatment of lung cancer.
Note: August 1 to raise awareness about the causes and treatment of lung cancer. The campaign was first organized in 2012 by the Forum of International Respiratory Societies
- The theme of the World Breastfeeding Week celebrated annually in the first week of August from 1st to 7th of August -- "**Support Breast feeding for a healthier planet**".
Note: The day is celebrated to encourage breastfeeding and improve the babies' health around the world. The day was commenced after signing the Innocenti Declaration in August 1990.
- The World Sanskrit Day was observed annually on **Shravan Purnima (3rd August 2020)**.
Note: On the occasion Prime Minister Narendra Modi thanked everyone involved in promoting, teaching and using Sanskrit language. Sanskrit is a beautiful language which has made India a repository of knowledge for many years.
- Annually World Heroshima Day is observed every year on **6th August**.
Note: Annually 6th of August marks the anniversary of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima during World War II. The horrific incident took place on August 6, 1945, when the United States dropped an atomic bomb named "Little Boy", on the town of Hiroshima in Japan.
- National Handloom Day** is being celebrated every year on 7th August.
Note: 7th August was chosen as the National Handloom Day to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement which was launched on the same date in the year 1905. The objective is to generate awareness about the Handloom Industry among the public and its contribution to socio-economic development.
- United Nations observes the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples every year on **09th August**.
Note: The day is being observed to raise awareness of the needs of indigenous peoples. The **theme** of International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2020 is "**COVID-19 and indigenous peoples' resilience**".
- The World Biofuel Day is observed globally every year on **10th August**.
Note: The World Biofuel Day is observed every year to aware about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels. The day also highlights the various actions taken by the Government in the Biofuel sector.
- International Youth Day** is being celebrated very year on 12th August.
Note: This day is celebrated to recognize the efforts put in by the youth for the betterment of society. The Day aims to promote the ways to engage the youth and make them more actively involved in their communities through positive contributions.
- The theme of the International Youth Day (IYD) 2020 -- **Youth Engagement for Global Action**.
Note: This day is celebrated to recognize the efforts put in by the youth for the betterment of society. The Day aims to promote the ways to engage the youth and make them more actively involved in their communities through positive contributions.
- The 'World Elephant Day' is observed every year across the world on **12th August**.
Note: The day focuses on bringing the world together to help elephants and also inform people and organisations about the threat that an elephant faces. On 12 August, 2012, the first international Elephant Day

was celebrated. Since then, it is observed annually and this day is dedicated to the huge animal protection and preservation.

11. The World Organ Donation Day is observed globally every year on **13th August**.
Note: This day is celebrated to raise awareness about the importance of organ donation and motivate people to donate organs after death.
12. The World Lizard Day is observed every year on **14th August**.
Note: Most celebrations of this holiday occur at the local level, through events organized by schools, natural history or science museums, zoos, national parks, conservation NGOs etc. World Lizard Day has not yet been taken up for serious conservation work by international agencies or organizations like the IUCN or WWF, and is focused on creating awareness of the reptiles, apparently mostly as pets.
13. The World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is observed globally every year on **19th August**.
Note: This day is celebrated to pay tribute to humanitarian personnel and those workers who lost or risked their lives while doing humanitarian service. This year is the 11th edition of World Humanitarian Day.
14. The World Photography Day also known as World Photo Day is observed annually on **19th August**.
Note: The Day is celebrated to inspire photographers across the globe to share a single photo with a purpose of sharing their world to the world. The day celebrates the arts, crafts, science and history of Photography.
15. Indian Akshay Urja Day or Renewable Energy Day is observed on every year on **20th August**.
Note: It is significant to promote awareness about renewable resources among people who are ignorant about the subject. Indian Akshay Urja Day was established in 2004 to support renewable energy development programs and promote its use instead of traditional sources of energy. The very first event relating to Akshay Urja Diwas was organized in New Delhi.
16. **Rajiv Gandhi** birth anniversary is celebrated as Sadbhavana Diwas or Harmony Day on 20th August every year.
Note: This year on 20th August 2020, we are going to celebrate the 76th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The Indian National Congress instituted Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award in 1992, a year after his death. Every year this day is celebrated in the memory of the late Rajiv Gandhi who was the youngest Prime Minister of India at the age of 40 years.
17. World Mosquito Day is observed annually on **20th August**.
Note: The Day is celebrated to raise awareness about the Causes and Prevention of Malaria and to commemorate the discovery made by British Doctor Sir Ronald Ross in 1897 that female Anopheles mosquitoes transmit Malaria between humans.
18. The World Senior Citizen Day is observed globally every year on **21st August**.
Note: This day is celebrated to raise awareness about issues affecting older people, such as deterioration with age and the abuse of the elderly and support, honour and show appreciation to seniors and to recognize their achievements. The World Senior Citizen's Day also recognises and acknowledges the contributions of older people to society.
19. International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism observed globally every year on **21st August**.
Note: The day is observed to pay tribute to the individuals across the globe who have been attacked, injured, traumatized or lost their lives because of terrorist attacks. This year, the 3rd commemoration of the day will focus on the response to the pandemic and cancellation of many memorials and commemorations, it is critical to take the time to remember and honour the victims of terrorism.
20. The International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition observed globally every year on **23 August**.
Note: The Day is observed to inscribe the tragedy of the slave trade in the memory of all peoples. The day was designated by UNESCO to memorialize the transatlantic slave trade.
21. The World Water Week 2020 is observed as the World Water Week at Home (WWWeek at Home) from **24th to 28th August 2020**.
Note: The theme for World Water Week 2020 at Home is '**Water and Climate change: Accelerating Action**'.
22. The Women's Equality Day is being observed in the United States on **26th August**.
Note: This was 100th anniversary of the Women's Equality Day. The day is celebrated to commemorate American women getting the constitutional right to vote.
23. The National Sports Day is observed every year on **29th August**.
Note: The first National Sports Day was celebrated on 29th August 2012, on the birth anniversary of Major Dhyan Chand who was the star of hockey team of India.
24. The International Day against Nuclear Tests is observed globally on **29th August**.
Note: The day aims to increase awareness about the effects of nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and the need for their cessation as one of the means of achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

25. The International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances observed every year on **29th August**.
Note: The day is being observed to express deep concern about the rise in **enforced or involuntary**

disappearances in different regions of the world including the incidents of arrest, detention and abduction.

New Appointments

1. **Hamed Bakayoko** has been appointed as the Prime Minister of Ivory Coast.
Note: The Republic of Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara has appointed Defence Minister Hamed Bakayoko (55 years old) as Prime Minister (PM). Hamed Bakayoko will also hold his position as defence Minister. Hamed Bakayoko became acting PM on May 2, 2020 due to the absence of Amadou Gon Coulibaly.
2. Indian economist **Urjit Patel** has been appointed as the additional and independent director of Great Eastern Shipping Company Ltd.
Note: He has been appointed for a term of five years. Recently, he has authored a book titled 'Overdraft: Saving the Indian Saver'. The book will be published by HarperCollins India.
3. **Varun Sridhar** has been appointed as the New Chief Executive Officer(CEO) of Paytm Money.
Note: Sridhar will report to Amit Nayyar, President of Paytm who leads the financial services business of Paytm. He will lead the launch and development of equity development and the mutual funds, NPS and Gold Services.
4. **Perseverance** launched by NASA to seek signs of ancient life and collect first Martian rock.
Note: The rover will land on Jezero Crater of Mars on Feb. 18, 2021 with duration of at least one Mars year (about 687 Earth days). The outlay of Mars mission 2020 is around \$2.7 billion.
5. Mohamed Irfaan Ali became the President of **Guyana**.
Note: He is a member of the opposition People's Progressive Party (PPP). He succeeds David Arthur (A.) Granger. David A. Granger is a member of A Partnership for National Unity and Alliance for Change (ANPU-AFC).
6. Gen. Charles Q. Brown sworn in as the first Black Chief of Staff of the Air Force of **USA**.
Note: President Donald Trump hosted the swearing-in of Gen. Charles Q. Brown. Vice President Mike Pence administered the oath of office to Gen. Brown, who was confirmed by the Senate in June in a 98-0 vote.
7. Mark Anthony Phillips has been sworn in as the Prime Minister of **Guyana**.
Note: Former Chief-of-Staff of the Guyana Defence Force Brigadier (retired), Mark Anthony Phillips has been sworn in as Prime Minister of Guyana. He served as the Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defence Force from 2013 to 2016. Meanwhile, former President Bharrat Jagdeo has been sworn in as Vice President.
8. **Sashidhar Jagdishan** has been appointed as the next Managing Director(MD) and Chief Executive Officer(CEO) of HDFC Bank for a period of 3 years.
Note: Aditya Puri was the CEO of HDFC Bank since September 1994. He is the longest-serving head of any private bank in India. Sashidhar Jagdishan is a chartered accountant. He holds a Master's degree in Economics of money, banking and finance. He joined the Bank in 1996 and heads finance, human resources, and other departments.
9. **Manoj Sinha** has been appointed as the Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Jammu and Kashmir.
Note: He will succeed Girish Chandra Murmu, who resigned recently. Manoj Sinha has represented the parliamentary constituency of Ghazipur in eastern Uttar Pradesh thrice in the Lok Sabha. He also served as Communication Minister as well as Minister of state for Railways.
10. **Girish Chandra Murmu** has been appointed as the new Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.
Note: He will assume office on 8 August 2020. He will replace Rajiv Mehrishi, a 1978 batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre, as the CAG. Murmu, a 1985 batch IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre, was the first Lt Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.
11. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), Government of India (GoI), has approved another extension of Ajay Tyagi's term as Chairman of **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**.
Note: The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved extension of Tyagi's term until February 28, 2022. His tenure would otherwise have ended at the end of this month. In 2017, the government had initially appointed Tyagi for five years as Sebi chief, but suddenly it was cut to three years. With this second extension, he will be at the helm for five years.
12. Indian cricketers **Suresh Raina & Harmanpreet Kaur** were appointed as Global brand ambassadors of Win Trade Fantasy (WTF) Sports.
Note: In addition to this, Suresh Raina has also joined the brand as Strategic Partner. World Trade Fantasy (WTF) Sports is a fantasy sports gaming platform,

- which was formally launched in India and other parts of the world on 6th August, 2020.
13. **Pradeep Kumar Joshi** has been appointed as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
Note: His tenure as the chairman of the UPSC will be till April 4, 2022. He succeeds Arvind Saxena who retires as the UPSC chairman on 6th August 2020.
 14. **GK Pillai** has been appointed as the chairman of the 3-member committee set up by the government of India for determination of ceiling rates under Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme.
Note: The two other members are Y G Parande, retired Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs member and Gautam Ray, retired chief commissioner of custom and central excise.
 15. **Hardayal Prasad** has been appointed as new Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PNB Housing Finance Limited.
Note: Prasad will take over from, Neeraj Vyas the current interim managing director and chief executive officer of the company, will step down from the position on August 10. Prasad is experienced in banking, international operations at SBI and SBI Cards and Payment Services (SBI Card).
 16. **Mahinda Rajapaksa** took oath as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.
Note: The 74-year-old Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) leader has been appointed as the PM of Sri Lanka. Prior to this, Mahinda Rajapaksa was first elected prime minister in 2004 and again appointed for brief periods in 2018 and 2019.
 17. Alexander Lukashenko has won the presidential election in **Belarus**.
Note: President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko has won his sixth consecutive term with 80.23 per cent of the vote at the country's presidential election. A former English teacher Svetlana Tikhanouskaya, who emerged as Lukashenko's main rival at the elections gets 9.9 per cent of the vote.
 18. **Harsh Kumar Bhanwala** has been appointed as the Executive Chairman of Financial Services Platform, Capital India Finance Limited (CIFL).
Note: Dr. Bhanwala is a PhD holder and did his Post Graduation degree in Management from Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad. He was Chairman of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) from December 2013 till May 2020.
 19. Walter Roger Martos Ruiz becomes new Prime Minister of **Peru**.
Note: His appointment was confirmed by President of Peru, Martin Vizcarra. Ruiz will succeed Pedro Álvaro Cateriano Bellido. The swearing-in ceremony took place at the Government Palace in Lima.
 20. **Mohamed Ould Bilal** has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of Mauritania.
Note: The appointment was made by the Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani. Mohamed Ould Bilal is a veteran public administrator and has served as the head of the country's national water agency, a presidential aide and a cabinet minister.
 21. **Pramod Bhasin** has been appointed as the new Chairman of Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).
Note: He is currently the vice-chair of the board of governors at ICRIER. He will replace Isher Judge Ahluwalia, who has stepped down due to health reasons. Isher had been in this position for 15 years. She will continue as chairperson emeritus, a position specially created to honour her exceptional contributions to the Council.
 22. **Subhash Sheoratan Mundra** has been appointed as non-executive chairman of Indiabulls Housing Finance (IBH).
Note: Sameer Gehlaut, the co-founder and Chairman of Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd (IBHFL) has stepped down as the Executive Chairman of the company, and taken up the role of Non-Executive, Non-Independent Director of IBHFL He has stepped down to take charge as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Indiabulls Ventures Ltd, a subsidiary company of IBHFL.
 23. **Soma Mondal** has been selected as the next chairman of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) by the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB).
Note: She will be taking charge when the present Chairman Anil Chaudhary. Mondal had taken over as Director (Commercial) of SAIL in September 2018. Prior to this, she was Director (Commercial), NALCO, Bhubaneswar which was history in making as was NALCO's first-ever female director.
 24. **Rakesh Asthana** has been appointed as the Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF).
Note: Asthana is currently heading the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) with an additional charge of Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), will assume full-time charge of the border guarding force deployed at the approximately 2,280 km long border with Pakistan.
 25. **Kaushik Khona** has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of GoAir Airline.
Note: GoAir is owned by the Indian business conglomerate Wadia Group. Khona brings with himself more than 32 years of corporate experience and all at the CXO level. He was with the Wadia Group for almost 4 years from 2008 to 2011.
 26. Goa Governor Satya Pal Malik has been appointed as the new Governor of **Meghalaya**.

- Note:** Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari has been given the additional charge of Goa, it added. Mr. Malik, who was Governor of Jammu and Kashmir when its special status under Article 370 was abrogated last August, will be replacing Tathagata Roy in Meghalaya.
27. Recently, Ashok Lavasa has stepped down from constitutional post of **Election Commissioner of India**.
Note: Lavasa is set to join the Philippines-based Asian Development Bank as the vice-president from September 2020. He will succeed the incumbent vice-president Diwakar Gupta, who is in charge of private sector operations, and public-private partnerships.
28. **GP Garg** has been appointed as Executive Director (ED) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
Note: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has appointed GP Garg as executive director (ED). Prior to this, he was Chief General Manager in Sebi and has handled several assignments since joining in January 1994. He has been closely associated with Sebi's initiatives on financial literacy and investor education in the country.
29. **Rohit Sharma** has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Sports eyewear "Oakley".
Note: As a part of the partnership, Sharma will be sporting Oakley eyewear equipped with patented Prizm technology created specifically for sports lenses. With this partnership, Sharma will sport the brand's performance eyewear on and off the pitch. He joins the likes of Virat Kohli, Yuvraj Singh and Milind Soman who have endorsed the brand before.
30. Luis Rodolfo Abinader Corona has been sworn in as the 54th President of **Dominican Republic**.
Note: Abinader's Modern Revolutionary Party (PRM) won the elections with 53% vote, while Gonzalo Castillo who was the candidate of the ruling PLD got 37.7%. The 53-year old Luis Rodolfo Abinader was elected to the four-year term on July 5, which ended the 16-year run in power by the Center-Left Dominican Liberation Party (PLD).
31. **Keith Rowley** has been appointed as the **Prime Minister** of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for a 2nd consecutive 5-year term.
Note: Keith Rowley sworn in as Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for a 2nd consecutive 5-year term. He is from the ruling People's National Movement (PNM). As per the preliminary result, PNM won 22 of the 41 electoral seats, while the opposition United National Congress (UNC) led by former prime minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar won 19 seats.
32. **Ritesh Shukla** has been appointed as the **Chief Executive Officer** (CEO) of the newly launched NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of NPCI.
Note: It is also responsible to co-create payment technologies with other countries. NPCI has appointed Ritesh Shukla as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NIPL. As per the Regulatory records the NIPL was incorporated on April 03, 2020 and has Dilip Asbe, MD & CEO of NPCI, Arif Khan, Chief Digital Officer and Rupesh Achayara, Head of Finance at NPCI as directors.
33. **Luis Rodolfo Abinader** has been sworn in as the President of Dominican Republic.
Note: He succeeds Danilo Medina of Liberation Party. Abinader's Modern Revolutionary Party (PRM) won the elections with 53% vote, while Gonzalo Castillo who was the candidate of the ruling PLD got 37.7%. The 53-year old Luis Rodolfo Abinader was elected to the four-year term on July 5, which ended the 16-year run in power by the Center-Left Dominican Liberation Party (PLD).
34. **Ashwani Bhatia** has been appointed as the Managing Director (MD) of the State Bank of India (SBI).
Note: He has been appointed as the managing director up to the date of his superannuation that is May 31, 2022. Bhatia is currently working as the managing director and chief executive officer at SBI Mutual Fund.
35. **Rajiv Kumar** has been appointed as the **Election Commissioner of India**.
Note: Mr. Kumar has been appointed in place of Ashok Lavasa, who has resigned to join the Asian Development of Bank. Mr. Kumar is an ex-IAS officer of the 1984 batch of Jharkhand cadre.
36. **Vinay Tonse** has been appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of SBI Mutual Fund (MF).
Note: Vinay Tonse has been appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of SBI Mutual Fund (MF). He will replace Ashwani Bhatia, who has been now appointed as the managing director (MD) of State Bank of India.
37. **Akinwumi Adesina** has been re-elected as the **President of African Development Bank**.
Note: The 60-year-old Nigerian was the sole candidate to head the continent's biggest multilateral lender, in a virtual vote as a result of the coronavirus, at the end of its two-day annual meetings.

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