



Monthly G.K. MANIA

Analytically Covering National, International, Political, Cultural, Economic, Sports, Science and Technology Events, Environment and much more.....



VIRAT KOHLI

becomes fastest to

12,000

runs in ODIs



TIME

KID
of the
YEAR

SCIENTIST
AND INVENTOR

**Gitanjali
Rao, 15**

INTERVIEW BY
Angelina Jolie





NATIONAL NEWS

Invest India Won United Nations Investment Promotion Award for 2020

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) acknowledged National investment promotion and facilitation agency, 'Invest India' as winner of the 2020 United Nations Investment Promotion Award at the award ceremony at UNCTAD Headquarters in Geneva. It was honored for its Business Immunity Platform, Exclusive Investment Forum webinar series, its social media engagement and focused COVID-19 response teams. Besides this, Invest India has also shared long-term strategies and practices being followed for investment promotion, facilitation and retention at UNCTAD's high-level brainstorming sessions. After evaluating work undertaken by 180 national Investment Promotion Agencies across the world, UNCTAD adjudged Invest India as the World's best-practice investment promotion agency.

Himgiri of Project 17A

The Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) recently started a new Project 17A ship called Himgiri for the Indian Navy into the waters of Hooghly river. It is a Nilgiri-class Stealth Frigate. Under the project, a total of seven advanced frigates will be delivered to the Indian Navy. Among them, four of these will be manufactured by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and three will be launched by GRSE. Himgiri is the first

National Energy Conservation Day

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under the Ministry of Power, celebrated the National Energy Conservation Day on 14th December 2020 to raise awareness among the general public about the importance of energy efficiency, holistic development for overall effort towards climate change mitigation as well as energy conservation i.e. to avoid unnecessary use of energy and to use minimum energy so that energy sources can be saved for future uses. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency helps in the development of policies and strategies in order to reduce energy use or develop other resources for its replacement. The Energy Conservation Act came into effect in the year 2001. The objective of the Act is to appoint professional, qualified, and energetic managers and auditors who have expertise in policy-making, financial management, and implementation of energy-related projects.



of the three ships built by GRSE. The estimated cost of this project is 7 billion USD. The project generated employment opportunities for over 2,000 Indian companies and MSMEs. The Project 17A ships are guided missile frigates and each of these ships are 149 metres in length and has displacement of approximately 6,670 tonnes and a speed of twenty-eight knots. The latest integrated construction methodology has been used for them.

INS Viraat Has Been Disassembled

An aircraft carrier of the Indian Navy, INS Viraat, which was decommissioned in 2017, is currently being broken apart at Alang ship-breaking yard, Gujarat. It

participated in Operation Jupiter and Operation Parakram. There were offers of converting it into a maritime museum. The warship has been sold for scraps as the centre did not issue a 'no objection certificate'. Recently, the government of Maharashtra offered to cooperate with the defence ministry to restore the historic warship. History reveals that INS Viraat is a Centaur class aircraft carrier of Indian Navy that served in the British Navy for 27 years before being commissioned in Indian Navy in 1987. It served in the Falkland wars and in joint exercises like Malabar Exercise (Indo-US); Varuna Exercise (Indo-French); Naseem-Al-Bahr (Indo-Oman) and TROPEX (Annual Theater Level Operation Exercise).

SC's Verdict On One-time Voluntary Disclosure Scheme

The Supreme Court of India upheld the order of Allahabad High court to grant immunity from investigation and prosecution if a person voluntarily declares possession or acquisition of exotic species (alien and non-native species that occur in areas outside their geographic range). It is applicable under the new amnesty scheme of the centre. According to the One-Time Voluntary Disclosure Scheme for Exotic Animals of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the people who acquired stock of exotic animal species legally or illegally need to declare their stock between June and December. And the Chief Wildlife Warden has to be informed about the death, new acquisition or change in possession of animals within 30 days. Besides this, the owner of the animal will have to provide details of the facility where they are housed, their numbers, etc. The scheme will also help in addressing the issue of zoonotic diseases, improve compliance with CITES (international agreement that ensures that the international trade in birds, wild animals and plants does not endanger them) and regulate exotic species imports.

Central government Recognized Two new Zoos

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar granted recognition to two new zoos, the Rajgir Zoo Safari in Nalanda, Bihar and Shaheed Ashfaque Ullah Khan Prani Udyaan in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh during the 37th General Body meeting of Central Zoo Authority. Rajgir Zoo Safari, Nalanda, Bihar will be exclusively meant for safari enclosures which, in comparison to conventional enclosures, will offer larger space for captive animals. There are around five safari

enclosures and a walk-in proposed in the zoo that will accommodate Lion, Bear, Tiger, Leopard and a mixed safari of common herbivore species such as Spotted Deer, Sambar among others. Shaheed Ashfaque Ullah Khan Prani Udyaan, Gorakhpur, U.P. will feature enclosures for a range of birds, herbivores and carnivores creating long-lasting visitor experience through state-of-the-art visitor facilities like 4D Theatre, battery-operated train and accessibility to Divyangjan. With this, the number of zoos in the state of Uttar Pradesh will become 9. Prior to this, Maharashtra government also approved 10 new Conservation Reserves viz. Mahendri, Amboli-Dodamarg (Sindhudurg), Jor-Jambli (Satara), Munia (Nagpur) and Chandgad, Panhalgad, Vishalgad, Gaganbawda, Mayne and Ajra-Bhudargad. Besides these, the state government also granted 1 new Wildlife Sanctuary, Kanhargaoon in Chandrapur district, which will be the 50th Wildlife Sanctuary of the state. The proposed

Kanhargaoon sanctuary will cover an area of 269 Square Kilometres and will house Tigers & Leopards.

First mRNA vaccine of India

Pune based Gennova Biopharmaceuticals in collaboration with HDT Biotech Corporation of the US reported development of the country's first indigenous mRNA vaccine, 'HGC019 Vaccine'. Drug Controller General of India recently green flagged the phase I and phase II clinical trials of the vaccine. The vaccine employs the same platform as that used by COVID-19 vaccines developed by Pfizer and Moderna. Instead of the conventional model to produce immune response, the vaccine uses molecular instructions to make protein in the body through synthetic RNA. It was found that the vaccine is stable at 2-8 degrees Celsius and it has full support of the Ind-CEPI mission, which is meant to strengthen vaccine development for diseases of epidemic potential.

Nirmala Sitharaman On Forbes 2020 list

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman succeeded in grabbing a place in the Forbes



2020 list of 100 most powerful women for the second consecutive time. This year she has received 41st position in the list. Interestingly she is above Queen Elizabeth II who has been ranked at 46th position. In 2019, she was at 34th spot. This is the 17th annual Forbes Power List that accommodates 10 heads of state, 38 CEOs and five entertainers among others from 30 nations across the globe, who differ in age,

nationality and job description, and are using their platforms to address the unique challenges of 2020. Roshni Nadar Malhotra of HCL Technologies (55th rank), Biocon's Mazumdar Shaw (68th rank) and chairwoman of Landmark Group Renuka Jagtiani (98th rank) are other Indian women on the list. German Chancellor Angela Merkel has topped the list for the 10th year in a row.

Justice Rajesh Bindal : The New Acting Chief Justice Of J&K High Court

Justice Rajesh Bindal, who was elevated as a judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court in March 2006, has now been appointed as the acting Chief Justice of the common high court for the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. He has taken the place of Chief Justice Gita Mittal, who was appointed as a single judge Tribunal under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 in February, 2008 to scrutinize the government ban on activities of the Students of Islamic Movement in India (SIMI).

IIT-G Thought Of Harvesting Water from Air

The Indian Institute of Technology-Guwahati (IIT-G) has developed a method for harvesting water from humid air. Inspired by the insect-eating pitcher plant, whose slippery surface makes insects land on it to fall into itself to get digested, researchers used 'Slippery liquid-infused porous surface' (SLIPS) to effectively harvest water from foggy air. The SLIPS employed were capable of harvesting water from air without the use of an external cooling arrangement. Researchers employed the principle of hydrophobicity as the

published study read as "A patterned hydrophilic SLIP was produced by spraying a sponge-like porous polymeric material on top of a simple A4 printer paper. Further, chemically modulated hydrophilic spots were associated on the coating, prior to lubricating with two distinct types of oils. This surface could harvest water from foggy/water vapour laden air without the need for any cooling arrangement."

The Eco-Bridges

The Ramnagar Forest Division in the Nainital district of Uttarakhand



constructed the first eco-bridges for smaller mammals and reptiles to enhance the wildlife connectivity that is usually disrupted because of logging or highways. The eco-bridges cover overpasses, fish ladders, green roofs, tunnels, canopy bridges that are built considering size, location, and animal movement patterns. Scientist Divya Mudappa of the Nature Conservation Foundation built canopy bridges for Nilgiri Langurs and lion-tailed Macaques which are currently on the IUCN Red List of threatened species. Around six bridges were constructed across three kilometers of stretch.



Raj Kamal Jha: Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize Awardee

Journalist cum author, Raj Kamal Jha scripted the 3rd Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for his novel, "The City and The Sea", which says "Who fall apart, pick up their pieces, and, in doing so, help us become whole again." He won the \$5,000 prize for his book, which is based on the December 2012 Nirbhaya rape and murder case. His book was chosen among ten shortlisted books including Amitav Ghosh's Gun Island, Nirmala Govindarajan's Taboo and Ranjit Hoskote's Jonahwhale. Besides him, His Majesty



Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said, the late Sultan of Oman and The People of Oman as well as renowned Indian choreographer Sandip Soparrkar for his contribution to the betterment of society through his initiative Dance for a Cause received the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for Social Achievement 2020. Last year, British Indian novelist Rana Dasgupta was awarded the literary prize for his novel Solo.

The Dis-ease Of Andhra Pradesh

A mystery disease is said to have affected more than 400 people and claimed one life in the state of Andhra Pradesh. In the Eluru district of Andhra Pradesh, people are suffering from nausea, seizures, convulsions, and neurological symptoms. The first case of this mystery disease was reported on December 5, 2020. After testing patients and surrounding water samples

it was found that neither covid -19 nor water pollution and viral infection contributed to this outbreak. The results of the tests for the virus Japanese encephalitis, Chikungunya, dengue, bacterial infections including meningitis have also resulted in negative. However, the team of doctors is suspecting the involvement of disease triggering agent organochlorine that might be the reason. The organochlorine compounds are pesticides used in mosquito control as well as in agriculture.



Indian Navy Day: December 4

Like every year the Indian Navy Day was celebrated on 4th December 2020 on "Indian Navy Combat Ready, Credible and Cohesive" theme that indicates that India is keenly watching the moves Ocean Region and is ready to anytime. The same message is also. The Indian Navy Day is Operation Trident, which was during the India-Pakistan war Harbour. During this attack Storage tanks at Pakistan Karachi. This included minesweepers and destroyers as well. The Indian Navy also sunk 4 of the Pakistani boats and killed 500 Pakistani Naval personnel. This was the first time India deployed anti-ship missiles. The operation Trident was followed by operation Python, which was launched to counter Pakistan Navy's move of mingling with merchant ships



of the Chinese in the Indian encounter the Chinese forces meant for Pakistani forces celebrated to commemorate launched by the Indian Navy of 1971 to attack Karachi Indian Navy ravaged the fuel Naval headquarters of

Demise Of Father of Fibre Optics 'Narinder Singh Kapany'

The India-born American physicist, Narinder Singh Kapany, also known as the father of fibre optics, passed away at the age of 94 in the USA. The Father of Fibre Optics was the first to transmit images through fibre optics back in 1954 and laid the foundation for high-speed internet technology. He had more than 100 patents in his name. He also founded the Optics Technology Incorporation and Kaptron Incorporation in 1960 and 1973 respectively for business. The deceased was named as one of the seven "Unsung Heroes" by Fortune in their 'Businessmen of the Century' issue of November 1999. He also worked in fields of lasers, biomedical instrumentation, solar energy and pollution monitoring and won numerous accolades.

evaluated the deadlines and mobility potential of inaccessible areas and developed infrastructure with the latest techniques. It created and updated Terrain intelligence reports and thematic maps for the users. Apart from this, the government approved creation of a new post of Deputy Chief for Military Ops & Strategic Planning in Army as part of mega reforms in the Army headquarters. The post has been created to deal with military operations, military intelligence, strategic planning and operational logistics. Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) Lt Gen Paramjit Singh will become the first deputy chief of Army staff (strategy).

Eurasian coot, common greenshank, great crested grebe and many more visit this region mainly between March and November to spend the winter. The upcoming festival also aims to check cases of poaching in the region.

Odisha Hosted International Sand Art Festival

The first week of December 2020 witnessed the 9th edition of the International Sand Art Festival and the 31st edition of the Konark Festival at the Chandrabhaga Beach of Konark in Puri district of Odisha. Around 70 artists from across the country took part in the festival and the world acclaimed sand artist and Padmashree Awardee, Sudarsan Pattnaik was the Chief Curator of the festival. The festival provided a platform for both national and international sand artists to display their talent. Organised by Odisha Tourism, Konark Festival showcased the best of India's traditional and classical dance forms, and provided interesting insights into the rich cultural heritage of the country. The festival welcomed the leading exponents and dance enthusiasts of almost all classical dance forms of India viz. Odissi, Bharatanatyam, Manipuri, Kuchipudi and Kathak.

DRDO IS In Action

The Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO) created a new laboratory, Defence Geo Informatics Research Establishment by merging existing labs viz. the Manali-based Snow and Avalanche Studies Establishment (SASE) and the Delhi-based Defence Terrain Research Laboratory (DTRL). It is meant for researching terrain and avalanches along the borders with China and Pakistan. SASE had prepared avalanche atlas for more than 3000 on-road locations in different parts of the country, especially in the terrains where the armed forces were deployed. DTRL

Bihar migratory bird festival

Bihar's Bhagalpur forest division, Bombay Natural History Society and the local Mandar Nature Club will be organizing the first-ever, three-day Migratory Bird Festival from December 11, 2020 to save migratory birds and create awareness among the people about the importance of migratory birds. The sixty-kilometre long region of Vikramshila Dolphin sanctuary between Kahalagon and Sultanganj has been a hub of migratory birds for a long time. The migratory birds viz. Steppe eagle, Eurasian curlew, Ferruginous duck,

IFSCA Became Member of International Association of Insurance Supervisors

A regulator which has been given the task of shaping the international financial services centre in India, the "International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)" succeeded in obtaining the membership of "International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS)". After this, now IFSCA will enjoy access to IAIS's global network and will be able to exchange ideas and information with other global regulators. This will lead to the development of a vibrant global Insurance hub in IFSC at GIFT City. Today around 17 leading insurance entities are operating from GIFT IFSC undertaking offshore insurance and reinsurance business. It is worth knowing here that IAIS was established in 1994 with headquarters in Switzerland. It is a voluntary membership organisation of insurance supervisors and regulators from over 200 jurisdictions, constituting 97% of the world's insurance premiums.

The Upcoming Indigenous Aircraft Carrier INS Vikrant:

The Indigenous Aircraft Carrier is likely to be commissioned into service by end of 2021 or early 2022. "Jayema Sam Yudhi Sprdhah" (Rig Veda) meaning "I defeat those who fight against me" is the motto of this project. The project is significant in light of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative as 75% of its materials and onboard equipment have been made in India. The carrier is in the final stages of its construction at Cochin Shipyard Ltd, Kerala. Recently, the basin trials, which is the testing of the machinery and equipment in floating conditions, were successfully carried out. This will be followed by sea trials in early 2021.

HCL's C32 LH2 Propellant Tank

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has delivered the largest-ever cryogenic propellant tank 'C32 LH2' to ISRO

recently. It is meant to increase the payload capability of ISRO'S Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk III) from 4 tonnes to 6 tonnes and this will make India self-reliant to carry heavier communication satellites into space. C32 LH2 Tank is made of aluminium alloy and it can load 5,755 kilograms of propellant fuel. So far India depended on French Guiana to launch heavier communication satellites (of 5 to 6 tonnes). It is worth knowing here that Cryogenic implies low temperature and Cryogenic fuels require extremely low storage temperature. They are generally used in space as the temperature is low. The cryogenic engines employ liquid hydrogen as fuel and liquid oxygen as oxidiser as oxygen can be kept in a liquid state that is below -183 degrees Celsius. On the other hand, the liquid hydrogen is kept at -253 degree Celsius. Liquid Oxygen is highly reactive and can be used as a propellant to carry heavy loads.

The Annual Ranking of Police Stations

The Ministry of Home Affairs released the annual ranking of police Stations in India. Among more than 16,671 police Stations of India, the top 10 Police stations were shortlisted on parameters of crime against women, weaker section, property offences. This year, the government of India had introduced 3 new parameters viz. unidentified found person, missing persons and unidentified dead bodies. In the list, Nongpok Sekmai police station in Thoubal district of Manipur was ranked as the best performing police station in the country. It was followed by All Women Police Station of Suramangalam in Salem city of Tamilnadu and Kharsang police station of Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh on second and third spots respectively. They were followed by Jhilimili of Chhattisgarh, Sanguem of Goa, Kalighat of Andaman and Nicobar

Islands, Pakyong of Sikkim, Kanth of Uttar Pradesh, Khanvel of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Jammikunta Town Police Station of Telangana that completed the top ten list.

Karnataka's Learning Management System

The Karnataka government launched Learning Management System (LMS) worth Rs 304.14 crores in digital mode, which will be implemented in government colleges within the state. Equipped with the multilingual e-content in the form of PPTs, videos, quizzes, assignment and e-study materials developed as per the University syllabus, the digital platform will be the first of its kind initiative in the country aimed at encouraging digital learning and improving the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education. The system is likely to benefit 4.5 lakh students and 24000 teachers making impact on their teaching and learning respectively. It will cover 430 government first grade colleges, 14 Government Engineering Colleges and 87 Government Polytechnic.

Introduction Of The First 100 Octane Petrol

The Indian Oil Corporation launched the first 100 Octane petrol in the country. Manufactured in the Indian Oil Corporation Mathura Refinery located in Uttar Pradesh, the fuel will be available at selected Indian Oil Corporation outlets in Delhi, Noida, Gurgaon, Agra, Chandigarh, Jaipur, Mumbai, Ludhiana, Pune and Ahmedabad. It is worth knowing here that Octane ratings are the measure of fuel stability or the ability of the fuel to avoid knock that occurs when the fuel is prematurely ignited in the engine cylinder. Knocking degrades the efficiency of the engine and damages the engine. And higher the Octane number higher is the resistance of the fuel to

knock i.e. higher the Octane number, the fuel can tolerate more compression before detonating. 100 Octane Petrol is employed in luxury vehicles as well as race vehicles that demand high-performance. Currently it is available only in six countries viz. Germany, United States, Greece, Malaysia, Indonesia and Israel.

MDH owner Mahashay Dharampal Passed Away

Great philanthropist and Mahashian Di Hatti (MDH) spice brand owner Mahashay Dharampal Gulati died at the age of 97. Born in 1923, in Sialkot, now in Pakistan, Gulati dropped out of school in class five. In 1937, he tried his hands at a small business of mirrors, soaps and carpentry and later sold cloth and hardware. The 'Deggi Mirch wale' icon had arrived in India after the partition and reached Delhi in September 1947. With Rs 1,500 in his pockets, he restarted the struggle of his life as a cart puller. And later traded in rice which did not work for him. Finally he joined his family business of spices, MDH. He was featured in a number of the brand's television and print commercials. The advertisement jingle and Gulati cameo appearances distinguished MDH as one of the most recognisable brands in India. It is worth knowing that in 2017, Gulati was the highest paid CEO in the FMCG sector and MDH had posted a 15% jump in revenues to Rs 924 crore with a 24% increase in net profit at Rs 213 crore, according to an ET report. Besides this, a hospital in Janakpuri, New Delhi and set up of a number of educational institutions were his credentials, which were part of his philanthropic work.

Vijayanagara : The Upcoming 31st District Of Karnataka

The Karnataka cabinet gave in principle approval for the creation of Vijayanagara as the state's 31st district. With this, the

long standing demand for Vijayanagara district will be soon appeased. It is worth knowing that Mr Singh, one of the 17 disqualified MLAs whose rebellion led to the drop of the previous HD Kumaraswamy government, had cited the demand for a separate Vijayanagara district as one of the reasons for his resignation from Congress. He subsequently joined BJP and won from Vijayanagara seat on the party ticket. Vijayanagara is a place that has a lot of historical importance. It was the capital of a Hindu empire (Vijayanagara empire) Hampi in the past. The new district will be carved out from the mine-rich Ballari, which seems to have political importance as it is made up of nine assembly segments of which the Congress had won five and the BJP four in the 2018 polls.

AR Rahman: The New Ambassador for BAFTA Breakthrough India 2020-21

The most celebrated music composer AR Rahman has been appointed as the Ambassador for the "British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA)'s Breakthrough initiative in India 2020-21". Supported by Netflix, the initiative aims to identify, celebrate and support upto 5 talents working in Film, Television or Games in India. A jury of British and Indian industry experts will select them for the mentoring and guidance programme of 1 year. The chosen ones will receive one to one mentoring, global networking opportunities, free access to BAFTA events and screening for 12 months and full voting BAFTA membership. AR Rahman, the new Ambassador debuted as the Music Director in 1991 for the film "Raja" directed by Mani Ratnam and won the National award for best music composer for Raja. He has worked in various languages which includes, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, English as well as Chinese. Bombay, Jodha Akbar, Couples Retreat, 127 Hours, Warriors of

Heaven & Earth, Pele etc. are his celebrated works. He won 2 Academy Awards for original score and original song in 2009 for the film "Slumdog Millionaire". This movie fetched him the Golden Globes as well as BAFTA Award in 2009.

App DakPay of India Post Payment Bank

India Post Payment Bank has introduced an application, "DakPay" as a part of its ongoing initiatives to provide digital financial inclusion to the country. Launched by the Union Minister for communications, law and Justice and electronics and information technology Sri Ravi Shankar Prasad, the application will enable the customers of India Post Payment Bank and the department of post to operate their banking services digitally. The application provides online services for procurement of postal products and banking. Besides this, the customers can now send money by implementing domestic money transfers and scan the QR code and make payment for merchants. The application is on purpose of furnishing a cashless ecosystem through biometrics. The application offers interoperable banking services to the utility bill payment services and also to the customers of any banks. DakPay will resolve challenges faced by IPPB by increasing the transactions and usage of the bank digitally, which will eventually increase its revenue.

Accomplishment of eSanjeevani Telemedicine

According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the first of its kind in delivering health services online, eSanjeevani Telemedicine recently crossed one million tele-consultations. The eSanjeevani employs two streams in 28 states and Union Territories. The first one is eSanjeevani AB-HWC, which

enables doctor to doctor tele consultations. This is being used in more than 6,000 health and wellness centres and over 20,000 doctors, paramedics and specialists have been trained to use eSanjeevani AB-HWC. The second one is stream eSanjeevani OPD that is dedicated to remote health services to patients confining them to their homes. Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh emerged as the top two states that have registered the highest number of tele-consultations through eSanjeevani

Death of Aerospace Scientist Shri Roddam Narasimha

Eminent aerospace scientist and Padma Vibhushan awardee, Roddam Narasimha, who had served at the prestigious Indian Institute of Science (IISc) from 1962 to 1999, passed away. He also worked in the capacity of the director of the National Aerospace Laboratories from 1984 to 1993. The central government conferred the second-highest civilian award of India, Padma Vibhushan upon him in 2013 for his contribution in the field of aerospace engineering. He co-authored "Developments In Fluid Mechanics and Space Technology" with the Missile Man of India and former president Dr A P J Abdul Kalam.

Nagaland's Hornbill Festival

The annual cultural fest of Nagaland, Hornbill Festival, which is also called the 'Festivals of Festivals', started on 1st December 2020, which was also Nagaland's statehood day. The festival features the rich and diverse Naga ethnicity via Naga Morungs exhibition, folk dances, traditional music, local cuisine, handicraft, art workshops, religious ceremonies, food fairs etc. This is the 21st edition of this festival that is being celebrated digitally amid the coronavirus pandemic. History reveals that the festival is named after the Indian Hornbill Bird, which is a large and colourful forest bird. It is worth knowing

here that the Naga Morungs are also called the Nagas. They are the ethnic groups from North Western Myanmar and North Eastern India. Having similar culture and form, they constitute the majority of population in Nagaland and Naga self-administered zone located in the Naga Hills of Sagaing region of Myanmar.

GMRT Achieved 'Milestone' Status

The Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) observatory located in Pune has been honored with the prestigious 'Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)' milestone status. The status acknowledges its significant technical achievement, services, its excellence as a unique product, patent and seminal papers that aim to benefit humanity. As per the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics, this is the third IEEE milestone recognition being offered to India. Prior to this, the previous two IEEE milestone recognitions were conferred upon JC Bose (Father of Wireless Communication) in 1895 and CV Raman in 1928. GMRT is an array of thirty fully steerable parabolic radio telescopes. Among them, each radio telescope is of 45 metre diameter operated by the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics. It is a part of the Tata Institute of

Fundamental Research based in Mumbai. Constructed under the direction of lead professor Govind Swarup between 1984 and 1996, the telescope is meant to search for high redshift 21-line radiation. These radiations, which are emitted from the primordial neutral hydrogen clouds, determine the epoch of galaxy formation in the universe. In February 2020 the telescope observed the biggest explosion in the history of the Universe called the Ophiuchus Supercluster Explosion, which is located at about 390 million light years from the Earth. The eruption had occurred because of a supermassive black hole.

World's Largest Renewable Energy Park In Gujarat

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the 30,000 megawatts (MW) capacity hybrid renewable energy park in Kutch district of Gujarat, which will be the largest renewable energy park of its kind in the world. It is expected to generate 450 GW (4,50,000 MW) of power by 2030 for India. It will be constructed across 72,600 hectares of wasteland between Khawda and Vighakhhot villages near India-Pakistan border plus will have two dedicated zones, one each for the wind energy and solar energy.

Shashi Shekhar Vempati: The New Vice President of ABU



The CEO of India's largest public broadcasting agency, Prasar Bharati, Shashi Shekhar Vempati has been elected as the Vice President of one of the largest broadcasting associations in the world, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia-based Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) for three years. In the elections almost all of the public broadcasters of the Asia Pacific Region's member countries supported the candidature of the public broadcaster from India which was forwarded by NHK Japan. Shashi Shekhar Vempati has worked with IT major Infosys and was the head of an online media firm in the past. Vempati was associated with the public broadcasters group as a board's part-time member since February 2016. He has also been a member of the finance and accounts committee, chairman of the audit committee, sports rights committee, technology committee, and the HR committee in Prasar Bharati. He was appointed as the CEO of Prasar Bharati in June 2017 for five years.

The Blue tides Of Mumbai Beaches

The event of bioluminescence or the emission of light by microscopic marine plants called phytoplanktons like dinoflagellates have been observed in many stretches of Maharashtra coast including the Juhu Beach. The blue light is seen coming out as a result of chemical reactions of proteins inside the organism. Dinoflagellates are one of the largest groups of marine photosynthetic eukaryotes. This bioluminescence is said to have been controlled by a circadian clock and occurs only at night. This phenomenon is an anti-predatory response that helps the microorganisms to gather together easily and form colonies. The phenomenon also indicates the low oxygen and high nitrogen content in the sea water.

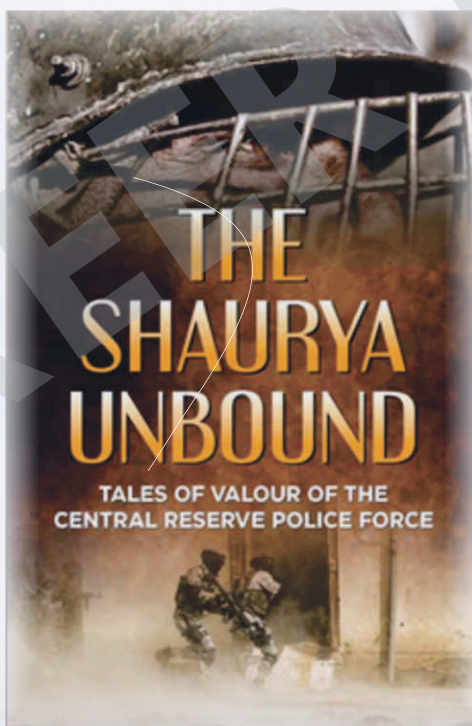
Goa's Liberation Day

Goa celebrated its Liberation Day on 19th December in India. It commemorates the victory of Indian armed forces to free Goa from 450 years of the Portuguese rule. History reveals that the Portuguese colonized several parts of India in 1510. By the end of the 19th century their colonies were limited to Daman, Dadra, Goa, Diu, Nagar Haveli. Even after India achieved independence from the Britishers in 1947, Goa was still under the Portuguese rule as they refused to give up Goa and other Indian territories. Then independent India launched a military intervention following an unsuccessful negotiation and diplomatic efforts with the Portuguese via the United Nations. On December 18, 1961, India launched a 36-hour military operation called Operation Vijay that involved attacks by Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Navy. India succeeded in reclaiming the Goan territories on December 19, 1961. The then Governor of Goa Manuel Antonio Vassalo e Silva signed the certificate of

surrender that punctuated the Portuguese rule in Goa with a full stop. It is worth learning here that the Usgalimal Rock Engravings in Goa show that people had settled in the region during the upper Paleolithic or Mesolithic periods. During the Iron Age Goa was under the Mauryan and Satavahana Empire. During the medieval period Goa came under Kadamba Kingdom, Vijayanagara Kingdom, Bahmani Sultanate and Bijapur Sultanate. Goa was invaded by the Portuguese during the rule of Bijapur Sultanate. Goa was granted statehood in 1987, which is being celebrated on 30th May.

The Book 'The Shaurya Unbound'

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla released a book titled "The Shaurya Unbound-Tales of Valour of the Central Reserve Police



Force" at the parliament house, New Delhi, India on 13th December 2020 i.e. the 19th anniversary of the Parliament attack. On December 13, 2001, five terrorists of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) attacked the Indian parliament in which 9 people including 6 Delhi Police personnel were killed. The book is co-authored by Ms.

Nitu, Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and M. Dhinakaran DIG CRPF and their team comprising Mr. Amit, Assistant Commandant CRPF, and Inspector Deepak Saxena. The book is a collection of 13 most exemplary acts of courage of CRPF who were the recipients of Ashok Chakra, Vir Chakra, and Shaurya Chakras. The book narrates stories of Constable Kamlesh Kumari Ashok Chakra (Posthumously) and four Shaurya Chakra recipients-Head Constable Yam Bahadur Thapa, Constable D Santosh Kumar, Constable Sukhwinder Singh, Constable Shyambir Singh. Om Birla also released the Hindi version of the book 'Samundar Samawe Boond Mein'.

The Conclusion Of SMDS IX

Sustainable Development Forum Uttarakhand (SDFU), Dehradun hosted the 9th edition of Sustainable Mountain Development Summit 2020 (SMDS IX). Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI) organized it on the 'Emerging Pathways for Building a Resilient Post COVID-19 Mountain Economy, Adaptation, Innovation & Acceleration' theme. This annual summit was meant to pave pathways for a strong and sustainable mountain economy in Post COVID-19 scenario and climate change. Issues like migration, water security, climate resilience, and innovative solutions for the farm sector, and Disaster risk reduction in Indian Himalayas were discussed at length. Besides these, the sustainable development in the Indian Himalayan Region, conservation of rich natural resources of the Himalayan Region etc. were the other concerns of this summit. On this occasion, Scholar and Environmental Activist, Ajay Rawat, was honored with Dr R.S. Tolia Memorial Award 2020 by IMI for his efforts in forest conservation in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR).

Nomenclature of Pygmy Grasshopper

A new species of wide-nosed Pygmy Grasshopper, which was documented by researchers in Eravikulam National Park (Idukki, Kerala) in January, 2018 has now been named 'Tettilobus Trishula' (common name Shiva's pygmy trishula). The protrusion of the Grasshopper in pronotum resembles the three-pronged spear 'Trishul' used by Lord Shiva. Shiva's Pygmy Trishula will be added in the list of 30 target species under the Red List Assessment of Grasshoppers in India, which is being initiated by the Grasshopper Specialist Group of the IUCN. This species was found in the dense rainforests of Western Ghats and also in Sri Lanka that eats mosses and detritus. It should be noted that around 200 species of Pygmy Grasshopper are found in the Indian subcontinent alone.

India's First Hot Air Balloon Safari

The Forest Minister of Madhya Pradesh launched the first hot air balloon safari of India in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve of India in the eastern Satpura hill range of the state, known for its Evergreen Sal

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Telecom Skill Excellence Awards

Sreenivas Karanam of Bengaluru and Subrat Kar of New Delhi have been honored with Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Telecom Skill Excellence Awards by Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad. Sreenivas Karanam, Bengaluru was selected for the first prize (Rs 50,000) for his contribution in developing a cost-effective customized technical solution under the brand 'C mobile', for deep-sea communication, that operates from Thiruvananthapuram to Calicut, almost 500km along Kerala coast, facilitating communication among fishermen and issue of weather alerts etc. Under this service devices have been installed in nearly 900 motorboats. Subrat Kar, New Delhi has been selected for the second prize (Rs 30,000) for his innovative solution on development & deployment of a large scale sensor network and devices to avoid a train-animal collision, which works without interfering with natural movements/behaviour of animals, thereby helping in wildlife conservation. The system has been installed in Rajaji National Park in Uttarakhand on pilot basis, to prevent elephant deaths by train-elephant collision. It is worth registering here that the nominations for these awards were called for the first time for the year 2018. These awards are bestowed for special contributions in the areas of Telecom Skilling, Telecom Services, Telecom Manufacturing, Telecom Applications in deploying telecom dependent sectoral solutions for different fields like agriculture, commerce, health, education etc.



forest. Although, there are several hot air balloon rides in the country, yet this is the first hot air balloon safari. A Jaipur based Sky Waltz company will operate this facility of hot air balloon in the buffer

area. Tourists will be able to watch tigers, Indian Sloth bears and leopards from a height during the ride. The service will be started in other tiger reserves of the state like Pench Tiger Reserve, Panna Tiger Reserve.

NITI Aayog Launched DigiBoxx

NITI Aayog CEO Aitabh Kant announced the introduction of a storage platform DigiBoxx after Google announced that it will not offer unlimited free photo uploads after 1st June 2021. It is the first of its kind under the "Make in India, Store in India" policy of India. It is a Software in form of Service product that is in line with the National



security and data localisation priorities. It is equipped with a feature called "InstaShare" that allows users to share high resolution images, videos, large-size documents, PDFs. When the user deletes a data from the storage space, it remains available for retrieval for another sixty days and after sixty days, the data gets deleted permanently. Moreover it is inexpensive as compared to other cloud storages, especially Google. DigiBoxx provides 20 GB of free cloud storage and 100 GB free space per month at the rate of 30 rupees per month for large storages.

Assam Official Language Amendment Bill

The Assam Cabinet gave its consent for a bill to make Bodo an official language of the state. The bill has been framed on lines of the Bodo Peace Accord signed between the Government of India, Assam Government, four Bodo rebel groups, and two Bodo organizations. The official language of Assam is Assamese. So far the additional official language of the state has been Bengali in three districts of Barak Valley and Bodo in Bodoland territorial Council areas. The cabinet also green flagged the Bodo Kachari Autonomous Council, which is also a part of the Bodo Accord signed in January 2020.

Indian Institute of Heritage



The Union Minister of Culture Prahlaad Singh Patel reviewed the proposal to set up Indian Institute of Heritage under the Ministry of Culture as announced in the Budget 2020-21. It will be set up in accordance with Societies Registration Act, 1860 as a centre of excellence in arts and heritage studies and will have the status of a

'deemed university'. In addition to this, the Certificate and diploma courses of several institutions like IGNC and National Archives of India, will also be brought under Indian Institute of Heritage. The institute will enhance the acquisition of knowledge in disciplines of archaeology and museology. The Finance Minister allocated Rs 3,150 crores for the Ministry of Culture to establish the museum and other activities. Along with the Institute, the finance minister also proposed setting up a tribal museum in Ranchi, Jharkhand. The above mentioned fund will be used to develop five iconic sites viz. Hastinapur (Meerut district, Uttar Pradesh. It has the new ceramic industry, which was used by the early Indo-Aryans) ; Rakhigarhi (Haryana, that is one of the five townships of Harappan civilization having sixty-two graves of Harappan civilization); Shivsagar (The 2007-08 excavation at this site unveiled structural remains of vessels, bowls, dishes, vases, terracotta smoking pipes); Adichnallur (Tamil Nadu, where ancient Tamil-Brahmi script, fragment of broken earthenware and remains of living quarters were discovered) and Dholavira (Gujarat having complete water system of Harappan Civilization)

lithium ore for the refinery will be imported from Australia.

India's First Indigenous Vaccine against Pneumonia

Serum Institute of India developed the first Indian vaccine against Pneumonia. The newly developed vaccine, Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine will be used for immunisation against pneumonia caused by "Streptococcus Pneumonia" and the clinical trials of the vaccine for all the three phases, were conducted in India as well as in Gambia. It is much more economical than the other pneumonia vaccines produced by two foreign companies viz. Pfizer (NYSE: PFE) and GlaxoSmithKline (LSE: GSK), which are currently used in India for immunisation against Pneumonia. Pneumonia is an infection in which the air sacs of the lungs get inflamed. In this, the air sacs of the lungs might get filled with fluid or pus, which may make breathing difficult.

Country's first Lithium refinery

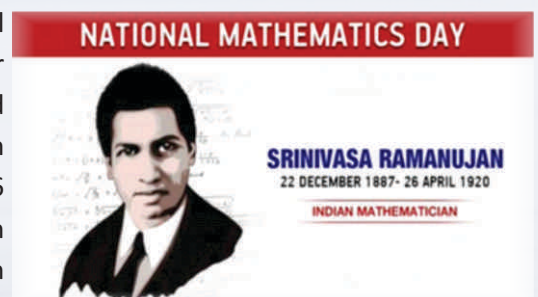
The first Lithium refinery of India will be established in Gujarat. An Australian firm, the Neometals and Manikaran, which is India's third largest power trading and renewable energy company, did an agreement to produce lithium in India. The future demand of Lithium in India is being driven by the electrification of transport and storage of renewable energy. In this project Manikaran will invest Rs 1000 crores. It is worth learning that India has set an ambitious goal of increasing the Electric Vehicle numbers to 30% by 2030 and as Lithium is a rare element and not found in India, so India is importing all the requisite lithium to make lithium-ion batteries. Recently India got access to the Bolivian Lithium reserves. Currently

India is dependent on China, Japan and Taiwan for its electrical batteries as lithium in India is highly expensive. The

22 December: National Mathematics Day

India observed the annual National Mathematics Day on 22nd December 2020 to commemorate the 133rd birth anniversary of Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan (22 Dec 1887- 26 April 1920) . This day was instituted in 2012 at the occasion of his 125th birth anniversary. 2012 was also observed

as National Mathematics Year. Ramanujan had made substantial contributions to mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series, and continued fractions, including solutions to mathematical problems that were considered as unsolvable. The legend had a wealth of ideas that have transformed and reshaped 20th-century mathematics and his ideas continue to shape mathematics of the 21st century as well. The main objective of the celebration of National Mathematics Day is to make people aware of the development of mathematics and its importance in the growth of humanity.





Demise Of Chuck Yeager

Chuck Yeager, who was a US Air Force officer and test pilot breathed his last at the age of 97. He was a test pilot, who on October 14, 1947, had become the first human to officially break the sound barrier, when he flew the experimental Bell X-1 aircraft at Mach 1 (speed of sound) at an altitude of 45,000 ft (13,700 m). He attempted this Level flight, which implies flying at a constant altitude, not going up and down with 1,127 km per hour speed. The accomplishment of the so called "The Fastest Man Alive" had launched the era of supersonic flight. He was honored with the 1947 Collier Trophy alongside John Stack and Bell Aircraft Corporation President Lawrence Bell for their research accomplishments in faster-than-sound flight. America's

greatest Pilot, & a legacy of strength, adventure, & patriotism had joined the Army Air Corps in September 1941 and served as crew chief until he was selected for pilot training under the flying sergeant program in July 1942.

International Universal Health Coverage Day

The annual International Universal Health Coverage Day was celebrated on 12th December by the United Nations and many other international organizations. It was meant to increase awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems. "Health for all: Protect Everyone" was the theme of celebration for this year. It was first celebrated in 2017. Around 12% of the world population spends at least 10% of

their budget in health care and studies reveal that till date more than 100 million people are pushed into extreme poverty because of health care expenses.

Zena Wooldridge : The New World Squash Federation President

Zena Wooldridge of England has been elected as the 10th World Squash Federation President for four years. She will serve the Federation that was found in 1967. She is the second female President after New Zealand's Susie Simcockin (1996 and 2002) in the history of this Federation. She has taken the place of outgoing President Jacques Fontaine, from France, who was appointed in 2016. Prior to this, Wooldridge served six years as President of the European Squash Federation between 2013-2019.

Human Rights Day : December 10



Like every year Human Rights Day also called as the International Human Rights Day was celebrated on 10th December 2020 to commemorate the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was done on 10th December 1948. "Recover Better-Stand Up for Human Rights" was the theme for this year and distribution of the United Nations Prize in the field of Human Rights was also done on the occasion. It should be noted that the Allies of World War II formally known as the

United Nations, adopted four freedoms viz. freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom from want and freedom from fear. They drafted the Charter of the United Nations based on the faith in fundamental human rights. Human Rights is vital to the UN and it is infact one of the very bases of the United Nations. The United Nations Human Rights Council protects and promotes human rights and investigates allegations of breaches of human rights in the United Nations.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Again Became PM Of Kuwait

Kuwait Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah has re-appointed Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah as prime minister for the second time. Sheikh Sabah was serving the foreign minister post since 2011 before being elevated to the post of premier in late 2019. He now encounters the urgent task of overcoming legislative gridlock on a debt law that will allow Kuwait to tap international debt markets in order to plug a growing budget deficit. The crisis ridden Kuwait has witnessed frequent rows and deadlocks between cabinet and the assembly and the Gulf region's oldest and most outspoken,

have led to successive government reshuffles and dissolutions of parliament, hampering investment and economic and fiscal reform in the cradle-to-grave welfare state. The new government is not expected to change the oil policy of the OPEC producer, determined by supreme petroleum council, and foreign policy, which is steered by the Emir.

International Anti-Corruption Day

The annual International Anti-Corruption Day was observed on 9th December 2020. Several other international organizations along with the United Nations observed it on the "Recover with Integrity" theme. It is worth knowing here that the United Nations Convention Against Corruption is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument that includes five main areas like international cooperation, criminalisation and law enforcement, preventive measures, asset recovery, technical assistance and information exchange. The convention looks into abuse of functions, trading influence and several other acts of corruption in the private sector. Undue Influence in decision-making, Unfair and Opaque Political Financing and Lobbying by powerful corporate interest groups are some of the main reasons for the increase in corruption. In India, the Central Bureau of Investigation in New Delhi observed this day. According to the Transparency International India can overpower corruption by controlling political financing, empowering citizens, managing conflicts of interests, strengthening electoral integrity and reinforcing checks and balances.

The Beginning Of The 5G New Radio In India

Finnish telecommunications corporation, Nokia began its production of the next generation of 5G Equipment in India, with this, it has become the first

telecommunication firm to manufacture 5G New Radio in India. Nokia along with CommScope has designed a new interleaved passive-active antenna (IPAA) radio platform that supports frequencies in the range of 700 MHz and also 3.4 to 3.8 GHz. This new radio access technology, which will be developed for the fifth-generation mobile network will be the standard for the interface of 5G networks. The 5G New Radio will offer significant enhancements like better operational flexibility, scalability and efficiency, both in terms of power usage and spectrum as well as high bandwidth communications such as streaming very high-quality video as well as low latency communications like remote control vehicle communications, machinery control etc. It is worth recalling here that in 2019, South Korea had become the first country to roll out 5G network in India.

Anil Soni : The First CEO of The WHO Foundation

US-based Indian-origin health expert, Anil Soni has been appointed as the first Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the newly-created "The World Health



Organization (WHO) Foundation". His appointment will come into effect from 1st January 2021. Prior to this, he was working with a global healthcare company, Viatrix, in the US, where he worked in the capacity of Head of Global Infectious Diseases. The WHO Foundation came into existence in May

2020 as an independent grant-making agency, based in Geneva, Switzerland, to work alongside the WHO and the global health community to address the most pressing global health challenge

Resignation Of Romanian PM Ludovic Orban

Romanian incumbent centrist Prime Minister Ludovic Orban laid his resignation after his party's disappointing performance in parliamentary elections. Among the 95% of the counted ballots, the Social Democrats (PSD) secured 30% of the vote, while the National Liberal Party (NLP) won only 25% of the vote. However, despite losing to the opposition Social Democrats (PSD), Mr Orban still hoped that his National Liberal Party (NLP) could put together a majority coalition to choose his successor on account of the party's efficient allies. Several smaller parties are likely to hold the balance of power, which appears to favour a Liberal-led coalition.

Australia's Go for Zero policy Against Covid-19

Proposed by a non-profit think tank Grattan Institute, Australia implemented a "Go for Zero" policy to bring down its COVID-19 cases. The policy is about expanding the testing of covid-19 as well as increasing contact tracing and mandatory isolation. It also established health hotels for symptomatic travellers that prevented emergence of clusters. The Australian government had introduced a QR code-based system to handle the issue of travellers breaking quarantines. It even deployed police to carry out spot checks of people instructed to be in isolation in the second most populated state of the country, Victoria and succeeded in curbing corona cases from 700 daily infections (August 2020) to 10 daily infections (last week of October 2020) according to Johns Hopkins

University. In addition to this, the country rolled out subsidies to the employed population including workers and businesses and increased unemployment benefits as well. In the past week Australia had 44 active cases of covid- 19 out of reported 28000 infections. During the second wave of covid-19, the country stressed on elimination of the virus rather than just pulling down the case numbers.

The New Reported Height Of Mount Everest

The Height of World's Highest Peak, Mount Everest has always been in debate. Recently Nepal and China jointly announced the revised height of Mount Everest as "8848.86 metres" on December 8, 2020. It is 86 centimetres more than the previously measured height, which was done in 1954 by Survey of India (8, 848 metres). This was the second revised height of the peak.

Prior to this, in 1999, a team from the United States of America reported the elevation of the Mountain as 8850 metres. That survey was sponsored by the National Geographic society. History reveals that the first 1954 measurement of the peak was accepted worldwide except China. The height of the peak was determined using instruments 50 theodolites and chains at that time. Mount Everest lies between the border of China and Nepal and the two countries had signed a deal to announce the latest measurement of the peak jointly. This latest move of re-measuring the height of the peak has its root in the 2015 earthquake of Nepal. Following that, Nepal decided to measure the mountain with the help of New Zealand, which offered Global Navigation satellite and trained technicians to measure the mountain. It is worth recalling here that sir Edmund Hillary, the first person to climb Mount Everest was from New Zealand.

The 2020 Champions of the Earth Award

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) bestowed the highest environmental honour, the 2020 Champions of the Earth award to six people for their transformative impact on the environment and their leadership in urging bold and decisive action on behalf of the planet and its inhabitants. The names of winners are Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama (Fiji, Policy Leadership category,



global climate action work and his commitment to climate-responsive national development); Yacouba Sawadogo (Burkina Faso, Inspiration and Action category for teaching farmers his traditional nature-based solution to regenerate their soil and turn barren land into arable land and forest across Africa); Nemonte Nenquimo (Ecuador, Inspiration and Action category for her leadership and unifying work with native communities that halted drilling in Ecuador's Amazon rainforest); Dr Fabian Leendertz (Germany, Science and Innovation category for his discoveries in zoonotic and his work in One Health); Mindy Lubber (USA, Entrepreneurial Vision category for her commitment to turning capital markets green by mobilizing top investors and companies and making the business case for climate action and sustainability) and Professor Robert D. Bullard (USA, the Champion of the Earth Lifetime Achievement award for his commitment and service to environmental justice).

The New 'Millionaire's tax' Of Argentina

The Argentina parliament has recently passed a new tax dubbed the "millionaire's tax" on its wealthiest people to pay for medical supplies, relief measures and small businesses amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The senators passed the one-off levy by 42 votes to 26. According to this, those with assets worth more than 200 million pesos (\$2.5m; £1.8m) will have to pay this tax. Recently, Argentina has recorded close to 1.5 million infections and almost 40,000 deaths from the coronavirus. In October, Argentina became the fifth country worldwide to report one million confirmed cases. The government of President Alberto Fernandez is now expecting to raise 300 billion pesos (\$3.75 billion) from around 12,000 richest people of the country. 20 percent of the total tax will go to medical supplies for the pandemic, another 20 percent to small and medium-sized businesses, 15 percent to social developments, 20 percent to student scholarships and 25 percent to natural gas establishments.

The Climate Change Performance Index

The New Climate Institute, Germanwatch and Climate Action Network (CAN) released a Global Climate Change Performance Index. The index rated 57 greenhouse emitters that are responsible for 90% of global emissions. It evaluated the mitigation efforts and transparency in international climate politics for the countries via parameters like Renewable energy, GHG emissions, Energy use and climate policy. None of the countries occupied the first three positions, while Sweden, UK, Denmark, Morocco, Norway, Chile, and India secured the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth ranks respectively. The USA (57th), Saudi Arabia (56th), Canada (55th), Australia (54th), South Korea

(53rd) and Russia (52nd) occupied the bottom of the index. The biggest current emitter of greenhouse gases (GHG) China occupied 33rd rank. In context to India, it continued to remain in the top ten in the Climate Change Performance Index for the second consecutive year as prior to this it was at 31st rank in 2014.

The Havana syndrome

The National Academy of Sciences has recently found that microwave radiations caused a mysterious neurological illness called Havana syndrome in people living in China, Cuba, and other countries for more than four years now. Hearing strange sounds and physical sensations accompanied by severe headache, nausea, dizziness, fatigue, hearing loss, and sleep problems are symptoms of this dis-ease. Although the state department has not publicly pointed to microwave weapons as the cause of the syndrome, yet the use of these direct energy weapons contributes to highly focused energy in the form of lasers or microwaves that seem to cause the above-mentioned symptoms. These weapons are said to have long-term and acute damages without any signs of physical damage

Flames Of Israel's Nation State Law

Approximately two years after Israel passed its controversial 'Nation-State of the Jewish People Law' informally dubbed as the 'Nation State Law', the country's Apex Court assembled for a special session to hear a plea of Arab-Israeli citizens and rights groups asking for the scrapping of this law. They demand a declaration that articles in this law are unconstitutional, specifically those pertaining to Israel's official language and land allocation laws, which seem to be discriminatory in nature towards non-Jewish citizens. The law degrades Arabic language (spoken by 20% of the population) from the status

of official language and crowns Hebrew as the the language of Israel. The law allows development of Jewish settlements in Israel. The law also declared Jerusalem as "Whole and United" and capital of Israel which seems to be contradictory to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The petition is still being heard and so far the court questioned whether the law indeed violated basic laws like liberty and human dignity. And as none of Israel's Basic Laws have been invalidated by the country's courts so the legal experts believe that in this case, it is unlikely that the Supreme Court would further intervene.

Fight against climate change in French Constitution

The French President Emmanuel Macron announced a referendum to add the fight against climate change into the French Constitution as well as the need to preserve the environment. France has failed to achieve its national targets that were set under the 2015 Paris Agreement. The European Union has vowed to reduce the greenhouse gases from 40% to 55% in comparison to 1990 levels. The French Government submitted its Nationally Determined Contributions together with the European Union, which promises to cut the GreenHouse Gas emissions by 40% by 2030 and 75% by 2050. Apart from this, the US President Joe Biden has pledged to re-join the Paris Agreement

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pathways for a strong and sustainable mountain economy in Post COVID-19 scenario and climate change. Issues like migration, water security, climate resilience, and innovative solutions for the farm sector, and Disaster risk reduction in Indian Himalayas were discussed at length. Besides these, the sustainable development in the Indian Himalayan Region, conservation of rich natural resources of the Himalayan Region etc. were the other concerns of this summit. On this occasion, Scholar and Environmental Activist, Ajay Rawat, was honored with Dr R.S. Tolia Memorial Award 2020 by IMI for his efforts in forest conservation in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR).

Nomenclature of Pygmy Grasshopper

A new species of wide-nosed Pygmy Grasshopper, which was documented by researchers in Eravikulam National Park (Idukki, Kerala) in January, 2018 has now been named 'Tettilobus Trishula' (common name Shiva's pygmy trishula). The protrusion of the Grasshopper in pronotum resembles the three-pronged spear 'Trishul' used by Lord Shiva. Shiva's Pygmy Trishula will be added in the list of 30 target species under the Red List Assessment of Grasshoppers in India, which is being initiated by the Grasshopper Specialist Group of the IUCN. This species was found in the dense rainforests of Western Ghats and also in Sri Lanka that eats mosses and detritus. It should be noted that around 200 species of Pygmy Grasshopper are found in the Indian subcontinent alone.

8th December

Demise of Eric Freeman

Former Australia Test all-rounder, Eric Freeman passed away. The deceased made his Test debut against India at the Gabba (Brisbane Cricket Ground) in 1968 during which his opening scoring shot was a six, and he became the first player to achieve this feat. In 2002, Freeman was honored with the Medal of the

Order of Australia for his services to sport. He announced retirement from the game in the 1973-74 season and then pursued the career as administrator, coach and broadcaster. Freeman had been an elite football player, representing Port Adelaide and he topped the club's goal kicking list in all five of his complete seasons.

Kenya's Kandie Created Half-marathon World Record In Valencia

Kenya's athlete Champion Kibiwott Kandie finished the Spanish Valencia Half Marathon annual race of 13.1 miles in 57 minutes and 32 seconds, breaking the previous record of 58:01 set by compatriot Geoffrey Kamworor in September 2019. This was the race in which the top four finishers all beat the previous record in Valencia. Jacob Kiplimo of Uganda finished second in 57:37, Kenyan Rhonex Kipruto third (57:49) and Kenyan Alexander Mutiso finished in fourth place clocking 57:59. On the other hand, Ethiopia's Genzebe Dibaba won the women's race in 1:05:18, setting the fastest time for a debut over the distance.

Diem: The Changed Name Of Libra cryptocurrency

The Libra cryptocurrency will be known as 'Diem Dollar ' and the Libra



Association, will now be known as the Diem Association. Meant for quicker and easier digital transferring of money online as well as offline, Libra was initially a single coin pegged to multiple currencies for stability that could be traded in place of them and it was later

Gitanjali Rao : Time's first ever 'Kid of the Year'

America's Top Young Scientist, 15-year-old Gitanjali Rao, has been chosen as the first-ever 'Kid of the Year' by Time magazine for her exceptional use of technology to solve world problems. She has accomplished wonderful groundbreaking work to tackle issues from contaminated drinking water to opioid addiction and cyberbullying. She invented Tethys, a device that detects lead contamination in water, in 2017. She started an Artificial Intelligence based service, 'Kindly' that identifies words or phrases that might be considered bullying and allows users to reflect and rephrase their conversation for safer use of the internet and thus helps in curbing cyberbullying. She also developed Epione, an early diagnosis solution for prescription opioid addiction, accompanied by a mobile application. She has also authored two books 'Stem' (to approach today's problems creatively with innovative solutions) and 'Baby Brother Wonders' that captures the curiosity of her younger brother. Marie Curie (radioactivity research), Emmanuelle Marie Charpentier (researcher in microbiology, genetics, and biochemistry) and Jennifer Anne Doudna (CRISPR gene editing) have been her source of inspiration. Indira Gandhi is her role model.



changed to offer multiple coins that would each be backed by a different currency. Facebook pitched Libra to offer financial services like potential moneymaker, digital wallet, called Calibra, around Libra cryptocurrency. Currently, the Calibra wallet app is known with name Novi. But last year the major launch partners of Libra withdrew support because of its controversial nature and the regulatory hurdles it faced due to concerns from lawmakers. So now the Libra cryptocurrency has changed its name to 'reinforcing its organizational independence' and is said to have distanced itself from Facebook with this move. Now Diem could debut as a single coin backed by the dollar, with an initial launch as early as January 2021. These coins will be "a complement to, not a replacement for, domestic currencies," as per Diem Association.

Demise of Former French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing

Valery Giscard d'Estaing, who served as the President of France from 1974 to 1981 and was known as champion of European integration, died of Covid 19 at 94. The grand old man of French politics was once, one of France's youngest presidents, who came to power at the age of 48. In 1955 he was among the staff of prime minister Edgar Faure before winning the seat of Puy-de Dome in the National Assembly. He was considered by many as arrogant and aloof and was squeezed out of the President office by a strengthening of opposition from both the left and the right. He was also trapped in a scandal surrounding his support for a corrupt African dictator.

Testing Of Israel's Missile



Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO) along with the United States Missile Defense Agency (MDA) successfully test-fired a series of Israel's 3 multi-range missile defense systems viz. "Arrow", "David's Sling" & "Iron Dome" over the Mediterranean Sea. The tests displayed the interoperability of the multilayered air-defense mechanisms. Among them, 'Arrow Missile' is an anti-ballistic missile jointly developed by Israel and the United States of America. Developed by Israel's Rafael Advanced Defence Systems & USA's Raytheon, 'David's Sling' is also an anti-ballistic missile as well as a Surface-to-Air missile meant to shoot down medium-range missiles. 'Iron Dome' has been developed by Israel's Rafael Advanced Defence Systems & Israel Aerospace Industries. It is an air defense system made for targeting incoming rocket fires. Rafael Advanced Systems, Israel's Air Force & Navy participated in these tests.

U.K. : The First Country To Approve Pfizer, Biontech Covid Vaccine

The U.K. became the first country to authorize the U.S.-German vaccine, Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for emergency use. However, the Emergency use approval in the United States is still under review by the Food and Drug Administration. The vaccine will soon be rolled out in the UK for the elderly people in care homes and medical workers initially. It is worth recalling here that Pfizer and BioNTech in July 2020 signed an agreement with the U.K. to supply 30 million doses of its mRNA-based vaccine, formally known as BNT162b2, once authorized for emergency use. This agreement was increased to 40 million doses in early October. As a two-dose vaccine, the U.K. will have enough doses to vaccinate around a third of its 66 million population.

China : The Second Nation To Plant Flag On The Moon

The latest shared pictures taken from a camera on the Chang'e-5 space probe of China's National Space Administration show that China has planted its five-

starred Red Flag on the Moon on 3rd December 2020, which is more than 50 years after the US first planted the Stars and Stripes on the moon during its manned Apollo 11 mission in 1969. It further flagged five more US flags during its subsequent missions till 1972. It is worth knowing that the two previous Chinese lunar missions had flags on the crafts' coatings so neither could be affixed to the moon. After planting the 2m wide and 90cm tall and one-kilogram heavy flag equipped with features that will protect it against cold temperatures, China has become the second nation to hoist flag on the lunar surface.

The Collapse Of Arecibo Telescope

The US National Science Foundation's Puerto Rico's Arecibo Telescope, which was built in 1963 and was the second-largest single-dish radio telescope in the world, collapsed. The discovery of the first exoplanets, prebiotic molecules in distant galaxies and first millisecond Pulsar as well as the information that Mercury rotates in 59 days and not 88 days (original calculation) were its credentials. It was one of the most powerful radars used to observe killer asteroids, planets, and the ionosphere. It

has also served as a hub in the search of extraterrestrial life and has picked up several radio signals from alien civilisations. Besides its scientific contributions, it was also a cultural symbol for Puerto Rico that attracted 90,000 visitors annually.

The First TWG Meeting Between India, Iran & Uzbekistan

The First Trilateral Working Group (TWG) meeting was held virtually between India, Iran & Uzbekistan regarding the joint use of Chabahar port in Iran to enhance regional connectivity within the three nations. Sanjeev Ranjan, Secretary (Shipping), Government of India, D. Dehkanov, Deputy Minister of Transport of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Shahram Adamnejad, Deputy Transport Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran presided over this meeting. In the meeting, Uzbekistan and Iran supported India's proposal of holding "Chabahar Day" on the sidelines of the International Maritime Summit, which India will in January 2021. Developed by India and located in the Southeastern part of Iran on the Gulf of Oman, Chabahar Port halves the time and cost of doing business with European & Central Asian Countries. It has strategic importance as it is just 170 km away from Gwadar Port built in Pakistan by China. It is worth recalling here that according to the trilateral agreement inked between India, Iran & Afghanistan in 2016, India was granted a 10-year lease to develop and operate 2 terminals & 5 berths and access to Chabahar free trade zone.

The QS Asia University Rankings 2021

QS i.e. Quacquarelli Symonds, global higher education think-tank and compilers of the world's most-consulted university rankings portfolio, have

released the QS Asia University Rankings 2021 for the continent's 650 best higher education institutions. National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore has retained its top position for the third consecutive time. It was followed by Tsinghua University, China (Mainland); Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore has retained its top position ; University of Hong Kong (HKU), Hong Kong SAR; Zhejiang University, China (Mainland); Fudan University, China (Mainland); Peking University China (Mainland); Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), Hong Kong SAR; University Malaya (UM), Malaysia and Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China (Mainland) that joined to comprise the top ten. It is worth noting here that Mainland China (124), India (107), Japan (105), South Korea (88), Taiwan (43), Pakistan (40), Malaysia (35) and Indonesia (30) emerged as top eight countries with maximum number of institutions included in the index. Although there is no Indian varsity among the top 10, yet 7 managed to secure a rank among the top 100. They are IIT Bombay (Rank 47); IIT Delhi (Rank 50); IIT Madras (Rank 56); Indian Institute of Science (Rank 58); IIT-KGP (Rank 71); University of Delhi (Rank 72) and IITK (Rank 81).

There min turned 100

The predecessor of the modern synthesizer, musical instrument Theremin has completed hundred years of its existence in 2020. Theremin that has revolutionised the music industry is considered as the world's first electronic instrument. History reveals that a scientist Leon Theremin invented the instrument by generating sound via modulation of electromagnetic waves without touching the instrument. The instrument has a vertical antenna for controlling the tone and a looped antenna for controlling the volume. This invention came his way while he was

experimenting with radio waves in his laboratory. He discovered that operators working on radio waves made strange sounds when he moved his hands around it and as he was a classical musician and trained in Cello, the sounds stimulated his interests. The instrument has its history tied to the prisons of Siberia, world war and Hollywood films of the 20th century.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Globe observed the annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3, 2020. "Building Back Better: Towards a disability-inclusive accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 World" was the theme for this year. The United Nations General Assembly

instituted this day in 1992 to promote well-being and rights of the persons with disabilities and increase the awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in social, political, economic and cultural life. It is disheartening to learn that there are more than 1 billion persons with disabilities across the globe and among them 80% belong to developing countries. It is worth knowing that 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal; New Urban Agenda; Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing Development; Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities with Humanitarian Action; Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction are some of the other framework endeavours of the United Nations for people with disabilities.

The 2020 Forbes' Highest Paid Celebrity List

Famous American Media Personality and founder of Kylie Cosmetics, Kylie Jenner topped the Forbes' Highest Paid Celebrity List of this year with an earning of USD 590 million. She sold a 51% stake in Kylie Cosmetics for \$600 million to Coty. She was followed by popular American singer Kanye West (USD 170 million), Roger Federer (USD 106.3) , Cristiano Ronaldo (USD 105 million), Lionel Messi (USD 104 million), Tyler Perry (USD 97million), Neymar (USD 95.5 million), Howard Stern (USD 90 million), LeBron James (USD 88.2 million) and Dwayne Johnson (USD 87.5 million) to complete the top ten. It is worth knowing here that Forbes is a 103-year-old, American business magazine that releases a list of the world's top billionaires annually.



China- Pakistan New Military Deal

China and Pakistan inked a new Memorandum of Understanding related to Defence that focuses on capacity building of the Pakistani army and it is a continuation of a defence agreement signed in 2019. The two nations discussed matters of regional security, mutual interest, bilateral defence collaboration as well as the China Pakistan Economic Corridor at

length. China Pakistan Economic Corridor is one of the flagship projects of the Belt and Road Initiative of China. The 3000 km long Corridor consists of highways, Railways and pipelines. China will set up 1,124 megawatt of Kohala hydro power project in Pakistan occupied Kashmir over the Jhelum river. The Corridor will connect Gwadar of Pakistan with the Xinjiang province of China through a network of Railways and Highways.

UNESCO's Plan Of Creative Economy Prize

In November 2021, UNESCO will launch an international prize in the creative economy field in the name of "Father of Bangladesh", Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the "UNESCO-Bangladesh Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman International prize". It is worth knowing that the year 2021 has been declared as 'International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development' by UNESCO. Before proceeding further it is worth knowing that the term 'creative economy' implies an economic system in which value is based on use of creative imagination rather than the traditional factors of land, capital and labor. The proposed biennial prize will be of fifty thousand USD meant to create a knowledge sharing mechanism by capturing, celebrating and communicating the best practice in developing creative entrepreneurship. The award will acknowledge exceptional initiatives taken by cultural workers and organizations in the development of

creative economy. It will also generate an opportunity to spread the ideology of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. There are only twenty-three UNESCO International Awards in the name of international celebrities and organisations so far.

National Defence Authorisation Act

The US Senate approved the 740.5 billion USD of the National Defence Authorisation Act. It has a provision of allocating funds for military ships, construction projects, aircraft, nuclear weapons and other national security initiatives. It is worth knowing that the National Defence Authorisation Act is a yearly bill of US Congress to oversee the defence budget of the USA. It provides specifications for the annual budget and expenditure of the country's defence department. Besides this, this year's bill also includes mandatory sanctions on Turkey for its acquisition of Russian missile defence system, renaming of bases that currently recognize Confederate leaders from pro-slavery

states, pay raises for service members, etc. The US Congress has been approving this annual bill for the past 60 years in a row.

The Expected Meteor Shower

Between December 17 and December 26, the Earth is likely to witness Geminids Meteor Showers as well as the Ursid Meteor showers. It is worth knowing that the meteors are pieces of rocks and ice that are ejected from comets as they orbit around the sun and when a meteor reaches the earth, it is called a meteorite. When a series of meteorites are encountered together, it is called a meteor shower.

The Geminids Meteor showers differ from other meteor showers as they are ejected from Phaethon, which is an asteroid and not a comet. This asteroid was discovered in 1983. The Geminids Meteor showers are expected at about 60 meteors per hour, while the Ursid Meteor showers at five to ten per hour. According to NASA, more than 30 meteor showers occur annually. November 2020 witnessed Leonids, Northern Taurids and Southern Taurids.

World Computer Literacy Day

Like every year, the globe celebrated the annual World Computer Literacy Day on 2nd December to create awareness and drive digital literacy in underserved communities worldwide. The day was meant to promote technological skills in children and women. The World



World Computer Literacy Day

Computer Literacy Day bridges the advanced gap that exists in the world today. Computers have become an essential part of human life and the time to time evolutions in computers' emerging technology has revolutionized human life. Development of computers from analytical to digital is one of the most significant changes that has simplified life. It is worth knowing that Indian computer company NIIT instituted the day in 2001 to mark its 20th anniversary. British mathematician Charles Babbage helped in the invention of computers. His extraordinary imagination of an Analytical Machine that would solve any arithmetical calculation and a device with punched cards for instructions, and a memory unit for the number storage, led to the invention of an early computer.

Demise Of Senegal World Cup hero Papa Bouba Diop

Papa Bouba Diop, who won 63 caps for Senegal and scored the goal which secured a historic 1-0 win over France in their opening FIFA World Cup match in 2002, passed away at the age of 42. He was also known as the 'Wardrobe' because of his stature. The midfielder joined Fulham from Lens two years later and succeeded as a robust defensive midfield enforcer. He made 98 Premier League appearances for Fulham and scored 10 goals. He played 53 times in the top flight after joining Portsmouth in 2007 where he became an FA Cup winner after 12 months. He then spent time with AEK Athens before returning to sign for West Ham United in 2011 and enjoyed a short stint at Birmingham City.

Wolf Brigade 44: Key Facts

Police found a crossbow, machete, knives and Nazi symbols in raids from homes of 11 members of the banned far-right extremist group called "Wolf Brigade 44" which wants re-establishment of Nazi state. This Brigade 44 openly pledged allegiance to Nazi leader Adolf Hitler and wants to end the democratic form of governance in Germany while propagating racism and anti-Semitism. This group has been banned by the German government along with its symbols that include a skull with two grenades marked with the number 44. Number 44 here means Division Dirlewanger, named after Oskar Dirlewanger, who ordered massacres against civilians in Belarus in the 1940s. The wolf Brigade 44 is a part of the Nazi Paramilitary SS that was established during World War II. This para military force was very brutal.

Star Wars Actor Dave Prowse Breathed His Last

Dave Prowse, the weightlifter who represented England in the Commonwealth Games in 1962 and later played the role of Darth Vader in the original "Star Wars" trilogy, passed away at the age of 85. Born in England, Dave Prowse began his career as a bouncer at a dance hall then weightlifter and finally excelled his career as an actor. In his weightlifting career, he won British Weightlifting Championship in 1962 at Perth, Australia. In his acting career, he had a long career in filmography from 1967 to 2017. He played memorable roles as Darth Vader in the original "Star Wars" trilogy and Frankenstein's monster in three movies. England acknowledged him by appointing him as Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services to charity and Road Safety in the 2000 New Year Honors.

The Return Of Hayabusa 2 Spacecraft of Japan



The Hayabusa 2 spacecraft of Japan is returning to the earth in Southern Australia after a yearlong journey collecting precious samples from asteroid Ryugu on 6th December 2020. Currently, the asteroid is located at a distance of about 300 million kilometres from the Earth. According to JAXA, Japanese Aerospace exploration agency, the capsule protected by a heat shield will turn into a fireball at a distance of

200 kilometre from the earth surface and the parachute of the capsule will open at about 10 kilometres. The spacecraft collected a surface dust sample in February 2019 and an underground sample in July 2019 from the asteroid. Ryugu is a carbonaceous near-Earth asteroid that holds the most Pristine materials in the solar system.

China's Hualong One Nuclear Power Reactor

According to the China National Nuclear Corporation, China recently connected its first native third generation nuclear power reactor called Hualong one to its national grid. The Hualong One nuclear power reactor i.e. Unit 5 of Fuqing Nuclear Power Plant with a lifespan of 60 years is first of its kind technology capable of generating 10 billion kilowatt hour electricity every year. This is likely to cut China's carbon emission by 8.16 million tonnes. It is worth noting that the technology of Hualong one has more than 700 patents and 120 software updates. The advanced reactor is made up of 177 reactor cores that will be replaced in every 18 months. More than 10,000 technicians have been working on it since 2015.

Roch Kabore Became Burkina Faso President For Second Term

The 63-year-old head of the ruling People's Movement for Progress party, Roch Kabore, secured 57.87% votes in the polls and became the President of the West African nation Burkina Faso for the second time. He had become the President for the first time in 2015. In the

November 2020 elections, Kabore's rivals Eddie Komboigo and Zephirin Diabre received 15.45% and 12.46%, respectively, of the nearly 3 million votes cast. President Kabore in his second innings has promised to make every effort for peace and development in the country.

International Migrants Day: December 18

The United Nations and several other international organizations celebrated the annual International Migrants Day on 18th December on the "Reimagining Human Mobility" theme. The resolution for this celebration was adopted in 1990 during the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their families. According to the UN, there are approximately 272 million migrants in the world, which includes 41 million internally displaced people. Ethnic violence, natural disasters and employment are the reasons for increasing migrations. In context to India, migration has increased. In 2001, the migrant population was 31.5 crores and in 2011, there were 45.6 crores of migrants. The migrant population has increased by 18%.

The Lunar Gateway Treaty

NASA and the Canadian Space Agency inked a historic agreement under which Canada will become a part of the Lunar Gateway Space Station via its new robotic arm called "Canadarm3". The Canadian Government has sanctioned 22.8 million USD towards the development of Canadarm3. The Lunar Gateway Space Station will be about one-sixth of the size of the International Space Station in lunar orbit. The international and commercial partners from Canadian Space Agency(CSA), Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and European Space Agency will develop and use it. Besides this, Canada will also be a part of the Artemis II mission, which is the first crewed mission to the moon by NASA since 1972. The proposed mission will be launched in 2023. The Artemis Programme will demonstrate new technologies and future explorations on the lunar surface. The astronauts will be uplifted by NASA's new Space Launch System via the Orion spacecraft.

Romania's parliament approves new government

The Parliament of Romania gave nod to the new liberal government which was voted by the 260 lawmakers out of 465 seats in the two chamber assembly of Romania. With this, Florin Citu, the former investment banker and Finance Minister, of the ruling National Liberal Party (NLP) became the new Prime Minister of Romania. He got the support of three other parties which gave him the majority of the Two chambers of the Parliament of Romania. The centre right coalition government garnered 260 votes in favor which is 32 votes more than required and 183 votes against. In the 2020 elections, the opposition Socialist Democratic Party (PSD) won around 30% of the votes in the election and was unable to form the government since it failed to get support from more than 50% of the lawmakers in the assembly. Past reveals that the present Prime Minister Florin worked in the capacity of economist for the European Investment Bank from 2003 to 2005 and

Central Bank of New Zealand from 2003 to 2005. He has been a senator since 2016. He was the finance minister in the liberal government led by Ludovic Orban from november 2019. It should be noted that the 21-member cabinet (including PM) of Florin Citu has only one woman, Labor Minister Raluca Turcan, which makes this as one of the most gender unbalanced governments of Romania in the last 30 years.

The First Potential Radio Signal From Exo planet

An international team of scientists has reported reception of the first possible radio signal from an exoplanet, which is 51 light years away from the earth in the Tau Bootes star-system. The signals were received by a Low Frequency Array radio telescope located in the Netherlands. Tau Bootes is a binary star system that hosts this Jupiter-like giant planet. This discovery of radio waves in the exoplanet of the star system has opened up a new way to examine the alien world. The radio waves will help in study of the magnetic field of the planet. This will in turn help the astronomers to learn the interior of the planet as well as its atmospheric properties.

China Opened World's Largest Radio Telescope

After the collapse of the world's second largest Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico, China opened the Five hundred meter Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST), also known as the "Eye of Heaven" or Tianyan for international scientists. It is said to be the world's largest Radio Telescope and the second largest single dish aperture after the RATA-600 in Russia, which is the world's



largest Single-dish aperture telescope. The construction of FAST was completed in 2016 at a cost of 175 million USD. It led to displacement of thousands of villagers from the location of Dawodang depression which is a natural basin in Guizhou, southwest China. The telescope has a reflecting surface of 500-metres in diameter in which a circle of 300 metres diameter can be used at one time. Having super sensitivity to detect cosmic phenomena like radio bursts and pulsars, it is meant for Pulsar Observations; Large Scale Neutral Hydrogen survey; Detection of Interstellar molecules; Pulsar Timing Arrays; Detecting Interstellar Communication signals; Leading International very long baseline interferometry network and Data Storage

UK-EU Brexit Trade Accord

The United Kingdom and the European Union are striking a deal defining the terms of their future relationship ahead of the deadline on December 31, 2020. Past reveals that the United Kingdom formally exited the European Union on 31st January 2020 and then entered into an eleven-month transition period during which it continued to follow European Union rules. The country tried to negotiate a deal with the European Union to determine the key aspects of their relationship after the end of transition period regarding defence, trade agreement, immigration, security etc. This deal is dubbed the Brexit Deal.



Ankita Raina Claimed ITF doubles title in Dubai

Indian Tennis star, Ankita Raina booked her third doubles title of the season after she won the 2020 Al Habtoor Tennis Challenge jointly with her Georgian partner Ekaterine Gorgodze in Dubai. The unseeded Indo-Georgian succeeded in getting an edge over the pair of Spain's Aliona Bolsova Zadoinov and Slovakian Kaja Juhan by 6-4 3-6 10-6 to win the final of the USD 1,00,000 event. It was the fourth doubles final of the season for Ankita and the biggest trophy of the calendar since her earlier two titles were at the USD 25,000 level. Al Habtoor Tennis Challenge is a professional female tennis tournament and part of the ITF Women's World Tennis Tour, held every year in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, since 1998



Max Verstappen : The 2020 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Winner

Max Verstappen of the Netherlands representing Red Bull, won the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2020, held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. This was his second victory of the season and 10th victory of his career. In this 17th edition and final round of the 2020 Formula One World Championship, Max Verstappen finished 16 seconds ahead of Valtteri Bottas and 18.4 clear of world champion Lewis Hamilton. Here Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes-Finland) stood second, followed by world champion Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) at third place.

Demise Of World's Greatest Athlete-turned Actor Rafer Johnson

American decathlete and film actor, Rafer Johnson, who was 1960 Olympic gold medalist in the decathlon, breathed his last at the age 86. He had also won a national decathlon championship in 1956 and a silver medal at the Melbourne Olympics in the same year. He made world records in the decathlon at three different times. After he retired from athletics, Johnson turned towards acting and appeared in a number of films, including the James Bond film Licence to Kill in 1989. He also played a vital role in helping to tackle the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy, the former United States Attorney General.

Virat Kohli Became The Fastest To Reach 12,000 ODI Runs

2nd December 2020 was a red letter day for Virat Kohli, who became the quickest to reach 12,000 runs in One-day Internationals. The 32-year-old achieved this feat in his 242nd inning during the third ODI against Australia at the Manuka Oval in Canberra. Virat surpassed Sachin Tendulkar's record of



18,426 runs which he scripted in his 300th inning. With this, Kohli has become the sixth player in the 12,000-plus run list that has Ricky Ponting (13,704), Kumar Sangakkara (14,234), Sanath Jayasuriya (13,430) and Mahela Jayawardene (12,650). Besides this, Virat Kohli also became the fastest batsman to score 22,000 International runs in his 462nd international inning. He surpassed Sachin Tendulkar, who achieved this feat in 493rd international inning. Kohli also became the Third Indian after Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid and the 8th Batsman in the history of International Cricket to make it to 22000 plus runs for the club. Others in the List include Kumar Sangakkara, Ricky Ponting, Mahela Jayawardene, Jacques Kallis (South Africa), Dravid, Brian Lara (West Indies) & Sachin Tendulkar.

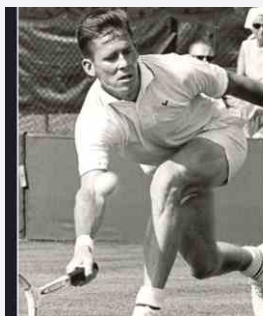
Jehan Daruvala : The First Indian To Win Formula 2 Race

Jehan Daruvala of India created history on 6th December 2020, by becoming the first Indian to win a Formula 2 race at the 2020 Sakhir Grand Prix. The 22-year-old represented the Red Bull Junior Team and competed for Carlin Motorsport. In this race his Japanese teammate, Yuki Tsunoda came second while Britain's Daniel Ticktum finished the race at the third spot. Racing legend Michael Schumacher's son Mick Schumacher was adjudged as the overall F2 champion of the season. Apart from this, Mexico's Sergio Perez won the 2020 Sakhir Grand Prix (officially known as the Formula 1 Rolex Sakhir Grand Prix 2020) held at 'Outer Circuit' configuration at the Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir, Bahrain. With this, Sergio Perez became the first Mexican Formula One driver to win a race since Pedro Rodriguez had won the 1970 Belgian Grand Prix

Demise Of Football Legend Maradona

Football legend Diego Maradona died of cardiac arrest at the age of 60. Maradona was one of the greatest footballers of all time. He was a master of brilliant skills and Trainer Francisco Cornejo signed him for Argentinos Juniors's youth team, which he led to a 136-game unbeaten run. Maradona made his debut in Argentina's top tier in 1976 and was the league's leading scorer for three consecutive seasons from 1978. He was the man, who helped Argentina win the World Cup in 1986, the pinnacle of an illustrious career. Maradona will always be remembered for his goal against England in the 1986 World Cup quarter-final in Mexico, when he appeared to use his hand to push the ball into the net prior to later changing the direction abruptly through the English defenders for a memorable second goal that sealed victory for his

Demise Of Tennis Champion Dennis Ralston



HALL OF FAMER
DENNIS RALSTON
July 27, 1942 - December 6, 2020



failed to achieve success as he was defeated by Spain's Manuel Santana in three sets in the 1966 Wimbledon final. He also reached the semifinals at the 1960 U.S. national championships and the 1970 Australian Open. But Ralston got success in doubles, when he paired with Rafael Osuna of Mexico to win Wimbledon in 1960. He along with American Chuck McKinley won titles at the U.S. national championships in 1961, '63 and '64. Ralston teamed with American Clark Graebner to win the 1966 French championships on clay. He was a three-time Grand Slam finalist in mixed doubles as well. He also helped the U.S. in winning the Davis Cup title in 1963. He captained the team from 1972-75, and succeeded in getting an edge over Romania in the final in 1972. He retired in 1977 and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1988.

team. The Argentine No. 10 dedicated the goal to the "Hand of God". In 1981 he played for giants Boca Juniors, Napoli and Barcelona among others, helping them to win the league championships.

The '2020 World Athletes of the Year'

Pole Vaulter Armand "Mondo" Duplantis of Sweden and Triple Jumper Yulimar Rojas of Venezuela have been adjudged as the male and female "2020 World Athletes of the Year" respectively at the annual World Athletics Awards 2020. With this the 21 years old, Mondo Duplantis became the youngest athlete as well as the first Swedish to receive this title. Duplantis has broken the record held by Frenchman Renaud Lavillenie and Ukrainian Sergey Bubka, with the highest pole vault clearances indoors (6.18 meters) and outdoors in (6.15). Besides this, he has received many accolades in the past viz. gold medal at the 2015 World Youth Championships, gold medal at the 2018 European Championships, Rising Star Award in 2018, silver medal at the 2019 World Championships and Svenska Dagbladet

The five-time Grand Slam doubles champion and an International Tennis Hall of Fame inductee, Dennis Ralston passed away at the age of 78 in Austin, Texas. The deceased was the highest-ranked American player for three years in the 1960s, long before the sport's computerized rankings system began. As a singles player, Ralston

failed to achieve success as he was defeated by Spain's Manuel Santana in three sets in the 1966 Wimbledon final. He also reached the semifinals at the 1960 U.S. national championships and the 1970 Australian Open. But Ralston got success in doubles, when he paired with Rafael Osuna of Mexico to win Wimbledon in 1960. He along with American Chuck McKinley won titles at the U.S. national championships in 1961, '63 and '64. Ralston teamed with American Clark Graebner to win the 1966 French championships on clay. He was a three-time Grand Slam finalist in mixed doubles as well. He also helped the U.S. in winning the Davis Cup title in 1963. He captained the team from 1972-75, and succeeded in getting an edge over Romania in the final in 1972. He retired in 1977 and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1988.

Gold Medal(2020) among others. Yulimar Andrea Rojas Rodriguez with her leap of 15.43m, has become the world record holder in women's triple jump indoor. She also has numerous awards booked in her name in the past viz. the Olympic silver medal (2016 Rio de Janeiro), two time World Champion (2017 London and 2019 Doha), two time World Indoor Championship (2016 Portland and 2018 Birmingham) in Triple jump.

Establishment of 1000 Khelo India Centres

The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports aired an announcement that the government has decided to start 1000 Khelo India centres across India at the tenth Global Sports Summit organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The proposed centres will generate employment for the retired sports persons and will also aid in encouraging sports culture in the country. With this, the Sports Ministry is trying to make India one of the top ten medal grossing countries in the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics.

Yogasana “: The New Competitive Sport In India

The Sports Ministry has officially announced Yogasana as a competitive sport to spread awareness about Yoga and its benefits and help improve physical and mental wellbeing of the people. Under Khelo India, Yogasana sport will be conducted in categories like Rhythmic Yogasana, all round championship, team Yogasana etc. This will also to avail government funding. competitive sport, Yogasana enter several sports events. Sports Federation has been leadership of Yoga Guru Baba



Traditional Yogasana, individual championship, artistic enable the ancient practice After this recognition as a has become eligible to An International Yogasana formed under the Ramdev. Besides this, the National Yogasana Sports Federation also exists to preserve and develop Yoga as a competitive sport. This federation received recognition as National Sports Federation by the sports ministry in November 2020.



IOC adds Breakdance & Three other events as Medal Events in Olympic Games

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board has added "Breaking", a competitive form of breakdancing as well as 3 other sports viz. Skateboarding, Sport Climbing, and Surfing to Medal Events Program in the Olympic Games. Breakdancing belongs to the genre of Hip-Hop Dance and is an athletic style of Street dance that originated from the United States in the early 1970s. It was created by the African-American and Puerto Rican Youth and was successfully trailed at the 2018 Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires. After this, the Paris 2024 Organising Committee proposed it for the Olympic Games. Now Breakdancing will make its Olympic debut at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, while the rest of the three newly included sports will make their Olympic debut at the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics that will be held in July 2021. The IOC has also subtracted certain medal events from the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics. It will feature 10 events less than the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. Besides these, four Medal

Events from Weightlifting have been canceled. The IOC Executive Board has also scrapped the Athlete quota for the 2024 Paris Olympics to 10,500 which is 600 less than Tokyo Games to be held in 2021.

Australia: The Dettol ODI series 2020 Winner

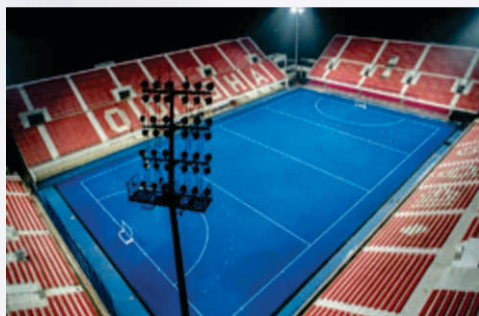
The Australian Cricket Team booked the 3-match Dettol ODI series 2020 on its name against India by 2-1. The ODI series was part of India's Tour of Australia, 2020-21 consisting of 3 ODIs viz. 3 Twenty20 Internationals (T20I), 4 Test Matches to be played from November 2020 - January 2021. It is worth knowing that the ODI Series is the first for India in the 2020-22 ICC Cricket World Cup Super League and the top 7 teams on the points table of ICC super league will qualify directly for the 2023 ODI World Cup, which will be held in India. The overview reveals that Australia won the first ODI that took place on November 27 by 66 runs and the Second ODI of November 29 by 51 runs, both matches were held at Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG), Sydney, while India won the Third and Final ODI by 13 runs, which was organized at Manuka Oval, Canberra. Australian Batsman Steve Smith was adjudged as the Player of the Series for scoring 216 runs in the series which included 2 Centuries. After this Series win, Australia led the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League with 40 Points and as India won the last ODI, it has been placed at No.6 position with 9 points.



Hamilton Scripted Bahrain Grand Prix On His Name

British Driver Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes won the 2020 Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix held at Bahrain International Circuit, Sakhir, Bahrain. The race was the fifteen round of the 2020 Formula One World Championship that became the 11th Win of the 2020 season for Hamilton. In this race Netherlands Driver Max Verstappen of Red Bull finished Second while Thailand's Alexander Albon of Red Bull finished Third. The race also witnessed an unfortunate crash of France's Romain Grosjean's (Haas) car. Lewis Hamilton's victory gave Mercedes their 115th Formula 1 race win, they surpassed Williams to take the 3rd position on the all-time list of most Grand Prix Victories by Constructors. Currently, Ferrari holds the record for the most Grand Prix victories with 238 wins, and with 182 wins, McLaren is placed second.

India's largest hockey stadium will be in Rourkela



India's largest hockey stadium is being planned in the city of Rourkela in Odisha. The planned stadium will cover an area of 15 acres in the Biju Patnaik University of Technology campus that is owned by the government of Odisha. Having a capacity of 20,000, the stadium will host the 2023 Men's FIH Hockey World Cup. The 2023 World Cup fixtures will be hosted by

Bhubaneswar (Kalinga Stadium) which is Odisha's capital city and as well as in Rourkela. It is worth learning here that Indian hockey legends like former captain Dilip Tirkey and Sunita Lakra belong to the Sundargarh district of which Rourkela is a part. The construction of the Rourkela hockey stadium has already started and will take up 17 blocks of Sundargarh district.

New Zealand's Greg Barclay: The New ICC chairman

Greg Barclay of New Zealand replaced interim chairman of International Cricket Council (ICC) Imran Khwaja, who had succeeded Shashank Manohar after his second two-year term ended in July 2020. Barclay has been a commercial lawyer and director of New Zealand Cricket since 2012. It is worth recalling here that Barclay was also a director of the men's World Cup that was jointly organized by Australia and New Zealand in 2015. Having 12 Full Members that play Test matches, and 92 Associate Members, ICC organises world championship events like Cricket World Cup, Women's Cricket World Cup, ICC T20 World Cup, ICC Women's T20 World Cup, ICC Champions Trophy and Under-19 Cricket World Cup.

Four Indigenous Games Now In Khelo India Youth Games 2021

The Sports Ministry gave nod to inclusion of 4 indigenous games viz. Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta, and Mallakhamb for Khelo India Youth Games 2021, scheduled to take place in

Haryana. Kalaripayattu is from Kerala and has practitioners worldwide, which include Bollywood actor Vidyut Jammwal. Mallakhamba is a popular sport across India and Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have been the hotspots of this sport. Gatka has its origin in Punjab. It is a traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors used both as self-defense as well as a sport. Thang-Ta is a Manipur martial art that will get national recognition with the help of the Khelo India Youth Games 2021

Lewis Hamilton: The BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2020

Formula 1 world champion, Lewis Hamilton has won the BBC Sports Personality of the Year title for the second time. The 35-year-old is one of F1's all-time great drivers, he equalled Michael Schumacher's record of seven world titles with his fourth consecutive championship in 2020 as well as surpassed Schumacher's total of 91 grand prix wins. Prior to this, he won this title in 2014. Besides him, the other award winners at Sports Personality 2020 were Captain Sir Tom Moore (Helen Rollason Award); Marcus Rashford (Expert Special Panel Award); Jurgen Klopp (Football) (Coach of the Year); Liverpool FC (Team of the Year); Sgt Matt Ratana (Unsung Hero); Tobias Weller (Captain Tom Young Unsung Hero); Andrea Spadolini-Sirieix (British diver): Young Sports Personality of the Year.

Wrestler Anshu Malik Won India's First Medal at the Individual World Cup 2020

Young Anshu Malik, coming up from the junior ranks, grabbed her third medal at the senior level. She lost the gold medal bout 1-5 to Moldova's Anastasia Nichita and claimed the silver medal in the 57kg category at the individual Wrestling World Cup. Anshu started with a 4-2 win over Azerbaijan's Alyona Kolesnik and followed it up with 3-1 victory over Germany's Laura Mertens in the quarterfinals. In the semi-final, she defeated Russia's Veronika Chumikova, recording a victory. Earlier in this year, she had claimed bronze at the Asian Championship in New Delhi and silver at the Matteo Pellicone event in Rome in January 2020. She is attempting to make a place for herself in the 57kg category along with World championship medallist Pooja Dhanda and experienced Sarita Mor in the same weight class. Sarita (59kg), Sonam Malik (62kg) and Sakshi Malik (65kg) failed to go beyond the quarterfinals in their respective categories.





Current Affairs

1. IAS officer Varsha Joshi has become the new Chairperson of
 (a) AIIMS New Delhi (b) PGIMER Chandigarh (c) JIPMER Pondicherry
 (d) SCTIMST Thiruvananthapuram (e) NDDB
2. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu released a book "..... Years with Abdul Kalam- Untold Stories".
 (a) 10 (b) 20 (c) 30
 (d) 40 (e) 50
3. Zoological Survey of India during the first of its kind survey in India found that Malayan Giant Squirrel or Giant Squirrel, "Ratufa bicolor" has reached the verge of extinction.
 (a) Black (b) White (c) Golden
 (d) Brown (e) Orange
4. Prof Sangita Srivastava got appointed as first woman Vice Chancellor of
 (a) Aligarh Muslim University
 (b) University of Allahabad
 (c) Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University
 (d) Banaras Hindu University
 (e) Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University
5. World's first Tram library for children has been launched in
 (a) Odisha (b) West Bengal (c) Gujarat
 (d) Maharashtra (e) Tamil Nadu
6. Indian supercomputer, Param Siddhi ranked in the list of 500 most powerful supercomputers in the world.
 (a) 61st (b) 62nd (c) 63rd
 (d) 64th (e) 65th
7. Shrikant Madhav Vaidya became Chairman of
 (a) Indian Oil Corporation (b) Bharat Petroleum (c) Reliance Petroleum Limited
 (d) Essar Oil Limited (e) Cairn India
8. The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports restored recognition of as a National Sports Federation for promotion and regulation of the sport in November 2020.
 (a) All India Chess Federation (b) Cycling Federation of India (c) Hockey India
 (d) Archery Association of India (e) Kho-Kho Federation of India
9. The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs has approved the removal of marijuana from the list of the "world's most dangerous" drugs category. It has been on this list since
 (a) 1960 (b) 1961 (c) 1962
 (d) 1963 (e) 1964

10. Dr. Adam Yao Liu was declared the winner of Export-Import Bank of India's (India Exim Bank's) BRICS Economic Research Award 2020 during theBRICS financial forum.
(a) 7th (b) 8th (c) 9th
(d) 10th (e) 11th
11. The book of Comic Series Chronicling India's Maritime Heritage was launched on Navy Day.
(a) First (b) Second (c) Third
(d) Fourth (e) Fifth
12. 5th December 2020 was celebrated as the International Volunteer Day, which was instituted in
(a) 1985 (b) 1986 (c) 1987
(d) 1988 (e) 1989
13. Veteran Bengali actor Manu Mukherjee, who recently passed away, had also been part of children's fantasy film
(a) Rani Aur Lalpari (b) Patalghar (c) Goopy Gyne Bagha Byne
(d) Sonar Kella (e) Haami
14. Bangladesh shifted Rohingyas from refugee camps near Ukhia in district to Bhasan Char, an island in the Bay of Bengal.
(a) Bandarban (b) Chittagong (c) Cox's Bazar
(d) Feni (e) Lakshmipur
15. The central bank has 'nowcast' that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the July-September quarter is set for a contraction of%.
(a) 8.2 (b) 8.3 (c) 8.4
(d) 8.5 (e) 8.6
16. India's Amul has become the world's largest milk processor.
(a) 5th (b) 6th (c) 7th
(d) 8th (e) 9th
17. Dictionary companies, Merriam-Webster and Dictionary.com chose as the word of the year.
(a) Kraken (b) Malarkey (c) Pandemic
(d) Quarantine (e) Antebellum
18. Ranjitsinh Disale of won the \$1M Global Teacher Prize 2020.
(a) Odisha (b) West Bengal (c) Gujarat
(d) Maharashtra (e) Tamil Nadu
19. Which of the following governments launched "Mukhyamantri Unnat Godhan Prakaalp" ?
(a) Tripura (b) Nagaland (c) Assam
(d) Manipur (e) Mizoram
20. BSF celebrated its 56th Raising Day on December 2020.
(a) 1st (b) 2nd (c) 3rd
(d) 4th (e) 5th



ANSWERS



- 1.(e) IAS officer Varsha Joshi has become the new Chairperson of National Dairy Development Board (**NDDB**). Currently, she is serving as Joint Secretary (CDD), Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India.
- 2.(d) Vice President released a book “**40 Years with Abdul Kalam- Untold Stories**”. It has been written by Dr A.Sivathanu Pillai. The book is published by Pentagon Press LLP and its foreword was penned by Pranab Mukherjee, former president of India.
- 3.(a) Zoological Survey of India during this first of its kind survey in India found that Malayan Giant Squirrel or **Black Giant Squirrel**, “*Ratufa bicolor*” has reached the verge of extinction. Its population might decline by 90% in India by 2050. The animal is native to the Indomalayan region, which spreads across the South and South-East Asia. In India, the species is found at higher numbers at the Kaziranga National Park in the state of Assam and parts of North-East India. The Giant squirrels are characterised by dark upper body, pale under body and long bushy tails.
- 4.(b) Prof Sangita Srivastava got appointed as the first woman Vice Chancellor of **University of Allahabad**. She is a former head of Allahabad University's home science department. She has been relieved from her present charge as Vice Chancellor of Prof Rajendra Singh University on the orders of the chancellor and governor Anandiben Patel.
- 5.(b) World's first Tram library for children has been launched in **West Bengal**. It is a first-of-its-kind library in the world on the tram that runs on tramway tracks along public streets. The tram will run on Shyambazar-Esplanade and Esplanade-Gariahat routes, spanning across north and south Kolkata, every day from morning to evening. It has been jointly developed by the West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) and Apeejay Anand Children's Library. It has around 1,000 books.
- 6.(c) Indian supercomputer, Param Siddhi ranked **63rd** in the list of 500 most powerful supercomputers in the world. Param Siddhi is the High-performance Computing-artificial Intelligence (HPC-AI) supercomputer created under National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) at C-DAC. The Top 500 project which ranks the top 500 non-distributed computer systems in the world is published twice a year.
- 7.(a) Shrikant Madhav Vaidya became Chairman of **Indian Oil Corporation** and took the place of Sanjiv Singh. Before his elevation, Vaidya was the Director (Refineries) on the IOC Board, since October 2019. Concurrently, Vaidya will also be Chairman of Chennai Petroleum Corporation, which is a stand-alone refining subsidiary of IOC and Indian Oiltanking Ltd.
- 8.(d) The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports restored recognition of the **Archery Association of India (AAI)** as a National Sports Federation for promotion and regulation of the sport in November 2020. The Government recognition of AAI was withdrawn eight years back on account of its failure to conduct its elections in accordance with the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011 (Sports Code).
- 9.(b) The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs has approved the removal of marijuana from the list of the “world's most dangerous” drugs category. It has been on this list since **1961**. Cannabis will be removed from Schedule IV of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, where it was listed alongside deadly cocaine, fentanyl, heroin, methadone, morphine, opium and the opiate OxyContin addictive opioids.

- 10.(d)** Dr. Adam Yao Liu was declared the winner of Export-Import Bank of India's (India Exim Bank's) BRICS Economic Research Award 2020 during the **10th** BRICS financial forum. David Rasquinha, Managing Director, India Exim Bank, did this announcement in the Forum hosted online by the Russia's State Development Corporation (VEB.RF). The Award comprises prize money of Indian Rupees 1.5 million (approximately USD 21,000), a medal and a citation.
- 11.(a)** The **first** book of Comic Series Chronicling India's Maritime Heritage was launched on Navy Day by Navy Vice Chief Vice Admiral G Ashok Kumar. The series, being published in collaboration with Amar Chitra Katha celebrates the glorious naval and maritime heritage of India. This first book tells about our nautical past, while the upcoming book two and three will showcase the transformation of the Indian Navy since Independence.
- 12.(a)** 5th December 2020 was celebrated as the International Volunteer Day, which was instituted in **1985**. "Together We Can Through Volunteering" was the theme for this year. It was to highlight the efforts of volunteers and organizations and offer the opportunity to promote volunteerism, encourage governments to support volunteer efforts and recognize volunteer contributions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at local, national and international levels.
- 13.(b)** Veteran Bengali actor Manu Mukherjee, who recently passed away, had also been part of children's fantasy film **Patalghar**. He started his film career with Mrinal Sen's Nil Akasher Niche (1958). He played outstanding roles in Satyajit Ray's Joy Baba Felunath and Ganashatru.
- 14.(c)** Bangladesh shifted Rohingyas from refugee camps near Ukhia in **Cox's Bazar** district to Bhasan Char, an island in the Bay of Bengal. The human rights groups have opposed this move of the country as the island is flood-prone, vulnerable to frequent cyclones and lacks basic facilities.
- 15.(e)** The central bank has 'nowcast' that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the July-September quarter is set for a contraction of **8.6 %**. For the first time in history, India's economy has entered a "technical recession" in the first half of 2020-21.
- 16.(d)** India's Amul has become the world's **8th** largest milk processor in the list of top 20 global dairy processors released by a global dairy research network, the International Farm Comparison Network (IFCN). Amul is a brand of dairy cooperative major Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMF) The home-grown dairy giant was the 9th largest milk processor by IFCN in 2018.
- 17.(c)** Dictionary companies, Merriam-Webster and Dictionary.com chose "**Pandemic**" as the word of the year. The Greek roots of this word are pan means "all" or "every," and dēmos means "people"; its literal meaning is "of all the people." It means an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area (such as multiple countries or continents) and typically affects a significant proportion of the population. The searches on the site for pandemic spiked more than 13,500% on March 11, the day the World Health Organization declared an outbreak of the novel coronavirus a global health emergency.
- 18.(d)** Ranjitsinh Disale of Solapur, **Maharashtra** won the \$1M Global Teacher Prize 2020 at the Natural History Museum in London in a virtual ceremony. He is most well-known for demonstrating scientific experiments from the science lab he has built in his home. And official numbers from Microsoft show that Ranjitsinh has taught an incredible 85,000 plus students from over 1400 classrooms in 83 countries via these virtual lessons. He will share half the prize money with the nine finalists from across the world, where each one will receive about \$55,000 each, making another history by sharing the prize money with the finalists.
- 19.(a)** **Tripura** government has launched "Mukhyamantri Unnat Godhan Prakalp" to make Tripura Self Sufficient in Milk Production. The government contemplated a 3-year plan to introduce sex-sorted artificial insemination of cattle for ensuring that more cows are born through selective chromosome selection.
- 20.(a)** The Border Security Force (BSF) celebrated its 56th Raising Day on **1st** December 2020. It was formed in 1965, as a unified central agency, after the Indo-Pak and India-China wars, for ensuring the security of the borders of India and for matters connected therewith. It is one of the five Central Armed Police Forces of the Union of India and stands as the world's largest border guarding force.