



Monthly **GK** Mania



June - 2020

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De-recognition of Karate Association of India

World Karate Federation (WKF) provisionally de-recognised the Karate Association of India (KAI) from June 21, 2020 on pretext of violating the World Karate Federation norms during its 2019 elections. These elections of the KAI were flawed. A part of the management led by Likha Tara says that the office-bearers were illegally elected, another part of management claimed control and the rest part proposed to re-appoint Bharat Sharma as vice president of KAI. After this derecognition, KAI will not be entitled to the exclusive rights reserved to the WKF members. It will not be able to participate in WKF events, use the WKF logo and name and represent the WKF in India. Prior to this, KAI suffered disaffiliation at the hands of Indian Olympic Association in January 2020 for violating its constitution and guidelines. That issue was related to the 2019 elections of KAI, which had no observer from the IOA & there have been accusations that the adopted procedure was invalid.

Cell Membrane Killer Nanoenzymes

Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru has reported development of nanozymes that can destroy the cell membrane of bacteria by directly targeting its phospholipids. The researchers of Department of Inorganic and Physical Chemistry and the Department of Microbiology and Cell Biology reveal in the ACS Applied BioMaterials journal that these nanoenzymes can be employed to break cell membranes of many disease causing bacteria. The nanoenzymes were tested on several typhoid, gastroenteritis, dysentery, cholera and pneumonia causing bacteria. The results showed that these nanoenzymes not only broke the cell membrane but also stopped the growth and killed the microbes. Therefore these nanoenzymes can be used in place of several antibiotics.

Healthcare & Hygiene EXPO 2020

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), the five-day Virtual Healthcare & Hygiene Expo, which was e-inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Chemicals & Fertilizers, Mansukh Mandaviya has concluded on 26th June 2020. The event created a self-reliant ecosystem in the Pharmaceuticals and Health & Hygiene Sector by ramping up domestic

production. The five day event focussed on Health Infrastructure such as medical devices, ventilators, etc, ; Benefits of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) and Medical Textiles & Consumables. Indian Pharmaceutical Companies imported over 70% of the API i.e. Bulk drugs , which are the most essential components for the manufacturing of any drugs and in order to end this dependency, the government of India is setting up Bulk Drug Parks in the country. This will add value to AtmaNirbhar Bharat.

The New Declarations of CBSE

The Central Board of Secondary Education has cancelled Class 10th & 12th examinations, which were scheduled from July 1 to July 15, 2020. The Centre and the CBSE have informed the Supreme Court bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar about a scheme to assess the performance of class 10th and 12th students on the basis of their performance in the last examinations. And CBSE will declare the results of both the board classes on 15th July 2020 following the mentioned scheme. Further CBSE added that it will conduct optional examinations for class 12th students, in the subjects whose examinations were scheduled to be conducted from 1st to 15th July 2020. The detailed information regarding these optional examinations can be captured on <http://cbse.nic.in/newsite/attach/Notification%20dt.%2025.06.2020.pdf> Apart from this, CBSE has postponed the Central Teachers Eligibility Test (CTET) examinations which were scheduled to be conducted on 5th July 2020. And the new dates for the same will be announced soon.

India pledged USD 10 million to UNRWA

India offered 10 million US dollar financial aid to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in the upcoming two years. This aid will be used for the capacity enhancement through training and building durable institutions in Palestine. It is worth noting here that in the past when certain countries withdrew funding, India came up with its annual pledge from 1.25 million US dollar to 5 million US dollar in 2018. India provides 250 annual scholarships to Palestinian youth and officials, apart from regular customised training programmes.

Demise of Shooter Pournima Zanane

Coach cum former Indian Air Rifle shooter Pournima Zanane passed away at the age of 42 because of cancer. She was an International Shooting Sport Federation(ISSF)-licensed coach who belonged to Nanded, Maharashtra. Her record of accomplishment states that she had a national record in the 10 m air rifle event on her name and represented India in numerous ISSF World Cups,

Asian Championships, Commonwealth Championships. She had begun her career as coach in 2012 and had coached shooters of Sri Lanka as well. She also assisted World Champion Farnik Thomas of Austria in 2014. She earned Shiv Chhatrapati Sports award for 2018-2019 on 22nd February 2020 from the state government of Maharashtra.

IIT Bombay's 'Dhruva' to Navigate Locations

Researchers of Indian Institute of Technology Bombay led by Rajesh Zele from the Department of Electrical Engineering have made a chip named 'Dhruva' that can be mounted in smartphones and navigation devices to search places and routes within the country. Dhruva is meant to send and receive radio signals to satellites regarding GPS and India's NAVIC group of navigation satellites, which are 36,000 km above the earth's surface. It can receive multiple frequency bands viz. 1.176 GHz (NAVIC L5 band), 1.227 GHz (GPS L2 band), 1.575 GHz (GPS L1 band), and 2.492 GHz (NAVIC S band) and tackle weak signals. Besides this, the chip can be converted into digital bits and processed by any standard digital signal processor (DSP) to accurately determine any location.

'Click to Buy' platform of Hyundai

Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL) partnered with HDFC Bank to offer its first online auto retail financing on its end-to-end online automotive retail platform, 'Click to Buy'. In this partnership, Hyundai Motor will provide customised car financing solutions to its customers from HDFC bank through its online car buying platform. Using the platform, the customers will be able to choose loans and get the funds they need to buy their favorite Hyundai car without visiting HDFC Bank branch. 'Click to Buy', an upgraded version of end-to-end online automotive retail platform to provide a safe, contactless and convenient purchasing experience to its consumers in wake of the COVID-19 circumstances.

India's First Oral Vaccine for Moderate COVID-19 Cases

The National Regulatory Authority for Indian pharmaceuticals, which is a Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) to Mumbai based Glenmark Pharmaceuticals gave approval for manufacturing and marketing of oral antiviral drug 'Favipiravir (Fabiflu)' for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 positive cases. This was approved in India on basis of the global evidence of the ongoing clinical trial on 150 subjects. The drug has shown notable efficacy in Russia and Japan. The drug will be sold by the pharmacists to customers having a valid prescription. The price of each 200 mg tablet will be Rs 103/-, which will be available in a combined strip of 34. The cost of the strip will be Rs 3,500. As matter of fact, for transcription and replication, the RNA polymerase enzymes are necessary for the DNA or RNA genes of the covid virus and the approved drug targets the Ribonucleic Acid (RNA) polymerase (RdRp) enzymes that are dependent on RNA.

Gujarat launched digital course material for students

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani launched digital course material for more than 1 lakh students engaged in professional ITI courses in wake of the Novel CoronaVirus. The online digital course involves more than 12 vocational categories like wiremen, basic cosmetology, computer operator cum programming assistant, fitter, electricians, electronics and diesel mechanic, sewing technology etc. Prepared by more than 700 supervisors and instructors of I.T.Is, the course duration is more than 2000 hours. Besides this, the Chief Minister has also launched three translated books in Gujarati related to fitter and turner trade to benefit more than 30,000 students.

Urjit Patel: The New Chairman of NIPFP

Former RBI Governor Urjit Patel has been appointed as the Chairman of National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP). His four year tenure has begun from 22nd June 2020. He has taken the place of Vijay Laxman Kelkar, former chairman of NIPFP. Patel's role in this new job is advisory in nature. He will preside over the board meeting of NIPFP which will be held 3 to 4 times a year. It is worth learning here that NIPFP's board has three representatives of the Ministry of Finance; three representatives of sponsoring state governments; one representative of Niti Aayog; one representative of RBI; three economists; three heads of sister research institutions as well as members of other sponsoring agencies and invitees. This institution is meant to provide an analytical base for formulating policies.

Reliance wore a market cap worth Rs 11 trillion!

Mukesh Ambani led Reliance Industries became India's first firm to reach a market capitalisation of Rs 11 trillion, as the company was valued at Rs 11.15 trillion. Its stock on Bombay stock exchange (BSE) was record high at Rs 1,738.95 as the company's share doubled since mid-March 2020. RIL has attained the net-debt free status via fundraising to the tune of Rs 115,693.95 crore through the sale of 24.71% stake in its digital services arm, Jio Platforms Ltd (JPL), to 10 global investors in 11 investments. In terms of dollar, RIL's m-cap translates into \$155 billion and currently it is the 54th largest company in the world and Mukesh Ambani is the world's 9th richest man.

Kidambi Srikanth got recommended for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

The Badminton Association of India (BAI) has recently recommended shuttler Kidambi Srikanth for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award. Flashback reveals that Srikanth had left the squad at Asian Badminton Championship in Manila in February, which put India's chances of winning the historic medal at the championship in jeopardy. Eventually India lost in the semi-finals against Indonesia

and this forced BAI to keep the player at bay for this year's National Sports Awards. However, realizing his mistake, the former world number 1 has recently submitted an apology for the same and looking at his past accomplishments, BAI could not refrain itself from recommending his name for the most coveted award.

India's first 'pay as you fly' Insurance for drones

The country's third-largest non-life insurance provider HDFC Ergo in collaboration with Tech firm Tropogo launched the country's first drone cover 'Pay as you Fly' insurance for drone-owners in India. This policy will offer an insurance cover of up to Rs 10 lakh on TropoGo mobile app on-demand to commercial drone owners and operators and will give life insurance for Third Party Liability Claims cover for property damage and bodily injuries that may have happened while carrying out activities like survey, mapping, monitoring, disaster relief initiatives, civil administration services, usage during festivals & events, property management and travel & tourism purposes etc.

The Delhi High Court & Education

Recently the Delhi High Court asked the final year undergraduate and postgraduate visually impaired students of Delhi University to endeavour to sit for the open book online exam which is scheduled on 2nd July 2020 and the cost of any book or assistive device, which they will buy for the examination shall be reimbursed up to two lakh rupees. In addition to this, a second round of open book exam will also be held, for which the visually impaired students will be eligible to appear in them also to improve their score even if they have taken the first round of exams. The verdict came in response to the plea filed by the National Federation of the Blind challenging the Delhi University's decision to hold open book examinations on the ground that it violated rights of students with visual impairments and other disabilities. Apart from this, a petition has been filed in Delhi HC seeking to ensure 27 percent reservation for OBCs in medical and dental colleges. The petition alleges that the previously allotted 27 percent reservation to OBCs was not being followed by the central government in the process of admissions to medical and dental college seats surrendered by the state government to the all India quota. The petition also states that in the past two academic years, 2017- 18 and 2018-19, 5,530 seats that should have gone to students in OBC category under the reservation procedure, were allotted to students in the general category. The petition dubbed it as a clear violation of Article 14 of the Constitution of India. The expected verdict in favour of this plea may curb the alleged discrimination by the centre against the OBC students in dental and medical courses.

The Rajya Sabha Elections

Elections for 19 Rajya Sabha seats across eight states were held on 19th June 2020. Among the 19 seats, four each are from Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat, three each from Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, two from Jharkhand, and one each from Manipur, Mizoram and Meghalaya. While in Karnataka, elections were to be held for four seats, all the four candidates viz. former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge, BJP candidates Iranna Kadadi and Ashok Gasti have been declared elected unopposed.

1000 Khelo India Centers at district level across country

On 19th June 2020, the Government of India announced a set up of 1000 Khelo India Centers (KIC) at the district level across the country. The proposed centers will either be run by a past champion or have them as coaches. This will tap into the expertise of past sporting champions for grassroot-level training of athletes and will also ensure a sustained source of income for them in the sports ecosystem. This will ensure past champions' contribution in making India a sporting superpower. With this decision, the government is looking forward to make sports a viable career option for youngsters. For this a shortlisting mechanism has been implemented to identify past champions who are eligible to either establish their own academy or work as a coach in a KIC. In order to establish a country-wide network of Khelo India Centres, existing SAI extension centres will be given the option of converting into a KIC and recruiting a past champion to avail the financial grant under the scheme.

The ATMA of Nagpur station

Under the New, Innovative Non Fare Revenue Ideas Scheme (NINFRIS) policy to prevent transmission of COVID-19, Indian Railways installed Automated Ticket Checking and Managing Access Machine (ATMA) at Nagar Central Railways station. With this, Nagpur station became the first railway station of India to have this first of its kind facility. It is equipped with digital screens which will check the human body temperature with a Human thermal scanning device, check whether the passengers are wearing masks, their tickets are valid, whether the passenger carries their ID cards & check the Passenger Name Record (PNR) of the ticket. It also has a 2 way mic system to guide railway passengers or raise any questions by the ticket checking staff who will be sitting and monitoring inside the cabin. After receiving clearance from the railway staff, the machine will send a signal to open the gate for the passenger. The system is expected to increase the Non Fare Revenue for the Central Railway zone. This facility will be extended to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT) and Kalyan railway stations in the future. Recently, Indian Railways had also introduced a new automated face mask and hand sanitizer dispenser machine at Patna Junction for ease of those who forgot to carry their sanitizer or mask.

The Privilege of DK Jain

The tenure of former supreme court judge DK Jain as the ethics officer and ombudsman of Board of Control for Cricket in India(BCCI) has been extended for 1 year in June 2020 on account of covid-19 situation. With this, he has become BCCI's first ever Ombudsman to get such an extension. He was also the first-ever ombudsman of BCCI appointed by the supreme court in February 2019. His tenure as the ethics officer and ombudsman of BCCI ended on 29th February 2020 and he resumed office post renewal of his contract in June 2020. He looked into cases of suspension of KL Rahul and Hardik Pandya for their inappropriate comment in a talk show as well as the conflict of interest between Sachin Tendulkar, VVS Laxman and Sourav Ganguly.

India Will Be The President of UNSC in August 2021

India has recently been elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and will serve as the President of UNSC in August 2021. It should be noted that the council presidency has been held by each of the members in turn for one month following the alphabetical order. As per this rule, Tunisia will begin as a President of the United Nations Security Council in January 2021 and in the next coming months, the United Kingdom, the United States, Vietnam, China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, and Niger will be the Presidents of the Security Council. After August 2021, India will get another chance of becoming President of the same in 2022 as well.

“Karmo Bhumi” of West Bengal

The government of West Bengal has launched a job portal “Karmo Bhumi” for Information Technology(IT) professionals, who have lost their jobs after the outbreak of COVID-19 and returned to the state. The portal will help them get a job in the state. The portal will act as a medium between the professionals and IT companies in the state. It can be accessed via <http://karmabhumi.nltr.org>. This portal will eliminate the requirement of middlemen who waste the money of job seekers and the job will be readily available for job seekers.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of Lonar lake

The Bombay High court recently sought report on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of Lonar lake from the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) and GSI (Geographical Survey of India) regarding the change of color of the Lonar Lake in Maharashtra. The two organizations are involved in research work regarding glass formation on the surface of the Lonar Lake. The lake was formed by a meteorite hit on the earth around 50,000 years ago and is oval in shape. Recently it showed a change in color. The area around the lake is an eco-sensitive

zone as it made up of the Ejecta Blanket that is made up of the same material as that found on the moon. The lake is a National Geo-Heritage monument notified under Geological Survey of India for protection, maintenance, promotion and enhancement of geotourism.

Khelo India State Centres of Excellence

In order to scale up the best world-class standard sporting facilities in each state of India, the Sports Ministry decided to set up Khelo India State Centres of Excellence under the Khelo India Scheme. In the proposed centres, athletes from all over India will be trained in their specific discipline. With this aim of creating a strong sporting ecosystem in the entire country, the sports ministry will identify one such centre in each of the States and UTs. As a first step towards this goal, the Ministry has already identified state-owned sports facilities in 8 states of India viz. Jaiprakash Narayan National Youth Centre, Bangalore (Karnataka) ; Sangey Lhaden Sports Academy, Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh); GV Raja Sr. Secondary Sports School in Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala); Khuman Lampak Sports Complex, Imphal (Manipur); Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Aizawl (Mizoram); State Sports Academy, IG Stadium, in Kohima (Nagaland); Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar (Odisha) and Regional Sports School, Hakimpet (Telangana). The state and UTs will run the centres and will build infrastructure to convert them into a world-class sporting facility. And as far as the funds for expert coaches, equipment, support staff, infrastructure are concerned, they will be managed under the Khelo India Scheme.

Demise of Lt Gen Raj Mohan Vohra

June 2020 became witness to the passing away of 1971 war hero, Lt Gen Raj Mohan Vohra at the age of 88 years. The Maha Vir Chakra awardee of 1972 hailed from Shimla and received this accolade for his role in the Battle of Basantar (Part of 1971 India-Pakistan war). He also received the Param Vishisht Seva Medal. He was commissioned into the Army in 1952 and retired in 1990. He also took part in the Indo-Pak War of 1965. He had also served in the Scinde Horse regiment and afterwards commanded the 4th Horse (Hodson's Horse- a unit of the Indian Army which originated as part of the British Indian Army) in the Shakargarh Sector during the Indo-Pak War of 1971. The deceased was also a part of the first batch of the National Defence Academy as well as the joint services wing of the Indian Military Academy, which started its training in 1949. The alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington served in capacities of General officer commanding in Chief (GOC-in-C) Eastern Command as well as GOC 31 Armoured Division.

UP Became The Top Employment Provider under MGNREGA

According to the latest released data, Uttar Pradesh has become the top state in the country to provide employment to the workers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA). More than 57 lakh workers have been employed in 57 thousand village panchayats of the state which accounts to 18% of the total work generated under MGNREGA in the country. Uttar Pradesh succeeded in generating 7.93 crore man-days and the government will provide jobs to 10 lakh more workers in the coming days. This employment push from the state government is said to be a major positive development at a time when more than 30 lakh migrant labourers have returned from other states to UP. Further the state government is conducting a survey of all the industrial units to explore possibilities of employment so that migrant workers who have returned from other states can be accommodated.

India : Cofounder of GPAI

In order to promote responsible evolution of Artificial Intelligence, some of the leading economies of globe viz. USA, UK, EU, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Singapore and India launched the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI). Through this partnership, the leading experts from industry, civil society, governments, and academia will evolve methodologies to show how Artificial Intelligence can be leveraged to better respond to the present global crisis around COVID-19. GPAI will be supported by a Secretariat and will be hosted by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris, as well as by the two Centres of Expertise- one each in Paris and Montreal. Through this partnership, India will be able to actively participate in the global development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as well as will be leveraging its own experience around the use of digital technologies for inclusive growth.

India : A Non-permanent Member Of UNSC

India has been elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for a two-year term. The 193-member General Assembly cast 184 votes in favour of India for this membership. India's two year term will start from 1st January 2021 and this is the eighth time, when India will sit at the UN high-table. According to the External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar, India's approach at the UN Security Council will be guided by the tenets of Samman, Samvad, Sahyog, Shanti and Samriddhi. And in this fresh tenure in the UN Security Council, India will try to work for New Orientation for a Reformed Multilateral System. Besides India, Ireland, Mexico and Norway also won the Security Council elections.

India-China Row On Galwan Valley

The most violent clash in more than 50 years broke out on 16th June 2020 between India and China on the Line of Actual Control in the Galwan Valley of Ladakh region in which around 20 Indian soldiers were killed in the face-off. Both India and China share a border that is more than 3,440km (2,100 miles) long and have overlapping territorial claims. The Galwan river valley has harsh climate and high altitude terrain, lies along the western sector of the LAC and close to Aksai Chin, which is a disputed area claimed by India but controlled by China. In order to improve military access to the Galwan valley, India is building a strategic road through the region that connects to a high-altitude forward air base that India has reactivated at Daulat Beg Oldi, which holds the reputation of being the world's highest landing ground. Currently, the armies of both the countries are engaged in standoff in Galwan valley, Pangong Tso, Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldie in Ladakh. S Jai Shankar, the External Affairs Minister of India held a telephonic conversation with his counterpart Wang Yi and conveyed the protest of the Indian Government over the stand-off in strongest terms. Flashback reveals that this stand-off in the Galwan area was one of the biggest flashpoints in the 1962 war as well and China till date opposes to Indian constitutional provisions in the area.

Indian Gaurs Are Suffering Mutation

The World Wide Fund along with the government of India conducted an estimation exercise of grazing animals, Indian Gaurs in the Nilgiris forest division of Tamil Nadu. According to the exercise, there are around 2,000 Gaurs across this division. Indian Gaurs are the largest and tallest in the family of wild cattle. The scientists have found that they are suffering from a rare genetic condition of leucism. The condition causes partial loss of pigmentation in the skin pattern of the animals that might compromise their immune systems and reduce their survival rates. It is happening because of low quality diet, environmental alterations, follicular damage, inbreeding, pollution, etc. The IUCN Red List has placed the Indian Gaurs under the Vulnerable category.

Four New Kendriya Vidyalaya

According to Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank's information, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan has recently given nod to establishment of four new Vidyalayas. The proposed four Kendriya Vidyalayas are KV SSB Champawat in Uttarakhand, KV Railway Dangoaposi in Jharkhand, KV Madhupuri, Fatehpur and K V Sumerpur, Hamirpur in Uttar Pradesh. With this, the total number of Kendriya Vidyalayas will reach 1239 across the country.

India's first gas trading platform

The Central Electricity Regulatory Commission's electronic system, the Indian Energy Exchange launched the country's first gas trading platform on 15th June 2020. Minister of Petroleum and Natural gas, Dharmendra Pradhan did the e- inaugural ceremony for it. This online gas trading platform will act as a subsidiary of Indian Energy Exchange. This will be the first online gas trading platform for physical delivery of natural gas, whose trading will be done in rupees. The minimum lot size allotted is 100 Million British Thermal Unit (MBTU). The platform is meant for buyers and sellers of natural gas to trade both in the spot market and in the forward market for imported natural gas across three hubs viz. Dahej and Hazira in Gujarat, and Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh. The exchange has vowed to facilitate transparent price discovery in natural gas, and facilitate the growth of the share of natural gas in India's energy basket. India Energy Exchange began its operations in 2008 and pioneered the development of power trading in India. It has power traders, state electricity boards, power producers and open access consumers.

NHAI : The First Fully Digitalised Organisation Of Construction Sector

The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has become the first fully digitalised organisation in the construction sector that uses the cloud and artificial intelligence. Data Lake, a Big Data Analytic platform and Project Management softwares are powering this digitalisation. The organization transformed the complete project management including the timelines and alert mechanism workflow from manual to online. All the requisite documentations, contractual decisions and approvals are made via the online portal.

The Online ISRO Cyberspace Competitions-2020

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) announced an online ISRO Cyberspace Competitions-2020 to ignite young minds in the country. The competition will involve drawing competition for Class 1st to 3rd students, model making competition for Class 4th to 8th and Essay competition for Class 9th and 10th students, whereas for the students of class 11th and 12th an essay competition will be organized with space quiz contests in Hindi and English. Students can register via <https://icc2020.isro.gov.in/icc/register.jsp> and details of the competition are now available on ISRO website www.isro.gov.in/ICC-2020.

India's First Infectious Disease Diagnostic Lab

The government of India launched India's first rapid response mobile laboratory, infectious disease diagnostic lab as a part of its Atma Nirbhar Bharat. This laboratory has been constructed in a record time of eight days from the date of receipt of Automotive Chassis, from Bharat Benz. It was

supported by the Department of Bio-Technology. Equipped with a BSL-2 facility with on site Elisa, real-time reverse tranion polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) test and Biochemistry analysers, it can test Elisa about 200 per day and RTPCR about 50 per day.

India's course conduction in Bangladesh

Between June 18 to June 26, India will organise four more courses on COVID 19 management for professionals. According to the High Commission of India in Dhaka these courses are part of the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation (ITEC) platform that aims at capacity building for professionals engaged in the COVID 19 pandemic management in Bangladesh and other countries. The upcoming first course starting on June 18 will be conducted by the National Centre for Good Governance, Mussoorie and the other three courses will be conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Jodhpur, which will focus on issues of biomedical waste management, mental healthcare and human resource management. It is worth remembering here that starting from 17th April, six courses on various aspects of COVID 19 management have already been conducted by leading institutions like AIIMS and PGIMER among others. In addition to this, another course designed specifically for Bangladesh in Bangla language was conducted by AIIMS, Bhubaneswar on May 12th and 13th which was attended by 159 medical professionals from the country.

Rajasthan witnessed Operation Desert Chase

The Rajasthan Police recently arrested two civil defence employees in Jaipur based on Military Intelligence inputs under Official Secrets Act, 1923. The arrested employees were said to be passing sensitive information to Pakistan spy agency ISI under Operation Desert Chase. It is an anti-espionage operation that was started by the Military Intelligence in 2019. It is worth registering here that the Official Secrets Act condemns actions that involve helping an enemy state against India. In 2017, the Ministry of Home Affairs requested amendment in this Act to make the act more transparent in line with RTI act (Right to Information Act, 2005). This Act is still active in Hong Kong, UK, Myanmar, Singapore and Malaysia, while New Zealand and Canada practised it in the past. It is worth recalling here that Pakistan has been running a military intelligence Operation Tupac to make Jammu and Kashmir a part of Pakistan since 1947.

The 2020 NIRF Ranking

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has put out the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) for the educational institutions across the country. The IIT Madras has emerged as the topper in overall ranking followed by IISc Bangalore, IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay, IIT

Kharagpur, IIT Kanpur, IIT Guwahati at the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh spots respectively. Launched in 2015, the NIRF ranking system ranks institutions in 10 categories viz. engineering, university, management, college, medical, pharmacy, law, dental and architecture. And the toppers in the various categories include IIT Madras (Engineering); IISc Bangalore (University list); IIM, Ahmedabad (Management) ; AIIMS (Medical) ; Miranda College (college list) and Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences, Delhi (Dental category). It should be noted that Dental institutions have been included for the first time in Indian Rankings 2020. It is worth knowing that the performance of the institutions have been linked to the “Institution of Eminence” scheme, which is being operated by the Ministry of HRD to project Indian institutes to global recognition.

The Sound Roar Of Asiatic Lions

As of June 10, 2020, the Asiatic Lion population has increased by 29%. In 2015 it was 523 and now in 2020 it has become 674. In 2015, the distribution area of lions was 22,000 square kilometres, that has now increased by 36% i.e. 30,000 square kilometres. The Asiatic Lions are currently dwelling in the protected areas of agro-pastoral landscape of Saurashtra, Gujarat. Previously, they were found in the region between the Indus river in the west, till Bengal in the east and till Narmada river in the south. Community Participation, Emphasis on Technology, Proper Habitat Management, Wildlife Healthcare and reduction in human-lion conflicts were the main reasons that contributed to this increase.

Railways made a new world record

Indian Railways has created a new world record by successfully running the first Double-Stack Container Train with high reach pantograph in Over Head Equipment electrified territory on Western Railway. Pantograph is a spring-like apparatus which is mounted on the roof of an electric train to collect power through an overhead tension wire. The Operation successfully commenced on 10th June from Palanpur and Botad stations in Gujarat. This is a first of its kind accomplishment in the entire world which will fuel the ambitious Green India of Indian Railways. This double-decker freight train was successfully tested on the newly-built Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) in Rajasthan's Sawai Madhopur district in December 2019 by the Indian Railways.

The Untimely Demise of Sushant Singh Rajput

Renowned Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput committed suicide on 14th June 2020. The 34 year old from Bihar was found dead at his Bandra residence in Mumbai. He had started his acting career via TV serial "Pavitra Rishta". He made his film debut in Kai Po Che! (2013), for which he

received a nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Male Debut. The highly-talented actor won several accolades for his roles in movies like PK (2014), M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story(2016) and Kedarnath (2018). He also gave a remarkable performance in the romantic comedy Shuddh Desi Romance (2013) and as the titular detective in the action thriller Detective Byomkesh Bakshy! (2015). It is worth registering here that Chhichhore (2019) was his last movie in which he is seen counselling his on screen teenage son, who tries to commit suicide after failing an entrance exam. A week ago his ex-manager Disha Salian had also committed suicide by jumping off the 14th floor of her apartment in Mumbai. Apart from all this, Indian think tank NITI Aayog had signed Sushant to promote Women Entrepreneurship Platform.

The Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle Complex Vice

Admiral Atul Kumar Jain, PVSM, AVSM, VSM Flag Officer Commanding in Chief ENC inaugurated a Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) Complex at Visakhapatnam to accommodate the newly inducted Submarine Rescue System with state of the art facilities to store the DSRV assets in a Rescue-Ready state. The system has a Submarine Rescue Vessel, a Remote Operations Vehicle, Side Scan Sonar and associated equipment. It is also well equipped with Diver Decompression Chambers and hyperbaric medical equipment to decompress submariners after being rescued from a sunken submarine. The system can be quickly mobilised by air or road to facilitate submarine rescue operations even at distant locations. Presently, the Indian Navy has inducted two such systems which are all set to provide rescue cover to submarines on the West and East coast of India respectively. Globally there are about 40 nations that operate submarines and out of which only a few have submarine rescue capability. It should be noted that the third generation Indian Navy submarine rescue capability can be called to assist during submarine contingencies of other navies in the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR).

Flames of Assam Baghjan Oil Well Fire

The Baghjan oil well of the Oil India Limited in Assam, that had blown out on May 27, 2020 and has been leaking gas for the past 14 days, has eventually caught fire on 9th June 2020 bringing the flora and fauna of the region in jeopardy. The massive fire led to the deposition of gas condensate in the Maguri Beel WetLand. The tea growers in the region have launched complaints about the deposited layers of gas condensates in the tea gardens. The incident has thrown the Dibru-Saikhowa National park in dismay. The landscape displays a pathetic scene of carcasses of endangered Gangetic dolphins and aquatic life floating. The thing of beauty has now become a grief forever. Besides this, the paddy fields, wetlands and ponds have also got contaminated under the increasing threats. The smoke from the site is visible from 10 km of radius. The Indian Air

Force and the Indian Army are playing their role in rescue operations. So far around 6,000 people living around the natural gas producing well have been evacuated and Rs 30,000 has been announced for the affected families.

Contact-free ATM cash withdrawals

The authorized national payment system, Empays Payment Systems partnered with Mastercard to enable contact-free ATM cash withdrawals in the country and with this, India will become the first country outside the United States (US) where this product will be launched. This will eliminate the necessity of touching an ATM PIN pad, amid the spread of coronavirus from contaminated surfaces. In this cardless system, the Automated Teller Machine will enable the users to withdraw their money just by scanning a Quick Response code on the mobile phone, using their banking app. It will involve four steps viz. Opening of banking app, Scanning of QR on ATM, Authentication of withdrawal amount on banking app and Picking up cash from ATM.

Javed Akhtar Became First Indian Richard Dawkins Awardee

Renowned lyricist in the Indian film Industry and Padma Shri recipient Javed Akhtar received the Richard Dawkins Award and with this he became the first Indian to get this award. He had also won the Sahitya Akademi award and Padma Bhushan in the past. Javed Akhtar raised his voice on social media like twitter, literary events and in interviews about the issues regarding Citizenship Amendment Act, public policy, reopening of liquor shops after lock down, communism in the society, etc. The Richard Dawkins Award is presented by an NGO the Atheist Alliance of America to those distinguished individuals that belong to the world of scholarship, science, education or environment and exhibit values of rationalism, secularism upholding scientific truth. Richard Dawkins is an English ethologist, evolutionary biologist, and author.

World's first 'Internet-controlled' robot 'Coro-bot' for COVID-19 hospitals

A 23-year old Thane engineer, Pratik Tirodkar, founder of a start-up PNT Solutions, Dombivali has recently developed the world's first 'Internet-controlled' robot named 'Coro-bot' to cater the needs of the hospitals treating COVID-19 patients. Coro-bot is well equipped with 3 trays of 10-15 kg carrying capacity each, a 30-kg storage at the bottom to help serve more than 12 patients at a time in the COVID-19 ward. It has dispensers and sensors for sanitizers, LED lights, a small Personal Computer(PC) like screen above for basic computer work or entertainment and nozzles for disinfectant baths that use Ultraviolet(UV) lights. It can be operated from any location in the world using Internet of Things (IoT) technology. This is the first occasion when this technique is being deployed in the medical field in Holy Cross Hospital, Kalyan, Maharashtra. It costs between Rs 1.60-Rs.3.80 lakhs, depending on various specifications.

Adani Green Energy won world's largest solar bid worth USD 6 billion

The Adani Green group won the first-of-its-kind manufacturing linked solar tender from the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) on June 9, 2020. Under the project, the Adani Green Group will make 8 GW of solar projects and will set up 2 GW of additional solar cell and module manufacturing capacity. It is said to be the world's largest solar bid worth Rs 45,000 crore (USD 6 billion) which will create 400,000 direct and indirect jobs. It is also expected to displace 900 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over its lifetime. Besides this, Azure Power Global Limited also won a bid to construct a PV project of 4,000 MW and solar kit manufacturing capacity of 1,000 MW under domestic manufacturing-linked solar power projects from SECI.

Treating cancer with magnetocaloric material

As per recent publication of a study in Journal of Alloys, a team of Scientists from the International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI), an autonomous R&D Centre of Department of Science and Technology (DST) reported success in development of a magnetocaloric material that can be used in the treatment of cancer. Magnetocaloric material is a rare-earth-based material that can be heated or cooled by applying or removing a magnetic field. The study states that when the body of a cancer patient is given radiation therapy in conjunction with a controlled amount of heat using magnetocaloric material then the side-effects caused by the treatment of cancer such as Blood Pressure are not generated plus the time taken in treatment is also saved. Scientists also studied the merit of this Magnetocaloric material which revealed that the rare earth element used in this innovation was found to be compatible with the human body and the composition of the alloy which was employed was capable of bringing the Curie temperature close to the requisite medical temperature range (42–46 ° C) to kill cancer cells.

The Best Ever Safety Record Of Railways

During April 2019 to March 2020, Railways registered the best ever safety record as there has been no fatality of any railway passenger in any train accident. It is an outstanding feat achieved for the first time in the year 2019-20 since the introduction of the Railway System in the country 166 years ago. The zero passenger fatalities in the last 15 months is due to several measures that Railways adopted to improve safety viz. record elimination of 1270 manned level crossings, construction of road over bridges, highest ever renewal of rail tracks for 5181 Track kilometres , effective track maintenance and improvements in signaling system as 84 stations with mechanical signaling have been replaced with electronic signaling.

Madhya Pradesh: The Top Wheat Procurer In Country

Madhya Pradesh became the top state in the country in wheat procurement on support prices. The state government has procured more than 1.27 crore tonnes of wheat from farmers, which is equivalent to the 33 % of the total wheat procured in the country. This time around 81% of the registered farmers were seen at the procurement centres to sell wheat, which itself is a record. Out of the total wheat procured, 118 lakh metric tonnes i.e. 95 % of the purchased quantity has been safely stored. A sum of Rs 20253 crore has been deposited in the accounts of 14 lakh and 19 thousand farmers.

MGNREGA received highest ever funds of Rs. 1,01,500 crore

The central government has allocated an amount worth Rs. 1,01,500 crore for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) during financial year 2020-2021, which is so far the highest ever fund allocated for the scheme. The scheme has already received a sum of 31493 crores out of it, which equals to more than 50 % of the budget estimate of the current Financial Year. According to the Agriculture Ministry a total of 60.80 crore person days have been generated so far and work has been offered to 6.69 crore persons.

Country Threw Blacklisted Foreign Nationals At Bay

The Government of India banned 2,550 blacklisted foreign Tablighi Jamaat members from traveling to India for 10 years on account of the violations of visa provisions and covid -19 rules under Section 14 of the Indian Foreigners Act 1946. The banned foreign nationals had come to India on tourist and e-visas and attended the Tablighi Jamaat event in Delhi's Nizamuddin in March 2020. According to the Delhi Police, "They had entered India on a tourist visa and participated in the Markaz and in addition to violating visa provisions, they also led to a situation where a highly infectious disease spread and threatened the lives of inmates as well as the general public..... they deliberately, willfully, negligently and malignantly disobeyed the lawful directions promulgated in this regard". Some of them travelled to different states of India after attending the event and the state governments reported details of these foreigners found to be illegally living in mosques and religious seminaries across the country. They have been booked for the offences under sections 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 269 (Negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life), 270 (Malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) and 271 (Disobedience to quarantine rule) of the Indian Penal Code and relevant sections of the Foreigners Act. In April 2020, the government had blacklisted these foreigners and cancelled their visas.

India's First online waste management platform

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched India's First online waste management platform of Andhra Pradesh Environment Management Corporation (APEMC) on the occasion of World Environment Day i.e. 5th June 2020. With the principles of 6 'R's– Reuse, Reduce, Recycle, Redesign, Refurbish and Remanufacture, it will ensure 100% safe disposal of industrial toxic wastes. APEMC handles the industrial waste from its generation till the end of its life cycle that includes sorting & streamlining the waste as hazardous or non-hazardous or e-waste according to category, scientifically disposing of the waste at the disposal centres. It works in coordination with Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB).

Recent Announcements About Exams

Reviewing the prevailing situation on COVID-19, Union Public Service Commission issued revised schedule of Examinations and Recruitment Tests (RTs). Among them, the Personality tests for remaining candidates of Civil Services Exam 2019 has been scheduled from July 20, 2020 onwards. The Recruitment Test for the posts of EO/AO in the Employees' Provident Fund Organization, which was scheduled to be held on the October 04, 2020, has now been deferred. New date for the same will be published on the website of the Commission along with the calendar of Examinations/ Recruitment Tests for 2021. Apart from this, Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has postponed the National Council for Hotel Management Joint Entrance Examination (NCHM JEE) 2020 and the new dates for the same will be announced in coming time.

The Green Field Expressway Project

The Government of India (GoI) gave a nod to convert the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway into a green field project to connect five historic towns viz. Goindwal Sahib, Sultanpur Lodhi, Khadoor Sahib and Tarn Taran in the states. The Green Field projects are about new productions or facilitation of services. It is worth learning here that the original proposal was to widen the existing roads under brown field projects, which are about modification or upgradation. India is currently working towards becoming a 5 trillion USD economy and the GoI has launched a series of infrastructure projects under the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) for the same. The NIP will include both brown field and green field projects at an estimated cost of Rs 1 billion each.

Nabam Rebia will represent BJP in biennial elections

BJP candidate, Nabam Rebia will contest the upcoming biennial elections for Rajya Sabha on 19th June 2020 from Arunachal Pradesh. The elections will be held for 24 Rajya Sabha seats that

includes 18 seats where polling was deferred previously due to the lockdown and six seats are falling vacant in June and July. It is worth knowing here that Rebia, had represented the state in the Rajya Sabha for two consecutive terms from 1996 to 2002 and 2002 to 2008 as Congress candidate. He had also served the state as Speaker in the Nabam Tuki-led Congress government and later served as the Urban Development, Town Planning, Housing, Urban Local Bodies and Law and Justice Minister in BJP-led Pema Khandu government. Besides this, according to the information provided by Rajendra Trivedi, Gujarat Assembly Speaker, two Congress MLAs Akshay Patel and Jitu Bhai Chaudhary have resigned voluntarily from the post of MLA.

Empowered Group of Secretaries

The Union Cabinet presided by PM Modi approved the constitution of “Empowered Group of Secretaries”. Having members from NITI Aayog, revenue department secretary, secretary of economic affairs, etc, the proposed group will have Project Development Cells to attract investments in India and will provide investment support to global investors as well. The Project Development Cell will look into both the investable as well as investible projects and will also coordinate between State Government and Central Government for the same. This will lead to an increase in FDI inflows. As per prescribed guidelines, an officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary will be placed in charge of the Project Development Cell, that will conceptualize, implement and disseminate the details that are related to the projects.

13 Year Old Became Goodwill Ambassador of UNADAP

A thirteen-year old girl, Nethra from Madurai, Tamil Nadu has been appointed as the Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Association for Development and Peace, the UNADAP by virtue of her role in feeding the poor amid the COVID-19 lockdown. In order to redress the problem, the Tamil Nadu Government has nominated five Ministers to be part of the Field Support Team, that has senior IAS and IPS officials to oversee the coordination and relief works done by the city civic body.

The Pharmacopoeia Commission

The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Modi gave nod to re-establish the Pharmacopoeia commission for Indian Medicine and Homeopathy under the Ministry of AYUSH. Earlier, the commission was set up by merging Pharmacopoeia Laboratory for Indian Medicine and Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory in 2010. The two central laboratories came into existence at Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh in 1975. The upcoming merger will optimize the use of resources and will also enhance outcomes of Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy drugs towards effective quality control. The commission is expected to have adequate administrative structure under the ministry.

Basu Chatterjee Passed Away

June 2020 brought the news of demise of the National awardee and Veteran filmmaker cum screenwriter Basu Chatterjee at 90 in his Santacruz residence, Mumbai due to age-related ailments. He worked in Hindi & Bengali cinema and was a dialogue writer. He made his debut as a director with 'Sara Akash' movie in 1969. He was well known for his middle-of-the-road cinema that fetched him the tag of 'balcony class director' as his films were associated with middle class and largely urban settings. He produced a few films like Choti Si Baat, Rajnigandha, Baaton Baaton Mein, Ek Ruka Hua Faisla (Indian adaptation of Twelve Angry Men), Chameli Ki Shaadi, Us Paar, Chitchor, Piya Ka Ghar and Khatta Meetha. He was bestowed the National Film Award for Best Film on Family Welfare in 1992 for his film Durga. He also earned International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Lifetime achievement awards (2007) and Filmfare for best screenplay, best director & critics award for best movie. He directed some popular TV shows in the 80s & 90s as well. They were Rajani, Darpan and Kakaji Kahin among others. He directed 34 episodes of Doordarshan's Byomkesh Bakshi.

EPFO renewed KYC data

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has renewed Know your Customer (KYC) data for its 52.62 lakh subscribers in the month of April and May 2020. Aadhaar seeding for 39.97 lakh subscribers, mobile seeding for 9.87 lakh subscribers and bank account seeding for 11.11 lakh subscribers sums up to 52.62 lakh figure. KYC is a one-time process meant to identity verification of subscribers via linking of Universal Account Number (UAN) with KYC details. Besides this, EPFO has also rectified the details of the subscribers which includes 4.81 lakh name corrections, 2.01 lakh date of birth corrections and 3.70 lakh Aadhaar number corrections in the last two months. Now any KYC compliant member can avail all online services either through desktop or through Umang App. The online services have provision of KYC updation that enables a member to avail online services through member portal; one can file online for final withdrawal and advances including the recently introduced COVID-19 advances under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. In addition to these, hassle free online transfer of PF account can also be done on switching jobs.

Kerala declared internet as a fundamental right

State government of Kerala declared access to the internet as a fundamental right of citizens and with this Kerala became the first state of India to do so. Kerala State IT Infrastructure Limited and Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) will implement Kerala Fiber Optic Network (K-FON) project worth Rs.1500 crore by December 2020. Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), RailTel

Corporation (Public sector companies) and SRIT and LS Cables (Private sector companies) will assure completion of the project. The state government will provide internet to institutions like schools, hospitals, government offices etc. which will increase the usage of the internet in the education and banking sector. It will enhance the development of Kerala in industrial, educational and tourism sectors.

TULIP internship programme for engineering graduates

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Ministry of HRD together launched an internship learning programme called “TULIP” for fresh engineering graduates. The programme extends opportunities to them to work with 4,400 urban local bodies and 100 smart cities in India. This proposed internship will be held for one year in areas like financing, urban planning, environmental engineering, environmental planning, sanitation and infrastructure. The interested graduates can apply for the internship through an online portal of TULIP. Both the urban local bodies and the smart cities will employ the youths to improve their services to the citizens of the country. The programme will enroll 25,000 fresh engineering graduates. The programme seeks to make up manpower shortage problems in implementing several government schemes.

India's First online coaching programme 'Khelo India e-Pathshala'

Sports Authority of India (SAI), the apex national sports body of India, in collaboration with National Sports Federations (NSF) has launched India's first -ever national-level open online coaching and education programme called “Khelo India e-Pathshala” for grassroots players. Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju and Union Minister of Tribal Affairs and Archery Association of India president Arjun Munda conducted the inaugural ceremony via a webinar. The programme includes 21 games like athletics, archery, boxing, cycling, fencing, football, gymnastics, hockey, judo, kayaking & canoeing, kabaddi, para games, rowing, shooting, taekwondo, table tennis, Volleyball, weightlifting, wrestling and wushu.

Death of JayantiLal Nanoma

Former international archer and Archery coach of Rajasthan, Jayantilal Nanoma died of road accident at the age of 34 in Udaipur, Rajasthan. The deceased was a member of Indian Compound Teams from 2003 to 2010 and claimed victory in Asia Cup Grand Prix Archery Tournaments. He had won the team gold under compound with Chinna Raju and Chungda. at the 4th Asian Archery Grand Prix Championship, 2009. While, in the 1st Asian Archery Grand Prix Championship 2010, he claimed the team silver with Chinna Raju and Palton and the individual silver under Compound. In the 2nd Asian Archery Grand Prix Championship Feb 2010, he won the team bronze. He was felicitated Maharana Pratap State Sports Award 2005-2006 and Guru Vashistha Award in 2017 by the Rajasthan Government for his outstanding performance in the sport.

Subramanian Sundar got extension

Lakshmi Vilas Bank's MD and CEO, Subramanian Sundar got another extension of tenure on 31st May 2020 for 6 months until November 30, 2020 or till the appointment of new CEO. This is the second extension received by Sundar. Prior to this, his first extension as the MD and CEO (interim) came from January 1, 2020 to April 30, 2020. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Commerce. He started off as a Chief Financial Officer) of Lakshmi Vilas Bank from April 2018. He has also served Andhra Bank and City Union Bank and has more than 40 years of experience.

India's access to USD 50-60 billion worth of carbon credits

According to the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog vice-chairman Rajiv Kumar, India's access to USD 50-60 billion worth of carbon credits can be achieved if it propagates natural farming and agroecology. Carbon credit is a tradable permit or certificate that provides the holder of the credit, the right to emit one ton of carbon dioxide or an equivalent of another greenhouse gas. The purpose of carbon credit is to minimize the emission of carbon dioxide & other greenhouse gases from industrial activities to decrease the effects of global warming. It is worth learning here that agricultural activities too are responsible for 25% of total emissions on account of intensive fertiliser usage and deforestation. Kumar also suggested adoption of innovative farming methods based on ecological principles during a virtual high-level round-table on 'Agroecology and Regenerative Agriculture'. It is worth remembering here that Sikkim became the first organic state in the world and was acknowledged with the UN Future Policy Gold Award, 2018.

RNA extraction Kit for detection of COVID-19

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), Trivandrum and Agappe Diagnostics Ltd, Cochin, a vitro diagnostics manufacturing company commercially launched a magnetic nanoparticle-based RNA extraction Kit, 'Agappe Chitra Manga for the detection of COVID-19 at the Biomedical Technology Wing of SCTIMST. In this, on exposure to the magnetic field, the magnetic nanoparticle beads bind with the viral RNA and deliver a highly purified and concentrated RNA. The sensitivity of detection depends on getting an adequate quantity of viral RNA, which enhances the chances of identifying the positive cases. The kit has been validated at the National Institute of Virology for COVID-19 RNA isolation. The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) gave nod for commercialization of this kit. The cost of the kit is Rs.150 which is likely to reduce the cost of testing and the nation's dependence on imported kits which cost around Rs 300.

Discovery of Rare fish *Scorpaenopsis neglecta*

The Researchers at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute have discovered a rare fish from the Gulf of Mannar, a shallow bay in the Indian Ocean between Sri Lanka and India during the exploratory survey of the seagrass ecosystem. The fish is locally called Scorpion Fish for its venomous band-tail. It camouflaged within the seagrass meadows with its ability to change colour. It has a highly powerful sensory system as it can even detect ventilation flows produced by crabs at a distance of 10 cm in a dark environment. It employs its lateral sensory system instead of eyes to hunt its prey, unlike other fish. The specimen has been deposited at the National Marine Biodiversity Museum of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI). This is the first occasion when the species has been found alive in the Indian waters.

Karnataka launched COVID-19 tracking platform

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) delivered an end-to-end coronavirus tracking platform for Karnataka, called the Karnataka Listening Dashboard for COVID-19. Equipped with advanced Artificial intelligence(AI) technology models along with the permission of real-time streaming of infectious data across regions and states, the multi-faceted, open-architecture platform is meant to assist state governments in sustainable industry recovery and helps them make informed decisions to reopen their economies in a phased manner across the state. The platform features COVID summary related to state and district level numbers; COVID source analysis; Tests by category and Hospital capacity

Demise of Bollywood Music Director Wajid Khan

Singer-composer Wajid Khan passed away at the age of 42 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He along with his brother, music director Sajid Khan made their Bollywood debut with Salman's 1998 movie Pyaar Kiya Toh Darna Kya and went on to work on actor's various films including Garv, Tere Naam, Tumko Na Bhool Payenge, Partner, Dabangg 'Wanted', the 'Dabangg' and 'Ek Tha Tiger' etc. The duo also served as mentors on singing reality shows like "Sa Re Ga Ma Pa 2012" and "Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Superstar". They also scored IPL4 or Indian Premier League 2011 season's theme song, "Dhoom Dhoom Dhoom Dhadaka", which was sung by Wajid. Wajid also did playback for Salman in chartbusters like "Mera Hi Jalwa", "Fevicol Se" & for Akshay Kumar in "Chinta Ta Chita Chita" from the film Rowdy Rathore, among others. Salman's songs "Pyaar Karona" and "Bhai Bhai", which the actor released on his YouTube channel were his latest compositions which he did with Sajid.

Arun Singhal : The New CEO of FSSAI

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), Government of India (GoI), gave nod to the appointment of a 1987-batch IAS (Indian Administrative Service officer) of Uttar Pradesh cadre, Arun Singhal, as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). The new appointee is presently serving as Special Secretary in the Department of Health and Family Welfare, and will take the place of GSG Ayyangar who was briefly appointed to the post. Besides him, a 1991 batch of Tamil Nadu (TN) cadre IAS officer, S.K. Gopalakrishnan, has been appointed as Additional Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO); Rajendra Kumar, creator of the Director General of Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), has been appointed as additional secretary in the Ministry of Information Technology and a 2001 batch IAS of Bihar cadre, C. Sridhar, has been made Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office.

Indian long distance runner Kiranjeet Kaur got banned for 4 years

The 32 year old, Kiranjeet Kaur, long-distance runner of India was found guilty of violating anti-doping rules with the abuse of Enobosarm and its metabolite. The World Athletics anti-doping body handed a four year ban to her. Her samples were tested in the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) accredited laboratory in Doha as the National Dope Testing laboratory is suffering suspension at hands of the World Anti-Doping Agency. The Athletics Integrity Unit has disqualified her from all the competitive results from 15th December 2019 to 26th February 2020 including the gold medal she clinched in TATA Steel Kolkata 25K and forfeited the titles, awards, medals, points, prizes and appearance money by the article 9 ADR and Article 10.8 ADR.

A Glance At Modi Government's First Year Of Its 2nd Innings

The track record of Prime Minister Narendra Modi government's first year in the second term includes some key decisions viz. the historic step of removing Article 370 and 35A of the Constitution and bringing Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh at par with other States and Union Territories; The approval of Jammu and Kashmir (Reorganisation) Act that reorganised the state into union territory of Jammu and Kashmir with legislature, and Union Territory of Ladakh without Legislature; Inclusion of 5,300 Displaced Persons families of Jammu and Kashmir in the Rehabilitation Package for Displaced Families of Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Chhamb; Approval of the 7th Central Pay Commission allowances worth 4800 crore rupees for Government employees of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh; Approval of Citizenship (Amendment) Act to grant Citizenship to persons belonging to religious minorities who migrated to India after facing persecution on grounds of religion in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh;

The Kartarpur Sahib Corridor Agreement with Pakistan which permitted pilgrims of all faiths for year-round Visa-free travel to Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib through Kartarpur Sahib Corridor ; Approval of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act which empowered Central Government to designate individual as terrorist; Publication of the National Register of Citizens of Assam as well as historic step of the Bodo Agreement between Government of India, Government of Assam and Bodo representatives to end the over 50-year old crisis.

Thierry Delaporte : The New Wipro CEO & MD

The Ex-Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the Capgemini group, Thierry Delaporte has been appointed as new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) of Wipro in place of Abidali Z Neemuchwala, who has officially stepped down from his post today. Thierry Delaporte's appointment will come into effect from July 6, 2020. Meanwhile, Rishad Premji, Chairman of Wipro will oversee the day to day operations of the company till July 5, 2020. Thierry Delaporte has played various leadership roles during his 25 year long career in Capgemini.

COVID-19 negative certificate is now entry pass of Goa

The Chief Minister of Goa, Pramod Sawant informed in a recent press conference that only those people who will have an Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) approved COVID-19 negative certificate will be allowed to enter the state and go to their homes. And this requisite certificate must have been issued within 48 hours prior to the arrival. It is worth learning here that Goa is the only state in India that has conducted 13,000 COVID-19 tests on all the people who have entered the borders. Other states are also following footsteps of Goa.

CIPET Got Renamed

A premier national institution under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India (GOI), Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology (CIPET) has been renamed as Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology. This changed name has been registered under the Tamil Nadu (TN) Societies Registration Act 1975 (TN Act 27 of 1975). The dedicated institute that works for growth towards the plastics industry via a combined program of education and research, will now fully devote itself for the growth of the entire petrochemical sector with a focus on Academics, Skilling, Technology Support and Research. In the ongoing fight against Covid-19, CIPET will take up Research and Development (R&D) initiatives in the areas of Health Care, like Manufacturing and Certifying PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and other relevant products as per WHO & ISO (International Organization for Standardization) guidelines.

The One Sun One World One Grid Proposal

The Union Ministry of New and Renewable energy (MNRE) proposed the 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) to provide solar power to nations which lack sunlight, by building a common transmission system. The proposal is about linking renewable energy by sharing solar resources with more than 140 nations of West Asia and SouthEast Asia. The grid will be interconnected with African power pools as well. The Ministry has invited proposals from consulting firms for preparing a long-term OSOWOG road map, and identify two or three cross-border projects that can be initiated within one or two years. Preference will be given to one with each of the Middle East, South East and Africa regions considering India as the grid fulcrum.

CAREER FLITE



World's First Gold-backed US Digital Gold Currency

IBMC Financial Professionals Group in collaboration with US Gold Currency Inc and Blockfills launched the world's first monetary gold-backed US Gold digital currency in India, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Middle East and Africa. It was launched from Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) at a specially designed IBMC Hybrid Event. Each US Gold digital currency is backed by a US American Eagle one ounce (33.931 gram) gold coin, minted by the US Federal Agency, US Mint. Owners of such currency can redeem their digital assets as physical gold coins or in US dollars anywhere across the globe. Customers ranging from retail and corporate investors, banks, financial institutions and sovereign wealth funds to treasuries and asset management companies can make use of this currency to reduce the cost of business transactions and settle their inter-country company transactions to address business risks.

China annexed parts of Nepal !

A report prepared by Nepal's Agricultural Ministry's Survey Department has indicated that China has diverted the flow of rivers in certain areas of the Nepal-China border. China has encroached 11 places in the Nepalese territory and among them it has diverted the flow of rivers in 10 places covering 33 hectares of Nepali land. The names of the encroached districts and the diverted rivers include Humla District (Bagdare Khola River and Karnali River); Rasuwa District (Jambu Khola, Sinjen, and Bhurjuk); Sindhupalchowk District (Bhote Kosi and Kharane Khola rivers) ; Sankhuwasabha District (Arun, Sumjung, and Kam Khola rivers). And two villages viz. Rui and Teigha in the northern part of the Gorkha district.

Iran's Permanent Base in the Indian Ocean

The Navy Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Israel, Alireza Tangsiri aired announcement regarding establishment of permanent military base in the Indian ocean by March 2021. This move has been decided as per the instructions of the first Supreme Leader of Iran Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on pretext of repeated harassment faced by Iranian Fishermen in the ocean from pirates as well as the encroachments made by foreign vessels in the Indian Ocean and the Sea of Oman. It is worth knowing here that Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is a branch of

the Iranian Armed Forces, which was founded on 22nd April 1979 after the Iranian Revolution. And currently the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain.

Vivekananda Yoga University: World's First Yoga University outside India

In Los Angeles city of United States, a new university named Vivekananda Yoga University was launched. With this it became the first yoga University that has been started outside India. The University was launched as a part of the celebration of the 6th International Yoga Day. Union Minister of State for External Affairs, V. Muraleedharan and PP Chaudhary, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on External Affairs jointly launched the Vivekananda Yoga University during the virtual event that was organized at New York City's Consulate General of India. In this university with a combination of scientific principles and modern research approaches, programs based on the ancient traditional Indian practice of yoga will be offered. California's Bureau of Private Post Secondary Education received approval for this university in November 2019. Dr. H R Nagendra, who is Chancellor of SVYASA- Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (Deemed University at Bengaluru for the study of yoga will be the first Chairman of the Vivekananda Yoga University.

The Launch Of Last Satellite of BDS-3

In order to compete with the USA's NAVSTAR Global Positioning System (GPS), Russia's GLONASS, and the Galileo Systems of the European Union, China launched the last satellite of its BeiDou Satellite System 3 (BDS-3) via Long March 3 rocket from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre. This BeiDou i.e. 'Big Dipper' in Mandarin is a part of the third generation of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS-3) and it is the 55th satellite of the Beidou system. A glance at the Beidou system shows, First Generation (BDS-1) was launched on an experimental basis between 2000 to 2003 that provided limited coverage for users in China. The Second Generation (BDS-2) system was started in December 2011 that provides coverage in the Asia-Pacific Region and is still operational. While this freshly launched Third Generation (BDS-3) is aimed to provide global coverage. It consists of 35 satellites to enable enhanced communication.

Indian Pavilion in 1st Online Edition of Cannes Film Market 2020

Minister of Information & Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar did e- inauguration of Virtual India Pavilion in 1st Online Edition of Cannes Film Market 2020 on 22nd June 2020 that continued till 26th June 2020. He also unveiled the booklet and poster of the 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI), which will take place from November 20 to 28, 2020 in Goa. Two National Film

Award winning movies Ananth Narayan Mahadevan's MaiGhat: Crime No 103/200 (Marathi) and Abhishek Shah's Hellaro (Gujarati) were featured in this festival. In addition to this, to mark the Centenary year of legend filmmaker Satyajit Ray in 2021, a preview festival of some of his films, music and documentary by and of Satyajit Ray were also showcased at the Indian pavilion Website.

Halimah Yacob dissolved Parliament of Singapore

President of Singapore, Halimah Yacob had dissolved the ongoing 13th Parliament of Singapore on 23rd June 2020 and now the general elections will be held on 10th July 2020. These elections will be carried out keeping in mind covid - 19 safety guidelines. Suspension of mass rallies, an increased number of polling stations, designated time-bands for the senior citizens to vote, etc will be strictly observed. A maximum of 5 persons will be allowed in a group for door-to-door campaigning. It is worth knowing in context to Parliament of Singapore, which is a unicameral parliament with 105 seats. In it 47 seats are the majority mark that is required by a political party or coalition to form a government. Among 105 members, 93 members are elected via Parliamentary Elections, 3 seats are reserved under the Non-Constituency Member of Parliament (NCMP) while the remaining 9 seats are reserved for the Nominated Member of Parliament (NMP).

China Is In For the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

The top law making committee in China, Legislative Affairs Committee announced that the People's Republic of China will join the multilateral Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) regarding international sales and transfer of conventional arms regulated as per the global standards. This treaty was adopted at the United Nations General Assembly on 2nd April 2013 and it came into effect from 24th December 2014. So far 130 countries have ratified the treaty. Although, the USA had signed it, yet it did not ratify this. Moreover, in April 2019, the current U.S. President had announced that the U.S. will never ratify the Arms Trade Treaty under his administration. And India did not even sign it. Flash back reveals that China was one of the 23 countries back in 2013 that abstained from the vote to adopt the treaty at the United Nations.

The Triumph Of SNS Coalition

Serbia conducted national elections on 21st June 2020 and became the first country in Europe to do so amid COVID-19. In the elections the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) coalition, under the leadership of the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic succeeded in getting one of the largest parliamentary majorities in Europe by winning 191 of the total 250 seats in the Parliament. The Parliament of Siberia, dubbed as the National Assembly of Siberia has a unicameral legislature.

The elections were held across 8,253 polling stations in Serbia and also in 140 polling stations of Kosovo. It is worth knowing here that Serbia does not recognize Kosovo as an Independent Country that accommodates people of Serbian Community. Currently, Ana Brnabic, who was the first female Prime Minister of Serbia in 2017, is the incumbent Prime Minister of Serbia.

The Bilateral START Treaty

On 22nd June 2020 the United States delegation led by Marshall Billingslea and the Russian Delegation under Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov began a 2-day talk at the capital city of Austria, Vienna on START or 'Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty', which is a bilateral nuclear disarmament treaty, officially known as 'Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms' between the United States and Russia. The two nations inked this treaty on 8th April 2010 and it came into effect on 5th February 2011 for a period of 10 years. The treaty will expire on 5th February 2021. Trump wanted China's involvement in this dialogue but China still feels that this is not the right time to involve or to be a part of such a nuclear treaty. According to China its nuclear stockpile is smaller in comparison to these two countries and feels that the United States must drastically reduce the size of its stockpile.

'Tonoshiro' will be known as 'Tonoshiro Senkaku'

On 22nd June 2020, the Assembly of Ishigaki city approved a bill that seeks renaming of the Tonoshiro area as 'Tonoshiro Senkaku'. This new nomenclature has become an apple of discord between Japan and China. The disputed group of Islands without inhabitants located at the South China Sea in the southern part of Japan, in the fold of the Senkaku Islands are known by the name 'Tonoshiro' in Japan. While China dubbed it as 'Diaoyu'. History reveals it was initially controlled by the Ryukyu Kingdom of China during the 14th century. They were annexed by the Japanese Central Government during the First Sino-Japanese War. At the end of the second world war, the disputed islands came under the power of the United States Government. Then in 1971, 26 years later, the United States approved the Okinawa Reversion Treaty to return the group of islands back to Japan. From 1972 onwards the administrative authority of Ishigaki city of Japan's Okinawa Prefecture looked into the administration of the disputed island. Since then, China began to claim its ownership over the islands.

The Proposal of Amendment of Citizenship Law

A parliamentary panel in Nepal recently proposed an amendment in Clause 5.1 of Nepal's Citizenship Act that states, all foreign women marrying Nepali men are entitled to get citizenship immediately. If the amendment gets approved then as per the new proposal such foreign women

will be required to wait for 7 years before getting Nepali citizenship. This proposal was supported by the ruling Nepal Communist Party's Secretariat and was opposed by Nepali Congress (NC) and Janata Samajbadi Party (SJP) as it is likely to create inconvenience for people living in Madhes where cross-border marriages are quite common. The Madheshi are residents of Terai region in the south of Nepal at the foothill of the Himalayas on the border with India in Bihar. The people of this region share cross-border kinship with Indian community.

'The Thing': The Second-Largest Egg

According to the June 2020 publication of the Journal Nature, the 68 million year old egg fossil which was discovered by scientists of South American Nation Chile on the Seymour Island of Antarctica in 2011 is the second-largest egg in terms of size (29 by 20 centimeters) that has been discovered to the date after the Madagascan Elephant Bird (extinct) egg. This second largest egg as well as the largest soft-shelled egg on record was found 200 meters away from the spot where the fossil of a 10-meter long Mosasaur (an ancient reptile) was unearthed. Since 2011 this fossil has been placed at a museum in Chile and was named 'The Thing'. Although scientists are still clueless about the identity of the animal that laid the egg, yet in their opinion the animal that had laid the egg must have been 17 meters tall and at least 7 meters in length.

The Trilateral RIC Meeting

On 23rd June 2020, foreign ministers of Russia, India and China participated in the virtual RIC meeting, which was convened at the initiative of Russia. The meeting sidetracked the bilateral issues and foreign ministers talked on the global economic, political and financial circumstances amid COVID-19 and the cooperation opportunities to overcome the crisis. Discussions were done at length about the situation in Afghanistan as well as about regional connectivity projects such as the International North South Transport Corridor involving India, Russia and Iran. The participating nations felt the need to respect the international law, recognizing legitimate interests of partners, supporting multilateralism and promoting common good that are the only ways of building a durable world order.

China will set National Security Bureau in Hong Kong

Top law making committee in China, the Legislative Affairs Commission confirmed plan of establishment of a 'Special Bureau- National Security Office' in Hong Kong that will have the rights to deal with criminal cases and analyze intelligence that is related to national security. This move is the next step after Beijing passed legislation that empowered the Chinese Parliament to draft security laws for Hong Kong last month. Hong Kong has protested this but China is well

determined to suppress democracy in Hong Kong. It is worth knowing here that Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of China since 1997 when the former colony was returned by Britain to China. All matters related to foreign affairs and defense of Hong Kong are controlled by China, while for the rest, Hong Kong has its own- Executive, Legislative, and Independent Judicial Power.

The 32nd Virtual EAG Plenary Meeting 2020

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) led the 32nd Virtual Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) Plenary Meeting 2020. The EAG Yury Chikhanchin of Russian Federation was the chair and Farhod Bilolov of the Republic of Tajikistan was the EAG Deputy Chair for this meeting. Money Laundering /Terrorist Financing risk assessment methodology in the Eurasian region along with the information collection methods was approved in this meeting. EAG Annual Report for 2019 and the EAG Budget for 2021 were adopted in this event. The Mutual Evaluations and Progress Reports of the 2nd round of EAG Mutual Evaluations for one plenary cycle has been postponed. The deadline to ensure compliance with the 27 tasks, including stopping terrorist funding, eradicating terrorism from its land etc. which was given to Pakistan has now been extended till October 18-23, 2020 plenary from June 2020.

Bangladesh will get Zero Tariff facility

According to the information given by the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Tohidul Islam in Dhaka, the country has been entitled for zero tariff facility on 97% of its goods exported to China under the Duty Free Quota Free (DFQF) scheme of WTO for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Bangladesh will get this facility on 5161 additional items from July 1, 2020. So far around , 3095 commodities from Bangladesh were enjoying zero tariff facility for export to China under the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA). It is worth knowing in this context that in the beginning, China had granted this facility to 33 LDCs on 60% of its tariff line which was further extended to 95% of its tariff lines in 2013. In the third phase, it was further extended to 97% of the tariff lines of China in 2015.

Nobel Laureate Kazuo Ishiguro's 'Klara and the Sun'

In March 2021, Japanese origin British author and Nobel Prize winner of year 2017, Kazuo Ishiguro will release his new novel 'Klara and the Sun'. The novel is about the artificial being called Klara and her desire to find a human owner. This novel will be published by Faber & Faber in the United Kingdom, Alfred A. Knopf in the United States and Knopf in Canada. When We

Were Orphans, An Artist of the Floating World and The Buried Giant are his other famous works. His works have been translated into more than 50 languages and he has been nominated 4 times for the Man Booker Prize. He won the Man Booker Prize of 1989 for his novel, 'The Remains of the Day', that has been made into an acclaimed film along with "Never Let Me Go". He also received a knighthood in 2018 for Services to Literature as well as the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star from Japan.

The 69th Edition of BP Statistical Review 2020

United Kingdom based oil and gas company BP plc has put out the 69th edition of "Statistical Review of World Energy 2020", after collecting and analysing energy data for 2019. It includes total energy consumption viz. oil, natural gas, coal, electricity, carbon emissions, renewables, hydro and nuclear energy. Globally, the growth in consumption of primary energy has gone down to 1.3 % in 2019 as compared to a 2.8 % increase in consumption in 2018. Carbon emissions from energy use has increased by 0.5%. Oil consumption has increased by 9 million barrels per day (bpd) or 0.9 % and in this context it is worth remembering that China's consumption of oil has been 6.81 lakh barrels per day, Iran's 1.83 lakh barrels per day and India's 1.59 lakh barrels per day. And they emerged as the top three consumers of oil worldwide. Natural gas consumption has been 78 billion cubic meters (bcm). The coal consumption has dropped by 0.6%. However, the Renewable energy (including biofuels) posted a record increase in consumption in energy terms 3.2 EJ. This emerged the largest increment for any source of energy in 2019. Hydroelectric consumption increased by a below average of 0.8% and China (0.6 EJ), Turkey (0.3 EJ) and India (0.2 EJ) showed lead increase in this. Nuclear consumption witnessed an increase of 3.2% (0.8 EJ) in which China (0.5 EJ) and Japan (0.1 EJ) showed the largest increments. And electricity generation has increased 1.3%. According to this report, China is the first major driver of global energy consumption.

Nepal Finally Included Three Indian Territories In Its Map

Nepal's President Bidhya Devi Bhandari approved the controversial constitution amendment bill, The New Map Amendment Bill (Coat of Arms) that seeks to update the nation's political map including three Indian territories Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura in Uttarakhand. Last week all 57 members of the Upper house of the Parliament had voted in favour of the bill. The lower house had approved it on 9th June 2020 and this bill was introduced by Nepalese Law Minister Shivamaya Tumbahangphe on May 31, 2020. India is disappointed with Nepal, which did not even try to create a conducive atmosphere for talks over the matter. In support of the newly formed law regarding the revised map, Nepal said that the artificial enlargement of their national map is not

based on historical facts and evidence and violates their current understanding to conduct talks on outstanding border issues. It is worth registering here that the Lipulekh pass is located at the trijunction between India's Uttarakhand state, Tibet region of China and Nepal. It has been used by traders and pilgrims traveling between India and Tibet. Since it is used by pilgrims for the Kailas Manasarovar Yatra also, in May 2020 India inaugurated an 80-km-long road on the pass, connecting Ghatiabgarh and Lipulekh in Uttarakhand, to reduce travel time for pilgrims going for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. Kalapani lies at an altitude of 3600m on the Kailash Mansarovar route. It borders Indian state of Uttarakhand and Nepal's Sudurpashchim Pradesh. And India claims Kalapani to be a part of the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand, while Nepal claims it to be a part of its Dharchula district.

IMD World Competitive Index 2020

Switzerland-based International Institute for Management and Development (IMD)'s World Competitiveness Center (WCC) released the 32nd edition of World Competitiveness Index 2020 after evaluation of performance of 63 economies across the globe. Singapore, Denmark and Switzerland emerged as the top three in index on account of their strong international trade and investment, employment and labor market measures. While India stood at 43rd position due to its weaknesses in terms of competitive power, such as weak infrastructure and inadequate investment in education, poor stability of foreign currency exchange rate, real gross domestic product (GDP) growth, competition law and taxes. Besides this overall rank, India stood at 37th position in Economic Performance, 50th in Government Efficiency, 32nd in Business Efficiency and 49th in Infrastructure.

Postponement of the 93rd Academy Awards

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences and the ABC Television Network postponed the 93rd Academy Awards to April 25, 2021 from February 28, 2021. It is worth knowing that this is the fourth time these awards have been postponed. Prior to this, these prestigious awards were delayed for 24 hours in 1981 because of the assassination attempt on then US President Ronald Reagan. Before that in 1968, the Academy award ceremony was delayed two days because of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. And before that, this award ceremony was pushed back by a week due to the disastrous floods in Los Angeles in 1938. Along with the fresh postponement, the organization also released some new date eligibility rules viz. the feature film nominated for the Oscar must now have a qualifying release date between January 1, 2020, and February 28, 2021. The nominations will be announced on March 15, 2021 and will be opened on April 30,

2021. The December Opening of Academy Museum of Motion Pictures has also been pushed to April 30, 2021, to coincide with Oscars. And the new submission deadline for the specialty categories like documentary feature, animated feature film, international feature film, documentary short project, live-action short film, and an animated short film is December 1, 2020. While, the new submission deadline for general entry categories like original score, best picture, and the original song is January 15, 2021.

Myanmar's probe about controversial China backed City project

The Myanmar government has established a tribunal to probe a project regarding construction of 59 villas at Shwe Kokko in the Karen state, which is about 15 km north of Myawaddy. The Yatai International Holdings group of China along with the BGF have been implementing this project with support of the Myanmar military. The project has incurred allegations of illicit activity and lack of transparency. The Deputy Minister of Union Government office U Tin Myint will chair the committee to investigate this Shwe Kokko city Project. The story reveals that this project was started in 2017 at a small scale at an estimated expenditure of 22.5 million dollars, which later on was carried out at a much larger scale than was approved to construct a 'small international city'. The company covered 30 thousand acres that spanned over 19 kilometers across the border of Myanmar and Thailand at a projected cost of \$15 billion. Construction of hotels, casinos, airport and tourism related places was also included in this, which ran against the wish of the Myanmar government. The project was temporarily suspended in 2019 for breaching investment regulations. The project is said to have displaced local families, material for the project was sourced from China or Thailand, and thousands of Chinese workers were employed into Shwe Kokko instead of Myanmar's skilled labour workforce.

The Procrastination Of Prestigious Awards

The popular BAFTA film awards has been pushed from February 14, 2021, to April 11, 2021. The 12th Annual Governors Award, which is usually not televised has been cancelled in which honorary Oscars are bestowed to previously announced recipients. It is generally held in Los Angeles in the second week of November. Besides these, the 74th Tony Awards which was to take place on June 7, 2020, has been postponed indefinitely. The 78th Golden Globes Awards also suffers the same fate. Among the series of the prestigious awards, the 72nd Emmy Awards, which was to be held on September 21, 2020 suspends in ambiguity because it has neither been cancelled nor has been postponed.

The Upcoming Russia's Victory Day Parade

To commemorate the surrender of Nazi Germany in 1945, Russia celebrates Victory Day Parade on 9th May every year, which got postponed to 24th June this year due to Covid-19 outbreak. Year 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of this victory. India will also send its tri-services contingent (75 soldiers) of all three services viz. army, navy and air force to Russia to participate in the upcoming parade at the Red Square, Moscow. Prior to this in 2015 the Indian Army alone took part in this parade. India has deep military and defence ties with Russia. The duo jointly developed military equipment under India's Make-in-India programme. They conduct joint military exercise 'INDRA' to encourage military cooperation. They recognised the need for an institutional arrangement for provision of logistic support and services for the armed forces after the Vladivostok summit 2019 and had agreed to prepare a framework for cooperation for it. Besides India, China will also send its soldiers to the parade.

Resignation of Mukhammedkalyi Abylgazyev

52 year old Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, Mukhammedkalyi Abylgazyev laid his resignation under heat of ongoing criminal investigation regarding the assignment of national radio frequencies. The probe will find out if the government illegally sold radio frequencies. President Sooronbai Jeenbekov appointed him as the Prime Minister in April 2018. He had taken a two week leave on May 27, 2020 to avoid interference with a corruption investigation over radio frequency resources. Presently, the first Deputy Prime Minister Kubatbek Boronov is coordinating the work of the government.

NASA Witnessed The Fifth State Of Matter

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) observed the first results of Bose-Einstein Condensate (BEC) experiments in the International Space Station. We generally know about the three states of matter viz. solid, liquid and gas. But there are two more states of matter, "plasma" and "BEC". According to the chemist Irving Langmuir, the fourth state of matter, "plasma" has only positively charged nuclei roaming freely. This state is formed when orbital electrons are removed from gas i.e. the separated positive ions of gas is called plasma. Here scientists discovered the fifth state of matter, 'BEC', which is obtained when a group of atoms from gas of bosons are cooled to absolute zero (a temperature at which the entropy and enthalpy of cooled gas reach their minimum value), the atoms clump together behaving as one big super atom. This state of matter was discovered by Indian Mathematician Satyendra Nath Bose and Albert Einstein almost one hundred years ago and scientists created this state 25 years ago.

International Day of Family Remittances

Like every year, the United Nations observed the International Day of Family Remittances on June 16 on “Remittances are a lifeline” theme. It is being observed to acknowledge the efforts of migrants living abroad that help improve the lives of their family members in their home countries by sending them money. The foreign workers transfer money to their family in their home country is referred to as ‘Remittance’. Remittance is highly important as it is one of the largest financial inflows for the developing countries. In 2015, the International Day of Family Remittances was celebrated for the first time. As per the World Bank, the remittances of India in 2019 were 83 billion USD and the global remittances were 554 billion USD in 2019.

The Latest FIFA Ranking

In June 2020 FIFA Ranking was released in which Belgium emerged as the topper followed by France, Brazil, England, Uruguay, Croatia, Portugal, Spain, Argentina and Colombia at second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth spots respectively. Indian team retained its 108th position in ranking. This ranking is based on points awarded to the teams on the results of international matches that were played by the countries. FIFA was founded in 1904 and is headquartered in Zurich. Around 211 member countries are members of FIFA.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

The United Nations observed the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15 to raise awareness about the negligence and abuse of older persons. It also drew attention towards social, cultural, economic and demographic processes that affect elders. ‘Lifting up Voices’ was the theme of this day. The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse along with the World Health Organization at the United Nations launched a Campaign “Safeguard older persons during COVID-19 and beyond.” According to the United Nations, around 66% of old age people are currently under the risk of COVID-19.

Indian-American Rattan Lal got 2020 World Food Prize

The distinguished University Professor of Soil Science and founding Director of the Carbon Management & Sequestration Center at the Ohio State University (OSU), soil scientist Rattan Lal has been chosen for this year's World Food Prize for developing and mainstreaming a soil-centric approach to increase the food production that conserves natural resources and mitigates climate change. Native of India and a citizen of the United States, the awardee dedicated more than 50 years in promotion of innovative soil-saving techniques that benefit the livelihoods of over 500 million smallholder farmers, improve the food and nutritional security of more than two billion people and save hundreds of millions of hectares of natural tropical ecosystems. His remarkable efforts will be acknowledged with a 2.5 lakh dollar award.

The Upcoming Sri Lankan parliamentary elections

Sri Lankan election commission finally announced parliamentary elections on 5th August 2020. These elections were postponed twice in the past because of Covid-19 outbreak. Sri Lanka's parliament was dissolved on 2nd March 2020. After that the parliamentary polls were initially scheduled on April 25, which were later postponed to 20th June 2020. The commission had conducted a mock poll this week at a polling station to test the COVID health guidelines and its preparedness and there will be five more such mock polls to determine the likely time needed to cast each vote in strict adherence to the health guidelines. More than 16 million people are eligible to vote in the election to choose the 225-member parliament for the next 5-year term.

China Reached The Deepest Point Of The Earth

An unmanned submersible of China dived deep down to 10,907 metres to the world's deepest point Mariana Trench and with this, China became the first country of the globe to register this new record. The researchers of China began this expedition on April 23 and tested acoustic detection, video transmission, high precision depth detection during the deep-sea diving operation. In order to develop deep sea technology to explore mining of natural resources from the sea, China had signed a deal in 2011 with the International Seabed Authority. And as per the deal, China was allocated 10,000 square kilometres in the Indian Ocean for exploration of polymetallic sulfide for a period of 15 years. In context to India, it is worth registering that it is also a member of International Seabed Authority and in 1987, India became the first country to receive the status of "Pioneer Investor" at International Seabed Authority. India was allocated 1.5 lakh square kilometres of the Central Indian Ocean Basin for the exploration.

Renjith Kumar Became "NASA Distinguished Public Service Medal" Recipient

Engineer from Kerala and Indian Entrepreneur based in Virginia, Renjith Kumar, Engineer was honoured with NASA's highest form of recognition for a non-governmental individual "NASA Distinguished Public Service Medal" for his contribution to NASA in redesigning the International Space Station (ISS) via executive leadership and technical excellence that witnessed customer satisfaction. He is a Mechanical Engineer, who earned a gold medal in Central Engineering College Trivandrum in 1985. He has been with NASA for more than three decades. The "NASA Distinguished Public Service Medal" is conferred upon those non-governmental individuals, who provide a level of excellence supporting or impacting the success of NASA's missions and contribution in NASA's advancement of United States interests. It is worth remembering here that RK Chetty Pandipati was the first Indian to win this award in 2002.

Discovery of the 'mirror image' of Earth and Sun

According to the latest publication of journal Astronomy and Astrophysics, a team of scientists from the Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research (MPS) in Göttingen (Germany), the Sonneberg Observatory, the University of Göttingen, the University of California, and NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) led by MPS, have discovered a new planet named 'KOI-456.04' & its host star called 'Kepler-160' by using Kepler Space Telescope, which are said to be "mirror image" of our earth and sun. Our earth-like exo-planet 'KOI-456.04' is less than twice the size of Earth and it orbits its star located some 3,000 light-years away from us and it takes approximately 378 days to complete one revolution. And the sun-like star, 'Kepler-160' has three planets in its orbit. It emits visible light, which is something unique that most of the exoplanets' stars don't do. Most of the exoplanets' stars tend to be smaller and fainter than our Sun and mostly emit infrared radiation and they are classified among the 'red dwarf' classification of stars. As this pair is quite similar to the Sun and the Earth, there are chances of existence of liquid water which further opens chances of life on the exoplanet.

A Glance of Solar Corona's magnetic field

According to the latest publication of Astrophysical Journal, researchers at the University of Hawaii Institute of Technology (IFA), succeeded in measuring solar corona's magnetic field. Solar corona is the outermost atmosphere of the sun which is best seen during a total solar eclipse when the moon comes directly in between the Earth and Sun which blocks the bright surface of the Sun. Scientists used total solar eclipse observations of the last 20 years to measure the shape of the coronal magnetic field along with a higher spatial resolution over a large area for the first time. This data provided an additional opportunity to study the changes in the corona over the two 11 year magnetic cycles of the sun. The attributes of Solar corona are reflections of the Sun's complex magnetic field that is produced in the solar exterior which extends outwards via a stream of charged particles that radiates from the surface of the Sun called the Solar wind. They focused on the space-based observations at wavelengths of light and measured the magnetic field angle relative to the sun's surface. As per the study, during the minimum solar activity, the corona's field emanated almost straight out of the sun near the poles and the equator, while it came out at a variety of angles at mid-latitudes and during the maximum solar activity, the coronal magnetic field was far less organised and was more radial. They found that the coronal field was often non-radial to at least 4 solar radii. These observations of Solar eclipses led to breakthroughs in learning some of the secrets of the physical processes that define Corona.

Investments of American DFC

The US International Development Finance Corporation (USIDFC) announced investments worth \$1 billion for advance development in the low to lower-middle income countries across the globe. It has pledged investments worth \$350 million in Indian firms in sectors of finance (\$50 million loan for businesses that expand access to water, sanitation, and food or advance women's economic empowerment in India) ; health infrastructure (Food: \$20 million in equity for "FreshToHome", Dairy : \$371,000 million in technical assistance to support Milk Mantra and \$2.7 million to Stellapps Technologies); renewable energy (\$30 million investment in South Asia Growth Fund II, \$142 million for 300-megawatt solar power plant in Rajasthan, \$50 million for 100-megawatt solar power plant in Rajasthan, \$27.3 million for 50-megawatt solar power plant in Gujarat) and education(\$14.6 million loan for the expansion of Avanse Financial Services student loan program). This is one of the largest approvals made by the Board of Directors of DFC.

Constitution of Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China

A group of eight democracies viz. Japan, United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, Lithuania, Norway, Netherlands and the USA have formed an Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China. This international cross-party group of legislators will work towards reforms on democratic countries' approach towards China. The Alliance will follow two principles namely free, open and rule-based international cooperation to support human dignity and maintenance of integrity in political systems by the Democratic states. The Alliance will look into upholding human rights, Safeguarding international rules, Promoting fair trade, Strengthen security and Protect national integrity.

Indian Appointments in foreign institutions

The private secretary to the prime minister, Rajeev Topno has been appointed as the Senior Advisor to the Executive Director(ED), World Bank. Besides him, Brajendra Navnit, the Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (July 2014 – September 2019) has been made Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India (PRI) to the World Trade Organisation(WTO). He will be posted at the Permanent Mission of India (PMI) to the WTO, under the Department of Commerce. He took the place of JS Deepak at the PMI whose two-year extended term ended on May 31; a 1993 batch IAS officer of Assam-Meghalaya cadre, Ravi Kota got appointed as Minister (Economic) at the Indian embassy in Washington(Joint Secretary-level post), under the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA); a Central Secretariat Service (CSS) officer, Lekhan Thakkar has become Counsellor (Economic) at the Indian Embassy in Beijing, China(director level), under the Department of Economic Affairs; a 2000 batch officer of the Indian Civil

Accounts Service(ICAS), H Atheli has become Advisor (Director level) to ED, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Manila, Philippines, under the DEA; a 2000 batch officer of the Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS), Anwar Hussain Shaik got appointed under Brajendra Navnit as the Counsellor in the PMI to the WTO and N Ashok Kumar, a 2004 batch IAS officer of Manipur cadre has been made Advisor (Industry and Engineering) in the Indian Embassy in Brussels.

World Economic Forum to hold Twin Summit

The World Economic Forum aired an announcement about its upcoming 51st annual summit dubbed as “A Unique Twin Summit” on “The Great Reset” theme in the Swiss ski resort town Davos. It will be held in January 2021 in which the World Economic Forum will adopt a new twin-summit format of in-person and virtual dialogues among world’s rich and powerful global leaders from government, business and civil society and multi stakeholders from worldwide. In addition to these, the summit will be virtually open for everyone across the world with more than 400 global hubs and in this, each of the hubs are expected to have an open-house policy to integrate all interested citizens into the event making the WEF Annual Meeting open to everyone. In this forum, the Global Shapers Community with more than 9,698 members, spanning 421 city-based hubs across 148 countries will encourage people under the age of 30 to work together to address local, regional and global challenges.

Amir Faten Mekky was arrested

Danish national, Amir Faten Mekky, who is the leader of one of the most dangerous international crime rings involved in murder, drug trafficking and money laundering was arrested by security officials of Dubai, UAE. Mekky is associated with one of the globe’s most notorious international criminals Radwan Al-Taghi, Head of the ‘Angels of Death’ gang, who was arrested in Dubai in December 2019 and handed over to Holland. Most Wanted by INTERPOL, Mekky eluded security forces across Europe in the past. He was arrested with the efforts of a joint task force that included the Dubai Public Prosecution and the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

China- Pakistan Kohala Hydro Power Project

China and Pakistan inked an agreement to implement Kohala Hydroelectric Power project in the region of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. China has established the Kohala Hydropower project in Pakistan occupied Kashmir. A tripartite agreement was inked between the Tripartite Gorges Corporation, Private Power and Infrastructure Board and the authorities in PoK for the same. The proposed project will be built on Jhelum river, which is

the western most of the river of the five rivers in Punjab. It is a tributary of Indus. The project is meant to provide 5 billion units of clean hydro electric power to Pakistan. The project will earn carbon credit from the United Nations Framework convention on Climate Change for clean energy.

The Confusion of A Rare Trojan Asteroid

Astronomers of Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System (ATLAS) Institute for Astronomy at the University of Hawaii thought they discovered a rare ‘first of its kind’ Trojan asteroid with a tail, which later turned out to be ‘2019 LD2’ trojan asteroid in vicinity of Jupiter’s Orbit, which was discovered in 2019 to their dismay . It should be noted that asteroids that follow the same orbit like that of a planet, but remain 60 degrees ahead or behind along the orbit are termed as Trojan asteroids. Earth, Neptune and Jupiter have more than one Trojan asteroids. Jupiter Trojan asteroids orbit the Sun in two huge swarms, one swarm orbits ahead of the planet (where 2019 LD2 was found) and one swarm orbits behind it. 2019 LD2 is said to have attained an identity between an asteroid and comet on pretext of its collision with another cosmic body and appearance of a tail. This asteroid has comet-like-tail. It spews out gas as a comet. There are theories behind leakage of gas viz. Trojan asteroids have large amounts of ice beneath their surfaces for decades, but there was never any evidence of the same, until the LD2 collided with another asteroid and exposed the previously sealed ice leading to the tail and gas leak. Another theory suggests that the so-called LD2 is a stray asteroid captured by Jupiter from outside the solar system where it is cold enough for ice to remain on the surface.

International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression

The United Nations designated 4th June as International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression in 1982. It is meant to realize the agony of the young innocent souls becoming victims of mental, physical and emotional abuse and make commitment towards protecting the rights of such children worldwide. The United Nations instituted this day in wake of the victims that suffered in the Lebanon war, which was fought between Israel and Hezbollah. A cross border raid was carried out by the Lebanon based Hezbollah militants on the Israel Troops. It was a 34-day military conflict. The war came to an end after the United Nations brokered a ceasefire .

The Upcoming UNSC Elections

The UN Security Council will conduct elections on June 17, 2020 to elect the five non-permanent members of the 15-member Security Council for the 2021-22 term. The 193 UN member states will cast their votes in a secret ballot. Canada, Ireland and Norway will contest in this election for the two seats in the Western Europe and Other countries category; Kenya and Djibouti will contest

for one non-permanent seat of the African group of countries; Mexico will be the only candidate from the Latin America and Caribbean seat. Like Mexico, India is also the sole candidate for the non-permanent seat from the Asia-Pacific category. Its candidature was unanimously endorsed by the 55-member Asia Pacific grouping including Pakistan and China in 2019. Prior to this, India has been elected as the non-permanent member of UNSC several times in 1950 - 1951, 1967 - 1968, 1972 - 1973, 1977 - 1978, 1984 - 1985, 1991- 1992. Its latest term was from 2011- 2012.

Education world at a glance!

According to the recently released Times Higher Education (THE) Asia University Ranking for 2020, Tsinghua University, China emerged as topper followed by Peking University, China at the 2nd position and National University of Singapore, Singapore at the 3rd position. In this Japan with 110 institutes emerged as the most represented country followed by China (81 institutes) and India (72 institutes). In the Asia University Ranking India's IISc, Bangalore (36th rank), IIT-Ropar (47th rank), IIT-Kharagpur (59th rank), IIT-Indore (55th rank), IIT-Delhi (67th rank), IIT-Bombay (69th rank), IIT-Roorkee (83rd rank) and Institute of Chemical technology, Mumbai (92nd rank) got place in top 100. Apart from this, in India, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh announced the online Common Eligibility Test (CET) for recruitment to non-gazetted posts at the occasion of release of a digital book titled 'Aarambh', that highlighted the achievements of the Department of Personnel and Training.

Sansa & Nasa Will Go Hand In Hand To The Moon, Mars And Beyond

The South African National Space Agency (SANSA) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) coupled to host a deep-space ground station to support human spaceflight missions to the Moon, Mars and beyond. It is worth registering here that South Africa has become the fourth country (4th site) after the United States of America, Spain and Australia to host a deep space ground station. The addition of the 4th site will complement the other sites & provide improved coverage and redundancy for critical mission support. As the station is located at the southern tip of Africa, it will be operated, maintained & managed by SANSA. This presents an opportunity for South Africa for development of scarce skills and the growth of the science, engineering, technology and innovation sector among others and it will result in increased national research output in space science and technology.

The G7 summit got postponed

US President Donald Trump postponed the G7 summit to September or November 2020 and has also suggested expansion of the group from 7 to 10 or 11 including Russia, South Korea, Australia

and India for proper representation of global affairs. Currently, the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada and Japan are members of the group. It is worth learning here that France had invited India to the G7 meet, which it hosted at the resort town of Biarritz in 2019. Past reveals that in 2005, the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had attended a meeting of the G8 in Gleneagles, Scotland at the invitation of then British PM Tony Blair. And in context to the inclusion of Russia, it was part of the G8 meet until it became G7. The US wants to develop tactical ties with Russia to balance China. The proposal of re-admission of Russia was supported only by Italy among other members.

‘COVID-19 Technology Access Pool’ of WHO

The World Health Organization launched ‘COVID-19 Technology Access Pool’ or C-TAP to provide access to all for making vaccines, tests, treatments and other health technologies to fight COVID-19. C-TAP has five main principles viz. Public disclosure of gene sequences and data; Transparency in the publication of all clinical trial results; Governments and other funders will be able to include clauses in funding agreements with pharmaceutical companies and other innovators about equitable distribution, affordability and the publication of trial data; Licensing of potential treatment, diagnostic, vaccine or other health technology to the Medicines Patent Pool – a United Nations-backed public health and Promotion of open innovation models and technology transfer that increase local manufacturing and supply capacity, including through joining the Open Covid Pledge and the Technology Access Partnership (TAP). This idea was mooted by Costa Rica and 35 countries and multiple international partners and institutions have signed for this pool to support it. The signatories will have collective ownership of COVID-19 treatment which implies that it will avoid the patent laws that act as a barrier in sharing the crucial supplies amid the outbreak. The move will accelerate the discovery of COVID-19 health products by way of vaccines, medicines and other technologies through open-science research.

Millipede-like Creature: The World’s Oldest-known Land Animal

According to the research published in the journal Historical Biology, fossilized millipede-like Silurian Period creature named *Kampecaris obanensis* has been discovered on the island of Kerrera in the Scottish Inner Hebrides (Scotland), which is probably the world’s oldest-known (approximately 450 million years old) land animal. The fossil is about an inch (2.5 cm) long with a segmented body, resembling modern millipedes but it is not ancestral to modern millipedes as its legs were not preserved in the fossil. It is an arthropod fossil which includes insects, spiders, millipedes, centipedes and crustaceans like crabs and shrimp. Apart from this, researchers have also come across fossils of the oldest-known plant with a stem, called *Cooksoniathe* in the same ancient lake region as *Kampecaris*.

World's Best Startup Ecosystems

Global innovation mapping and research company, StartupBlink has put out Ecosystem Rankings Report 2020, “Countries Global Ranking of Startup Ecosystem 2020” in which the the United States (US) emerged as the topper, followed by the United Kingdom , and Israel at second and third positions respectively. India was ranked 23rd in world’s best startup ecosystems. Although this ranking runs contrary to India’s annual Ease of Doing Business ranking, yet it should be noted that India is home to the third largest startup ecosystem. Among the top 100 startup cities, only four Indian cities managed ranks in “2020 Cities Global Ranking of Startup Ecosystem” viz. Bengaluru (14th position), New Delhi (15th position), Mumbai (22nd position) and Hyderabad (96th position).

Space X Transported Nasa Astronauts To Space

The private rocket company, SpaceX, transported American astronauts Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken to the International Space Station (ISS) via ‘Crew Dragon’ Spacecraft from Pad 39A at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral, Florida. The Crew Dragon can carry seven passengers and suits worn by the astronauts are called the Starman suits meant only to be worn inside Crew Dragon spacecraft and are not for spacewalks. With this, SpaceX became the first private space company to send astronauts to space. It is worth remembering here that SpaceX was also the first private company in the world to return rockets back to the earth. This is the first launch of humans by the US in the decade. Prior to this, the Columbia Space Shuttle did this task but it broke up while returning to the earth in 2003. This has ended NASA’s reliance on Russian space rockets to launch its astronauts.

“SwissCovid”: World’s First App With Exposure Notification API of Apple and Google

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne and ETH Zurich developed first of its kind digital contact tracing app, “SwissCovid”, using the Exposure Notification Application Programming Interface (API) of Apple and Google and based on a decentralized approach to track the spread of coronavirus. In this app, the interface generates a random ID for the device to protect the user's identity and location which changes every 10-20 min. These IDs are exchanged with the other devices via bluetooth and are checked with the random IDs with COVID-19 positive cases in the database and if any ID matches, the app notifies the further instructions from the health authorities. Currently, the access for the API is requested by 22 nations including the states in the US

Witnessed Birth of New Planets

Recently Very Large Telescope (VLT) located in European Southern Observatory, northern Chile that has four telescopes, captured images of birth of new planets in the AB Aurigae star system. The image depicts spiral formation with an orange mass of gas showing the cosmic matter of the universe at a gravitational tipping point, which is a sure shot sign of a newly born star system. It is worth learning here that the VLT operates at Infrared wavelength and is capable of detecting objects four billion times fainter. Apart from this, astronomers received confirmation of the existence of an Earth-like planet ‘Proxima b’ orbiting Proxima Centauri (4.2 light years away from the sun) in the Alpha Centauri star system. The planet is said to have mass 1.17 times the mass of the earth, which was measured using radial velocity measurements with the help of a spectrograph ESPRESSO. It is 20 times closer to its star than the earth is to the sun. The new planet orbits its sun in just 11.2 days.

UN extended sanctions in South Sudan till May 2021

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) announced extension of the individual sanctions, travel ban and an arms embargo in South Sudan until May 2021. Arms embargo is a restriction or a set of sanctions that applies only to weaponry to encourage developments in South Sudan’s peace process as the country is coming out from a brutal six-year civil war that left 380,000 dead and millions displaced. The United States drafted this extension which received 12 votes in favour while Russia, China and South Africa abstained it.

Marcos Troy : The New President of NDB

On July 7, 2020, Marcos Troy of Brazil will take charge as President of the multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states, New Development Bank, which was formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank. Troyjo is a former deputy economy minister of Brazil, who will now take the place of KV Kamath of India as a president of the multilateral financial institution. Besides him, India’s Anil Kishora will be the bank’s Vice-President and Chief Risk Officer. They were elected in a special meeting of the bank’s board of governors on May 27.



Asian Championship Winner stripped off Medal

31-year old athlete, Gomathi Marimuthu, who won the Asian Championship Gold medal has been stripped off the medal as well as banned from sport activities for 4 years as she was found positive for anabolic steroid Nandrolone at the 2019 Asian Championship. Nandrolone is usually used in the treatment of anemias, osteoporosis, cachexia, breast cancer, etc. This Indian field runner from Tamil Nadu had won her first gold medal in the women's 800 metre race at the Championship that was held in Doha, Qatar. Asian Integrity Unit has derecognized all the achievements of Gomathi between March 2019 and May 2019. However, the athlete can appeal against the imposed ban at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

Promotions of 10 indigenous sports of India

Sports Ministry's flagship programme, Fit India in collaboration with the Department of School Education and Literacy will launch a series of special films promoting 10 indigenous sports of India under the Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat initiative. It will be available from Monday to Friday from June 8 to June 19 at 11am on the Fit India YouTube page and Ministry of Human Resource Development digital platforms. Kho-kho, Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Mallakhamb, Thang-Ta, Sqay, Kabaddi, Roll Ball, Tug of War and Shooting Ball are the 10 sports that will be featured in the films.

Virat Kohli in the forbes top 100 highest paid athletes of 2020

In the latest Forbes top 100 highest paid athletes of 2020, Virat Kohli emerged as the only cricketer and Indian who managed a rank in this list. The Indian Cricket Team Captain got ranked 66th in Forbes Magazine with an estimated earning of around 26 million USD (24 million from endorsements and 2 million from salary/winnings). While Tennis player Roger Federer emerged as the topper of the list for the first time with estimated earnings 106.3 million USD. In the 2019 list, he was placed 4th with the estimated earnings of 95million USD. He was followed by Cristiano Ronaldo 2nd rank with the estimated earnings of 105 million USD), Lionel Messi, the topper of the 2019 list dropped to 3rd rank in 2020 list with 104 million USD and Neymar stood 4th with 95 million USD.

Bahrain Will Host The Fourth Asian Youth Para Games

The Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) announced that the 4th Asian Youth Para Games will be held in Bahrain from December 1st to 10th in 2021. The National Paralympic Committee (NPC) of Bahrain along with the local government will organise this event in partnership. Around 800 participants under 20 years of age will contest in 9 disciplines of sports viz. Athletics, Badminton, Boccia, Goalball, Para Taekwondo, Powerlifting, Swimming, Table Tennis and Wheelchair Basketball across numerous venues in Khalifa Sports City, a multi-use stadium in Isa Town, and Isa Sports City. This will be the first time when Bahrain will host such a big para-sport event. It is worth recalling here that the 1st Asian Para Youth Games was hosted by Tokyo in 2009 and the last edition was hosted by Dubai in 2017.

Postponement of 2020 World Archery Field Championships

The World Archery (WA) and Yankton organising committee broke the postponement news of the 2020 World Archery Field Championships which was previously scheduled on September 2020 at the National Field Archery Association (NFAA) Easton Yankton Archery Centre (NEYAC), which is the world's largest archery centre. Although Yankton is ready to host the 2021 World Archery Championships, yet the committee is planning to shift it to 2022 which was against the one year postponement decision because all events planned for 2021 moved to 2022 after the delay of the Olympics. The World Archery Field Championships was planned as the primary qualifier for the upcoming World Games in Birmingham but now a separate qualification event is likely to take place in the summer of 2021. Besides this, the 32nd edition of the Tokyo Olympics to be held in Tokyo, Japan has been postponed from July 23 to August 8, 2021 and the Paralympics from August 24 to September 5, 2021. The World Swimming Championships postponed to 2022 which was scheduled on July 16 to August 1, 2021 in Fukuoka, Japan.

The Upcoming AFC Women's Cup

The Asian Football Confederation confirmed India's hospitality for the upcoming 2022 Women's Asian Cup. This will be the first time when India will be hosting this cup since 1979. The Asian Football Confederation has handed over the hosting rights to the All India Football Federation. Total 12 teams will participate in the tournament. Flashback reveals that Indian team has twice finished as runners in 1980 and 1983 and won bronze in 1981. It should be remembered that Asian Football Confederation is one of the 6 continental confederations that has 47 member countries.

Cricket Tournaments will start in October 2020

Cricket Australia announced dates for India's tour to Australia which are starting in October 2020. This cricket assignment comprises four Tests, ODIs as well as T20 Internationals. Team India led by Virat Kohli will tour the country for a T20 series first, which will begin on October 11 at Brisbane followed by matches on October 14 and 17. They will then return for a four-Test series, beginning on December 3 at Brisbane, which will be followed by a three-match ODI series. The ODI series is scheduled to roll on January 12, 2021 in Perth. The Indian women's team will also go to Australia for an ODI series with matches scheduled in Canberra in January 2021.

CAREER FLITE



Current Affairs

1. Raveesh Kumar has been appointed as next Ambassador of India to
 (a) Norway (b) Finland (c) Russia
 (d) Sweden (e) Denmark
2. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) discovered the 1100-year-old Shiva lingam in during temple excavation.
 (a) China (b) Vietnam (c) Laos
 (d) Cambodia (e) Malaysia
3. Which of the following teamed up with WHO to improve health through sport amidst COVID-19 Pandemic?
 (a) FIFA (b) FIBA (c) IOC
 (d) ICC (e) IAAF
4. Which of the following states celebrated its foundation day on 2nd June?
 (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Karnataka (c) Telangana
 (d) Gujarat (e) West Bengal
5. Which of the following Ministries released 'One Year of Modi 2.0 – Towards A Self-Reliant India' e-book ?
 (a) Ministry of Communications (b) Ministry of External Affairs
 (c) Ministry of Home Affairs (d) Ministry of Human Resource Development
 (e) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
6. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) introduced seven weather services of IMD in UMANG app, which was launched in
 (a) 2015 (b) 2016 (c) 2017
 (d) 2018 (e) 2019

7. COVID-19 testing laboratory has been established in
(a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Assam
(d) Tripura (e) Nagaland
8. ICICI launched 'ICICI Bank Golden Years FD' a special FD with interest rate of 6.55% pa for
(a) Physically challenged (b) Senior Citizens (c) BPL people
(d) Entrepreneurs (e) None
9. Recently astronomers created Cloud Atlas for exoplanets that are like
(a) Mercury (b) Venus (c) Earth
(d) Mars (e) Jupiter
10. International Everest Day was celebrated on May
(a) 25th (b) 26th (c) 27th
(d) 28th (e) 29th
11. Which of the following developed solar parabolic trough collectors for concentrating solar energy for industrial applications?
(a) IIT Bombay (b) IIT Kharagpur (c) IIT Madras
(d) IIT Kanpur (e) IIT Roorkee
12. World Bank announced \$..... billion assistance to 100 countries over a 15-month period to fight Coronavirus.
(a) 120 (b) 130 (c) 140
(d) 150 (e) 160
13. Which of the following states started Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana for farmers ?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Gujarat
(d) Andhra Pradesh (e) Uttar Pradesh
14. From 10th June 2020, RBI stopped People's Co-operative Bank of from granting fresh loans and accepting deposits for 6 months.
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Bihar\
(d) Gujarat (e) Maharashtra

- 15.** “She Triumphs through Respect, Equality, and Empowerment (STREE)” programme was launched in which of the following cities?
- (a) Bengaluru (b) Hyderabad (c) Chennai
(d) Kochi (e) New Delhi
- 16.** Which of the following states became the first state in India to receive ISO certification for tribal hostels ?
- (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Odisha
(d) West Bengal (e) Bihar
- 17.** Green Day was celebrated on June 11.
- (a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Tripura
(d) Assam (e) Arunachal Pradesh
- 18.** developed Dry Heat Treatment Chamber “GermiKlean” to Sanitise Uniforms of Security Force.
- (a) DRDO (b) ICMR (c) IIT Madras
(d) IIT Delhi (e) IIT Hyderabad
- 19.** Boxing champion and Olympic medalist Oleksandr Gvozdyk of announced retirement.
- (a) Poland (b) Slovakia (c) Hungary
(d) Romania (e) Ukraine
- 20.** Which of the following nations topped the Deep Knowledge Group’s safest country in the world from covid- 19 index ?
- (a) Denmark (b) Switzerland
(c) New Zealand (d) Germany (e) Israel



ANSWERS



- 1.(b)** Raveesh Kumar has been appointed as next Ambassador of India to Finland. He is a 1995 batch IFS officer, who has earlier served as the spokesperson of Ministry of External Affairs.
- 2.(b)** The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) discovered the 1100-year-old Shiva lingam at the Cham Temple Complex located in My Son Sanctuary, Vietnam during temple excavation. It is a monolithic sandstone Shiva lingam, a representation of the Hindu deity Shiva.
- 3.(c)** International Olympic Committee (IOC) teamed up with WHO to improve health through sport amid COVID-19 Pandemic. It is to ensure Health of athletes, supporters and workers at the games.
- 4.(c)** Telangana celebrated its 6th foundation day on 2nd June 2020. Telangana has excelled in a wide range of sectors and has been making valuable contributions to the growth trajectory of India. It is the torchbearer for many innovative development and welfare programs for other states.
- 5.(e)** Ministry of Information and Broadcasting released 'One Year of Modi 2.0 – Towards A Self-Reliant India' e-book. It speaks about the key achievements of the Modi government during its second term.
- 6.(c)** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) introduced seven weather services of IMD viz. Current Weather, Nowcast, City Forecast, Rainfall Information, Tourism Forecast, Warnings, Cyclone in Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG) app, which was launched in 2017.

- 7.(c)** COVID-19 testing laboratory has been established in North East Institute of Science and Technology, Assam. The institute's Biotechnology Division is playing an important role in isolating RNA from virus and carrying out RT-PCR-based COVID-19 testing.
- 8.(b)** ICICI launched 'ICICI Bank Golden Years FD' a special FD with interest rate of 6.55% pa for Senior Citizens. The scheme offers this interest rate for deposits up to Rs 2 crores with a tenure of more than 5 years to 10 years.
- 9.(e)** Recently astronomers created Cloud Atlas for exoplanets that are like Jupiter. This atlas will help in prediction of the many types of clouds, from smoggy methane haze to sapphire, that are expected on hot Jupiter like exoplanets of different temperatures, which can be up to thousands of degrees kelvin.
- 10.(e)** International Everest Day was celebrated on 29th May in memory of the first summit of Mt. Everest on 29 May 1953 undertaken by Sir Edmund Hillary from New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa from Nepal who became the first humans to achieve the feat.
- 11.(c)** IIT Madras developed solar parabolic trough collectors for concentrating solar energy for industrial applications like desalination, space heating and space cooling. The innovation focuses sunlight on a small area where it is absorbed and then utilised for heating and subsequently into energy generation. This system has a concentrator or reflector, receiver, supporting structures like pylon, torque tube, mirror supporting arm and receiver support and a tracking unit.
- 12.(e)** The World Bank announced \$ 160 billion assistance to 100 countries over a 15-month period to fight Coronavirus.
- 13.(b)** Chhattisgarh started Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana to boost crop production in the state and to give the farmers the right price for their produce. Under this, an amount of Rs 5700 crore will be transferred directly to their accounts in four instalments to 19 lakh farmers of the state.

- 14.(b)** From 10th June 2020, RBI stopped People's Co-operative Bank of Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh from granting fresh loans, accepting deposits, selling or transferring any of its properties or assets for 6 months due to its weak financial position. Also no withdrawal of amount across all savings account or current accounts or any other account of a depositor will be allowed from the co-operative bank. However, the above restrictions are not meant for the cancellation of banking licence of the co-operative bank.
- 15.(b)** "She Triumphs through Respect, Equality, and Empowerment (STREE)" programme was launched in Hyderabad. Hyderabad City Security Council along with Hyderabad City Police launched this programme.
- 16.(c)** Odisha became the first state in India to receive ISO 9001:2015 certification for its 44 tribal hostels of Keonjhar (32 hostels) and Sambalpur (12 hostels) districts. The state government improved their overall infrastructure and standards under Mission Suvidya.
- 17.(b)** Green Mizoram Day was celebrated on June 11. This day was observed to protect the state's diverse flora and fauna and preserve the ecological balance of the region. This day has been celebrated since 1999.
- 18.(a)** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) developed Dry Heat Treatment Chamber "GermiKlean" to Sanitise Uniforms of Security Force. Saveer Biotech Limited manufactured it. The chamber can sanitise 25 pairs of uniforms in 15 minutes.
- 19.(e)** Boxing champion and Olympic medalist Oleksandr Gvozdyk of Ukraine announced retirement. Known with the nickname "The Nail", he won the 2018 World Boxing Councils (WBCs) light heavyweight world title against Adonis Stevenson in Quebec. He is also the former light heavyweight champion of North American Boxing Federation (NABF).
- 20.(b)** Switzerland topped the Deep Knowledge Group's safest country in the world from covid-19 index. It was followed by Germany and Israel at the second and third spots. India got 56th rank in this index, while South Sudan emerged as the most unsafe country amid covid-19 at the 200th position.