



Monthly **GK** Mania



March - 2020

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### **Green flag for National Technical Textiles Mission**

In order to make India a global leader in Technical Textiles, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave nod to the National Technical Textiles Mission and allocated it an amount of Rs 1,480 crores. The Mission will be implemented in India for 4 years between 2020-21 and 2023-24. The mission is comprised of components viz. Research, Innovation, and Development. It will focus on Aramid Fibre, Carbon Fibre, Composites, and Nylon Fibre. It is worth registering here that the Indian Textiles Market contributes 6% of the global technical textiles and is estimated to be 16 billion USD, whereas the global market is 250 billion USD. And this mission eyes to take the Indian Technical Textiles market to 40-50 billion USD by 2024.

### **The privileged SCs of Lakshadweep**

On 26th February 2020, the Union Cabinet approved amendments to ‘the Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands Land Revenue and Tenancy Regulation, 1965 Act’ for providing Occupancy rights to Scheduled Tribes of Lakshadweep. The occupancy right is the right to occupy and use tribal areas. Lakshadweep is made up of an extensive group of islands and currently, it has 17 uninhabited islands in the region. According to Census 2011, there are 64,429 people on the island. It is worth knowing here that out of this 93% of the population is native and it has been classified as Scheduled Tribes due to the social and economic backwardness of the people. In addition to this, it is worth noticing here that according to the SC and ST list (modification order), 1956, the inhabitants born to both parents born in the islands are alone treated as Scheduled Tribes.

### **The Surrogacy (Regulation) bill, 2019 won Cabinet’s approval**

The Cabinet has approved the changes which were introduced to the ‘Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019’ by the 23-member select committee of Rajya Sabha In February 2020. Now not only close relatives but “any woman” willing to act as a surrogate mother shall be allowed to become a surrogate mother and this clause is likely to benefit widows and divorced women besides infertile Indian couples. It has also agreed to delete the definition of infertility which meant an inability to conceive after unprotected intercourse for 5 years. The committee was of the opinion that it was a

pretty long period for a couple to wait for a child. The Insurance Cover of a surrogate mother has also been increased from 16 months to 36 months. Around 15 amendments have been approved. This bill was passed in Lok Sabha in 2019 and was meant to forbid commercial surrogacy and promote altruistic surrogacy that does not demand monetary compensation apart from medical expenses and Insurance.

### **The ‘Jagananna Vasthi Deevena’ scheme of Jagan Mohan**

In February 2020, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Jagan Mohan launched ‘Jagananna Vasthi Deevena’ scheme for Students in Vizianagaram district. Under this scheme, there is a provision of extending financial assistance of Rs 2,300 crore to the students pursuing Industrial Training Institute (ITI), polytechnic, under-graduate and postgraduate education courses to handle hostel and mess expenditure. This scheme is likely to benefit 11,87,904 students, where the ITI students will get Rs 10,000 each, polytechnic students (Rs 15,000) and under-graduates and postgraduates (Rs 20,000) each in 2 installments, in February and July every year. And the fund will be added to the account of the beneficiary student’s mother.

### **IRDAI formed a 9-member panel**

An autonomous body, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) formed a 9-member committee led by Mr. G. Srinivasan, Director of National Insurance Academy to explore the possibility of allowing life insurers offer insurance-based health policies again. The committee will be co-chaired by MR Kumar, Chairman of LIC of India. M N Sarma (Secretary-General of GI Council), S N Bhattacharya (Secretary-General of LI Council), A V Girija Kumar (CMD of Oriental Insurance), Vibha Padalkar (MD & CEO of HDFC Life Insurance), Ritesh Kumar (MD & CEO of HDFC Ergo General Insurance), Dr. S Prakash (MD of Star Health and Allied Insurance Company) and Jayashree Sridhar (Faculty Member of NIA, Pune are other members of this committee.

### **“Santusht” mobile app for ESI beneficiaries**

The Union Labour Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar started the “Santusht ” mobile app for the benefit of ESI beneficiaries along with ESIC’s Special Service Fortnight. The service is meant to organize daily health check-up camps, special camps for clearance of pending bills of IPs (insured persons) and channel partners and cash benefits in case of death/disability, redressal of public grievances, mock fire drill in all ESIC Hospitals. Besides this, ESIC Hospital Basaidarapur, New Delhi has been renamed as ‘Sahib Singh Verma ESIC Hospital’ and ESIC AYUSH Hospital as ‘Padma Vibhushan Brihaspati Dev Triguna ESIC AYUSH Hospital’.

### **The new warning systems**

The Indian National Center for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad introduced 3 new ocean-based specialized products viz. Small Advisory and Forecast Services System (SVAS), Swell Surge Forecast System (SSFS) and Algal Bloom Information Service (ABIS) for the benefit of fishermen and people living in the coastal areas of South India. Apart from this, the Minister of Food Processing Industry started a 'Market Intelligence and Early Warning System (MIEWS)' Web Portal in New Delhi for monitoring prices of Onion, Tomato, and Potato. It will also generate alerts under the terms of Operations Green Scheme. Under Operation Green Scheme, the surplus production from producing areas are taken to consumption centers.

### **Crisil purchased Greenwich Associates**

Rating Agency Crisil completed the acquisition of a 100% stake in Greenwich Associates which was announced on December 19, 2019. Being a leading provider of proprietary benchmarking data, analytics and qualitative insights to financial services firms worldwide, Greenwich serves over 300 clients across top investment banks, corporate banks, commercial banks, asset managers and key players in the market infrastructure. After this acquisition, Greenwich will accelerate Crisil's strategy and will act as the leading player in the growing market of global benchmarking analytics across financial services.

### **The Report on clause 6 of Assam accord**

In February 2020, a high-level committee headed by retired Justice Biplab Sharma submitted a report on the implementation of clause 6 of the Assam accord. Background reveals that Assam Accord was inked between the All Assam Students Union (AASU), Union government and Assam government on August 15, 1985, in the presence of then prime minister (PM) Rajiv Gandhi. Under this accord, the center had agreed to accept all the migrants that entered before 1966 & also affirmed to provide constitutional, legislative and administrative measures to protect and preserve the cultural, social, linguistic identity of the Assamese people.

### **India-UK Indra Dhanush Exercise 2020**

The Indian Air Force and the Royal Air Force of the United Kingdom conducted a joint Air Force Exercise at Air Force Station Hindon in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh on 24th February 2020. "Base Defence and Force Protection" was the theme of this exercise. Around 36 specialized combatants of the Royal Air Force and 42 combatants of Garud Commando Force from the Indian side participated in this exercise. Operated under Western Air Command, the Hindon Air Force Station is the eighth largest airbase across the globe and the largest airbase in Asia. Formed in September



2004, Garud Commando Force is meant to protect air bases and installations, disaster, relief, search and rescue operations during hostilities. It is presently deployed in Congo to carry out United Nations Peacekeeping operations.

### **Madhya Pradesh : The first state to launch a unified vehicle registration card**

The Madhya Pradesh Government launched a unified vehicle registration card on February 25, 2020, and with this, it became the first state of India to do so. The card possesses complete information on both sides of the cards unlike the previous ones and carries unique numbers recognized across the country. Each card has a QR code that helps to verify the authenticity of the data printed on the cards. Several pieces of information including the name, address, blood group, DOB, Photograph of the holder, issuing authority, validity & other details will be stored in a chip. Besides this, Madhya Pradesh has also become the second state after Uttar Pradesh to launch a unified driving license card, that informs about the ability of the driver to drive in hilly & dangerous areas & emergency contact number. It is worth recalling in this context, that the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways issued certain guidelines to bring uniformity in driving license & vehicle registration cards across the country in 2019.

### **The UKIERI-UGC Higher Education Leadership Development Programme**

Union Minister for Human Resource Development Ramesh Pokhriyal launched the “Higher Education Leadership Development Programme for Administrator” on February 26, 2020. This initiative is a joint venture between UGC and the British Council under the United Kingdom (UK) India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI). The programme is meant to train the senior and middle-level academic administrators in order to enable them to bring about systemic changes with renewed approaches, capacity, tools, and skills in Universities in India. Under this programme 2 workshops will be conducted by UK trainers, which will train about 300 academic administrators at the level of Registrar and Joint/Deputy/Assistant Registrar.

### **GISAT-1 is all set for space**

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch Geo Imaging Satellite (GISAT-1) via Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F10) from the Second Launch Pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota on March 05, 2020. GISAT-1 is 2275 kg, a state-of-the-art agile Earth observation satellite that will be placed in a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit. It is worth remembering here that this is the first time when a 4 meter diameter Ogive shaped payload fairing is being flown in this GSLV flight and this is the fourteenth flight of the GSLV. GISAT-1 is meant to facilitate near real-time observation of the Indian subcontinent, under cloud-free conditions, at frequent intervals.

### **The Central Excise Day**

Like every year, the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) celebrated the Central Excise Day across the nation on February 24, 2020. It aimed to acknowledge the sincere service of CBEC officers towards the country as they check corruption in goods from the manufacturing sector. The day commemorates the legislation of Central Excise and Salt Act on 24 February 1944. The CBEC works under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance. It deals with policy formulation regarding the collection of service tax and central excise and duties. It also holds the responsibility of checking the implementation of Customs Act, 1962, Central Excise Act 1944, Customs Tariff Act 1975 and Service Tax Act.

### **World's largest 'Export Cold Zone' in India**

Joint Venture between the GVK led consortium and Airports Authority of India (AAI), the Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL), has recently launched the world's largest temperature-controlled facility, "Export Cold Zone" to store agro and pharma products. The facility can accommodate more than 700 tonnes of cargo. Spread over 6,000 square metres covering 12 truck docks equipped with dock-levellers, automated workstations, spacious acceptance and examination area, X-Ray machines and Ball mat system for Unit Load Device, the terminal links 500 cargo destinations across 175 nations. It is worth noting here that the airport is one of the few airports in the world, first in India and third in Asia to obtain IATA CEIV PHARMA accreditation from International Air Transport Association. This accreditation ensures safety, security, efficiency and compliance in handling pharmaceutical products.

### **Adline Castelino : The LIVA Miss Diva Universe 2020**

Adline Castelino from Mangalore, Karnataka emerged as LIVA Miss Diva Universe 2020 at an event held in Yash Raj Films Studios, Mumbai, Maharashtra. Crowned by Vartika Singh, the winner of the previous edition, Castelino will be representing India at Miss Universe pageant 2020. Besides her, Aavriti Choudhary of Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh became LIVA Miss Diva Supranational 2020 and will represent India at Miss Supranational 2020. While Neha Jaiswal of Pune, Maharashtra was declared as LIVA Miss Diva 2020, Runner-up. The participants got the opportunity of getting trained and groomed under the mentorship and guidance of Bollywood actor & former Miss Universe, Lara Dutta.

### **The Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2020**

February 2020 witnessed announcements of the Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2020. The list of winners included Super 30 (Best Film); Hrithik Roshan (Best Actor);

Kiccha Sudeep (Most Promising Actor); Dheeraj Dhoopar (Best Actor in Television Series); Divyanka Tripathi (Best Actress in Television); Harshad Chopda (Most Favourite Television Actor); Sriti Jha and Shabbir Ahluwalia (Kumkum Bhagya) (Most Favourite Jodi in Television Series); Bigg Boss 13 (Best Reality Show); Kumkum Bhagya (Best Television Series) and Armaan Malik (Best Playback Singer Male). Actor Ravi Dubey served as the host of this event.

### **The First Anniversary of PM-Kisan Scheme**

On 24th February 2020, the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana completed its one year of implementation. The scheme was meant to increase the income of farmers by providing them income support of Rs 6,000 per year. Implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare, the scheme was launched one year ago by PM Modi on February 24, 2019, at Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. The scheme initially provided income support to small and marginal farmers that held land up to 2 hectares, which was later extended to all farmers irrespective of the size of their landholdings. The Ministry also launched PM KISAN mobile App for the same. So far, the Central Government has sanctioned Rs. 50,850 crores that benefited 8.46 crores of families.

### **The 70th Berlin International Film Festival & India**

February 2020 witnessed External affairs minister Dr S. Jaishankar's participation in the 70th edition of this event in Berlin, Germany. The event gave impetus to strengthening the bilateral relationship between the two nations and carry forward the co-production platform. The event also saw the release of a Pickle Magazine at the Pavilion. Jaishankar expressed gratitude towards German Minister of Foreign affairs Heiko Maas for his strong support for expanding India - European Union cooperation.

### **The New NDMA members**

The Government of India gave nod to the appointment of Rajendra Singh (former Director-General of the Indian coast guard), Syed Ata Hasnain (former Lt. General of Army) and Krishna Vatsa (Policy and Recovery Advisory, Climate change and disaster risk reduction, United Nations Development Program) as members of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) for upcoming five years. Besides this, the government also extended the tenure of Kamal Kishore, who is currently serving as NDMA member for another 5 years.

### **The Grassroots Charter Bronze Level**

In February 2020, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) received the "Grassroots Charter Bronze Level" membership, which will enable the national body to promote its basic-level events



recognised by Asian Football Confederation (AFC). In 2014, AIFF was honored with the President Recognition Award for grassroots football along with the Philippines and Tajikistan. Prior to that, the AIFF had also achieved a podium finish for its work at the grassroots levels along with Japan and Vietnam in the year 2013.

### **The 25th GulFood 2020 & India**

The Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal represented India at the 25th edition of Gulfood 2020 in Dubai, UAE. India emerged as the largest participant in Gulfood with almost 300 companies displaying a wide variety of food products. India's food exports to UAE stand at almost 1.8 billion dollars and UAE is the third-largest trading partner of India with bilateral trade amounting \$ 59.909 in 2018-19.

### **Speaker of Kerala became the Ideal Legislative Assembly Speaker Awardee**

In February 2020, Venkaiah Naidu presented the Ideal Legislative Assembly Speaker/ Ideal Legislative Council Chairman Award 2019 to P. Ramakrishnan, Speaker of Kerala during the inaugural ceremony of the 10th edition of "Bharatiya Chhatra Sansad" (Indian Student Parliament) at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, India. The award-2019 acknowledges the significant contribution made by the Hon'ble Speaker in strengthening & safeguarding best legislative practices in the state. Shivraj Patil -Former Speaker of the Parliament and the Governing Council of the Bhartiya Chhatra Sansad, who was honoured by MIT School of Government presided over the selection committee.

### **India to switch to World's cleanest petrol and diesel.**

India is all set to join the league of nations that use petrol and diesel containing just 10 parts per million (ppm) of sulphur. From April 1st, 2020, India shall leapfrog straight to BS-VI emission compliant fuels from BS-IV grades now. India's journey with Bharat Stages (BS) began in the year 2000, when the country adopted its emission standards from European emission and fuel regulations. Sanjiv Singh, chairman of Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) stated that new fuel will reduce the Nitrogen Oxide NOx in 25% in petrol cars and 70% in diesel cars with the implementation of BS-VI.

### **Pension Rules of Government Employees changed**

The Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare under Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has notified that all Central Government employees whose selection for appointment was finalized before January 1, 2004 but who joined service on or after 01.01.2004, for



administrative reasons, can now opt to be covered under the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972 instead of the NPS (National Pension System). The last date to exercise this option is May 31, 2020. The employees, under CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972, will be required to subscribe to the General Provident Fund (GPF).

### **Cabinet said yes**

In February 2020, the cabinet gave nod to the constitution of the 22nd Law Commission of India for a period of three years. It will consist of a full time Chairperson as well as four full time members. The Commission will undertake research works and suggest reforms that are essential to enact new legislation. Besides this, the Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill has also been approved by the Union Cabinet. The bill seeks a set up of a national registry. It has provisions for identifying people that are involved in illegal embryo sale and trafficking, treating infertility as well as technology to remove an egg from a woman's body and fertilize it with a man's sperm to make an embryo. This will transform India into a surrogacy hub for foreign couples. The bill will encourage whistleblowers to highlight unethical practices that need to be brought under legislation.

### **The newly introduced apps**

The Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India launched a 'Credai Awaas' app to connect home buyers with its member developers to purchase properties. The app will feature projects from 220 cities & will entertain participation from 20000 CREDAI developers across the country. Apart from this, Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan launched "Yodhav" (Warrior) mobile app at Kochi, Kerala, through which the public can inform police about drug abuse & its distribution and will help in the battle against drug menace.

### **The acquisitions in discussion**

In February 2020, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) gave nod to JSW Steel's bid of Rs 19,700 crore for the purchase of the bankrupt Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd (BPSL). Currently BPSL's former promoters are facing the lawsuits filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002. In this context, JSW Steel will be relieved from facing litigation for the work done by former promoters of Bhushan Power. Apart from this, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved acquisition of Westinghouse Air Brake Company (WABCO) Holdings by Automotive industry in Germany, ZF Friedrichshafen. Now ZF will purchase 100% shares of WABCO for USD 136.50 per share under the all-cash transaction method for a total equity value of USD 7 billion (approximately Rs. 49,700 crores).

## **The hustle-bustle of the educational world**

All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) banned all the government & private universities across India to offer both PGDM (Post Graduate Diploma in Management) and MBA (Master of Business Administration) courses simultaneously. The Human Resource Development Ministry has announced that PGDM courses can be run by standalone institutions, which are neither universities nor affiliated to any university, similar to the prestigious (IIMs) Indian Institute of Management. Whereas institutions affiliated to universities have the option of either converting all PGDM courses into corresponding MBA courses with respect to the university affiliation or vice-versa and run those under a separate standalone institute. Apart from this, two important institutions have been renamed. Latur Medical College of Maharashtra has been renamed as 'Vilasrao Deshmukh Institute of Medical Sciences' after former CM Vilasrao Deshmukh and Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA) has been renamed as 'Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses' to "honour the commitment and legacy" of late Manohar Parrikar.

## **Some key Appointments**

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) received its new chairman in the form of Supratim Bandyopadhyay, who was earlier a member of PFRDA. He will be on the post for a period of 5 years from the date of assumption or till attaining the age of 65 years. He has succeeded Pankaj Jain. It is worth knowing that PFRDA consists of a chairperson and 6 members, out of which 3 members are whole-time members, who are appointed by the central government. Apart from this, Ex-IAS officers Sanjay Kothari and Bimal Julka have become the next Chief Vigilance Officer (CVC) and Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) respectively. Sanjay Kothari has taken the place of K. V. Chowdary and Bimal Julka succeeded Sudhir Bhargava as CIC. And former Chief Managing Director (CMD) of Andhra Bank, Suresh Patel has been chosen as Vigilance Commissioner.

## **The latest from RBI board**

The Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank of India at its 582nd meeting recommended aligning the financial year of RBI, currently July-June, with the government's fiscal year (April-March) from the year 2020-21. Now, the proposal is waiting for the government's approval. Besides this, RBI started a 3- year Long term Repo Rate Operations (LTRO) for Rs.25,000 crores. LTRO is about providing cheaper money to banks at the repo rate so that it can be used to boost credit growth. RBI has received bids of more than Rs. 1.944 lakh crore and has accepted bids of

Rs. 25,035 crore. The RBI will conduct the second issue for Rs 25,000 crore on February 24 which will have one-year tenor. The current repo rate is 5.15% and LTROs will be conducted on CBS (E-KUBER) platform at a fixed rate in which bids below or above policy rate will be rejected.

### **India's 1st digital parcel locker in West Bengal**

The Department of posts in Kolkata (West Bengal circle), has launched free digital parcel locker service in two post offices viz. the Nabadiganta IT post office in Sector 5 of Salt Lake City and at the post office in New Town's Action Area I. The facility has been started to enable working class customers to collect their parcel from the post office according to their convenience as they do not get time to receive any parcel at home. Customers availing this facility will be given a special locker number for their address wherever the parcel will be dropped from India Post and the customer will get an OTP (one-time password) message along with SMS (Short Message Service) intimation. Customers can collect their parcel and letters addressed to them from the kiosks at 24x7.

### **Attention SBI account holders!**

State Bank of India (SBI) has announced some important changes which have become effective from March 10, 2020. The bank has decreased its interest rate on savings bank (SB) accounts to 3% along with waiving off of average monthly balance (AMB) for all SBI accounts on the basis of 'Customers First' approach. Prior to this, the bank offered 3.25% per annum for saving deposits of upto Rs 1 Lakh and 3% for deposits above Rs 1 Lakh. But now the new rate is uniform at 3% for all SBI accounts. Among other changes, the bank also waived SMS charges, which is likely to fetch significant relief to all the customers; in order to make home and auto loans cheaper SBI has reduced its one-year marginal cost of fund-based lending rate (MCLR) to 7.75% from 7.85%.

### **The end of Ujjwala Yojana**

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, which was launched in 2016 to provide Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) connections to 5 crore women belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families over a period of 3 years starting from FY 2016-17, has finally reached a full stop. According to the report of the Parliamentary Committee on Petroleum headed by BJP member Ramesh Bidhuri, only three States (Haryana, Punjab and Andhra Pradesh) and five Union Territories (Delhi, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Andaman & Nicobar Island and Puducherry) have become kerosene-free although in September 2019 the government succeeded in achieving the target of 8 crore LPG connections under this PMUY. The report pinpoints the gap between the continuing use of kerosene and the claim of 97% LPG coverage nationwide.



### **The 12 Commandments Of Being A Woman**

Writer- producer, professor, Tahira Kashyap Khurrana launched a new book titled “The 12 Commandments Of Being A Woman” on 8th March 2020 i.e. Women’s Day. This was her 4th book published by Juggernaut Books, New Delhi. “I Promise”, “Souled Out” are the other famous titles of the wife of actor Ayushmann Khurrana. In the year 2015, she also co-authored Ayushmann’s biography “Cracking the Code: My Journey in Bollywood”.

### **The Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship**

Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey started Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship programme (MGNF) in the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Bengaluru in Karnataka. This fellowship programme is a part of Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) programme of the ministry to give impetus to skill development at the district level. In this pilot project, IIMB will train 75 graduates for two years in preparing the District skill plan. Graduates in age group of 21-30 years from 75 districts in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Karnataka and Meghalaya have been chosen for the training. On joining the program, the candidate will receive a stipend of Rs. 50,000 per month during Year 1 of the program while a stipend of Rs. 60,000 per month will be provided during Year 2 of the program.

### **Indo-U.S. Fellowship for women scientists**

In order to provide opportunities to Indian Women Scientists, Engineers & Technologists to undertake international collaborative research in premier institutions in the United States of America (USA), the Department of Science & Technology (DST) of the Government of India along with Indo-U.S. Science & Technology Forum’s (IUSSTF) program is providing international exposure to several women scientists. The Indo-U.S. Fellowship for Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics & Medicine (WISTEMM) has two categories of women scientists viz. Module I accommodating Women Overseas Student Internship for students pursuing PhD & Module II having Women Overseas Fellowship for PhD holder & also who is present in regular position at any recognized institution/laboratory in India.

### **Renaming of Aurangabad Airport**

Recently the Maharashtra Government renamed Aurangabad Airport located in the Chikalthana area of Aurangabad as “Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj Airport”. The Municipal Corporation of Aurangabad had passed a resolution to rename this airport to honour Chhatrapati Sambhaji

Maharaj, who was the son of Maratha warrior King Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Besides this, Kolhapur airport has been renamed as “Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj”. This decision was taken at a meeting of the state cabinet to fulfil the promises made to the people of the state.

### **Praveen Rao became Dr MS Swaminathan Awardee**

Praveen Rao, Vice-Chancellor of Professor Jaya Shankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJ TSAU), has been selected for the 7th edition of Dr MS Swaminathan Award for the period 2017- 2019 for his contributions in the fields of agricultural research, teaching, extension and administration. The awardee has handled 13 research & 6 consultancy projects on micro-irrigation in India, Israel and South Africa. Instituted by the Retired Indian Council of Agricultural Research Employees Association (RICAREA) and Nuziveedu Seeds Limited (NSL), the award carries a cash prize of Rs 2 lakh and a citation.

### **No more fake Passports & Counterfeit Currency Notes**

CSIR-National Physical Laboratory has recently reported the development of a bi-luminescent security ink that can detect Fake Printed Passports and Counterfeit Currency Notes. The ink glows in red and green colours when illuminated by two different excitation sources at 254 nanometers (nm) and 365 nm, respectively. The ink has been prepared in a batch of 1kg and given to Bank Note Press (BNP), Dewas, a unit of Security Printing Minting Corporation of India Ltd. (SPMCIL), New Delhi. The ink is in line with the standards that are in use. The formulation will be employed to check the authenticity of passports, Government documents, tamper-evident labels, identity cards, etc.

### **Lt Gen KJS Dhillon: The new DG**

Lt Gen Kanwal Jeet Singh Dhillon has been appointed as a Director-General, Defence Intelligence Agency, Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff, under the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) in the Department of Military Affairs. He has taken the place of Lt Gen AS Bedi. Prior to this, Dhillon of Indian Military Academy (IMA) served in the capacity of XV Corps and handed over the charge to Lt Gen Baggavalli Somashekar Raju.

### **Direct Tax Vivad Se Vishwas Bill, 2020**

Lok Sabha approved the Direct Tax Vivad Se Viswas Bill, 2020’ or “No Dispute, But Only Trust” that seeks to reduce the number of litigations that are associated with direct tax payments. Introduced by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman during the Union Budget 2020-21, the Direct Tax Vivad Se Vishwas concept aims to highlight the appeals led by the Income Tax

Department under the Act. And for the taxpayers, the bill warns that if the tax payment is made after March 31, 2020, the taxpayer has to pay 110% of the disputed tax. And if the tax is paid before the due date then the taxpayer has to pay the full amount of the disputed tax without any penalty.

### **The Upcoming Mega Consolidation of PSBs**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Narendra Modi had given nod to mega consolidation of 10 Public Sector Banks which will come into effect from April 1, 2020. This includes the amalgamation of United Bank of India and Oriental Bank of India into Punjab National Bank; the amalgamation of Syndicate Bank into Canara Bank; the amalgamation of Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank into Union Bank of India; the amalgamation of Allahabad Bank into Indian Bank. Each of the amalgamated banks will hold the business of 8 lakh crore rupees to stay competent with other banks in India and abroad.

### **The Amendment of Companies Act, 2013**

The Union Cabinet permitted 72 changes to the Companies Act, 2013 to decriminalize the provisions in the Act. The amendment leads to a recategorization of 23 offences and omission of 7 compoundable offences. Under the amendment, the companies with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) obligation of less than Rs 50 lakhs need not to constitute a CSR committee. The amendments will multiply foreign investments. Currently, Indian Companies have the option of Global Depository Receipt (GDR) and American Depository Receipt (ADR) alone.

### **The Mandation of BHOG Certificates**

The Tamil Nadu Food Safety and Drug Administration recently asked the administrators of holy places to obtain a Blissful Hygiene Offering to God (BHOG) certificate from Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to ensure the quality of food offered to devotees and deities in Gurudwaras, Temples and Mosques. Started in 2018, the BHOG project involves Eat Right Campaign, which in turn is based on two broad pillars namely “Eat Healthy” and “Eat Right”.

### **The 35th ‘AAHAR 2020’**

India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) in partnership with the Agriculture and Processed Food Products Development Authority (APEDA), Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries and many apex industry associations organized a 5-day-long 35th edition of the Food and Hospitality fair ‘AAHAR 2020’ in Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on 3rd March 2020. This fair is meant to promote the agriculture-community as well as tourism sectors especially hospitality



companies. More than 750 people from India and abroad like Hong Kong, Israel, Indonesia, Japan, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, UK, UAE etc. are participating in this event.

### **Ajay Bhushan Pandey : The New Finance Secretary**

Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) headed by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi has given nod to the appointment of Ajay Bhushan Pandey as the new Finance Secretary in Ministry of Finance. He has succeeded Rajiv Kumar. Pandey is a 1984 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Maharashtra cadre who had served in capacity of the chief executive officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). Besides him, currently 1985 batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, Atanu Chakraborty is secretary of Department of Economic Affairs and the upcoming new one rupee notes will have his bilingual signature; 1987 batch IAS officer of Odisha cadre, Tuhin Kant Pandey is secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management; 1987 batch IAS officer from Tamil Nadu cadre, T V Somanathan is secretary of Department of Expenditure and Debasish Panda is financial services secretary.

### **Cheers to Shafali Verma**

In the latest ICC women's T20I Rankings 2020, Indian cricketer, Shafali Verma created history by becoming the world's No.1 batsman at the age of 16. She climbed 19 places to reach the top with 761 points surpassing New Zealand's Suzie Bates followed by Bethany Louise Mooney of Australia in third place. Shafali's explosive batting at the top of the order saw her score 161 runs in four innings including knocks of 47 and 46 against Sri Lanka and New Zealand, which helped her become the second Indian batswoman after Mithali Raj to top the Women's T20I batting rankings. Coming from Rohtak, Shafali made her debut in September 2019 against South Africa in Surat. She has so far amassed 485 runs in 18 T20Is at an average of 28.52 with a strike rate of 146.96 including two half-centuries.

### **National Workshop on Explosive Detection (NWED-2020)**

High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) organized National Workshop on Explosive Detection (NWED-2020) in Pune, Maharashtra. A new explosive detection device with a capability to detect explosives from a stand-off distance, 'RaIDer-X' was unveiled in this workshop. Developed by HEMRL Pune and Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, Karnataka, it can expand its capability to detect a number of explosives in pure form as well as with the contaminants via construction of a data library in its system. Around 250 delegates from different DRDO laboratories, Army, Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, State Police, academic Institutes, industries and other security agencies participated in this event.

### **The Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2019**

The HRD Ministry introduced the Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2019 in Rajya Sabha on March 2, 2020, which was introduced in Lok Sabha in December 2019. The bill seeks to convert deemed Sanskrit universities like Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi, Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati and Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, New Delhi to central Sanskrit universities. These universities will work towards promotion of Sanskrit, training of manpower in preservation of Sanskrit and other allied subjects and will also make provisions for integrated courses in social sciences, humanities and sciences.

### **ONGC & HPCL purchased stake in Petronet MHB**

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and its subsidiary Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) purchased 17.28% stake each from 34.56 % of bankers' stake in Petronet MHB in Rs 371 crore. Petronet MHB owns a petroleum product pipeline in Mangalore, Karnataka and it had a networth of Rs 793.60 crore as of March 31, 2019. The acquisition will promote opportunities for synergy, better cost economics and revenue maximization. The shareholding of HPCL in Petronet MHB will be about 49.996 % after acquisition and ONGC owns 51.11 % stake in HPCL.

### **UGC will establish 11 Chairs in the names of women scientists**

In February 2020, Women and Child Development (WCD) Minister Smriti Zubin Irani, announced establishment of 11 Chairs by University Grants Commission across India in the names of women scientists, which includes eminent anthropologist Iravati Karve, Cytogeneticist Archana Sharma, botanist Janaki Ammal, organic scientist Darshan Ranganatham, chemist Asima Chatterjee, doctor Kadambini Ganguly, meteorologist Anna Mani, engineer Rajeshwari Chatterjee, mathematician Raman Parimala, physicist Bibha Chowdhuri, and biomedical researcher Kamal Ranadive. The proposed Chairs will be set up for 5 years in the Universities to honor their contribution in the field of science as well as to inspire women and young girls to play a greater role in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Each chair will be provided Rs 50 lakh each for a year with a total expenditure of Rs 5 crore per annum.

### **President said yes for delimitation exercise in the NE States**

On 28th February 2020, President Ram Nath Kovind gave his consent for resuming delimitation exercise in the Northeastern States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland by canceling the February 8, 2008 order. The decision has been taken after the registered improvement

in the security situation in these states and a reduction in insurgency incidents. Delimitation exercise means the act or process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country or a province for the purpose of Lok Sabha and state assembly elections.

### **Marathi now mandatory in all schools of Maharashtra**

On February 27, 2020, the Maharashtra state government assembly has unanimously approved “ Maharashtra Compulsory Teaching and Learning of Marathi Language in Schools Bill, 2020 ” to make the Marathi Language a mandatory subject in all schools of the state. According to the bill, schools that fail to implement the new rule will have to pay a penalty of Rs. 1 lakh. Now Marathi will become a compulsory subject in all schools from Class I to Class X in the academic year 2020-2021. In the initial phase, Marathi language will be introduced from class I to VI and shall be extended to further classes in subsequent years. This law will be applicable to all boards like the Central Board of Secondary Education, Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, International Baccalaureate board, International General Certificate of Secondary Education and National Institute of Open Schooling.

### **The Demise of Balbir Singh Kullar**

Former India hockey player Balbir Singh Kullar died of a heart attack at the age of 77 on 28th February 2020 in Punjab. He was born at Sansarpur village of Jalandhar district in Punjab and had made his Indian debut in 1963 in Lyon in France. He had earned a reputation as an inside forward in the Indian team and toured nations like Belgium, England, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and West Germany. He was a part of the Indian team that won the Asian Games gold in 1966 at Bangkok as well as a member of the 1968 Olympics bronze-winning team in Mexico. He had served as an Indian national team selector in Hockey India.

### **Joginder Singh Saini passed away**

Dronacharya awardee athletics coach Joginder Singh Saini passed away because of age-related problems at the age of 90. He was a science graduate, who became an athletics coach in 1954. He was the chief national athletics coach for many years from the 1970s to the 90s. The veteran athletics coach had groomed some of India's finest track and field stars. Saini had received the Dronacharya Award in 1997 for his contribution to Indian athletics. Under his guidance, the Indian athletics team won 18 medals, including eight golds, at the 1978 Asian Games.





### **“ICoSDiTAUS-2020”: The largest conference on traditional medicine**

New Delhi hosted the largest ever conference on traditional medicine, “International Conference on Standardisation of Diagnosis and Terminologies of AYUSH (ICoSDiTAUS-2020)”. Serbia, Sri Lanka, Curacao, Mauritius, Iran, Japan, Qatar, Uzbekistan, Bhutan, Switzerland, Myanmar, Cuba, Ghana, Jamaica, and Equatorial Guinea were the participants of this event. The conference focused on Challenges in Counting and Classification of Traditional Medicine Encounters and International Classification of Diseases based on traditional medicinal systems.

### **The Upcoming RAISE 2020**

India will host an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Summit called ‘Responsible AI for Social Empowerment (RAISE) 2020’ in New Delhi between April 11 and 12, 2020. In this event the experts of AI from worldwide will focus on the use of AI in social empowerment, transformation and inclusion as well as in fields of agriculture, healthcare, smart mobility, and education. Although AI has immense potential of bringing regulatory changes, improving the efficiency of workplaces, decreasing operating costs, saving large amounts of fuel and time via autonomous transportation yet it can not be denied that it has the inevitable potential of marring the employment opportunities in nations as well. The Summit will look into all these key factors and will act accordingly.

### **The Hurun Global Rich List 2020**

Shanghai-based Hurun Research Institute and Shenzhen-based Shimao Shengkong International Center released ‘Hurun Global Rich List 2020’. It is a ranking of US-Dollar billionaires in the world, which is being prepared after the wealth calculation till 31st January 2020. In this Jeff Bezos (USD 140, Amazon); Bernard Arnault (USD 107, LVMH) and Bill Gates (USD 106, Microsoft) emerged as the top three billionaires. The list includes 4 Indians in the top 100 viz. Mukesh Ambani (9th rank), Gautam Adani & Shiv Nadar (68th rank), and Banker Uday Kotak (adjudged as the World’s Richest self-made banker). China topped the country’s list with 799 billionaires, followed by the US with 626 billionaires at 2nd place & India at the third in list with 137

billionaires. It is worth knowing here that Oyo founder Ritesh Agarwal has become the youngest Indian in the rich list with a net worth of \$1.1 billion (Rs 7,800 crore). He was World's second-youngest self-made billionaire after Kylie Jenner, who was the world's first youngest self-made billionaire.

### **Sri Lanka escaped UNHRC Resolution**

The government of Sri Lanka formally informed the United Nations that it will withdraw from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution 40/1 that was co-sponsored by Sri Lanka and 11 other nations. Recently the United States barred the Sri Lankan Army Chief from entering the country accusing him of war crimes, which is one of the reasons behind this move of Sri Lanka. The main aim of this resolution was to investigate wartime violence against Tamil Tiger rebels. It is worth recalling here that the Tamil Rebels were demanding separate homeland claiming that they were ethnic Tamil minority.

### **Renewal of UNSC sanctions on Yemen**

The UN Security Council has renewed its sanctions regime on Yemen for another year amid the ongoing tensions between Britain and Russia. Russia threatened to veto any mention, even implicit, of Iran. The sanctions plan includes the extension of the mandate of UN experts who monitor the arms embargo imposed in 2015. The resolution also extends the measures that provide for the freezing of assets and travel bans on targeted officials. The government of Yemen welcomed the London-drafted resolution on the sanctions, which was adopted by thirteen countries. According to Yemen's Permanent Representative to the UN Abdullah Al-Saadi, the Council is playing an important role in ending the suffering of people of Yemen caused by the war launched by the Iran-backed Houthi militias.

### **The “2019 World Air Quality Report-Region & City PM2.5 Ranking”**

According to recently released IQAir AirVisual's “2019 World Air Quality Report-Region & City PM2.5 Ranking” report Bangladesh, Pakistan, Mongolia, Afghanistan, and India emerged as the top five most polluted countries respectively, whereas the Bahamas ranked 98th as the cleanest country of the world with an average of 3  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . Among the world's top 30 most polluted cities during 2019, 21 are from India, 27 are from South Asia, and all the top 30 cities are within greater Asia. And among Indian cities, Ghaziabad emerged as the most polluted city in the country.

### **Resignation of world's oldest government leader**

On 24th February 2020, 94-year old Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mahathir Mohamad submitted his resignation to Malaysia's king Al-Sultan Abdullah of Pahang. He had served the post from 1981 to 2003 and was part of the long-ruling Barisan Nasional (BN). In 2018, Mahathir teamed up with Anwar and joined Pakatan Harapan to oust the government of Najib Razak, Malaysia's former PM, who was involved in the 1MDB corruption scandal. Mahathir and Anwar's alliance won and Mahathir agreed to eventually hand over the power to Anwar after two years. Mahathir has dissolved his cabinet and also called off his political party (Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia) from the Pakatan Harapan coalition. He has also resigned from Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, the political party which he chaired.

### **Oman player Yousuf will suffer a 7-year ban**

In February 2020, the International Cricket Council (ICC) banned Oman player Yousuf Abdulrahim Al Balushi from all forms of cricket for 7 years on account of match-fixing charges. He has accepted 4 charges of breaching the ICC Anti-Corruption Code in the ICC men's T20 World Cup Qualifiers 2019, which was held in UAE. He is said to have breached Article 2.1.1 of the Anticorruption code (being party to an agreement or effort to fix or contrive in any way the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of matches), Article 2.1.4, Article 2.4.4 and Article 2.4.7 (all relating to corrupt practices).

### **Conservatives are all set to reign the Iranian Parliament**

In Iran, conservatives won the general election marked by the lowest turnout since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. According to the announcement of the Interior Ministry, Conservative candidates have booked at least 219 seats in the 290-seat parliament, also known as the Majlis. 17 women were elected, the same number as in the outgoing 290-seat parliament. The participation rate was 42.6 percent, which was the lowest in the last 40 years as a conservative-dominated electoral watchdog disqualified about half of the 16,000-odd candidates, who were mostly moderates and reformists.

### **The Upcoming US-Taliban peace deal**

On 29th February 2020, the United States of America will sign a peace agreement with the Taliban forces to put an end to the 18-year war in Afghanistan. After the agreement, 12,000 US troops that are currently deployed in Afghanistan will return to the US. The background reveals that the Taliban who are waging war in Afghanistan are Sunni Islamic fundamentalists. The Taliban reigned between 1996 and 2001 and emerged as a powerful political and military organization in Afghanistan. Although 80% of the world opium originates in Afghanistan today, yet under Taliban



rule in Afghanistan, Opium was completely eradicated. The Taliban openly rejoiced the 09/11 attacks on the US that led the US wage war in Afghanistan to roll back the control of the Taliban. The US conducted two major operations to confront the terrorism of Taliban namely Operation Enduring Freedom (2001-14) and Operation Freedom's Sentinel (2015-present).

### **Discovery of breathable oxygen outside of Milky Way**

As per the latest publication of the Astrophysical Journal, astronomers at China's Shanghai Astronomical Observatory, led by Junzhi Wang has identified molecular oxygen in a galaxy outside the Milky Way for the very first time. They discovered the presence of molecular oxygen by analyzing light waves that had reached Earth from Markarian 231 galaxy, which is located around 581 million light-years away from Earth. The lightwave readings were taken at two different locations viz. Institute for Radio Astronomy in the Millimeter Range (IRAM) 30-meter telescope in Granada, Spain, and the Northern Extended Millimeter Array telescope in the French Alps. As per estimates, there could be 100 times more oxygen in Markarian 231 than the Milky Way. It is worth recalling here that in the last 20 years, molecular oxygen has been found on two other locations in the Milky Way viz. the Rho Ophiuchi cloud and the Orion nebula.

### **Resignation of Irish PM Varadkar**

Irish Prime Minister Leo Eric Varadkar resigned from his post on account of the insufficiency of the majority after the parliamentary vote. He submitted his resignation to Irish President Micheal Daniel Higgins. He had served as the Prime Minister of Ireland since June 2017. But he will continue to act as an interim leader until the successor gets appointed.

### **Women entrepreneurship can create 170 million jobs**

According to the report titled 'Women Entrepreneurship in India – Powering the economy with her', by Bain & Company and Google, Indian women can generate between 150–170 million job opportunities by 2030. This is more than 25% of the new jobs required for the entire working population until then. The report identifies six dominant segments of female entrepreneurs and estimates India to have 13.5–15.7 million enterprises owned by women, representing about 20% of all enterprises. Women entrepreneurs provide direct employment to an estimated 22-27 million people today. The report projects an opportunity to accelerate both quantity and quality of entrepreneurship to create over 30 million women-owned enterprises out of which 12 million can create employment.

### **HDFC, MasterCard and SAP concur for T&E Tech**

On February 18, 2020, HDFC (Housing Development Finance Corporation) teamed up with MasterCard and SAP Concur collaborated to manage travel and other corporate expenses. HDFC Bank will offer a corporate credit card for business travellers, providing a one-stop solution for payment and expense management during business trips. Interest-free credit period for the card is up to 50 days. SAP Concur offers credit for travel, expense, and invoice management solutions and the corporate credit card is supported by MasterCard. Mankiran Chowhan, the managing director (Indian subcontinent) of SAP Concur said that by automating and integrating travel, expense, and invoice management, they intend to help customers build an intelligent spend management platform.

### **20th February : World Day of Social Justice**

In order to create awareness against social injustice regarding gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability, World Day of Social Justice is celebrated annually worldwide on 20th February. The theme for this year was "Closing the Inequalities Gap to Achieve Social Justice" that inspired upholding of the principles of social justice by promoting gender equality, or the rights of native people or migrants. Many Organizations, including the United Nations and the International Labour Office conducted programmes for the same.

### **Barry O'Farrell: Australia's new high commissioner to India**

In February 2020, Australia has appointed former New South Wales (NSW) premier Barry O'Farrell as the next high commissioner to India. He will succeed in Harinder Sidhu. Barry has served in the New South Wales (NSW) Parliament from 1995-2015, as the 43rd premier of the province. He has made a significant contribution as the Deputy Chair of the Australia-India Council Board. It is worth knowing here that India is an important trading partner of Australia, with 2-way investments worth 30.7 billion dollars and around 700,000 people of Indian Origin are living in Australia.

### **Times emerging economies university rankings 2020**

On 19th February 2020, Times Higher Education's (THE) Emerging Economies University Rankings 2020, was released in which a total of 533 universities from 47 countries were ranked. The list was dominated by China's three universities viz. Tsinghua University (83.8), Peking University (83.0) and Zhejiang University (65.5) that secured the first, second and third ranks respectively. 56 institutes of India also got a place in this list. Among featured Indian institutes, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore (Karnataka) emerged on the 16th rank with a score of

48.4. It was followed by IIT Kharagpur (32nd rank, 42.9 score), IIT Bombay (34th rank, 42.4 score), IIT Delhi (38th rank, 41.9 score), IIT Roorkee (58th rank, 38.4 score), IIT Indore (61st rank, 38.2 score), IIT Madras and IIT Ropar (63rd rank, 37.7 score), Institute of Chemical Technology (73rd rank, 37.3 score), IIT Kanpur (77th rank, 37.1 score) and Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham (90th rank, 35.3 score). The list included institutions which were classified by the London Stock Exchange's FTSE (Financial Times Stock Exchange) Group as "advanced emerging", "secondary emerging" or "frontier".

### **12th March : World Kidney Day**

The 15th edition of World Kidney Day was observed on 12th March 2020 on "Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere- from Prevention to Detection and Equitable access to care" theme. The theme is an alarm about the increasing burden of kidney diseases worldwide and to promote advanced kidney prevention in order to achieve Kidney health for everyone, everywhere. Globally every year the second thursday of March is observed as World Kidney Day since 2006. It was jointly organised by the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations (IFKF). According to the National Health Portal of India, one in 10 people suffer from Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) globally. Around 850 million people worldwide are victims of the disease.

### **World's first Digital Solutions Exchange Cloud "GOKADDAL"**

World's first Digital Solutions Exchange Cloud platform "GOKADDAL" or [www.gokaddal.com](http://www.gokaddal.com) was launched in India on 11th March 2020. It is meant for Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Analytics and Augmentative Technologies. This is a Business to Business (B2B), Business to Government (B2G), Business to Consumer (B2C) solution platform that will link solution providers to solution seekers and an innovative platform for Startups and SME companies. The involved Dubai based emerging Technology company led by Ravinder Pal Singh (Digital Disrupter, Industry Expert, Ex Cisco and Dell Executive) is a part of the Mekado Group at Bangalore, Karnataka. It is working with innovative projects made of Data Analytics as platform, like Smart Cities eGov tracking application, Digital Healthcare Diagnostic as a Service, IoT based Smart Water Management and Cyber Assessment for digital world.

### **Jack Ma, the richest man of Asia**

According to the latest Bloomberg Billionaires Index of March 2020, founder of Alibaba Group Holding Ltd, Jack Ma with net worth at \$44.8 billion emerged as the richest man of Asia. He has surpassed Mukesh Ambani, Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Reliance Industries, whose



share has dropped by \$5.8 billion to \$41.8 billion on account of the coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic that led to collapse in oil markets. On 9th March 2020, Reliance Industries countered its biggest single-day fall in at least 10 years, which hit an intra-day low of 1,096.65. RIL's market-cap is down from ₹10-lakh crore to ₹7,36,559.49 crore. Globally, at present the richest Indian Mukesh Ambani is ranked at number 19th and Jack Ma is at 18th position.

### **The KPMG global Technology survey 2020**

The United States of America topped the Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG)'s global Technology industry innovation survey that has been released on 11th March 2020. It was followed by India and China at the second spot, which were followed by Japan and the United Kingdom at the fourth spot. KPMG's also surveyed cities in this context. Singapore topped this list followed by London (UK) and Tel Aviv (Israel). The survey further revealed that the global leader Silicon Valley/San Francisco, will be leading technology innovation hubs for more than 4 years. While Bengaluru of India ranked 9th, which was on the 18th position last year.

### **The First UNDP Gender Social Norms Index 2020**

As per the first edition of the 'Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) 2020', released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), about 90 % or 9 in 10 of the world's population has some bias against women. Pakistan has the highest bias against women. Around 99.81 % of its people support gender bias followed by Qatar and Nigeria (99.73 % people) at the second spot and Zimbabwe (99.56% people) on the third spot. On the other hand, Andorra (27.01 % people), Sweden (30.01 % people) emerged as the countries with the least bias against women.

### **The CSW64 meet in the USA**

An intergovernmental organization, the United Nations adopted a political declaration on women's rights during CSW64 meet in New York, US on 10th March 2020. It is a stripped-down political declaration on women's rights that seeks to protect the benefits under threat but does not recommend new ways to ensure progress toward equality. It is worth registering here that the UN declaration on women is approved every 5 years. The session agreed to combat human trafficking and modern slavery and other forms of exploitation and ensured to provide support, services and for all women victims of violence. It is in line with the Beijing Declaration and Platforms for Action of 1995, that aims to enhance the women's emancipation and advancement around the globe.

### **Vision via CRISPR (CaS9)**

The scientists of Oregon University, Portland, USA for the first time used a Gene Editing Tool, “Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) (CaS9)” to treat blindness. However, the verification of restored vision is still in process. CRISPR is a family of DNA sequences that are found in prokaryotic organisms like bacteria which are derived from DNA of Bacteriophages. Bacteriophage is a virus that infects bacteria and archaea. In this process, an enzyme CRISPR-Cas (associated protein) is used to edit genes in an organism. After identifying the target, it adds, removes or alters the particular DNA sequence for the chosen purpose.

### **Irish Architects swept the Pritzker Architecture prize 2020**

Hyatt Foundation conferred the prestigious ‘Pritzker Architecture prize 2020’ also dubbed as “Architecture’s Nobel” & “the profession’s highest honour” upon Ireland’s Architects Yvonne Farrell & Shelley McNamara for their blocky, brutalist-inspired structures that include Paris’s Institut Mines-Telecom building, which is a French public academic institution dedicated to Higher Education and Research for Innovation in the fields of engineering and digital technology. Prior to them, 3 women viz. Zaha Hadid in 2004, Kazuyo Sejima in 2010 (with Ryue Nishizawa) and Carme Pigem in 2017 (with Ramon Vilalta and Rafael Aranda) had won this award. The award consists of \$100,000 (US) & a bronze medallion to acknowledge living architect or architect’s built work that demonstrates a combination of talent, vision, a commitment that has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture.

### **Trade-related illicit financial flow index**

US-based think tank Global Financial Integrity (GFI) released a report titled “Trade-Related Illicit Financial Flows in 135 Developing Countries: 2008-2017”. China has topped the report with USD 457.7 billion followed by Mexico (85.3 billion), India (83.5 billion), Russia (74.8 billion) and Poland (66.3 billion) at the second, third, fourth and fifth spots respectively. Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) involves trade misinvoicing, smuggling, tax evasion, illegal earning etc. across an international border. But this report only focuses on trade misinvoicing, and the trade-related aspects of IFFs.

### **China will preside over UN Security Council for March 2020**

In order to promote solidarity and cooperation, China has taken over as president of the United Nations (UN) Security Council for the month of March 2020. It is worth knowing here that the council’s presidency rotates every month among its 15 members viz. China, France, the Russian

Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Five permanent members) and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly viz. Belgium (the year 2020 is the end of term year), Dominican Republic (2020), Estonia (2021), Germany (2020), Indonesia (2020), Niger (2021), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (2021), South Africa (2020), Tunisia (2021) and Viet Nam (2021). It is worth registering here that a nation which is a Member of the United Nations but not of the Security Council may participate, without a vote, in its discussions when the Council considers that country's interests are affected. The UN Security Council was established in 1945 to maintain international peace and security.

### **US and Taliban historic peace agreement**

On February 29, 2020, America and Taliban militants have inked a historic peace agreement in Doha, Qatar to restore peace in Afghanistan. The US special envoy for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad and Taliban leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar were the signatories for this deal which was inked in presence representatives of 30 countries viz. India, Pakistan, Qatar, Turkey, Indonesia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) member countries, as well as members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Michael Richard Pompeo, United States Secretary of State. India's Ambassador to Qatar, P. Kumaran also signed the USA-Taliban peace deal in Doha on behalf of India and with this, the event became the first occasion for India when it has officially joined any Taliban related case. After this agreement, the US has promised to withdraw all forces from Afghanistan within 14 months. However, the issue of the release of 5000 Taliban Prisoners, who are still in grip of the Afghanistan government, is an apple of discord.

### **The 70th Berlin film festival 2020**

The 70th edition of Berlin International Film Festival concluded on 1st March 2020. There Is No Evil by Mohammad Rasoulof (Golden Bear for Best Film), Never Rarely Sometimes Always by Eliza Hittman (Silver Bear Grand Jury Prize), Hong Sang Soo for The Woman Who Ran (Silver Bear for Best Director), Paula Beer for Undine (Silver Bear for Best Actress), Elio Germano for "Hidden Away" (Silver Bear for Best Actor), Favolacce by Fabio D'Innocenzo and Damiano D'Innocenzo (Silver Bear for Best Screenplay), Jurgen Jurgens for cinematography on DAU. Natasha (Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Contribution), Delete History by Benoit Delepine and Gustave Kervern (Silver Bear Special Prize), The Works and Days (of Tayoko Shiojiri in the Shiotani Basin) by C.W. Winter and Anders Edstrom (Best Film in the Encounters Competition), The Trouble With Being Born by Sandra Wollner (Special Jury Award in the Encounters Competition), Cristi Puiu for Malmkrog (Best Director in the Encounters Competition), Isabella,



Matias Pineiro (Special Mention by the Encounters Jury), Irradies by Rithy Panh (Berlinale Documentary Award), Notes From the Underworld by Tizza Covi and Rainer Frimmel (Special Mention by the Jury for the Berlinale Documentary Award), Nackte Tiere, Melanie Waelde (Special Mention by the GWFF Best First Feature Award Jury), Los conductos by Camilo Restrepo (GWFF Best First Feature Award), “T” by Keisha Rae Witherspoon (Golden Bear for Best Short Film), Genius Loci by Adrien Merigeau (Audi Short Film Award), Filipiñana by Rafael Manuel (Silver Bear Jury Prize (Short Film)), The Kites by Seyed Payam Hosseini (Special Mention of the International Jury Generation Kplus), El nombre del hijo by Martina Matzkin (Special Prize of the International Jury in Generation Kplus for the Best Short Film), Los Lobos by Samuel Kishi Leopo (Grand Prix of the International Jury in Generation Kplus for the Best Film), Welcome to Chechnya (Panorama Audience Award for Best Documentary) and Otac by Srđan Golubovic (Panorama Audience Award for Best Feature Film) were the winners.

### **The biggest explosion in the universe**

On 29th February 2020, an international team of Astronomers including the Curtin University node of the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research in Perth, Australia, discovered the biggest explosion seen in the universe since the Big Bang. The explosion occurred in the Ophiuchus galaxy cluster, which is 390 million light-years from Earth. The astronomers employed X-Ray and radio telescopes, including India’s Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) in Pune, Maharashtra, NASA’s Chandra X-ray Observatory, European Space Agency’s (ESA) XMM-Newton and the Murchison Widefield Array (MWA) in Western Australia for the purpose.

### **‘Henneguya salminicola’: The First-ever animal that can live without oxygen**

According to the latest publication of the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Researchers of Tel Aviv University (TAU), Israel discovered a jellyfish-like parasite, ‘Henneguya salminicola’, that can survive without oxygen. It lacks the mitochondrial genome and with this, it has become the first multicellular organism known to have this absence. It implies that it doesn’t breathe and is not dependent on oxygen for its survival. Belonging to the family of jellyfish, coral, and anemones, it is a less than 10-celled parasite that lives within the muscle tissue of salmon fish that causes “milky flesh” or “tapioca” disease in the fish.

### **Muhyiddin Yassin: Malaysia's new Prime Minister**

Malaysia appointed Muhyiddin bin Haji Muhammad Yassin as its 8th Prime Minister. The swearing-in ceremony of the 72 years old former 10th Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia was held at the national palace in Kuala Lumpur. Coming from the Malaysian United Indigenous Party,

Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, Yassin has become head of a coalition dominated by the country's ethnic Malay Muslim majority. Malaysia had gone through a turmoil a week ago as Mahathir Mohamad's alliance suffered a collapse. Initially, the leader-in-waiting Anwar Ibrahim was about to take over the post but according to Malaysia's constitution, the King appoints a PM based on the majority & confidence commanded by him in the members of the Parliament(Dewan Rakyat) which has 222 elected members. The Malaysian constitution clearly specifies that if the PM ceases to command the majority, he shall tender the resignation of the cabinet unless at his request the King dissolves the parliament. Finally, Mr. Muhyiddin built his alliance and became the new PM.

### **The latest of Cameroon's parliament**

According to the constitutional council in Yaounde, President Paul Biya's ruling party has retained an absolute majority in Cameroon's parliament. Council President Clement Atanaga aired an announcement that Biya's Cameroon People's Democratic Movement won 139 seats out of 167 declared seats on a moderate turnout of almost 46 percent. It is worth knowing here that elections were canceled in 13 other seats, in the nation's troubled anglophone regions, which will be held at a later date.

### **The Red Panda Species are two separate species**

The Chinese Academy of Sciences has discovered that the red panda species are actually two separate species. It is worth registering here that both the Himalayan red pandas and the Chinese red Pandas were together considered as red panda species. But now the DNA analysis has proved that they are two separate species. The Himalayan Red Panda has more white spots on its face in comparison to Chinese red pandas that are redder with less white on it. The tail rings of the Chinese Red Pandas are darker and paler as compared to the Himalayan Red Panda. Chinese Red Pandas are found in northern Myanmar, Sichuan, south-eastern Tibet and Yunnan province of China. The Himalayan Red Pandas are found in India, Nepal, Bhutan, and southern Tibet. Globally, there are 10,000 red pandas in the wild.



### **The ongoing Khelo India University Games**

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar won two gold medals. In senior men's epee, the team of this University defeated Dr. BR Ambedkar University from Aurangabad by 45-22. The second gold medal for the University came via the men's saber finals, when the team of this University defeated Shivaji University, Kolhapur by 45-33. Apart from this, in the senior team, women's foil, Punjab University, Chandigarh defeated Sardar Patel University, Gujarat by 45-41 in the finals to win the gold. Besides this, Mumbai's twin-sisters won medals in swimming. In the 200m breaststroke, Jyoti won a gold and Aarti a bronze. The duo also helped the University of Mumbai to lift a bronze in the 4x200m freestyle relay. Apart from this, Punjab University of Patiala bagged two gold medals in compound men's and women's archery. While Rajasthan University earned silver, Delhi University satisfied itself with a bronze medal in compound men's archery. Kritika Sharma of Rajasthan University won a gold medal in the individual compound event. So far i.e. till the fifth day of the tournament, Savitribai Phule Pune University is on top with 14 medals including seven gold and two silver medals. Punjab University has won 18 medals including six gold and seven silver medals while Jain University, Karnataka is on the third position with a total of 12 medals including six gold and five silver medals.

### **ESPN Multi-Sport Annual Awards 2019**

February 2020 witnessed the announcement of Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) Multi-Sport Annual Awards 2019. The list of winners include Balbir Singh Senior (Lifetime Achievement Award, Hockey); PV Sindhu (Sportsperson of the Year(Female), Badminton); Saurabh Chaudhary (Sportsperson of the Year(Male), Shooting); Koneru Humpy (Comeback of the year, Chess); Deepak Punia (Emerging Sportsperson of the Year, Wrestling); Manu Bhaker – Saurabh Chaudhary (Team of the Year, Shooting) ; Manasi Joshi (Differently-abled Athlete of the year/ Para-athlete of the year, Badminton); PV Sindhu (Moment of the Year, Badminton); Dutee Chand (The Courage Award, Spinter) and Pullela Gopichand (Coach of the Year, Badminton).



### **India : Winner of Cairns Cup chess tournament**

Indian grandmaster Koneru Humpy has won the second edition of Cairns Cup Chess tournament held at St.Louis, US. She lifted the title after finishing 6 points off 9 rounds and received a cash prize of \$45,000. She was followed by reigning world champion Ju Wenjun, who finished with 5.5 points at 2nd spot, Russia's Alexandra Kosteniuk, who finished at the 3rd spot with 5 points, Ukrainian Mariya Muzychek at 4th spot and India's Harika Dronavalli at 5th spot with 4.5 points.

### **Conclusion of Asian Olympic qualifying event 2020**

China topped the medal tally with 6 medals viz. 4 gold and 2 bronze in the Asian/Oceanian Boxing Olympic Qualifiers event 2020, which was held at the Prince Hamzah Hall in Amman, Jordan from March 3- 11, 2020. And India ranked 9th with 8 medals viz. 2 Silver and 6 Bronze. A total of 9 Indian boxers have qualified this event for Tokyo 2020 Olympics, which will be held at New National Stadium in Tokyo, Japan from 24th July, 2020 to 9th August, 2020. Amit Panghal (Men's Flyweight (52 kg), Bronze); Manish Kaushik (Men's Lightweight (63 kg), Bronze); Vikas Krishan Yadav (Men's Welterweight (69 kg), Silver); Ashish Kumar (Men's Middleweight (75 kg), Bronze) ; Satish Kumar (Men's Super heavyweight (+91 kg), Bronze); Mangte Chungneijang Mary Kom (Women's Flyweight (51 kg), Bronze); Simranjit Kaur Baath (Women's Lightweight (60 kg), Silver); Lovlina Borgohain (Women's Welterweight (69 kg), Bronze); Pooja Rani (Women's Middleweight (75 kg), Bronze) are the medallist. Besides them, Neeraj, India's biggest medal hope in Olympic at the beginning of the year had won the Olympic ticket by throwing javelin at 87.86 meters at the Athletics Central North West (ACNW) meet in South Africa. And Shivpal Singh followed him by throwing the javelin at a distance of 85.47 meter.

### **Hockey India joined World Masters Hockey**

Hockey India (HI) joined the 38 National association of World Master Hockey (WMH) as a member to develop and grow Master Hockey across the world. The International Hockey Federation (FIH) recognizes WMH as the only Master entity responsible for organizing international master's hockey globally. R.P. Singh (former Indian captain) is the Convener and Harbinder Singh is the Chairman of Hockey India Masters Committee. B.P. Govinda, Jagbir Singh, A.B. Subbaiah, Surinder Kaur and M. Renuka Lakshmi are the other members of the committee.

### **Conclusion of Khelo India University Games 2020**

The Khelo India University Games, Odisha concluded in Bhubaneswar on 1st March 2020 on an impressive note. The Panjab University, Chandigarh won the champions trophy with a total of 46 medals including 17 gold, 19 silver, and 10 bronze medals, followed by Savitribai Phule Pune

University (37 medals including 17 gold, 11 silver, and 9 bronze medals) in the second position. And Punjabi University, Patiala was declared as the second runners up with a total of 33 medals including 13 gold, 6 silver, and 14 bronze medals.

### **Sharapova waved goodbye to Tennis**

One of the world's most recognizable sportswomen and five-time Grand Slam winner Maria Sharapova announced her retirement from tennis on 26th February 2020. The Russian player claimed her first Grand Slam at Wimbledon in 2004 at the age of 17 and completed the career slam, all four major titles, by winning the French Open in 2012. Among the dark secrets of her career, she served a 15-month ban after testing positive for meldonium in 2016. She also witnessed a drop to 373 ranks in the world that was her lowest ranking since August 2002, and she had lost in the first round of her past three Grand Slam tournaments.

### **Brazil Para badminton International 2020**

In February 2020, Sao Paulo, Brazil hosted Brazil Para badminton International 2020. China was the most successful team of the tournament with 8 gold medals. While India ended the campaign with 11 medals viz. 4 Gold, 5 Silver, 2 Bronze. The list of Indian winners included Pramod Bhagat (Men's singles SL3, Gold); Pramod Bhagat & Manoj Sarkar (Men's doubles SL3-SL4, Gold) ; Suhas Lalinakere Yathiraj (Men's singles SL4, Gold); Nagar Krishna (India) Carmen Giuliana Poveda Flores (Canada)(Mixed Double SH6, Gold); Parul Dalsukhbhai Parmar (Women's singles SL3, Silver) ; Manoj Sarkar (Men's Singles SL3, Silver); Raj Kumar & Rakesh Pandey (Men's doubles SU5, Silver); Nagar Krishna (Men's Singles SH6, Silver); Prem Kumar (India) Ale Tatiana Gureeva (Russia) (Mixed Double WH1 – WH2, Silver); Raj Kumar & Parul Dalsukhbhai Parmar (Mixed Double SL 3 – SU 5, Bronze) and Sukant Kadam (Men's singles SL4, Bronze)

### **Official slogan of FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup 2020**

In February 2020, Official slogan of FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup 2020, 'Kick Off the Dream' was announced. This tournament will begin on 2nd November 2020 and Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Guwahati (Assam), Kolkata (West Bengal) and Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra) will be the venues for the same. 16 teams will play across 32 matches to win the title and the final match will be held at Dr D Y Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra on 21st November 2020.



## Current Affairs

1. Which of the following states topped in implementation of POSHAN Abhiyaan ?  
 (a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu  
 (d) Andhra Pradesh (e) Telangana
2. The National Conference on Women in Police and CAPFs was held in .....  
 (a) Pune (b) Mumbai (c) Bengaluru  
 (d) Chennai (e) New Delhi
3. In March 2020, the Government of India declared ..... as an Eco-Sensitive Zone.  
 (a) Gir Wildlife Sanctuary (b) Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary  
 (c) National Chambal Sanctuary (d) Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary  
 (e) Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary
4. World Civil Defence Day was observed on March ....., 2020  
 (a) 1 (b) 2 (c) 3  
 (d) 4 (e) 5
5. In March 2020, which of the following banks switched to Cash Budget Based Assessment for corporates ?  
 (a) IDBI (b) HDFC (c) ICICI  
 (d) SBI (e) Axis
6. In February 2020, which of the following nations collaborated with India to increase the number of women entrepreneurs in the overall trade between the two nations ?  
 (a) West Indies (b) Australia (c) Belgium  
 (d) New Zealand (e) Armenia
7. The Fourth Global Ayurveda Festival will be held in .....  
 (a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu  
 (d) Andhra Pradesh (e) Telangana



8. Denys Shmygal became the new PM of .....  
(a) Germany (b) Italy (c) France  
(d) Netherlands (e) Ukraine
9. On 3rd March 2020, the Land Port Authority of India celebrated its ..... Foundation day.  
(a) 5<sup>th</sup> (b) 6<sup>th</sup> (c) 7<sup>th</sup>  
(d) 8<sup>th</sup> (e) 9<sup>th</sup>
10. Senior IPS officer S N Shrivastava became the new chief of ..... Police.  
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Delhi (c) Bihar  
(d) Madhya Pradesh (e) Chhattisgarh
11. Which of the following governments has signed an agreement with HDFC Bank to boost startups ?  
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Odisha (c) Jharkhand  
(d) Chhattisgarh (e) Bihar
12. Which of the following nations topped Inclusive Internet Index 2020 ?  
(a) France (b) Italy (c) Germany  
(d) Denmark (e) Sweden
13. RBI approved appointment of Sumant Kathpalia as MD & CEO of ..... Bank.  
(a) ICICI Bank (b) State Bank of India (c) Axis Bank  
(d) HDFC Bank (e) IndusInd Bank
14. Football Player Andre Schembri of ..... announced his retirement from the sport in March 2020.  
(a) Portugal (b) Spain (c) Italy  
(d) Malta (e) Vatican City
15. Chairman of Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Ajay Tyagi has been given an extension of .....  
(a) 6 months (b) 1 year (c) 2 years  
(d) 2.5 years (e) 3 years

- 16.** Which edition of National Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) conference 2020 was held in New Delhi ?  
(a) 10<sup>th</sup> (b) 11<sup>th</sup> (c) 12<sup>th</sup>  
(d) 13<sup>th</sup> (e) 14<sup>th</sup>
- 17.** S B Mainak, who was MD in ..... before, has recently resigned from chairmanship of CARE Ratings in February 2020.  
(a) Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company  
(b) Bharti AXA Life Insurance Company  
(c) Birla Sun Life Insurance Company  
(d) Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India  
(e) ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Limited
- 18.** Pekka Lundmark has been appointed as CEO of .....  
(a) Reliance Jio (b) Airtel (c) Nokia  
(d) BSNL (e) None
- 19.** Which of the following governments has prohibited online supply of food from Food Business Operators (FBOs), who lack hygiene rating ?  
(a) Maharashtra (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Punjab  
(d) Haryana (e) Gujarat
- 20.** Zero Discrimination Day was celebrated on March ....., 2020  
(a) 1 (b) 2 (c) 3  
(d) 4 (e) 5



# ANSWERS



- 1.(d)** Andhra Pradesh topped in implementation of Prime Minister's Overreaching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) Abhiyaan. The second anniversary of POSHAN Abhiyaan is being recognized by celebrating Poshan Pakhwada from 8th to 22nd March 2020 with focus on 'Men for Nutrition – Increasing Male Engagement in POSHAN Abhiyan to Improve Nutritional Indicators'.
- 2.(e)** The National Conference on Women in Police and CAPFs was held in New Delhi on 'Cyber Stalking and Bullying of Women: Steps for Protection' and 'Challenges faced by CAPF Women in Operational Areas' themes. Cabinet Minister Smriti Irani released a book titled "To Greater Heights" on this occasion.
- 3.(c)** In March 2020, the Government of India declared the National Chambal Sanctuary as an Eco-Sensitive Zone. Famous for freshwater Gangetic Dolphins and Gharials, the Sanctuary begins in the Vindhya Ranges, extends along the Chambal river and ends in Yamuna river. It is spread across Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- 4.(a)** World Civil Defence Day was observed on March 1, 2020 on "Civil Defence and a first aider in every home" theme. It was observed to create awareness on the self-protection & preventive measures to be taken in the event of disasters or accidents and pay tribute to the efforts, sacrifices of the national services responsible for the fight against disasters.
- 5.(d)** In March 2020, SBI switched to Cash Budget Based Assessment from "Projected Balance Sheet (PBS)" method of Fund Based Working Capital (FBWC) limits for assessment of the working capital requirement for corporates.
- 6.(d)** In February 2020, New Zealand collaborated with India to increase the number of women entrepreneurs in the overall trade viz. aviation, tourism, IT(Information Technology) , ICT (Information and Communications Technology) and education between the two nations.



- 7.(b)** The Fourth Global Ayurveda Festival will be held in Kochi, Kerala from 16th to 20th May 2020 on “Ayurveda Medical Tourism: Actualizing India’s credibility” theme. It will be organized by the Centre for Innovation in Science and Social Action (CISSA).
- 8.(e)** Denys Shmygal became the new PM of Ukraine. He has succeeded Oleksiy Honcharuk, who served only 6 months and was the country’s youngest Prime Minister.
- 9.(d)** On 3rd March 2020, the Land Port Authority of India celebrated its 8th Foundation day. The Land Port Authority of India manages border infrastructure. The Inland Custom Ports and Kartarpur Sahib Corridor were its constructions.
- 10.(b)** Senior IPS officer S N Shrivastava became the new chief of Delhi Police. He was appointed as the Special Commissioner of Delhi Police (Law & Order) and has now been given additional charge of the Delhi Police Commissioner by the Union Home Ministry. He has succeeded Amulya Patnaik
- 11.(b)** The Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Department of the Odisha government has signed an agreement with HDFC Bank to boost startups. The bank will provide smart banking solutions and will also extend incubation.
- 12.(e)** Sweden topped Inclusive Internet Index 2020 index that measures the extent to which the Internet is not only accessible & affordable, but also relevant to all, allowing usage that enables positive social & economic outcomes at the individual & group level. It was followed by New Zealand (2nd), the US (3rd), Australia & Denmark both ranked 4th..
- 13.(e)** RBI approved appointment of Sumant Kathpalia as MD & CEO of IndusInd Bank for three years in place of Romesh Sobti.
- 14.(d)** Football Player Andre Schembri of South European country Malta announced his retirement from the sport after the Hero Indian Super League (ISL) final against ATK FC in Goa on March 14, 2020. Currently, he is playing for Chennaiyin FC’s (Football Club). He also played club football in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Greece, Cyprus, Portugal before arriving in India.

- 15.(a)** Chairman of Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Ajay Tyagi has been given an extension of 6 months. This Indian Administrative Officer (IAS) of the Himachal Pradesh Cadre tenure of 3 years that began from 2017 ended on February 29, 2020.
- 16.(b)** The 11th edition of National Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) conference 2020 was held in New Delhi on 'Empowering Youth for Technology Led Farming' theme. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) organized it to focus on technology-led farming and youth entrepreneurship through agriculture. Currently, there are 717 KVKs in the country.
- 17.(d)** S B Mainak, who was MD in Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India, before, has recently resigned from chairmanship of Credit Analysis and Research Limited (CARE) Ratings in February 2020.
- 18.(c)** Pekka Lundmark has been appointed as CEO of Nokia. He will take the place of Rajeev Suri, who was more than a decade in charge of Nokia and Nokia Siemens Networks. Pekka is currently serving as the CEO of a Finland's energy group, Fortum since 2015.
- 19.(c)** Punjab government has prohibited online supply of food from Food Business Operators (FBOs), who lack hygiene rating or have rating less than three out of five to ensure safe food to the public. The prohibition orders will be effective for one year beginning April 30,
- 20.(a)** Zero Discrimination Day was celebrated on March 1, 2020 on "Zero Discrimination against Women & Girls" theme to raise awareness & mobilize action to promote equality & empowerment for women & girls. The symbol for this day was a Butterfly.