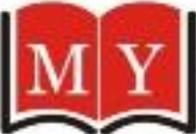




Weekly Current Affairs

25 to 31 Oct 2020

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NATIONAL NEWS

1. Punjabi version of 'Age Appropriate Fitness Protocols' launched

- To make people aware about the health issues and fitness mantra, Punjab Sports and NRI Affairs Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi launched Punjabi version of 'Age Appropriate Fitness Protocols' for all age groups under fit India movement under the initiative of Sports Authority of India (SAI) and National Institute of Sports (NIS) Patiala.
- These will provide vast knowledge about fitness throughout the country. The mission inspires fitness among all age groups, is a great initiative of the Ministry of Sports and Sports Authority of India.
- Also, they appreciated the efforts, for designing the age-wise specific fitness protocols as it will help people of all ages to follow these and test their fitness levels accordingly.

2. India gets chairmanship of ILO governing body after a gap of 35 years

- After a gap 35 years, India has assumed the Chairmanship of the Governing Body of International Labour Organization (ILO).
- Apurva Chandra, Secretary, Labour and Employment, has been elected as the Chairperson of Governing Body of ILO for the period October 2020-June 2021.
- The Chairperson of ILO's Governing Body is a position of international repute. The Governing Body (GB) is the apex executive body of the ILO which decides policies, programmes, agenda, budget and elects the Director-General. Currently, ILO has 187 members. Chandra will be presiding over the upcoming meeting of the Governing Body to be held in November 2020.

3. AYUSH Minister inaugurates Regional Raw Drug Repository at AIIA

- AYUSH Minister Shripad Yesso Naik inaugurated the Regional Raw Drug Repository at All India Institute of Ayurveda in New Delhi through a virtual function.
- This RRDR is the second in the series of repositories proposed by the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB).
- There is an increased demand for the natural healing and herbal products across the globe which has been further pushed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- In order to document the diversity in the genetics and chemistry of medicinal plants, eight RRDR and one NRDR have been proposed by the Ministry of AYUSH.

4. Mastercard partners with Atlantis to expand Digital First Program in India

- Mastercard has entered into a partnership with Atlantis to expand the Digital First Program in India.
- The partnership aims to provide the users of Mastercard, a technology solution that enables them to enjoy a best-in-class digital banking experience.
- After the launch in India, the partnership will expand to Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The partnership allows the users of the Mastercard to have immediate account access and convenient payments.

5. Mizoram schools to remain closed as it observes 'COVID-19 - No Tolerance Fortnight'

- Mizoram state government has decided to observe 'COVID-19 -No Tolerance Fortnight.' It is going to begin from October 26 as a containment measure to flatten the curve of Covid-19 in the state.
- The Mizoram government has accorded zero-tolerance policy to flouting any COVID-19 containment measures being implemented and enforced. All Unlock Guidelines, all Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) and all sections of the Mizoram Containment and Prevention of COVID-19 Ordinance, 2020 will be enforced very strictly.
- The meeting expressed concern over the opening of some classes (Class X and XII) in schools and also the increased vehicular traffic in Aizawl city and suggested that these need to be reviewed in a more detailed manner. State Executive Committee under Mizoram State Disaster Management Authority is expected to issue a notification concerning COVID-19-No Tolerance Fortnight.

6. Prime Minister Modi to inaugurate National Conference on Vigilance and Anti Corruption

- The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate the National Conference on Vigilance and Anti-Corruption, on the theme (Vigilant India, Prosperous India) at 4:45 PM on 27th October, 2020 via video conferencing.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation organizes this National Conference coinciding with 'Vigilance Awareness Week', which is observed in India every year from 27th October to 2nd November. Activities in this conference would be focused on Vigilance issues aimed at raising awareness and reaffirming India's commitment to promotion of integrity and probity in public life through citizen participation.
- The three day conference would discuss the Challenges in investigation in foreign jurisdictions; Preventive Vigilance as a Systemic Check against Corruption; Systemic improvements for financial inclusion and prevention of bank frauds; Effective Audit as an Engine of Growth; Latest amendments to the Prevention of Corruption Act as an impetus to the fight against corruption; Capacity Building and Training; Multi Agency Coordination-an

enabler for faster and more effective Investigation; Emerging Trends in Economic Offences, Cyber Crimes and Transnational Organized Crime-measures to Control and Exchange of Best Practices among Criminal Investigative Agencies.

7. Nitin Gadkari to lay foundation stones of nine NH projects in Tripura

- Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari will lay the foundation stones of nine National Highway projects in Tripura tomorrow.
- The total length of these highways will be 262 kilometres which will provide faster and hassle-free inter-state and international connectivity to Bangladesh.
- These highways will strengthen the tourism sector in the state by providing better connectivity, fast and safe movement of traffic to various tourist, historical and religious places.
- It will also generate large number of employment and provide self-employment opportunities to the unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled manpower of the region.

8. UP govt secures first rank in disbursing loans under PM SVANidhi Scheme

- Uttar Pradesh government has secured the first rank in central government's one of the most ambitious schemes - the PM Atmanirbhar Nidhi Scheme (SVANidhi Scheme) by approving the highest number of loans under the scheme in the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute loans to around 3 lakh beneficiaries and will interact with a few of them tomorrow via video conferencing. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will also be present on the occasion.
- State has ranked first in all the categories - Applications, Sanctions and Disbursements of the loans under the scheme. As many as 6,22,167 applications were received under the scheme in the state which is highest in the country, out of which sanctions were given to 3,46,150 applicants while the loans were disbursed to 2,26,728 beneficiaries.
- Seven cities of the state also find place in the list of top 10 cities of the country. Varanasi, Lucknow and Aligarh are the top three cities in the list even as other cities of the state include Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Ghaziabad and Kanpur.

9. NTPC ranks first among Indian PSUs in Forbes' 'World's Best Employer 2020'

- National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has featured on the top on the list of Indian PSUs under the 'World's Best Employer 2020', published by Forbes.

- The recognition is testimony to NTPC's commitment towards inculcating best in class practices that are thoughtfully designed and robustly executed, the company stated in a statement.
- The modules have helped thousands of workers from NTPC to grow and think beyond the professional sphere.
- NTPC has successfully innovated and introduced people practices in the domain of hiring; engagement; diversity and inclusion; rewards and recognition; and performance management.
- In the recent past, the company has initiated an 'NTPC Series' on success stories beyond official work, 'Ambition, Growth, Success Beyond Work', a series on the achievements of employees beyond their official assignments.

10. India-assisted Mangdechhu hydroelectric project in Bhutan wins UK engineers' body award

- The Mangdechhu Hydroelectric project in Bhutan, constructed by India has been awarded the Brunel Medal 2020 conferred by UK's top engineering body — Institute of Civil Engineers.
- The award, named after Isambard Kingdom Brunel who is known as 19th century engineering giant, was announced on October 5.
- The Indian and Bhutanese Prime Ministers had jointly inaugurated the 720MW Project on August 17, 2019. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called the project a "crucial milestone celebrating India-Bhutan ties" and "this project shows how the two nations working together can bring immense positivity in the lives of people,"



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11. Arjun Munda launches two Centers of Excellence for Tribal Welfare

- Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda launched two Centers of Excellence for Tribal Welfare today. These centers were launched in collaboration between the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Art of Living through video conference.
- Addressing on the occasion, Mr. Munda informed that the one Center will be engaged in the field of training tribal farmers in Aurangabad district of

Maharashtra on sustainable natural farming while the second one will be working towards strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions in 5 districts covering 30 Gram Panchayats and 150 villages of Jharkhand.

- Mr. Munda said, the Union government is fully committed to the welfare of tribal people in the country. Sri Sri Ravishankar of Art of Living, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Renuka Singh, along with senior officials of the Tribal Affairs Ministry were also present on the occasion.

12. Samsung Tops Forbes' list of World's Best Employer 2020

- South Korea based electronics conglomerate, Samsung Electronics has topped the list of 'World's Best Employer 2020' published by Forbes'.
- Amazon, IBM, Microsoft and LG are among the top 5 in the list respectively.
- The global list features 750 multinational and large corporations headquartered in 45 countries.
- From India, HCL Technologies is the top industry in the list.
- It is placed at the 30th position globally.

13. Mumbai Police bans use of drones, paragliders, remote controlled small aircraft & aerial missiles till Nov 28

- In order to ensure a safe festive season, Mumbai Police has banned the use of drones, paragliders, remote controlled small aircraft and aerial missiles till 28th November 2020. It states that anyone found contravening this order will be liable for punishment under relevant sections of Indian Penal Code.
- DCP of Mumbai Police, Chaitanya S. has said that terrorists or anti-national elements may use drones to cause law and order disturbances or make an effort to destroy public property or attack VVIPs. As a preventive and precautionary measure, no such flying activity will be permitted under the jurisdiction of Brihanmumbai Police Commissionerate.

14. India hosts meeting of SCO Ministers handling economy and foreign trade

- India today hosted the 19th Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Ministers responsible for Foreign Economy and Foreign Trade Activities.
- In his opening remarks, Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal said that the current crisis due to Covid-19 is a clarion call to the SCO countries to leverage the economic strength and explore partnerships that enhance trade and investment in the region. He said that cooperation should be continued to enhance intra-SCO trade and investment which would be critical in ensuring the speedy recovery from the aftermath of the pandemic. Shri Goyal said that every nation's world view is shaped by its

civilization and philosophical tradition. India's ancient wisdom sees the world as one family – Vasudeva Kutumbakam, he added.

- Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Shri Hardeep Singh Puri also spoke on the occasion. The virtual meeting was attended by the Secretary General of SCO and Ministers from, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

15. Union minister Shri Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurates 'DIRECT PORT ENTRY FACILITY' at V.O. Chidambaranar port

- The Union Minister of State for Shipping (I/C), Mansukh Mandaviya has inaugurated the 'Direct Port Entry (DPE) facility' of V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust in Tamil Nadu.
- This will help in increasing Ease of Doing Business for the exporters, as the facility will bring efficiency and reduce dwell time, lower tariff cost and improve the competitiveness of shipper in the international trade.
- The state-of-the-art Direct Port Entry (DPE) facility would enable direct movement of containers from factories, without intermediate handling at any Container Freight Station (CFS), thus facilitating the shippers to Gate-In their factory stuffed exports directly to the Container Terminal on 24x7 basis.
- The facility is created in an area of 18,357 sqm inside the Truck Parking Terminal which was developed under the 'Sagarmala' for issuing customs clearance of export cargo i.e. Factory stuffed/re-sealed containers.

16. Feni bridge connecting India and Bangladesh to be completed by December: Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari

- The 1.8 kilometre long Feni bridge connecting Sabrum in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh will be completed by December this year.
- This was announced on Tuesday by the Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Minister Nitin Gadkari while laying the foundation stone of nine National Highway projects in Tripura through video conferencing.
- According to a press release issued by the Ministry, Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari said that the Feni bridge being built at the cost of Rs. 129 crore will ease the transportation of goods from Chattogram and Kolkata ports. An integrated check post is also proposed to be built near Sabrum.
- He said that the construction of the RCC bridge over Feni will improve connectivity to the international border with Bangladesh.

17. Centre sets up high-level committee to commemorate Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur's 400th birth anniversary

- The Centre set up a high-level committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to commemorate the 400th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur.
- The mandate of the 70-member committee includes approval of policies, plans, programmes and supervision and guiding the commemoration, besides deciding broad dates for detailed programmes of celebration.
- Guru Tegh Bahadur was the ninth of ten Gurus of the Sikh religion.
- He founded the city of Anandpur Sahib in Punjab in 1665.
- On 24 November 1675, the Guru was publicly beheaded on the orders of Aurangzeb for refusing to accept the authority of Mughal Emperor, at Chandni Chowk in Delhi.

18. India, US hold 3rd bilateral two plus two Ministerial Dialogue in New Delhi; sign landmark defence pact BECA

- India and US today held the 3rd bilateral two plus two Ministerial Dialogue in New Delhi and signed the landmark defence pact BECA. The signing of BECA is significant as it allows India to use global geospatial maps of the United States for accuracy of stand-off weapons like cruise and ballistic missiles.
- From the Indian side, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar led the delegation. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Secretary of Defence Mark Esper led the US delegation. India and US signed five agreements in total.
- In the press statement after the meeting, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, signing the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement, BECA after signing of LEMOA in 2016 and COMCASA in 2018 is a significant achievement. He said, they had comprehensive discussions on key aspects of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. He said they also explored probable capacity building and other joint cooperation activities in third countries, including India's neighbourhood and beyond during the meeting.

19. Delhi's Air Quality Continues to be in "Very Poor" Category

- The air quality in Delhi continues to remain in a very poor category. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, Delhi's air quality index was recorded at 397 at 10 AM.
- An Air Quality Index between 201 and 300 is considered poor, 301 to 400 very poor and 401 to 500 severe.
- "Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) is in the "very poor" category with few locations entering a higher zone but that will be shortlived. This is mainly because the extremely calm local surface winds, which were prevailing yesterday, are likely to increase slightly and may further pick-up by October 26," the SAFAR said.

20. UP Govt to establish anti-human trafficking Police Stations in each and every district

- Uttar Pradesh Government has decided to establish anti-human trafficking Police Stations in each and every district in a major step towards the security of women and children. These Police Stations will be given enough powers to register the case and investigate the matter independently.
- State government is going to establish 40 new anti-trafficking units which will work like police stations in districts and will conduct investigation after registering the cases.
- Earlier, only 35 district in the state had Police stations of anti human trafficking unit which was established in 2011 and 2018.
- The new Police stations are being established after directives from women safety division of Union Government. Union Government has also allocated funds for these units. Till date for any action in any case related to the human trafficking the Anti-Human trafficking unit used to register the FIR in the Cantt. Police Station of the concerned district.
- After registering the case the local police station conducts the investigation. Recently some cases are now being transferred to anti- human trafficking unit. After getting established as a full-fledged police station now the anti human trafficking unit will be able to take all the decisions independently.

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21. Young Advocates Welfare Fund launched in Tamil Nadu

- In Tamil Nadu, the Young Advocates Welfare Fund has been launched. It provides a monthly financial assistance of three thousand rupees each for two years to the lawyers who just come out of law colleges.
- Normally a fresher from law colleges takes three to four years to begin practice as an advocate in the court as the registration in the Bar Council, and the mandatory practicing under a senior advocate takes time. Unable to sustain themselves during the initial period, many from poor and rural backgrounds shifted their profession. The Young Advocates Welfare

Scheme is aimed at helping such fresh candidates to withstand the initial challenges.

22. Cabinet approves signing of MoU between India and Cambodia in health sector

- On October 29, 2020, the union cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and Cambodia on cooperation in the field of medicine and health.
- The MoU will increase the cooperation between the countries through joint initiatives and technological developments in health sector. Also, it will strengthen bilateral ties between the countries.
- The main areas of cooperation included in the MoU are family planning, mother and child health, technology transfer, HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis, Epidemiology and Public Health, Disease Control, medical education, training in clinical, management skill and para-clinical, health manpower development and drugs and pharmaceuticals.

23. Kerala becomes the first state to fix floor price for vegetables

- Kerala becomes the first state in the country to fix the floor price for vegetables.
- The floor price will be 20 per cent above the production cost of the vegetable. Even if the market price goes below the floor price, the product will be procured at the floor price from the farmers.
- This is the first time in the country that the floor price is being fixed for vegetables produced in the state.

24. Indian Railways launches 'Meri Saheli' initiative for security of women passengers

- Railways has launched Meri Saheli initiative for focused action on security of women passengers across all zones. The objective of this mission is to provide safety and security to lady passengers travelling by trains for their entire journey from starting station to destination station.
- Meri Saheli initiative was started as a pilot project in South Eastern Railway in September this year and after getting encouraging response from lady passengers, it was extended to all zones and Konkan Railway with effect from 17th of this month. The RPF team collects only the seat numbers of the ladies and conveys them to stoppages en-route.

25. PM to inaugurate Arogya Van & Arogya Kutir at Kevadia in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is on a two-day visit to Gujarat. He will pay tributes to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at the 'Statue of Unity' near Kevadiya in

Narmada district on the occasion of 145th birth anniversary of this great leader.

- He inaugurated the Arogya Van and Arogya Kutir at Kevadia. He also inaugurated Ekta Mall Children Nutrition Park. Mr. Modi will then inaugurate Jungle Safari and Geodesic Dome Aviary and lay the foundation stone for various projects before reaching the Statue of Unity.
- He will also launch the country's first seaplane service between Kevadia and Ahmedabad Riverfront.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS & FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. US approves sale of weapons systems worth around 1.8 billion dollar to Taiwan

- The US State Department has approved the sale of weapons systems worth around 1.8 billion dollar to Taiwan. The deal comprised three weapons systems, including rocket launchers, sensors and artillery.
- Taiwan welcomed the decision and said the weapons will help improve its defensive capabilities to deal with the enemy threat and new situation.
- China said that the arms deal will likely have a major impact on its relationship with the US.

2. Saad al-Hariri reappointed as Lebanon Prime Minister

- Former Lebanese Prime Minister, Saad al-Hariri has been re-appointed to the post, after winning a slim majority of votes in parliament election. Hariri received 65 parliamentary votes out of 118, giving him the mandate to form his new government.
- In October 2019, Hariri announced his resignation amid 2019-20 mass-protests. Previously he had served as Prime Minister of Lebanon from 9 November 2009 to 13 June 2011 and then from 18 December 2016 to 21 January 2020. Hariri is the third person to be tasked with forming a government this year, after academic Hassan Diab, who succeeded in forming a government but resigned and then diplomat Mustafa Adib.

3. Pakistan to remain in grey list of global terror financing watchdog- FATF till February 2021

- Pakistan will remain on the grey list of global terror financing watchdog, Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as it has not been able to fulfil six out of the 27 mandates to check terror funding. The decision was announced by the President of FATF Marcus Pleyer.
- The FATF strongly urged Pakistan to swiftly complete its full action plan by February 2021. It said, Pakistan needs to do more to check terror

funding, adding that the 6 items which Pakistan is yet to address are serious deficiencies.

- The implementation plan to curb money laundering and terror financing was supposed to be put in place by the end of 2019. However, the deadline was extended in the wake of COVID pandemic.

4. Indian-origin Wavel Ramkalawan is elected as President of Seychelles

- Indian-origin Wavel Ramkalawan has been elected as the President of Seychelles.
- Seychelles has elected an opposition candidate as president for the first time since 1977.
- He has defeated the incumbent Danny Faure. Ramkalwan is a priest of Indian Origin whose grandfather came from Gopalganj, Bihar.

5. Japan to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050

- Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga has said that the country will achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- Mr. Suga announced this in his policy speech at first parliamentary session since he took office last month.
- The Prime Minister said, he intends to make a sustainable economy a pillar of his growth strategy and put maximum effort into achieving a green society.
- Mr. Suga emphasized the need to shift away from fossil fuels to counter climate change as an opportunity rather than a burden.
- As per Japan's current energy plan, 56 per cent of its energy requirements come from fossil fuels.

6. NATO plans to set up new space center in Germany

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance, plans to build a headquarters for space operations at its airbase in Ramstein in Germany, to counter a rising Russian and Chinese threat.
- The new centre is to be a central point of contact to support NATO missions with communication and satellite images.
- It will also be a place to exchange information on potential threats to satellites. Some 2,000 satellites orbit the Earth, more than half of which are operated by NATO members, allowing everything from mobile phone services to weather forecasts. Currently, at least 40 per cent of NATO's communications are via satellite.

7. Luis Arce declared as the President of Bolivia

- Bolivia's Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) announced that Luis Arce Catacora, the candidate for the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) party, has won the October 18 presidential elections with 55.1 percent of the votes.
- The MAS also obtained absolute majorities in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, although it did not achieve the two-thirds majority required to carry out constitutional reforms.
- This is the first time since 1989 that the country has published the official results of a presidential election in such a short period of time

New Appointments and Person in News

1. Lt Gen Nanda Kishore Sahoo, the first Odia Officer to be appointed DG Dental Services

- Lieutenant General Nanda Kishore Sahoo, VSM has assumed charge as Director General Dental Services and Colonel Commandant of Army Dental Corps. He is the first Odia officer to hold this post.
- His earlier appointments include Command of a unit in Kashmir Valley, Command Advisor of Western, Central, and Southern Commands.

2. Former Union Minister Dilip Ray sentenced to 3 year imprisonment in coal scam case

- A special CBI court today sentenced former Union minister Dilip Ray to 3-yr imprisonment in a coal scam case pertaining to alleged irregularities in allocation of a Jharkhand coal block in 1999.
- Special Judge Bharat Parashar also awarded three-year jail term each to two senior officials of the Ministry of Coal at that time, Pradip Kumar Banerjee and Nitya Nand Gautam, and Castron Technologies Ltd's (CTL) director Mahendra Kumar Agarwalla. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 10 lakh on each on them. The court has further imposed a fine of Rs 60 lakh on CTL.

3. Bimal Julka appointed as the Chairman of Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports

- Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS) has announced the appointment of Bimal Julka as its Chairman.
- In his new role, Julka will work closely with all the stakeholders to further strengthen the operating standards of the Indian fantasy sports industry. Bimal Julka is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer of the 1979 batch belonging to the Madhya Pradesh Cadre.
- Julka is taking over from John Loffhagen, who served as the Chairman of FIFS for over three years. Loffhagen will assume the role of a Strategic

Advisor and support FIFS on collaborating with relevant international bodies in the industry.

BANKING

1. World Bank sanctions Rs 3 crore to set up India's first Sand Dune Park in Goa

- India's first sand dune parks and interpretation centres is set to be developed in Goa.
- The Goa state biodiversity board has proposed the project, which will be implemented with financial assistance from the World Bank.
- World Bank has sanctioned around Rs.3 crore under the programme.
- The Sand Dune park project will have interpretation centres to educate locals and tourists on the importance of the sand dune ecosystem.
- Park would also have Bridges made of nature friendly material to reduce trampling on sand dune vegetation.
- Besides this, nurseries of sand dune vegetation will also be set up, which will enable its replantation on beach stretches where vegetation has gone extinct.

2. Sashidhar Jagdishan takes over as MD & CEO of HDFC Bank

- Aditya Puri stepped out of HDFC Bank's corporate headquarters after handing over charge to Sashidhar Jagdishan as the new chief executive and managing director of the largest private sector lender.
- Over 25 years ago, at a nondescript office across the road in Lower Parel's Kamala Mills compound, Puri had started work as the bank's first head, and built the lender which now employs close to 1.20 lakh people.
- Jagdishan had also come to office for the hand-over ceremony. Both Jagdishan and Puri addressed their colleagues virtually during the day, officials said.

3. RBI bars payment system operators from launching any new QR codes

- The Reserve Bank of India has barred Payment System Operators (PSOs) from launching any new proprietary QR code for payment transactions.
- Currently, there are two interoperable QR codes — UPI QR and Bharat QR.
- The decision to continue with the two existing Quick Response (QR) codes was based on the recommendations of the committee which was set up by the Reserve Bank under the chairmanship of Deepak Phatak to review the current system of such codes in India and suggest measures for moving towards interoperable QR codes.

- QR codes are two-dimensional machine-readable barcodes, which are increasingly used to facilitate mobile payments at the point-of-sale. QR codes can store a large amount of information.
- PSOs that use proprietary QR codes shall shift to one or more interoperable QR codes; the process of migration shall be completed by March 31, 2022.

4. SBI raises USD 1 billion untied loan with JBIC, other lenders

- The State Bank of India signed a loan agreement amounting to up to one billion US Dollars with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation. The loan is intended to promote the smooth flow of funds for the whole range of business operations of Japanese automobile manufacturers in India.
- As part of the agreement, 600 million US Dollars will be financed by JBIC while the remaining amount will be financed by other participating banks. The facility will be co-financed by SMBC, MUFG Bank, Mizuho Bank, Shizuoka Bank and Bank of Yokohama.

Books and Awards

1. Actor Victor Banerjee wins award at Ontario film festival

- Victor Banerjee has won the “best actor in a secondary role” for his performance of an aging Christian priest in Josef: Born in Grace at the Ontario International Film Festival.
- The film, directed by Susant Misra, also claimed the award for best cinematography.

2. Book titled “Night of the Restless Spirits: Stories from 1984” authored by Sarbpreet Singh

- A book titled “Night of the Restless Spirits: Stories from 1984” authored by Sarbpreet Singh. The author Sarbpreet Singh’s recounts the Sikh massacre of 1984 in this book.
- The book is a fictionalised version of real happenings comprising just eight chapters.
- It shows the events of 1984 through the prism of many lives & impact on Sikhs.

3. CSIR-CDRI Scientist Dr Satish Mishra bags DrTulsi Das Chugh Award-2020

- The National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) has selected the Principal Scientist, Division of Molecular Parasitology and Immunology,

(CSIR-CDRI)-Lucknow, Dr Satish Mishra for “Dr.Tulsi Das Chugh Award 2020”.

- He is awarded for his research work on Malaria parasite’s life cycle which is a complex process involving two hosts and three invasive stages.

SPORTS

1. Under-19 World Cup-winner Tanmay Srivastava retires from cricket

- Tanmay Manoj Srivastava, who was part of India’s Under-19 World Cup-winning team in 2008 announced his retirement from all forms of domestic cricket.
- He played 90 first-class games, scoring 4918 runs. He also played 44 List A matches and 34 T20s. He also played IPL (Indian Premier League), where he represented Kings XI Punjab, Deccan Chargers and Kochi Tuskers Kerala.

2. Lt. Governor R K Mathur flags off Ultimate Ladakh Cycling Challenge

- In Leh, Ladakh Lieutenant Governor R. K. Mathur flagged off Ultimate Ladakh Cycling Challenge, today. At an altitude of over 17 thousand feet this is one of the toughest cycling challenges in the world.
- Ladakh Police, Ladakh Tourism Department in association with the Cycling Federation of India with the support of Ladakh Cycling Association have organized the four-day event. AIR correspondent reports that Union Territory administration is taking all measures to promote tourism and Ladakh as the centre for adventure sports. As part of the activities, Ladakh Police and Tourism Departments are organizing a four-day Ultimate Ladakh Cycling Challenge in Leh.
- On various routes, the cyclists peddle a total of 263 kilometres in the four-day event. On 3rd and 4th Day the cyclists have to climb the world’s 3rd highest Taglang La and the highest motorable road Khardung La that test the stamina, endurance and the will power of a cyclist. Top national and local cyclists are taking part in the challenge. Winners will be awarded 10 lakh rupees as prize.

SCIENCE TECH & DEFENCE

1. Indian Army celebrates 74th Infantry Day in J&K

- Every year, October 27 is celebrated as Infantry Day by the Indian Army in Jammu & Kashmir (known by nickname, Chinar Corps).

- The Chinar Corps celebrated the 74th Infantry Day on October 27, 2020, to honour the supreme sacrifice of the gallant soldiers in fighting the Pakistani invaders, in Jammu and Kashmir, in 1947.
- Infantry Day is celebrated as a remembrance of the first military event of independent India, when the First Battalion of the Sikh Regiment of Indian Army fought battle to accomplish victory over the first attack on the Indian soil by the Pakistan Army and Lashkar invader on October 27, 1947, in the Kashmir valley, who tried to grab J&K.

2. Indian Navy fires anti-ship missile from guided missile corvette as part of military drill

- An anti-Ship missile fired by Guided Missile Corvette INS Kora of Indian Navy hit its target at the maximum range with meticulous accuracy in the Bay of Bengal.
- The spokesperson of the Indian Navy shared the news on Twitter and stated that Anti-Ship Missile (AShM) was fired by Guided Missile Corvette INS Kora of Indian Navy with precise accuracy in the Bay of Bengal. It was also added that the target ship was severely damaged and was in flames.
- The Indian Navy, earlier on October 23, 2020, had shared a video of AShM being launched by its Missile Corvette INS Prabal with extreme accuracy at a maximum range and sinking the ship in the target.

3. Indian Army develops its own WhatsApp-like messaging application 'SAI'

- The Indian Army has developed and launched an in-house messaging application called the 'Secure Application for Internet (SAI)'. This messaging application supports an end-to-end secure voice, text and video calling services for Android platform over Internet.
- The WhatsApp-like application has been specially designed by the Army for its personnel to prevent leaking of any classified information.
- This initiative by the Indian Army can also be seen as a part of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.'

OBITUARIES

1. Veteran Gujarati Film Musician, Former MP Mahesh Kanodia Dies At 83

- Famous Gujarati film musician, singer and former Parliamentarian Mahesh Kanodia died at his residence in Gandhinagar on Sunday following a prolonged illness, his family member said.
- He was 83.
- "The ace singer, who enthralled the audience through his performances together with his younger brother and Gujarati film superstar Naresh

Kanodia, died due to a prolonged illness," his nephew and BJP MLA Hitu Kanodia said.

2. Naresh Kanodia, popular Gujarati actor, passes away at 77 in Ahmedabad hospital

- Gujarati film superstar and actor-turned-politician Naresh Kanodia passed away. He was 77.
- He was suffering from COVID infection along with other comorbidities.
- Kanodia represented Karjan Assembly seat from 2002 to 2007. He worked in more than 100 Gujarati films.
- He along with his brother Mahesh Kumar- who passed away just two days ago, used to run the highly successful orchestra Mahesh-Naresh & Party.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. World Polio Day is observed on 24 October

- The World Polio Day is celebrated annually on October 24, to raise awareness for polio vaccination and eradication of polio. World Polio Day provides an opportunity to highlight global efforts toward a polio-free world and honour the tireless contributions of those on the frontlines in the fight to eradicate polio from every corner of the globe.
- The Day was established by Rotary International to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop a vaccine against poliomyelitis. 2020 theme for World Polio Day is "A win against polio is a win for global health." As of August 2020, Afghanistan and Pakistan are the only two nations which remain with the continued transmission of wild poliovirus.

2. ITBP observed its 59th Raising Day on 24 October

- The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) observed its 59th Raising Day on 24 October 2020.
- ITBP is India's primary border patrol organization with its border with Tibet (China).
- It is one of the seven Central Armed Police Forces of India.
- ITBP was formed on 24 October 1962, under the CRPF Act, in the wake of the Sino-Indian War of 1962.
- In 2020, a budget of Rs 7,223 crore has been allocated for the ITBP and more than Rs 15 crore has been sanctioned for management.

3. World Day for Audiovisual Heritage observed on 27 October

- The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage takes place every 27 October. This commemorative day was chosen by UNESCO in 2005 to raise awareness of the significance and preservation risks of recorded sound and audiovisual documents.
- 2020 theme : “Your Window to the World”.

4. International Animation Day: 28 October

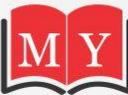
- International Animation Day is observed globally on 28 October every year. The day celebrates the art of animation and also recognises the artists, scientists and technicians behind animation.
- The day was created in 2002 by the International Animated Film Association (ASIFA), an International Animated Film Association, a member of UNESCO.



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