



Monthly G.K Capsule



March, 2021

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NATIONAL NEWS

1.Saras Aajeevika Mela, bringing rural women SHGs under one platform, opened at Noida Haat

- The Saras Aajeevika Mela 2021 is underway at Noida Haat. The fair was inaugurated by Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar. It will continue till 14th March. The fair remains open from 11 AM to 8 PM daily. More than 300 rural self-help groups and craftsmen from 27 states are participating in the Mela which is being run by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- Addressing the gathering, Mr. Tomar said that the Ministry of Rural Development is working to include more women in Self Help Groups (SHGs). He said these SHGs played a vital role in increasing family income and improving quality of life.
- Speaking about Prime Minister's call for self-reliant India, the minister said Atmanirbharta can't be achieved only by Government's schemes and efforts.

2.Principal Scientific Adviser to GOI launched Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship

- The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India under its Waste to Wealth Mission has launched the Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship to recognize students, community workers or Self-Help Groups, SHGs and municipal or sanitary workers who are engaged in tackling the enormous challenge of waste management, scientifically and sustainably.
- The Waste to Wealth Mission is one of the nine national missions of the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council, PM-STIAC.
- Targeted to encourage community participation, the Swachhta Saarthi Fellowships invites applications from students and community workers who have done previous work or are currently engaged in waste management activities, including awareness campaigns, surveys and studies.

3.Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV merged into Sansad TV

- After much deliberations the two dedicated channels — Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV — that air the parliamentary proceedings, have been merged into a single entity called the 'Sansad TV'.
- But, despite the merger, the two channels are likely to continue to be operational but under the banner of Sansad TV for the live telecast of proceedings of the two houses.
- The decision was jointly taken by the Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

- Former bureaucrat Ravi Capoor has also been appointed as the CEO of Sansad TV, for a period of one year, with immediate effect and will be spearheading the merger process.

4.Haryana to Reserve 75% Jobs In Private Sector for Locals

- The Haryana Governor had approved a bill that reserves 75 percent of the private sector jobs with gross salary upto Rs. 50,000 per month for the people of the state, Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala informed. The legislation was passed by the state assembly last year.
- Reservation in the private sector for locals was the main election promise of Mr. Chautala's Jannayak Janta Party, which had formed a government in the state in alliance with the BJP after winning 10 of the 90 seats.

5.Uttarakhand CM launched 'Gharoki Paachan, Chelik Naam Scheme from Nainital

- Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat launched "Gharoki Paachan, Chelik Naam" (daughter's name is a home's identity) program and development schemes worth Rs. 42 crore in Nainital.
- Initially, the scheme has been launched in Nainital and will be extended to entire Uttarakhand in the coming weeks.
- The government has allocated Rs. 42 crore for this scheme.
- This scheme is in line with the effort of the state government towards promoting women empowerment.
- Around 32,000 women groups of the state are being linked with self-employment to make them self-reliant.

6.Bengaluru topped list of cities in ease of living, Shimla best among small cities

- Bengaluru had emerged as the best city on ease of living parameters among 49 million-plus cities in 2020, pushing the earlier top ranker Pune to number two.
- Among 62 cities having less than one million population, Shimla has topped the list followed by Bhubaneswar, according to the Union housing and urban development ministry.
- Unlike the first ease of living index (EoLI) report of 2018, the latest ranking of cities in 2020 has put 111 cities in two categories, million-plus and cities having population less than a million.

7.Centre sets up 259-Member Committee to Commemorate 75 Years of India's Independence

- The Government of India had set up a 259-member high-level national committee, to be headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to commemorate 75 years of India's independence.
- The 259 member national committee will provide policy direction and guidelines for the formulation of programmes for the 75th anniversary commemoration of the Indian Independence.

- The 75 years of India's Independence will be observed on 15 August 2022 and the celebrations for the same are proposed to be launched 75 weeks prior to this date on 12 March 2021.
- 12 March marks the 91st anniversary of the historic Salt Satyagraha led by Mahatma Gandhi.
- The celebrations will be held at national and international level in the form of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.
- The high-level committee will hold its first meeting on March 8, 2021.

8.Cabinet approved 'PM Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi' as single non-lapsable reserve fund

- The Union Cabinet approved the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSSN) as a single non-lapsable reserve fund for share of Health from the proceeds of Health and Education Cess levied under Finance Act, 2007.
- The major benefit of PMSSN will be enhanced access to universal and affordable health care through availability of earmarked resources, while ensuring that the amount does not lapse at the end of financial year.
- Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi, PMSSN is a non-lapsable reserve fund for Health in the Public Account and Proceeds of share of health in the Health and Education Cess will be credited into it

9.India's first 'Transgender Community Desk' opened in Telangana's Gachibowli

- Cyberabad police inaugurated a 'Transgender Community Desk' at Gachibowli police station.
- It is the first-of-its-kind gender inclusive community policing initiative of India.
- It will be managed by police liaison officer and transgender person who is designated as community coordinator.
- It will provide support to file cases in offences related to violence or discrimination against any transgender person.

10.Jammu & Kashmir celebrated festival of Shivratri 'Herath'

- In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the festival of Shivratri 'Herath' is being celebrated across Jammu and Kashmir. It is a three day festival.
- Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha extended his greetings to the people on the eve of Maha Shivratri celebrated as Herath by Kashmiri Pandits. In his message Mr. Sinha observed that this festival symbolizes the values of devotion and harmony, which are the hallmarks of glorious tradition & cultural ethos of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Festival Maha Shivratri locally known as Herath in Kashmir is being celebrated across J&K by Kashmiri Pandit Community with religious fervour by offering "Watak Nath Pooja".
- The festival assumes colossal importance among the Kashmiri Pandit Community who celebrates it to mark the wedding of "Lord Shiva with

Goddess Parvati". Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted the Kashmiri Pandit Community on the auspicious occasion of Herath Festival.

11. Delhi govt approved formation of separate board for 2,700 schools in city

- The Delhi government on 6th March approved the formation of a separate school board for nearly 2,700 schools in the city.
- In the beginning, 21-22 state government schools will be affiliated to the Delhi Board of School Education (DBSE), and in the next four-five years, all the schools will be brought under it, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said in a press conference.
- There are around 1,000 Delhi government schools and about 1,700 private schools, most of them affiliated with the CBSE.

12. India's first forest healing centre inaugurated in Uttarakhand's Ranikhet

- First Forest Healing centre of the country was inaugurated at Ranikhet in Kalika Uttarakhand.
- The forest healing centre has been developed by the Research Wing of Uttarakhand Forest Department after research on healing properties of the forests and its revitalizing impact on overall health and well being. It is spread over an area of around 13 acres.
- It draws inspiration from Japanese technique of forest bathing (shinrin-yoku) and ancient Indian traditions and that basic theme is, be silent, go slow, think less and feel more.

13. Uttar Pradesh Government launched 2nd phase of Mission Shakti

- Uttar Pradesh government launched the second phase of Mission Shakti on the occasion of International women's day.
- After a gap of 24 years first commercial flight was flagged off by Union Minister for Civil Aviation Hardeep Singh Puri virtually and Union Minister Santosh Gangwar along with State Minister for civil aviation Nand Gopal Nadi were present in Bareilly on the occasion.
- The flight was operated by all women crew members' carrying 60 passengers to Delhi. With this flight Bareilly became 8th city in state with flight services on 4 days in a week to Delhi within 2000 rupees.

14. President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated conservation works at Singorgarh Fort in Damoh district (MP)

- President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone for the conservation works of Singorgarh Fort in Singrampur village of Damoh district in Madhya Pradesh. The President also inaugurated the newly carved Jabalpur Circle of Archaeological Survey of India. He also addressed the State Level Tribal Conference at Singrampur village in Damoh. The program was organized by the Ministry of Culture,

Government of India and the Tribal Affairs Department of Madhya Pradesh.

- Apart from this, President Kovind addressed the State Level Tribal Conference ‘Janjatiya Sammelan’ at Singrampur village in Damoh. The program was organized jointly by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and the Tribal Affairs Department of Madhya Pradesh.

15. Digitisation of 4.50 crore pages of Records and Exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi & the Non-Cooperation Movement inaugurated

- Union Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel inaugurated Digitisation of 4 crore 50 lakh pages of Records and Exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi & the Non-Cooperation Movement.
- On the occasion of 131st foundation day of the National Archives of India, Mr. Patel launched the process of digitisation of the huge volumes of work preserved with them. The Minister informed that out of the total archive of nearly 18 crore pages, about 4 crore 50 lakh pages will be digitised in the first phase which is expected to get over in the next three years.

16. Chhattisgarh ranked first in country in terms of providing employment under MGNREGA

- Chhattisgarh had ranked first in the country in terms of providing employment under MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act).
- As per an official release from the state government, in the current financial year 2020-21, employment of 16,06,84,000 man-days has been created so far, against the target of creating 15 crore man-days of employment, as sanctioned by the central government.
- The statement said that this year, a new record of providing employment for the highest number of man-days under MGNREGA has been set in the state, adding that more than 107 per cent of the given target for providing employment under MGNREGA has been achieved this year so far, with more than two weeks left for the completion of the financial year.

17. Delhi became EV capital as charging points to be installed after every 3 km

- The move to have a charging station at every three kilometres will build confidence among people to go for EVs and pave the way for making Delhi the EV capital of India.
- The government has already floated a tender to build 100 public charging stations with 500 charging points at prominent locations. These will be operational by December.

18. Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill 2021 introduced in Lok Sabha

- Screen Grab (Lok Sabha TV) Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill 2021 was introduced in the Lok Sabha. Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani introduced the Bill which seeks to amend the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.
- The amendments include authorizing District Magistrate including Additional District Magistrate to issue adoption orders to ensure speedy disposal of cases and enhance accountability. Defining eligibility parameters for appointment of Child Welfare Committee members and categorizing previously undefined offences as serious offences are some of the other aspects of the Bill.
- The Marine Aids to Navigation Bill 2021 was also introduced in the House. The Bill provides for the development, maintenance and management of aids to navigation in India for training and certification of operators of aids to navigation. The Bill was introduced by Minister of State for Ports and Shipping Manshukh Mandaviya.

19. President Ram Nath Kovind took part in Jagran Forum programme at Varanasi

- President Ram Nath Kovind, who is on a three-day visit to Uttar Pradesh, was took part in a programme - Jagran Forum at Varanasi organised by a Media House. President reached Varanasi and participated in various programmes in Varanasi, Sonbhadra and Mirzapur districts.
- President Ram Nath Kovind will inaugurate a program on "Ganga, Environment and Indian Culture" by Jagran Forum this morning. This discussion programme will highlight the different development works carried out by the Yogi Adityanath-led BJP government for the welfare of the state. There will be five sessions in the programme where officers of several converted departments will also be present.

20. "Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan" programme held at J&K's Budgam

- In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, a day-long "Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan" programme was held at Budgam.
- The event was inaugurated by District Development Commissioner Shahbaz Ahmad Mirza and was jointly organized by Social Welfare Department and District Administration in collaboration with the Department of Health and many NGOs.
- Speaking on the occasion, the DDC said that relentless efforts and commitment is required to take the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, a result oriented campaign.
- He said drug addiction has the capacity of devastating the future of our young generation. He said that we jointly have to share the responsibility in keeping vigil at our wards and their close ones to prevent them from getting into this menace.

21. India-Finland Virtual Summit 2021 held on 16th March

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of the Republic of Finland H.E. Ms. Sanna Marin held a Virtual Summit held on 16th March and discussed the entire gamut of bilateral issues as well as other regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.
- Both leaders noted that the close relations between India and Finland were based on shared values of democracy, rule of law, equality, freedom of speech, and respect for human rights. They reaffirmed their strong commitment to work for multilateralism, a rules-based international order, sustainable development, and combating climate change.
- The two leaders reviewed the ongoing bilateral engagements and expressed their desire to further expand and diversify the relationship across sectors such as trade and investment, innovation, education, emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence, 5G/6G, and quantum computing.

22.Hurun India Wealth Report 2020 announced on 16th March

- Hurun India Wealth Report 2020 released has identified a novel household category in India – the ‘New Middle Class’ – with an average savings of Rs. 20-lakh per annum. These households, the report says, have major allocation towards physical assets such as primary residential property and automobiles. Hurun India pegs the total number of such cumulative households in India at 633,000.
- There are 412,000 dollar-millionaire households / affluent households in India with a net worth of at least Rs.7 crore. Hurun Rich Listers have a wealth of Rs.1,000 crore, the report says, and pegs the number of such cumulative households in India at 3,000. At the other end of the spectrum is the ‘Indian middle class’ that has earnings of over Rs. 2.5 lakh per annum and a net worth of less than Rs.7 crore.

23.New Delhi is world’s most polluted capital for third straight year

- New Delhi was the world’s most polluted capital for the third straight year in 2020, according to IQAir, a Swiss group that measures air quality levels based on the concentration of lung-damaging airborne particles known as PM2.5.
- India was home to 35 of the world’s 50 most polluted cities, according to IQAir’s 2020 World Air Quality Report, which gathered data for 106 countries. The findings were based on the country’s annual average of particulate matter PM2.5, airborne particles with less than 2.5 microns in diameter. Prolonged exposure to PM2.5 can lead to deadly diseases, including cancer and cardiac problems.
- In 2020, New Delhi’s average annual concentration of PM2.5 in a cubic meter of air was 84.1, more than double the level of Beijing, which averaged 37.5 during the year, making it the 14th most polluted city in the world. Air pollution caused an estimated 54,000 premature deaths in New Delhi in 2020.

24.Government forms Experts Committee for Startup India Seed Fund Scheme

- The government has constituted an experts advisory committee which will be responsible for the overall execution and monitoring of the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme.
- The committee will evaluate and select incubators for allotment of funds under the scheme, monitor progress and take all necessary measures for efficient utilisation of funds towards fulfilment of objectives of the scheme.
- DPIIT had in February notified the operational guidelines to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry and commercialization.

25.6th India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Women's Forum virtually held on 16th March

- Sixth India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Women's Forum meeting was held virtually on 16th March, 2021. Led by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, the event witnessed participation of Ministers and officials responsible for Women Affairs of IBSA Countries.
- The India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Trilateral Cooperation Forum is a unique platform which brings together India, Brazil and South Africa, three large democracies and major economies from three different continents. All three partners are developing pluralistic, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious nations.
- IBSA is committed to inclusive sustainable development, in pursuit of the well-being for their citizens and those from the other developing nations. The principles, norms and values underpinning the IBSA Dialogue Forum are participatory democracy, respect for human rights, the Rule of Law and the strengthening of multilateralism.

26.India's weapon imports fell by 33% in last five years but remains world's second-largest arms importer

- India's arms imports fell by 33% between 2011-2015 and 2016-2020, but it continues in the strategically-vulnerable position of being the world's second-largest arms importer just behind Saudi Arabia.
- India accounted for 9.5% of the total global arms imports during 2016-2020, as per the latest data on international arms transfers released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on Monday.
- Saudi Arabia topped the list of arms importers (11%), followed by India, Egypt (5.8%), Australia (5.1%) and China (4.7%). Pakistan was placed at the 10th (2.7%) position. India's top three arms suppliers during 2016-2020 were Russia (49%), France (18%) and Israel (13%), followed by the US in the fourth place.

27.Punjab Government started crop procurement operations from April 10

- In view of the Covid spike in the state, the Punjab Government started the crop procurement operations from April 10 this year. The decision to

delay the procurement was taken at a Covid review meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh at Chandigarh.

- Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Minister Bharat Bhushan Ashu said in the meeting that the department needed more time to make arrangements to ensure safe procurement amid the surge in Covid cases.

28.NTPC Bongaigaon for 1st time achieved more than 100% PLF in Assam

- NTPC Bongaigaon, Assam for the 1st time achieved more than 100% Plant Load Factor (PLF) since commissioning of all its units. The station also achieved the highest ever generation of 18.2499 MUs on 18th March, 2021 with 101.39% PLF.
- The individual units I and II have crossed 100% and Unit III achieved a PLF of 98.5% PLF. The station also achieved the highest ever monthly Declared Capacity (DC) of 103.3% in June-2020. The plant also achieved the highest ever Quarterly DC of 103.05% in Q1 of the financial year which is the best among all NTPC stations.

29.Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga had started Yoga Volunteer Training Programme on Common Yoga Protocol from February

- The Ministry of AYUSH through its autonomous body- Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi has started a Yoga Volunteer Training Programme on Common Yoga Protocol (CYP) from 1st of February this year.
- The program divides the Yoga Protocol into short modules like appreciation, introduction and volunteer program allowing persons of varying capabilities to gradually learn and adopt Yoga. It is a monthly training module and would be repeated every month till month of June. In a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, AYUSH Minister Kiren Rijiju said that the objective of the programme is to increase mass awareness about the health benefits of Yoga as well as to introduce basic well-being principles and practices to common people. He said, the Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy, New Delhi conducts research and development in the field of Yoga and Naturopathy.

30.Jharkhand's SAAMAR campaign to fight malnutrition in the state

- The Jharkhand government announced the launch of SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction) campaign to tackle malnutrition in the state. The campaign aims to identify anemic women and malnourished children and converge various departments to effectively deal with the problem in a state where malnutrition has been a major problem.
- The recent Economic Survey quoted The Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey conducted in the state during March 2017 to July 2017 stating that based on the sample data, 36% of under five years of age are stunted—height for age, 29% are affected from Wasting—weight for

height, and 45% are underweight—weight for age, indicating the status of under-nutrition.

31.Over 67.5 million people brought back from around the world under Vande Bharat mission

- More than 67.5 million people have been brought back from around the world under the Vande Bharat mission so far.
- India commenced one of the world's largest evacuation operations from 7th May last year to bring back stranded Indians from abroad. Initially, Air India and its subsidiary Air India Express played a key role in the operations. Afterwards, other air carriers were allowed to take part in the programme. Besides, aerial evacuation, ships were also used to bring back Indian citizens.

32.Lok Sabha passed Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill

- Lok Sabha has passed the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2021. The Bill seeks to modify the list of Scheduled Castes in Tamil Nadu. The Bill replaces the entry for the Devendrakulathan community with Devendrakula Velalar which includes Devendrakulathan, Kalladi, Kudumban, Pallan, Pannadi and Vathiriyar.
- Speaking on the Bill, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawar Chand Gehlot said that no caste is being included and omitted with this legislation. Only the regrouping of some castes will be done so that the aspiration of these communities can be fulfilled.
- The government is committed towards the welfare of the Scheduled Caste and several historic decisions were taken in this regard. He said, budgetary allocation has increased which will benefit the schemes related to the welfare of scheduled castes. He informed that Central government has devised a new formula for the post matric scholarship which will benefit four crore scheduled caste students.

33.India slipped to 56th rank globally basis on-year housing price growth

- India slipped 13 spots lower, touching the 56th rank, in the global home price index in the fourth and last quarter of the financial year, against its 43rd rank in the same quarter previous fiscal. According to a recent research report 'Global House Price Index Q4 2020' released by property consultant Knight Frank, the country reported a decline of 3.6 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in home prices.
- According to Knight Frank's report, during the 12-month change for the period Q4 or fourth quarter of 2019 - Q4 or fourth quarter of 2020, Turkey continues to lead the global ranking with prices up by 30.3 per cent year-on-year. This was followed by New Zealand at 18.6 per cent year-on-year and Slovakia at 16.0 per cent year-on-year. The data showed that India was the weakest-performing country in the fourth

quarter of the fiscal, with a decline of 3.6 per cent year-on-year in home prices, followed by Morocco with a drop of 3.3 per cent year-on-year.

34. Maharashtra farmers started fresh fruit cake ‘movement’ to sustain during pandemic

- Fruit growers in rural Maharashtra have started an innovative ‘movement’ to promote fresh fruit cakes as a healthier option, instead of the traditional bakery-made cakes, to celebrate birthdays and other special occasions.
- According to farmers and agrarian experts, the aim of this ‘spontaneous’ movement, which is gaining popularity on social media, is to encourage farmers and their families to increase the intake of fruits in their diet and to find a new way of selling their produce in the times of COVID-19.
- As part of the movement, farmers, their families and various organisations of cultivators are encouraging cakes made locally using fruits like watermelon, muskmelon, grapes, orange, pineapple and banana while celebrating special events.

35. Bihar becomes 1st state to have own ethanol policy for bio-fuel

- The state industries minister, Syed Shahnawaz Hussain, on 19th March launched the much-touted Ethanol Production Promotion Policy, 2021. The state cabinet approved it, making Bihar the first state in the country to have an ethanol promotion policy under the National Policy of Biofuels, 2018.
- The state ethanol policy allows the extraction of ethanol, which was restricted to sugarcane, from surplus quantities of maize as well. An investor will get an additional government subsidy of 15% of the cost of plant and machinery up to a maximum of Rs.5 crore, in addition to the existing incentives under the Bihar Industrial Investment Promotion Policy, 2016.

36. PM Modi launched 'Catch the Rain' campaign, MGNREGA funds be spent for rainwater conservation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain' campaign for conserving water and stressed that every penny of MGNREGA funds be spent on rainwater conservation till the monsoon arrives.
- He said the more the rainwater is conserved, the less will be the dependence on groundwater.
- The prime minister urged that every penny of MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) funds be spent on rainwater conservation till the monsoon arrives.

37. Union Cabinet approved MoU between India's UPSC and Afghanistan's IARCSC

- Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Union Public Service Commission

(UPSC), India and Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Services Commission (IARCSC), Afghanistan.

- The MoU will strengthen the relationship between IARCSC and UPSC.
- It will facilitate sharing of experience and expertise of both the institutions in the area of recruitment.
- The MoU includes exchange of information and expertise including books, manuals and other documents which are not of a confidential nature and sharing of expertise in the use of Information Technology (IT) for the preparation of written examinations and holding of Computer Based Recruitment Tests and Online Examinations.

38. Union Education Minister inaugurated Shaheed Bhagat Singh Smarak in New Delhi on 23rd March

- University of Delhi organized a programme to pay homage and commemorate 90 years of martyrdom of our national icons of the Indian National Movement -Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru on 'Shaheed Diwas' in the Convention Hall of the Viceregal Lodge on 23rd March, 2021.
- To honour and value the sacrifices made by the National heroes and to drive out lessons of inspiration from their lives and times, the Government of India has declared 23rd March as 'Shaheed Diwas'. History holds important lessons for the humanity and commemorating such events remind ourselves of the price paid by our ancestors for the freedom we enjoy today. Only by understanding its value we can keep the flame of freedom ignited among the people.

39. Danish Red Cross launched Volcano Catastrophe bond

- The Danish Red Cross had launched a catastrophe bond for volcano-related disasters with the support of several financial firms, the groups.
- The \$3 million bond will enable the disaster relief agency to get aid quickly to those suffering following the eruption of 10 named volcanoes, in Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Indonesia and Mexico.
- Catastrophe bonds offer investors high yields, but do not pay out if a named catastrophe occurs. They typically cover areas prone to hurricanes and typhoons.

40. Andhra Pradesh to launch 'India's first govt-run ambulance network' for animals

- To further boost the animal husbandry and veterinary sector in Andhra Pradesh, the state government has now decided to set up "India's first government-run ambulance network" for animals.
- Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has made one of its main missions to help reach out to the distressed animals and provide them with proper animal healthcare.

- The Animal Husbandry Department has been further directed to set up one Mobile Ambulance Veterinary Clinic at every assembly constituency.
- A total of 175 mobile ambulances (veterinary) clinics will be placed at Assembly Constituency Level on the lines of 108 Services for providing Veterinary services at the doorstep.

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41. CJI SA Bobde recommended Justice NV Ramana as his successor

- Chief Justice of India SA Bobde had recommended the name of the second senior-most judge in the Supreme Court, Justice N V Ramana as his successor.
- Justice Bobde, who demits office on April 23, apparently closed in-house inquiry against Justice Ramana on a complaint filed by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy.
- After a formal approval of the recommendation by the Union government, Justice Ramana would become the 48th Chief Justice of India on April 24 with the superannuation of Justice Bobde.
- Justice Bobde followed the Memorandum of Procedure in recommending the name of the second senior-most judge, Justice Ramana as the next CJI. According to norms, communication is sent by the outgoing CJI, recommending the name of his successor.

42. India ranked 40th on International Intellectual Property Index

- India ranked 40 among 53 global economies on the latest annual edition of the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index released.
- Released annually by the US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC), the Index evaluates Intellectual Property rights in 53 global economies from patent and copyright policies to commercialization of IP assets and ratification of international treaties.
- The overall global IP environment improved in 2020, with positive score increasing in 32 of the 53 economies measured by the IP Index. This is the ninth IP index released by the GIPC.

43. AYUSH Ministry set up interdisciplinary team to explore potential of Yoga

- The Ministry of AYUSH has set up an interdisciplinary team of experts to explore the potential of Yoga as a productivity enhancing tool for the population. The committee is chaired by H. R Nagendra, Chancellor, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana and its members include representatives from AIIMS New Delhi, IIM Bangalore, IIT Bombay, various leading Yoga institutions, the corporate sector and the AYUSH Ministry.
- The committee will submit its preliminary recommendations by May this year. In the inception meeting held yesterday, the committee recognised that in the past five years, there has been an unprecedented Global surge in the popularity of Yoga. But the productivity dimension of Yoga - its role at the workplace in offering benefits to employees to perform better - remains unexplored to a large extent.

44.NHAI to develop over 600 wayside amenities across 22 states

- In a major move to improve the commuting experience on National Highways for both passengers and truckers, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will develop world-class 'Wayside Amenities' at more than 600 locations.
- It will be built across 22 states along the National Highways in the next five years, out of which 130 are targeted for development in 2021-22. NHAI has already invited bids to develop 120 such wayside amenities.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS & FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1.Xi Jinping claimed complete victory in eradicating absolute poverty in China

- President Xi Jinping declared that China has achieved a "complete victory" in its fight against absolute poverty by lifting over 770 million people out of it in the last four decades, calling it another "miracle" created by the world's most populated country.
- Absolute poverty has been eradicated in China, Xi announced while addressing a gathering held here to mark the country's accomplishments in poverty alleviation and honour its model poverty fighters.
- Xi said that all poor people in rural areas have been lifted out of poverty.
- With this, China, which has a population of around 1.4 billion, has achieved the UN goal of poverty eradication 10 years ahead of the 2030 deadline, he said.

2.China celebrated traditional 'Lantern Festival'

- China was celebrated its traditional Lantern festival. Celebrated on the 15th day of the first Chinese lunar month, the Lantern Festival traditionally marks the end of the Chinese New Year also known as 'Spring Festival' period.
- In 2021, China ushered into Lunar New Year - the 'Year of the Ox' on 12th February.

- The Lantern Festival is also the first full moon night in the Chinese calendar, marking the return of spring and symbolizing the reunion of family.

3. Pakistan to remain on FATF ‘greylist’

- Global money laundering watchdog the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) decided to keep Pakistan on its terrorism financing “grey list”.
- In an online press briefing from Paris, FATF President Marcus Pleyer said Islamabad had made progress but was yet to complete its action plan to overcome deficiencies in its combating of money laundering and terrorism financing.
- FATF said Islamabad should demonstrate effective implementation of targeted financial sanctions against all 1267 and 1373 designated terrorists.
- Pakistan must demonstrate in taking action against UN-designated terrorists and their associates.

4. Israel officially received first ever UAE ambassador

- Israel's president formally received the first-ever ambassador from the United Arab Emirates, following last year's historic agreement between the countries to normalise ties. UAE envoy Mohamed Al Khaja delivered his credentials to Israeli President Reuven Rivlin at a ceremony in Jerusalem yesterday. The UAE was the first country to agree to establish full diplomatic relations with the Jewish state under the Abraham Accords, a pact brokered by former US president Donald Trump.
- Khaja met Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi in Jerusalem, who wished him success in his historic mission.
- Israel opened its UAE embassy in January, with veteran diplomat Eitan Na'eh heading the Abu Dhabi mission. Israel and the UAE have already signed treaties on direct flights and visa-free travel, along with accords on investment protection, science and technology.

5. NHAI created world record by constructing 25.54 km highway in 18 hours

- The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) completed a single lane of the four-lane stretch of 25.54 km being developed between Solapur-Vijayapur highways in 18 hours. The highway is a part of the Bengaluru-Vijayapura-Aurangabad-Gwalior corridor and this would reduce the time of travellers significantly.
- This record will be recorded in the 'Limca Book of Records’.
- About 500 contractual workers worked hard for the project.
- Currently 110 km of Solapur-Vijayapur highway is in progress which will be completed by October 2021.

6. Australia building world's first platypus sanctuary

- Australian conservationists unveiled plans to build the world's first refuge for the platypus, to promote breeding and rehabilitation as the duck-billed mammal faces extinction due to climate change.
- The Taronga Conservation Society Australia and the New South Wales State government said they would build the specialist facility, mostly ponds and burrows for the semi-aquatic creatures, at a zoo 391 km (243 miles) from Sydney, by 2022, which could house up to 65 platypuses.
- Concerns about the platypus going extinct have been heightened since once-in-a-generation wildfires devastated 12.6 million hectares (31 million acres) of bush, nearly the size of Greece, in late 2019 and early 2020.
- Scientists estimate nearly three billion animals died in what the Prime Minister called the country's "black summer". A government inquiry found bushfires would likely occur more often because of warming temperatures.

7. UNGA adopted India-led resolution to declare 2023 as International Year of Millets

- The UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted by consensus a resolution sponsored by India and supported by over 70 nations declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets, aimed at raising awareness about the health benefits of the grain and their suitability for cultivation under changing climatic conditions.
- The resolution titled 'International Year of Millets 2023' was initiated by India with Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia and Senegal and was co-sponsored by over 70 nations.
- The 193-member General Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution, declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets.

8. Bangladesh launched national app portal bdapps.com

- The Government of Bangladesh had launched its national app portal bdapps.com.
- The agreement between the ICT division of the government of Bangladesh and the telecom company Robi was signed in Dhaka.
- Through this agreement, BDApps will be established as the hub of the ICT division for application developers.
- Under the agreement, the ICT division will collaborate with bdapps to organise exclusive boot camps and software development events in the country.
- Launching the app portal as the national app portal, ICT minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak said that app developers from any organisation can use this platform to upload their apps.

9. Switzerland votes to ban burqa, niqab in public places

- Voters in Switzerland narrowly backed a proposal to ban full-face coverings like burqa and niqab in public places, except sites of worship,

BBC reported. The right-wing Swiss People's Party put across the proposal.

- Provisional results of the vote, which the government released, showed that 51.21% voters supported the proposal. Switzerland's direct democracy system allows the people to vote on any topic as long as it collects 1 lakh signatures.
- A study by the University of Lucerne in Switzerland showed that only around 30 women in the country wear the niqab, and practically no one wears a burqa.

10.US President Joe Biden signs 1.9 trillion dollar coronavirus rescue package into law

- Screen Grab US President Joe Biden has signed the 1.9 trillion dollar coronavirus rescue package into law, marking a significant legislative accomplishment as the new administration looks to shepherd the country through the pandemic.
- President Biden, who signed the bill alongside Vice President Kamala Harris in the Oval Office, characterized the measure as historic legislation aimed at rebuilding the backbone of this country.
- The passage of the bill marked the first major legislative achievement of the new administration and a Congress that is now under full Democratic control, with narrow majorities in the House and Senate.

11.US, Chinese Diplomats Clash in High-Level Meeting of Biden Administration

- The first high-level U.S.-China meeting of the Biden administration got off to a fiery start, with both sides leveling sharp rebukes of the others' policies in a rare public display that underscored the level of bilateral tension.
- The run-up to the talks in Anchorage, Alaska, which followed visits by U.S. officials to allies Japan and South Korea, was marked by a flurry of moves by Washington that showed it was taking a tough stance, and by blunt talk from Beijing

12.SCO countries will have military exercises for the first time in Pakistan

- An anti-terrorism exercise is scheduled to take place between the armies of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member countries by the end of this year, but no decision has yet been taken by the Indian Army to join it. This multinational military exercise 'Pabbi Anti-Terror 2021' is to take place in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where Osama was killed in a US operation and during the Balakot strike in 2019, India destroyed camps of Jaish terrorists.
- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has members in India, Pakistan, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Every year, the armies of these countries take part in common maneuvers under the leadership of Russia. Till now this exercise has been

done in Russia but this is the first time that military exercises between SCO countries are going to take place in Russia outside Russia. However, it is not yet clear from the Indian Army whether it will participate in this 'Pabbi Anti-Terror 2021'.

NEW APPOINTMENTS AND PERSON IN NEWS

1. Sharad Goklani appointed as new President & CTO of AU Small Finance Bank

- AU Small Finance Bank had appointed Sharad Goklani as President & CTO. He will be based out of Jaipur and will report to the company's CIO, Ankur Tripathi.
- In his new role, Goklani would be responsible for ensuring technology deployment and adoption across the bank.
- "Moreover, given the diverse personas of our customer base, as a CTO of a tech-first Bank, Mr. Goklani would be responsible for creating technology interfaces, which are adaptable and flexible enabling tailor-made services for our unique set of customers," the company told ETCIO.

2. Maharashtra Shiv Sena Minister Sanjay Rathod resigned

- Amid furious Opposition clamour, Maharashtra Forest Minister and Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Rathod on Sunday resigned from the Maharashtra cabinet for his alleged connection with the Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Rathod from the nomadic Banjara community in Pune.
- Mr. Rathod, who has been under fire from the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for nearly three weeks following the incident, tendered his resignation to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday.
- While Mr. Thackeray said that he had accepted the Minister's resignation, he criticised the Opposition for attempting to lynch Mr. Rathod before the completion of an impartial probe.
- Stating that the affair was "a ploy" to defame him, Mr. Rathod said that he would assist in the police investigation even as former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, the BJP's Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, hit out at the Maharashtra Police and Mr. Thackeray's handling of the affair.

3. Former France President Nicolas Sarkozy convicted of corruption

- In France, Former President Nicolas Sarkozy had been convicted of corruption.
- Judges found Sarkozy guilty of trying to bribe a judge and of influence-peddling today and sentenced him to three years in jail, with two years suspended.
- Sarkozy, who led France from 2007 to 2012, has denied any wrongdoing, saying he was the victim of a witch-hunt by financial prosecutors. He has 10 days to appeal the ruling.

4. Manpreet Vohra appointed India's High Commissioner to Australia

- Senior diplomat Manpreet Vohra had been appointed as India's next High Commissioner to Australia, the Ministry of External Affairs said.
- Vohra, a 1988-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, is at present Ambassador of India to Mexico. He is expected to take up the assignment shortly, the MEA said.
- Vohra's appointment comes at a time when the India-Australia ties are at an upswing and the two countries are stepping up cooperation particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

5. Neera Tanden withdraws nomination to lead budget office

- The Biden administration will stop pursuing the nomination of Indian American Neera Tanden for Director of the powerful Office of Management & Budget (OMB), after Ms. Tanden wrote to the President withdrawing her nomination.
- It had increasingly become clear that Ms. Tanden could not win enough support in an evenly divided Senate. Her strongly worded tweets were central to the opposition to her candidacy from Senators on both sides of the aisle, as was her work at the Centre for American Progress, a liberal think tank that Ms. Tanden has led.
- Had she won the nomination, Ms. Tanden would have become the first person of colour to lead the White House budget office, which decides funding priorities and ensures that agency rules and proposed legislation are in sync with the administration's policies and budget.

6. Elon Musk topped Hurun Global Rich List, Mukesh Ambani ranked eighth

- In the Hurun Global Rich List published, Mukesh Ambani ranked eighth, while Tesla CEO Elon Musk is on the top. The list ranked 3,228 billionaires from 68 countries.
- Bloomberg Billionaires Index reported that in 2020, Ambani's wealth increased to \$83 billion. He is also the richest person in Asia since China's Zhong Shanshan lost \$22 billion last week.
- India now has 209 billionaires, of which 177 reside in the country. Mumbai alone houses 60 billionaires. Meanwhile, 40 billionaires call Delhi home, whereas Bengaluru has another 22.

7. Mary Kom appointed as Chairperson of AIBA's champions & veterans committee

- Six-time world champion pugilist Mary Kom had been appointed as the Chairperson of the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) champions and veterans committee.
- AIBA President Umar Kremlyov said this in a letter to the 2012 Olympic bronze-medalist. Mary Kom was elected by the Board of Directors of AIBA.
- The Committee, formed in December last year, consists of most respected worldwide boxing veterans and champions who have achieved significant results and who are ready to share their experience.

- Mary Kom thanked AIBA President and said she will give her best at the position.

8.Indian-American Naureen Hassan appointed first Vice President, COO of New York Federal Bank

- Indian-American financial services industry veteran Naureen Hassan has been appointed as the first Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.
- Hassan's appointment has been approved by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and her innings as the first Vice President and COO will begin from March 15.
- As the first vice president, Hassan will be the New York Fed's second ranking officer and an alternative voting member of the Federal Open Market Committee. Hassan's acumen in strategy, digital transformation, cyber security and regulatory/risk management is well known.

9.Bangladesh had appointed Tashnuva Anan Shishir first transgender newsreader

- A private news channel had appointed Bangladesh's first transgender news presenter. Tashnuva Anan Shishir was started presenting news for Boishakhi TV from the International Women's Day on March 8. This was announced by the TV news channel.
- The Boishakhi TV authorities told media that the appointment of the transgender newscaster was done on the occasion of 50 years of liberation of Bangladesh as it was the most neglected population of the country.
- The TV channel has appointed another transgender Nusrat Mau as one of the main characters for the regular drama section of the TV channel's entertainment wing.
- Tashnuva Anan is a model and actor who began her career in theatre group Natua in 2007. She has been actively associated with theatre in Bangladesh with appearances in many popular productions.

10.Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat Resigned

- Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat resigned today as the state's ruling BJP opted for course-correction a year before polls, amid growing resentment in the ranks. His exit was certain after his trip to Delhi, where he had met with the BJP leadership.
- Mr. Rawat, 60, handed in his resignation to Governor Baby Rani Maurya just days short of completing four years in power, becoming the latest in Uttarakhand's legacy of Chief Ministers exiting before term. A first-timer, he was chosen by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the BJP swept the Uttarakhand election in 2017, winning 57 seats in the 69-member assembly. The Congress won just 11 seats.
- According to reports, the party is mulling bringing in a deputy Chief Minister, the frontrunners for the post include State Education Minister Dhan Singh Rawat, MP Ajay Bhatt and Satpal Maharaj.

11. Joan Laporta won Barcelona Presidential Election

- Joan Laporta has won the race to become Barcelona's new president, with the 58-year-old seeing off competition from Victor Font and Antoni Freixa.
- Laporta, who held the post from 2003 to 2010, was the favourite to come out, and those predictions proved correct.
- An exit poll conducted by Catalan television station TV3 projected Laporta to succeed with 58.3 per cent of the vote over Font (31.3) and Freixa (9.3).
- The final figures were not too far off – Laporta claiming 54.28 per cent of the vote (30,184 votes). In total, there were 51,983 valid votes.

12. CAG Girish Murmu appointed Chairman of UN Panel of External Auditors again

- Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) Girish Chandra Murmu have been re-appointed as the Chairman of the Panel of External Auditors of the United Nations for the year 2021.
- The CAG of India was initially elected as Chairman of the Panel for 2020.
- Presently, the panel consists of 13 countries -- India, Germany, Chile, China, United Kingdom, France, Philippines, Switzerland, Italy, Ghana, Indonesia, Canada and Russia.
- As the Chairman, the CAG of India plays a key role in achieving the Panel's objective of greater degree of collaboration and coordination, and exchange of information on audit methods and findings, among the Panel members, said an official statement.

13. Imran Amin Siddiqui appointed as ED of Indian Bank

- Imran Amin Siddiqui, General Manager of Indian Bank, had been appointed as the Executive Director of the state-owned lender.
- He has been appointed for a period of three years with effect from the date of assumption of office, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- Siddiqui has assumed the office of Executive Director of the Bank with effect from March 10, 2021.
- He's an engineering graduate from HBTU, Kanpur and a Certified Associate of Indian Institute of Bankers.
- He started his banking career with erstwhile Allahabad Bank, which is now merged with Indian Bank, as a SSI Field Officer in December, 1987. He has diversified experience of more than 33 years in field of banking.

14. Jordan Health Minister stepped down after deaths in virus ward

- Jordan's Health Minister stepped down after at least six patients in a hospital COVID-19 patient ward died due to a shortage of oxygen supplies, state media reported.
- Jordanian Prime Minister Bisher al-Khasawneh ordered an investigation into the deaths early Saturday morning at a government hospital in the town of Salt, 20 kilometers (13 miles) north of the capital Amman.

- Jordan, home to 10 million people, is grappling with surging coronavirus infections and deaths and struggling to secure vaccines.
- About 150 relatives of the patients gathered outside the hospital, which was surrounded by a large deployment of police and security officers, who prevented the families from entering.

15. Gyanwant Singh appointed as Director Security, West Bengal

- Gyanwant Singh has been appointed as the Director Security, West Bengal. He was posted as the Additional Director Security. ECI ordered removal of Vivek Sahay from the post of Director Security and directed the state government to keep him suspended and frame charges against him within a week for failing in discharge of his primary duty as Director Security to protect the Z protectee in the Nandigram incident.
- It may be recalled that the TMC chief and Chief Minister of the state Mamata Banerjee had suffered injury in Nandigram on last Wednesday during campaigning. The DM and SP of East Medinipur district had also been changed by the ECI.

16. PM Modi's Principal Adviser P K Sinha resigned on personal grounds

- Pradeep Kumar Sinha, Principal Adviser to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has resigned from his position citing personal reasons.
- Former Cabinet Secretary Sinha, a retired IAS officer (1977 batch) of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, was appointed officer on special duty in the PMO in August 2019 after then principal secretary to the PM Nripendra Mishra requested to be relieved of his charge.
- In September 2019 Sinha was made Principal Adviser to the PM and has since continued in his post.

17. MA Ganapathy appointed NSG Chief and Kuldiep Singh to head CRPF

- Senior IPS officers M A Ganapathy and Kuldiep Singh were on 16th March, 2021 appointed Director General of National Security Guard and the Central Reserve Police Force, respectively, according to a Personnel Ministry order.
- Ganapathy, a 1986 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Uttarakhand cadre, is currently Director General, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS).
- Kuldiep Singh, a 1986 batch IPS officer of the West Bengal cadre, is presently the Special DG, CRPF.

18. Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan appointed as Chairman of international body Stop TB Partnership Board

- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan has been appointed as the Chairman of the international body Stop TB Partnership Board. He was appointed in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the movement to eradicate Tuberculosis from India by

2025. Dr. Harsh Vardhan will serve a three-year term, commencing from July this year.

- The Stop TB Partnership is a unique international body with the power to align actors all over the world in the fight against TB. The participation of a wide range of constituencies gives this global body the credibility and the broad range of medical, social and financial expertise needed to defeat TB. The Partnership's vision is a TB-free world.

19. Ajay Mathur takes over as Director General of International Solar Alliance

- Ajay Mathur on 15th March, 2021 assumed office as the Director General of the International Solar Alliance (ISA). On February 15, the Special Assembly of the ISA elected Ajay Mathur as the Director General. The appointment is for four years which can be renewed for an additional term.
- He replaced Upendra Tripathy, who completed his term on 14th March. Tripathy served as the Director General since 2017.
- India had proposed Mathur's candidature which was endorsed by the Special Assembly.
- Mathur brings a wealth of leadership and expertise across all key areas of energy transition, from policy, research, and technology commercialization to financing, international cooperation and institutional development, according to the statement.
- He is a member of the Prime Minister's Council on climate change.

20. External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar holds talks with Kuwaiti counterpart

- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on 18th March, 2021 held wide-ranging talks with his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Ahmed Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah to elevate bilateral relations.
- The Kuwaiti foreign minister arrived here on Wednesday evening on a nearly 18-hour visit.
- Historically, India-Kuwaiti ties have always had an important trade dimension. India has consistently been among the top trading partners of Kuwait.
- In the financial year 2019-20, Kuwait was the 10th largest oil supplier to India and it met about 3.8 per cent of India's energy needs.
- The total bilateral trade with Kuwait during 2019-20 was USD 10.86 billion, according to official data.

21. Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina inaugurates Amar Ekushey book fair in Dhaka

- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the Amar Ekushey book fair in Dhaka on 18th March, 2021.
- Participating in the inaugural event through video conferencing Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged upon all to develop the habit of book reading.

- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also released the book 'New China 1952' which is the English translation of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib's book 'Amar Dekha Naya Chin'.
- She also distributed prizes among the winners of the Bangla Academy Literary Award 2020.
- The theme of this year's book fair is the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and golden jubilee of independence.

22.Samia Suluhu Hassan becomes Tanzania's first woman president

- Tanzania's Samia Suluhu Hassan was on 19th March, 2021 sworn in as the country's first female president after the sudden death of John Magufuli from an illness shrouded in mystery.
- Hassan, 61, a soft-spoken Muslim woman from the island of Zanzibar, will finish Magufuli's second five-year term, set to run until 2025.
- Wearing a bright red headscarf, Hassan was sworn in as the country's sixth president, at a ceremony in Dar es Salaam, where neither she nor the majority of attendees wore a mask, in the COVID-sceptic nation.

23.President appointed Shri Narendra Kumar Vyas and Shri Naresh Kumar Chandravanshi, as Additional Judges of Chhattisgarh High Court

- The President of India, in exercise of the power conferred by clause (1) of Article 224 of the Constitution Of India, appointed Shri Narendra Kumar Vyas, and Shri Naresh Kumar Chandravanshi, as the Additional Judges of the Chhattisgarh High Court, for a period of two years. A notification in this regard was issued by Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice and Government of India.
- Shri Narendra Kumar Vyas, B.Sc., L.L.B. had enrolled as Advocate on 16.03.1996. He has over 23 years of experience. He has practiced in Labour Court, Industrial Court, District Court, Bilaspur, Raigarh, Janjgeer-Champa, EPF Tribunal and Central Government Industrial Tribunal cum Labour Court during period 1996 to 2002 and after that has been practicing in the Chhattisgarh High Court till date.

24.Indian-American Dr. Vivek Murthy appointed Surgeon General for Second time by US Senate

- American physician and former vice admiral in the Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Dr. Vivek Murthy has been elected as America's surgeon general under the Biden administration Tuesday. Murthy who holds the position for the second time has now had the responsibility to help President Joe Biden in helping the US out of the pandemic situation that has worsened recently, like in many other nations.
- The Senate announced the decision declaring the vote, 57 to 43, that "was a much smoother rife for Dr. Murthy compared to 2014 when he was confirmed as a politically connected supporter of President Barack Obama, and would use his powers to tighten the gun control in the US" the leading US daily reported.

25. Mangal Prabhat Lodha named India's richest real estate developer by Hurun India

- Despite the COVID-19-led slowdown in the real estate sector, the total wealth of the 100 richest builders in India jumped a full 26 per cent year-on-year to Rs. 3,48, 660 crore, according to the GROHE Hurun India Real Estate Rich List 2020.
- According to the report, Mangal Prabhat Lodha of Macrotech Developers (Lodha Group), having a wealth of Rs. 44,270 crore, topped the list for the fourth year in a row. His wealth increased by 39 per cent in the year 2020. Lodha Group had the highest revenue from operations among all the real estate developers in India during the pandemic hit year 2020.
- He was followed by Rajiv Singh of DLF, who stood second in the GROHE Hurun India Real Estate Rich List with a wealth of Rs. 36,430 crore. Singh registered an increase of 45 per cent in wealth, backed by a 50 per cent rise in DLF's share price.

26. Saurabh Garg appointed as Senior Aadhar Body UIDAI Chief

- Senior bureaucrat Saurabh Garg has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) as part of a bureaucratic reshuffle affected by the Centre.
- Mr. Garg is at present serving in his cadre state Odisha. He is a 1991 batch IAS officer.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Mr. Garg as the CEO, UIDAI in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.
- Sanjeev Kumar, a 1991 batch IAS officer of Maharashtra cadre, has been appointed as the Chairman.
- Atish Chandra will be Chairman and Managing Director, Food Corporation of India in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.

27. Hardeep Singh Puri inaugurated airport in Andhra Pradesh's Kurnool

- Union Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri virtually inaugurated the Kurnool airport in Andhra Pradesh.
- Kurnool is the sixth airport in Andhra Pradesh to become functional after Kadapa, Visakhapatnam, Tirupati, Rajahmundry and Vijayawada.
- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy and senior officials of the Civil Aviation Ministry and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) were also present virtually at the event.
- The flight operations at Kurnool airport will commence from Sunday under the regional connectivity scheme UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik), the Civil Aviation Ministry's statement noted.

BANKING

1.FM Nirmala Sitharaman virtually attended G20 Central Bank Governors' meet

- Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had participated virtually in the First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting under the Italian Presidency to discuss policy actions for transformative and equitable recovery.
- The other issues on the agenda included global economic outlook, financial sector issues, financial inclusion and sustainable finance.
- Sitharaman spoke about India's policy response to the pandemic. She said that India's domestic policies have been based broadly on supporting citizens through measures such as credit guarantees, direct transfers, food guarantees, economic stimulus packages and accelerating structural reform.

2.Matam Venkata Rao assumed Charge as MD & CEO of Central Bank of India

- Matam Venkata Rao had taken charge as its new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer.
- Rao till now held the position of Executive Director at Canara Bank.
- His appointment is for a period of 3 years with effect from the date of assumption of office on or after March 1, 2021, or until further orders, whichever is earlier, Central Bank of India said in a regulatory filing.
- Born on July 3, 1965, Venkata Rao is a post graduate in agriculture from Sri Venkateshwara Agriculture College, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.
- He is a Certified Associate of Indian Institute of Bankers.
- As the Executive Director of Canara Bank for more than three years, he played a pivotal role in the bank's progress and in amalgamation of Syndicate Bank with Canara Bank.

3.Jaideep Bhatnagar took over as Principal DG, PIB

- Mr. Jaideep Bhatnagar has taken over as Principal Director General, Press Information Bureau.
- Mr. Bhatnagar is an Officer of the Indian Information Service belonging to 1986 Batch.
- He has earlier served in Doordarshan as Head of the Commercial, Sales and Marketing Division.
- He also served as Prasar Bharati Special Correspondent in West Asia.
- He later went on to head the News Services Division of All India Radio.
- Mr. Bhatnagar takes over from Mr. Kuldeep Singh Dhatwalia who has superannuated.

4.Govt amends Insurance Ombudsman Rules, Strengthens Mechanism to Protect Policyholders' Interests

- The government (2 March) notified comprehensive amendments to the Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017 with a view to improve the working of the Insurance Ombudsman mechanism to facilitate resolution of complaints regarding deficiencies in insurance services in a timely, cost-effective and impartial manner.
- The amended rules have enlarged the scope of complaints to Ombudsmen from only disputes earlier to deficiencies in service on the part of insurers, agents, brokers and other intermediaries.

5. World Bank to launch \$100 million guarantee scheme for solar rooftop projects

- The World Bank plans to introduce a \$100-million credit guarantee scheme to boost India's rooftop solar programme, which has not gained enough traction.
- The scheme will allow micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to avail concessional debt financing for setting up rooftop solar units, said two people aware of the development requesting anonymity.
- The World Bank scheme, along with State Bank of India (SBI) and the MSME ministry to accelerate adoption of rooftop solar units, will help MSMEs access credit of around \$1 billion.
- This assumes significance given that India added around 4 gigawatts (GW) of rooftop solar capacity out of its 40GW target by 2022. Rooftop solar installations are part of India's renewable energy target of 175GW to help reduce its carbon footprint by 33-35% from the 2005 levels, as part of global climate change transition commitments adopted by 195 countries in Paris in 2015.

6. EPFO keeps interest rate unchanged at 8.5% for FY21

- In a major relief for India's working class, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) had decided to keep interest rates on Provident Fund deposits for the financial year 2020-21 unchanged at 8.5 per cent.
- On Thursday, the Central Board of Trustees, EPF, recommended 8.50 per cent annual rate of interest to be credited on EPF accumulations in members' accounts for the financial year 2020-21.
- The interest rate would be officially notified in the government gazette following which EPFO would credit the rate of interest into the subscribers' accounts.

7. HDFC ERGO's new Business Kisht Suraksha to protect MFIs from natural calamities

- HDFC ERGO General Insurance has introduced Business Kisht Suraksha — a unique cover aimed at protecting the balance sheet of MFIs, financial institutions and banks in the event of a catastrophe or natural disaster.

- It aims to limit the impacts on the balance sheet of financial institutions, due to non-payment of EMIs by borrowers, resulting out of listed calamities such as floods, earthquakes, cyclones, etc.
- Business Kisht as a product can be customised as per the needs of an individual MFI or financial institution.

8. SEBI cancelled Sahara India Financial Corp's registration as sub-broker

- Markets regulator SEBI cancelled the certificate of registration of Sahara India Financial Corporation Ltd as a sub-broker citing its failure to fulfill the "fit and proper" criteria.
- The regulator had appointed a designated authority in 2018 to enquire whether Sahara India Financial violated provisions of Intermediaries Regulations.
- According to the designated authority's report, considering the antecedents of Subrata Roy Sahara and the various judicial pronouncements against him and other group companies of Sahara, it is determined that Sahara India Financial (notice) is not a "fit and proper person" to continue as a sub-broker in the securities market.

9. Singapore ranks First, India 26th in Asia-Pac in latest Economic Freedom Index

- Singapore topped the global ranking for the second year in a row in the latest Economic Freedom Index published last week by US conservative think-tank, The Heritage Foundation.
- Singapore increased its overall score by 0.3 points to 89.7 primarily due to an improvement in the score for government spending. Singapore's score is well-above the regional and world averages.
- Rounding up the global top five are New Zealand in second place with 83.9 points, Australia, third (82.4 points), Switzerland in fourth with 81.9 points and Ireland (81.4 points).
- As for the major economies, the United Kingdom is 7th (78.4 points) United States is ranked 20th with a score of 74.8 points, Japan 23rd (74.1 points), Germany is 29th (72.5 points) and China is number 107 scoring 58.4 points.

10. OECD Projects India to be Fastest Growing Major Economy in 2021 at 12.6%

- Different international financial institutions have projected varied GDP growth projections for India ranging from 5.4 percent by World Bank to 13.7 percent by Moody for 2021-22.
- Fitch and HSBC Bank have projected India's GDP growth in the range of 11 and 11.2 percent respectively. The World Bank has projected GDP growth rate for India at 5.4 percent. According to CNN, after plunging into recession for the first time in nearly a quarter of a century, India's economy should come roaring back to life in 2021. India's gross domestic product is projected to expand by 12.6% during the country's fiscal year

starting in April, according to a forecast released Tuesday by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

11. Axis Bank launches “Wear N Pay” contactless payment wearable devices

- Axis Bank became the first bank in India to launch its own range of wearable contactless payment devices. Dubbed as ‘Wear N Pay’, these wearable devices are directly linked to the customers’ bank account and function like a regular debit card. India's third largest private lender joined hands with Thales and Tappy Technologies to design these affordable wearable products, exclusively available on the Mastercard platform.
- Axis Bank's new 'Wear N Pay' devices are available in a variety of accessories like band, key chain and watch loop. Users do not need to carry their smartphone and wallet for payments anymore. These wearable devices can be worn easily to carry out contactless transactions on the go.



12. Cabinet Approves Amendments in Insurance Act to Increase FDI up to 74%

- The Union Cabinet on Wednesday gave its nod for amendments in the Insurance Act, paving way for 74 per cent foreign direct investment in the sector. Currently, the permissible FDI limit in the life and general insurance stands at 49 per cent with ownership and management control with Indian.
- According to sources, the Cabinet in its meeting has approval for amendments in the Insurance Act, 1938. It was in 2015 when the government hiked the FDI cap in the insurance sector from 26 per cent to 49 per cent.

13. World Bank to provide USD 500 mn for COVID-19 vaccination to Bangladesh

- The World Bank has approved USD 500 million financing to help Bangladesh vaccinate 54 million people against COVID 19.
- The additional financing to the COVID 19 Emergency Response and Pandemic Preparedness Project will help Bangladesh in procuring vaccines, expanding storage facilities and distribute it to 31 percent of its population. It will help the Bangladesh government in achieving the

target of vaccinating 40 percent of the population against COVID 19 in the first phase. The project will also help in providing training and capacity building for vaccination in the country.

- The World Bank finance will help cover the deployment cost of the vaccines procured through the COVAX facility of the WHO for 20 percent of the people. It will also provide for direct purchase of vaccines from manufactures or COVAX for the remaining 11 percent of the people.

14.RBI imposed Rs.15 lakh penalty on Fedbank Financial Services

- The Reserve Bank of India on 22nd March has imposed a penalty of Rs.15 lakh on Fedbank Financial Services Limited, Mumbai.
- RBI said the statutory inspection of the company with reference to its financial position as on March 31, 2019, revealed, inter alia, non-compliance with the directions issued by it.
- A show-cause notice was issued to Fedbank Financial Services as to why a penalty should not be imposed for failure to comply with the directions issued by RBI.

15.RBI sets up external committee to evaluate applications for universal, small finance banks

- India's central bank announced the members of a committee that will evaluate applications for universal and small finance banks. Shyamala Gopinath, former deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India or RBI will be the chairperson of the committee.
- The other members of the 'Standing External Advisory Committee' include Revathy Iyer, the director of the central board of the RBI; B Mahapatra, chairman of National Payments Corporation of India; TN Manoharan, former chairman of Canara Bank; and Hemant G Contractor, former MD of SBI and former chairman of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority.
- The event was also attended by a number of panches and sarpanches from across the country.

16.Sri Lanka signed 3-year USD 1.5 billion currency swap deal with China

- Sri Lanka has signed a 10 billion yuan (about USD 1,5 billion) currency swap deal with China for a three year period to be used for promoting bilateral trade and direct investment between the two countries, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka has announced. The deal was signed between the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) and the People's Bank of China (PBoC).
- The People's Republic of China remains Sri Lanka's largest source of imports. In 2020 imports from China amounted to 3.6 billion US (22.3 per cent of Sri Lanka's imports).

17.Indian Overseas Bank launched 'IOB Trendy' savings account for millennials

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) launched 'IOB Trendy', a savings account customised for the growing millennial population in the country by keeping their banking preferences in mind.
- Millennials today heavily rely on their savings accounts to manage their finances. They want to carry out their banking activities with minimal hassles, and they routinely rely on technology to help them do it. IOB Trendy is a Savings Bank Account Scheme introduced by the bank towards this endeavour.
- For opening an IOB Trendy account, a customer needs to be within the age bracket of 21 – 38 years. The account may be self or jointly operated. In case of a joint account, the primary holder has to be a millennial at the time of account opening.

SCIENCE TECH & DEFENCE

1. Indian company to set up electric vehicle plant in Bangladesh

- An Indian company Omega Seiki will set up an electric vehicle plant in Bangladesh. The manufacturing unit will be set up near Dhaka with an investment of Rs. 100 crore. It is the first project of any Indian company producing Electrical vehicles in the international market. The project will be a modern greenfield facility and will focus on manufacturing two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and electric bicycles.
- The Chairman of the Omega Seiki mobility Uday Narang said that Bangladesh does not have a policy on Electrical Vehicles as yet but it may change fast. According to a press release issued by the Omega Seiki, the company will focus on coming out with best in class vehicles and quality service experience for the buyers.
- The company plans to contribute in reducing traffic jam and pollution with the use of electrical vehicles powered by the Li-Ion batteries and power trains built in Bangladesh with technology transfer from India.

2. DGCA allowed airlines to offer fare discount to customers with no baggage

- Aviation regulator DGCA allowed airlines to provide concessions in air fares to customers travelling with no check-in baggage.
- The move comes days after the Directorate General Civil Aviation (DGCA) provided greater flexibility to domestic carriers on fixing ticket prices by increasing the minimum fare band on domestic flights tickets.
- As part of airline baggage policy, scheduled airlines will be allowed to offer free baggage allowance as well as zero baggage/ no check-in baggage fares.

3. Inland Waterways Authority inks pact with world's largest gas carrier MOL

- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) inked a pact with the world's largest gas carrier MOL to facilitate transportation of LNG through Inland Waterways, the government said.
- MOL Group is World's largest gas carrier company and will invest in the construction and operation of dedicated LPG barges under the Make-in-India initiative of the Government of India.
- "A Memorandum of Understanding is signed between IWAI and MOL (Asia Oceania) Pte. Ltd for transportation of LPG (Liquified Natural Gas) through barges on National Waterways-1 and National Waterways-2, in the presence of Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Shri Mansukh Mandaviya," Ministry of Ports, Waterways and Shipping said in a statement.

4. India places Brazil's Amazonia-1 satellite, 18 others in orbit

- Brazil is looking to deepen cooperation with India in space technologies, including payload and platform development.
- The statement came on a day when India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) launched the earth observation satellite, the Amazonia-1, which was developed by Brazil.
- The launch of the 637kg Amazonia-1 was the first by India of a Brazilian satellite. On Sunday, PSLV-C51, which also carried 18 Indian satellites, is the first dedicated commercial mission of New Space India Ltd (NSIL), the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) commercial arm set up in 2019.

5. Vice Admiral R Hari Kumar took over as Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command

- Vice Admiral R Hari Kumar, PVSM, AVSM, VSM took over as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) of the Western Naval Command on 28 February 2021 at Mumbai. He succeeds Vice Admiral Ajit Kumar, PVSM, AVSM, VSM, who retires upon superannuation, after an illustrious career, spanning forty years, in the Indian Navy.
- At a ceremony held at the Command Post of Headquarters, Western Naval Command, the outgoing and incoming Commanders-in-Chief were accorded a Guard of Honour after which the formal handing-taking over took place with the handing over of the baton to the new Commander-in-Chief. On assuming command Vice Admiral Hari Kumar laid a wreath at the Gaurav Stambh monument.

6. Russia launched first Arctic-monitoring satellite to track climate changes

- Russia has successfully launched its first satellite to monitor the Arctic's climate and environment, the country's space corporation Roscosmos said in a statement.
- A Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket with the "Arktika-M" satellite on board blasted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 9.55 a.m. on Sunday, Roscosmos said.

- The Arktika-M spacecraft was delivered to the orbit at 12.14 p.m., Xinhua news agency quoted the space corporation as further saying in the statement.
- The creation of a satellite system in highly elliptical orbits is necessary for information collection to solve operational meteorology and hydrology problems, and monitoring the climate and environment in the Arctic region, it said.

7.Sri Lanka develop WCT at Colombo Port with India, Japan

- Sri Lanka will develop the West Container Terminal (WCT) at the Colombo Port with India's and Japan's assistance, almost a month after saying the two countries could not build the East Container Terminal because of opposition by workers' unions against "foreign involvement".
- The Sri Lankan cabinet on Monday gave the green signal to the development of WCT by "parties nominated" by the two countries. India's Adani Ports was one of the partners to develop the ECT.

8.IAF to participate in multinational exercise with ten countries including US, France in UAE

- The Indian Air Force is all set to take part in the multinational exercise Desert Flag along with France and the United States in the United Arab Emirates.
- Six IAF Su-30-MKI fighters will take off for the United Arab Emirates on March 3, 2021 to participate in the multinational exercise. IAF's two C-17s will also join the Indian team for the exercise to help them induct and de-induct from there.
- The Indian Air Force had recently carried out an exercise codenamed 'Desert Knight 2021' with France over Jodhpur involving their and own Rafale fighter jets.

9.Bharat Petroleum Corporation Board approved sale of its 61.65 % stake in Numaligarh Refinery

- Bharat Petroleum Corporation Board has approved sale of its 61.65 percent stake in Numaligarh Refinery for 9,875 crore rupees. Oil India Limited, Engineers India Ltd and Assam Government will be picking up the stake.
- Government has also received Multiple Expressions of Interest for privatisation of Shipping Corporation of India Limited. The transaction will now move to the second stage.

10.US imposed fresh sanctions against Russia over Navalny issue

- The United States has slapped sanctions on Russian individuals and entities over the near-fatal poisoning of prominent opposition figure Alexei Navalny with a nerve agent.
- These sanctions mark the first of several steps by the Biden administration to respond to a number of destabilizing actions. The sanctions are the first against Russia by the Biden administration.

Meanwhile, Russia has condemned moves to impose sanctions. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said those who continue to depend on these measures should probably give it some thought. Vladimir Chizov, Russia's envoy to the EU, said Moscow would respond to the latest round of EU sanctions imposed.

11. Union Cabinet apprised of the signing of MoU between India, French Republic in field of renewable energy cooperation

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi was apprised of the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and French Republic in the field of renewable energy cooperation. The MoU was signed in January this year.
- The objective of the MoU is to establish the basis for promotion of bilateral cooperation in the field of new and renewable energy on the basis of mutual benefit, equality and reciprocity. It covers technologies relating to solar, wind, hydrogen and biomass energy.
- The MoU entails exchange and training of scientific and technical personnel; exchange of scientific and technological information and data; organization of workshops and seminars; transfer of equipment, know-how and technology and development of joint research and technological projects.

12. Entire rail network in the country will be fully electrified by 2023

- The entire rail network in the country will be fully electrified by 2023 while all rail networks will run on renewable energy by 2030. This was stated by Railway Minister Piyush Goyal while addressing the Maritime India Summit-2021.
- The Minister said, integration of Road, Rail and Waterways can truly make India 'One Nation, One Market, One Supply'. Mr. Goyal added that upgrade, create and dedicate are the three Mantras of the government for the infrastructure sector. He said, the capacity of India's major ports has almost doubled in the six years.

13. SpaceX successfully tests Starship SN10 rocket after 2 failed attempts

- SpaceX successfully tested its Starship SN10 prototype rocket after two recent failed attempts.
- The rocket prototype was launched to an altitude of 10,000 kilometers and then landed back on the ground. However, the rocket exploded about six minutes after landing.
- The test launch is deemed successful because the goal was to gather information on how the flaps work to control the rocket when it is horizontal as it is falling back to earth.

14. India inks deal with Philippines for sale of 'defence equipment' including BrahMos cruise missiles

- India signed a key pact with the Philippines for the sale of "defence material and equipment", which are likely to include BrahMos cruise missiles.
- Philippine Defence Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, who was also present at the pact's signing ceremony in Manila, has reportedly said that his country is buying BrahMos missiles.
- The BrahMos missile is produced by an India-Russian joint venture "BrahMos Aerospace" and it can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft or from land platforms.
- It is the fastest supersonic cruise missile in the world.
- Currently the missile is used only by India, however several countries including Philippines, Vietnam, South Africa, Egypt, Oman, Chile and Brunei have expressed interest in the procurement of the missile.

15.All-Women crew of vessel MT Swarna Krishna created history

- The all-women crew of onboard Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) vessel MT Swarna Krishna created history as this is the first time in the world maritime history that a ship is being sailed by all women officers. Women are breaking barriers and stigmas in erstwhile male-dominated maritime sector. Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya virtually flagged off an all-women crew, said the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways on 7th march.
- Mandaviya acknowledged the contribution and sacrifice of the women seafarers who acted as the Indian ambassadors to the global maritime community and had made the nation proud.
- The vessel was virtually flagged off by the Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister on March 6.

16.Dr. Harsh Vardhan chaired 148th session of WHO Executive Board

- Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on 6th March underlined the need to step up funding for the health sector and bring inequity in the delivery of healthcare.
- He was addressing the inaugural session of TechBharat 2021.
- It brings together stakeholders from HealthTech & Edutech sector on a virtual platform.
- It is facilitating interactions & deliberations between thousands of domestic & global participants, including policymakers, govt representatives, industry members, investors and start-ups.

17.Indian Navy Ships visited Bangladesh on 50th anniversary of 1971 Liberation war

- As part of the 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh' celebration commemorating 50 years of the 1971 war triumph against Pakistan, Indian Naval Ships are scheduled to make the first-ever visit to the historic port town of Mongla in Bangladesh from March 8 to 10.
- Indian Naval Ships Sumedha, an indigenously build Offshore Patrol vessel and Kulish, an indigenously built guided missile corvette, are

scheduled to make a port call at Mongla from March 8 to 10 to commemorate the ongoing Swarnim Vijay Varsh and reiterating the historic Indo-Bangladeshi friendship.

- The ships was took part in the ongoing Swarnim Vijay Varsh celebrations to commemorate 50 years of Liberation War of 1971 and reiterating the historic Indo-Bangladeshi friendship.

18. Russia, China signed MoU to build lunar space station

- Russia and China signed a memorandum of understanding set up an international lunar research station, Russia's Roscosmos space agency said.
- Moscow and Beijing will draw up a roadmap to establish the station and cooperate closely on planning, designing and implementing the project as well as presenting it to the world space community
- An international lunar science station is a complex of experimental and research facilities created on the surface and/or in orbit of the moon, designed to conduct multidisciplinary and multipurpose research work
- Russia and China will promote international cooperation on the project and offer equal access to any nation that wants to take part, the agency said in a statement on its website.
- The memorandum was signed by Roscosmos chief Dmitry Rogozin and Zhang Kejian, head of the China National Space Administration, during a meeting by video conference.

19. Scorpene-class submarine INS Karanj commissioned into Indian Navy

- The third Scorpene-class submarine “INS Karanj” was commissioned into the Indian Navy in Mumbai on March 10, 2021, in presence of Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh and Admiral (Retired) VS Shekhawat.
- Scorpene-class submarine INS Karanj was commissioned into the Indian Navy on Wednesday. The ceremony took place at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, in the presence of Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh and Admiral (Retired) VS Shekhawat.
- INS Karanj is the third diesel-electric submarine of the Kalvari class -- a class based on the Scorpène-class submarine -- commissioned into the Indian Navy.
- Scorpene-class submarine INS Karanj commissioned into Indian Navy in Mumbai, in presence of Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh and Admiral (Retired) VS Shekhawat.
- INS Karanj has the best sonar and does not make noise at all which makes it the best in the world.

20. World's most powerful supercomputer Fugaku is ready for use

- Researchers at Japan's RIKEN institute had announced something the scientific community has been waiting for nearly a decade to hear:

Fugaku is fully operational and ready to prove itself as the world's most powerful supercomputer.

- Originally conceived of in 2014 as a project between RIKEN and Japanese computing firm Fujitsu, trial use of Fugaku began in April 2020, and the final of its 432 racks was delivered in May 2020.
- Fugaku has controlled the top spot on the list of fastest supercomputers since mid-2020, and it continues to hold that spot in the most recent Top 500 list published in November. With three times the computing power of runner-up IBM Summit.

21. Indo-Uzbekistan Field Training Exercise commences in Ranikhet

- The joint military exercise of India and Uzbekistan 'DUSTLIK II' commenced on March 10, 2021, in Ranikhet (Uttarakhand).
- This is the 2nd edition of the annual bilateral joint exercise of the armies of India and Uzbekistan and it will continue till March 19. The first edition of the exercise took place in Uzbekistan in November 2019.
- In order to participate in the exercise, the Uzbek soldiers arrived in New Delhi on March 8. The joint army exercise is mainly based on counter-terrorist operations and aims at enhancing the military cooperation between the two countries.

22. Union Minister Anurag Thakur promoted as Captain in Territorial Army

- Union Minister Anurag Thakur became the first serving MP to be appointed as Captain in the Territorial Army.
- The four-time BJP MP from Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur was commissioned into the Territorial Army as a Lieutenant by then Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Dalbir S Suhag TA in July 2016, according to a statement.
- Thakur was promoted as Captain in the 124 Sikh Regiment.

23. India imposed anti-dumping duty on Chinese antibacterial drug Ciprofloxacin Hydrochloride

- India has imposed anti-dumping duty on the Chinese antibacterial drug Ciprofloxacin Hydrochloride to guard the domestic industry against cheap imports from the neighbouring country.
- The duty was imposed following a recommendation by the commerce ministry's investigation arm, the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR).
- DGTR in its probe had concluded the product has been exported to India from China below its normal value, which has resulted in dumping and in turn impacting the domestic industry.

24. NIO launched Genome Mapping in Indian Ocean

- A 30-member team of scientists and researchers from the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) in Panaji and another 30 crew members onboard its research vessel Sindhu Sadhana will spend the next

three months traversing the course of over 10,000 nautical miles in the Indian Ocean on a research project to reveal the internal working of the body of the ocean at a cellular level.

- The first-of-its-kind research project in the country is aimed at understanding the biochemistry and the response of the ocean to climate change, nutrient stress and increasing pollution. Conceptualised over the last two to three years, the research project has been undertaken at a cost of Rs. 25 crore and will take three years to complete.

25.Government announces “All India Tourist Vehicles Authorization and Permit Rules, 2021” to be effective from April 01

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has announced a new scheme, under which any tourist vehicle operator may apply for an "All India Tourist Authorization/Permit" through online mode.
- According to an official release, the permit will be issued, after relevant documents are submitted and fees deposited, within 30 days of submission of such applications.
- The new set of rules, to be known as, "All India Tourist Vehicles Authorization and Permit Rules, 2021" has been published vide GSR 166(E) dated March 10. The new rules will be applicable from April 1. All existing permits shall continue to be in force during their validity.

26.NPCI launches dispute redressal mechanism for BHIM-UPI users

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has gone live with ‘UPI-Help’ on the BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money)-Unified Payments Interface (UPI) channel, as part of its Digi-Help stack. The redressal mechanism is aimed at creating a hassle-free experience for BHIM UPI app users regarding resolution of various issues.
- UPI-Help will enable BHIM UPI users to use their app to check the status of pending transactions, raise complaints for transactions that have not been processed or money not credited to the beneficiary and raise complaints for merchant transactions.
- Initially, UPI-Help has been made live on the BHIM app for the customers of State Bank of India, AXIS Bank, HDFC Bank, and ICICI Bank.

27.Indian Navy Ship Jalashwa reaches Comoros to deliver 1,000 tonnes of rice

- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Jalashwa reached Port Anjouan in Comoros on 14th march to deliver 1,000 tonnes of rice as part of the Mission Sagar-IV.
- This is the second visit of an Indian Navy ship to the island country within a span of one year.
- INS Jalashwa, the largest amphibious ship of Indian Navy, has been specially sent to Comoros due to its large carrying capacity.
- SAGAR, which stands for “Security and Growth for all in the Indian Ocean Region”, was started by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May

2020 to assist maritime neighbours such as Comoros amid the coronavirus pandemic.

28.ReNew Power becomes part of WEF Global Lighthouse Network

- Renewable energy firm ReNew Power has become a part of the World Economic Forum's Global Lighthouse Network. ReNew Power has been named to the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Lighthouse Network, which recognizes companies using new technologies to achieve environmentally sustainable, community supportive, profitable growth.
- The WEF specifically noted the company's recent investments in digital analytics and machine learning to increase the power yield and decrease the downtime of its solar and wind generation assets.
- ReNew's Hubli facility was specifically nominated as a Global Lighthouse for its groundbreaking work in development and deployment of advanced analytics and machine learning solutions to increase the yield of Renew's wind and solar assets.

29.Samsung opens Innovation Lab at Delhi Technological University

- Samsung Electronics set up an innovation lab at Delhi Technological University (DTU) to promote joint research and training on domains such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and computer vision.
- Engineers at Samsung R&D Institute, Noida (SRI-N) will work on collaborative research projects with DTU students and faculty members.
- As part of the lab, engineers at SRI-N will work on collaborative research projects with DTU students and faculty on smartphone. Domains based on cutting edge technology areas such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and computer vision.

30.Nokia and Google Cloud partner to develop cloud-based 5G radio solutions

- Nokia has announced a partnership with Google Cloud to develop new, cloud-based 5G radio solutions. The two companies will collaborate on joint solutions combining Nokia's Radio Access Network (RAN), Open RAN, Cloud RAN (vRAN) and edge cloud technologies, with Google's edge computing platform and applications ecosystem.
- The collaboration will lead to the development of solutions and use cases to solve key 5G scenarios for businesses worldwide.
- The initial collaboration, which is already underway at Nokia's Espoo headquarters, will pursue a number of different workstreams. The first, which will focus on Cloud RAN, will integrate Nokia's 5G vDU (virtualised distributed unit) and 5G vCU (virtualised centralised unit) with Google's edge computing platform, running on Anthos. Nokia's 5G standalone network with vCU and 5G core will also be tested on Google Cloud Anthos platform as a cloud-native deployment.

31.Italy signed framework agreement on International Solar Alliance with India

- Italy on 17th march signed the framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) with India, informed Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Anurag Srivastava.
- The Italian Republic signed the framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) today after the amendments to the framework agreement of the ISA entered into force on 8 January 2021, opening its membership to all member states of the UN.
- The signed copies of the agreement were received by Additional Secretary (ER), as the representative of MEA which is the depositary of the ISA framework agreement.

32.Indian Army's two longest serving Artillery systems de-commissioned

- Indian Army de-commissioned two of its longest serving Artillery systems. The Mahajan Field Firing Ranges witnessed the decommissioning ceremony marked by the customary firing of last salvos of the 130mm Self Propelled M-46 Catapult Guns and the 160mm Tampella Mortars in the presence of the Director General Artillery Lieutenant General K Ravi Prasad, the head of the Arm of Artillery.
- The proud end of the systems followed a long operational experience. The 130mm Catapult, with a range of more than 27 km, was a successful merger of two existing weapon systems: Vijayanta tanks and 130mm M-46 guns.
- This hybrid platform was a response to the need for a mobile Artillery gun system to support strike formations on the Western borders, after the 1965 and 1971 wars.

33.USAID, DFC announce \$41 million loan guarantee programme for rooftop solar projects

- United States Agency for international development (USAID) and US international development finance corporation (DFC) are jointly sponsoring loan portfolio guarantee to enable Indian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to access reliable power and cut costs.
- The loan worth 41 million dollars (about Rs 297 crore) will help finance investments by SMEs in renewable energy solutions, inclusion rooftop solar installations.
- Investments in solar solutions secured by these credit guarantees will improve access to clean, steady and affordable energy as well as further progress towards India's clean energy transition and climate change mitigation," said Karen Klimowski, Acting Mission Director at USAID India.

34.J&K's Ratle Hydroelectric Power Corporation to develop 850 MW project

- The J&K Administrative Council (AC), which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, on Tuesday approved the incorporation of the Joint Venture Company (JVC) under

the name Ratle Hydro-electric Power Corporation to implement the 850 MW Ratle Hydro-Electric Project (HEP) on river Chenab at Drabshala in Kishtwar.

- The proposed JVC will have authorised capital of Rs. 1,600 Crore with initial paid up capital of Rs. 100 Crore, out of which the Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDCL) will contribute Rs. 49 crore as an initial equity.
- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to execute the project, was signed between the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, JKSPDCL and NHPC on 03.01.2021 in the presence of the Lieutenant Governor.

35. Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated new Advanced High Resolution Microscopy Facility at NABI

- Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Science & technology Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the new Advanced High Resolution Microscopy Facility at National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI) and Unveiled the 4 Star GRIHA Certification of Center of Innovative and Applied Bio processing (CIAB) Lab and Admin Building at Mohali in Punjab.
- Both NABI & CIAB are autonomous institutes under Dept. of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology.
- Following the gathering Dr. Harsh Vardhan urged both the institutes to address the problems of hunger & malnutrition and to bring nutritional revolution in the country. Minister emphasized that with government impetus on doubling the farmer's income by 2022-23, NABI and CIAB's roles are crucial to achieve this ambitious goal.

36. Russia Launched 38 Satellites for 18 Countries

- A Russian Soyuz rocket blasted off from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan carrying 38 foreign satellites after takeoff was twice postponed due to technical issues.
- The Soyuz-2.1 a carrier rocket with the Fregat upper stage and 38 spacecraft from 18 countries took off from the Baikonur cosmodrome.
- The rocket will place in orbit 38 satellites from more than a dozen countries, including South Korea, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Italy and Brazil.

37. POWERGRID launched Certified E-Tendering portal "PRANIT"

- Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a central PSU under Ministry of Power has established an e-Tendering Portal-PRANIT which will lead to less paperwork and ease of operation, making the tendering process more transparent. It has been certified by Standardization, Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.
- With this, POWERGRID is now the only organization in India to have an eProcurement solution on SAP Supplier Relationship Management

(SRM), complying with all applicable requirements relating to security and transparency as stipulated by STQC. POWERGRID in pursuit of digitalization has been undertaking a number of innovative enhancements within SAP SRM framework.

38. Ministry of Defence (MoD) signs contract with MDSL to supply Light Specialist Vehicles to Indian Army

- Providing further boost to 'Make in India', Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a contract with Mahindra Defence Systems Ltd (MDSL) for supply of 1,300 Light Specialist Vehicles to the Indian Army, at a cost of Rs. 1,056 crore, in New Delhi on March 22, 2021. The induction of vehicles is planned to be completed in four years.
- The Light Specialist Vehicle is a modern fighting vehicle and will be authorized to various fighting units for carriage of Medium Machine Guns, Automatic Grenade Launchers as well as Anti-tank Guided Missiles.
- The Light Specialist Vehicle is indigenously designed and developed by MDSL. These combat vehicles are extremely agile with all round protection against small arms fire and will assist small independent detachments which are required to operate this weapon platform in the operational area.

39. ISRO Demonstrates India's First Free-Space Quantum Communication over 300 metres

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully demonstrated free-space Quantum Communication over a distance of 300 metres, for the first time in the country.
- A number of key technologies were developed indigenously to accomplish this major feat, which included the use of indigenously developed "NAVIC" receiver for time synchronization between the transmitter and receiver modules, and gimbal mechanism systems instead of bulky large-aperture telescopes for optical alignment.
- The Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology underpins Quantum Communication technology that ensures unconditional data security by virtue of the principles of quantum mechanics, which is not possible with the conventional encryption systems.

40. Government of India launched "Gram Ujala Scheme" for Rural Areas on 19th March

- India has launched the "Gram Ujala Scheme" on March 19, 2021 to provide the cheapest LED bulbs in the rural areas. The scheme was launched by the Union power and new and renewable energy minister, Raj Kumar Singh.
- The Gram Ujala Scheme is an ambitious scheme which offers the world's cheapest LED bulbs in rural areas. This is the first such scheme in India. It provides the LED Bulbs in these areas at a mere Rs.10. This the

scheme also furthers its climate change strategy and strengthen the self-reliance credentials.

- The scheme proposes for distributing some 600 million LED at rupees 10 in the rural areas. It will be financed entirely through the carbon credits which will be claimed under the “United Nations’ Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)”. The revenue from the carbon credit will contribute to Rupees 60 per LED. This scheme also proposes to take back the incandescent and compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) bulbs of the rural consumers. After submitting the bulbs, the consumers will get 7 watt and 12-watt LED bulbs with three years’ warranty.

41.India ranked fourth most powerful military in world

- China has the strongest military force in the world while India stands at number four.
- The USA, despite their enormous military budgets, comes in 2nd place with 74 points, followed by Russia with 69, India at 61 and then France with 58. The UK just about makes the Top 10, coming in 9th place with a score of 43.
- The world's biggest military spender with a budget of USD 732 billion per year is the USA, it noted, adding that China comes second with USD 261 billion, followed by India at USD 71 billion.

42.Project billed as world's first ship tunnel slated for construction in Norway

- An engineering project billed as the world's first ship tunnel is slated for construction in Norway.
- The tunnel will run underneath the mountains in Norway's Stadhavet peninsula. It will measure 1,700 metres long, 37 metres high and 26.5 metres wide when complete.
- At the present time, vessels sometimes have to wait days for harsh weather and rough tides to subside in the Stadhavet Sea before transiting the area. Construction on the project is expected to begin in 2022 and be complete by 2025 or 2026.

43.Nirmala Sitharaman launched Central Scrutiny Centre and IEPFA mobile App

- Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched Central Scrutiny Centre and Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority, IEPFA mobile App to leverage digital solutions to achieve Prime Minister’s vision of ‘Digitally empowered India.
- The Mobile App aims at achieving the goal of financial literacy, spreading investors’ awareness, education, and protection among investors. She also said, the Mobile App has been developed for citizen engagement and information dissemination to promote awareness among investors.

- The Central Scrutiny Centre will scrutinize certain Straight Through Process, STP Forms filed by the corporates on the MCA21 registry and flag the companies for more in-depth scrutiny.

BOOKS AND AWARDS

1.39th Agartala International Book fair begun in Tripura

- The 39th Agartala International Book Fair with the theme “Ek Tripura, Shrestha Tripura” has begun at Agartala.
- State Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb inaugurated the fair in presence of Bangladesh Assistant High Commissioner Md. Jobayed Hossain and other state cabinet ministers and MLAs.
- While addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said a book fair helps in building a positive mindset among people and that ensures a positive approach for overall progress in society.
- Cultural troops coming from Bangladesh, Northeastern States including Sikkim will be performing various cultural events on each day as part of the fair.

2.Nominations for the 78th Golden Globe Awards (2021) Announced

- The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) had announced the nominees for the 78th Annual Golden Globe Awards. Sarah Jessica Parker, six-time Golden Globe winner, and Taraji P. Henson, Golden Globe winner, disclosed the nominees.
- For the first time in the history of the Golden Globes, the nominations were announced virtually, following the current safety measures during the COVID pandemic.
- The 78th Golden Globes was took place on February 28, coast to coast from 5 pm to 8 pm PT/8-11 ET on NBC. The event will be hosted by Tina Fey and Amy Poehler, returning for the fourth time, after hosting in 2013, 2014, and 2015. Fey and Poehler will share duties from their respective cities, with Fey on the East Coast and Poehler on the West Coast. Fey will be live from New York’s Rainbow Room, Poehler will be live from the Beverly Hilton, in Beverly Hills, and nominees, from various locations around the world.

3.Mumbai's CSMT became first railway station to get IGBC Gold Certification

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Railway Station of Central Railway is the first railway station in Maharashtra to be awarded with Gold certification as per CII’s Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) ratings.
- Central Railway has implemented various green initiatives across its zone, with plantation creating green areas, installation of solar panels, customer-friendly initiatives at many stations, LED bulbs and lights etc.

- Amidst that, the Mumbai Division of Central Railway has put in concerted efforts in implementing many Green & passenger-friendly initiatives across its stations, especially at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus.
- The rating system gives impetus to the national priorities like energy efficiency, water conservation, handling of waste measures and motivates the adoption of green standards for buildings and its environment.

4.Udaipur Science Centre inaugurated at Udaipur , Tripura

- The Udaipur Science Centre, at Udaipur, Tripura was dedicated to the people by the Governor of Tripura, Shri Ramesh Bais on 28th February 2021. Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Culture and Tourism, Govt. of India Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The Deputy Chief Minister of Tripura Shri Jishnu Dev Varma, and the Minister for Agriculture, Transport and Tourism of Tripura Shri Pranajit Singha Roy, was the Guests of Honour.
- Speaking on the occasion, the Governor apprised the audience on the importance of National Science Day, which is celebrated every year on the 28th of February. He also highlighted that Science Centres play a vital role in developing a scientific temper in the society and inculcating a culture of Innovation among masses, particularly among students. He also appreciated the role of National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) and Ministry of Culture for the spread of scientific awareness.

5.WAN-IFRA named The Hindu Group ‘Champion Publisher of the Year 2020’

- The Hindu Group received two golds and two silvers at WAN IFRA’s South Asian Digital Media Awards, culminating in being named ‘Champion Publisher of the Year’, owing to the best tally on the factors desk.
- The awards are introduced in recognition of excellent work achieved by information publishers, in digital media. The winners had been honoured nearly on the Digital Media India 2021 Conference held.

6.PM Modi received CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award on 5th march

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be conferred with the CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award on 5th march.
- PM Modi will also deliver the keynote address at the Cambridge Energy Research Associates Week (CERAWeek) 2021 around 7 pm via video conferencing.
- CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award was instituted in 2016.

7.40 scholars from six countries recommended for award of India Science, Research Fellowship 2021

- 40 scholars from six countries had been recommended for the award of India Science and Research Fellowship 2021. This provides an opportunity to the researchers to use state of the art facilities available in Indian institutes and universities for carrying out their research.
- As a part of India's initiative to engage with neighbouring countries to develop Science and Technology partnerships, the government had launched India Science and Research Fellowship Programme for Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand researchers. It has been implemented since 2015. No award was made last year due to the pandemic. So far, over 120 fellows from these countries have been awarded fellowship under this programme.



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8. Bangladesh to confer its highest civilian award 'Swadhinta Puraskar' to 9 individuals, 1 organization

- Bangladesh has announced the names of 9 individuals and one organization for conferring the Independence Award, the highest civilian award of Bangladesh for the year 2021.
- Four individuals had been selected posthumously for the award under the category of freedom fighters for their contribution to the liberation war of Bangladesh. These include A K M Bazlur Rahman, Ahsan Ullah Master, Brig Gen. Khurshid Uddin Ahmed and Akhataruzzaman Chowdhury Babu.
- Dr. Mrinmoy Guha Niyogi has been selected for his contribution to science and technology. Mahadev Saha will be honoured with the award for literature while Ataur Rahman and Gazi Mazharul Anwar will get the award for their contribution in the field of Culture. Dr. M Amzad Hossain has been nominated for the award for social and public service.

9. Frontier Gandhi's autobiography released in English

- First published in Pashto in 1983, the autobiography of freedom fighter Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, fondly known as Bacha Khan or Badshah Khan, is now out in English, announced publishing house Roli Books. The book, titled "The Frontier Gandhi: My Life and Struggle", is translated by former Pakistani civil servant and author Imtiaz Ahmad Sahibzada. This is the "first time" that Khan's autobiography is available in English. An earlier account of his life, published in English in 1969,

and with the same title, was based on the interviews conducted with him and was not "his written autobiography".

- "Bacha Khan felt that the 1969 account of his life and struggle was not complete and began to write his own autobiography thereafter, with the help of numerous associates. Bacha Khan's autobiography was thus first published in Pukhto in 1983, in Kabul. This book is a translation of Bacha Khan's only written, Pukhto autobiography," writes Sahibzada in the book.

10.Amitabh Bachchan to be honoured with 2021 FIAF Award

- Amitabh Bachchan will be conferred upon with the prestigious 2021 FIAF Award by the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), the worldwide organisation of film archives and museums from across the world, at a virtual showcase scheduled to take place on March 19.
- The 78-year-old Bollywood icon's name was nominated by the FIAF affiliate Film Heritage Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation founded by filmmaker and archivist Shivendra Singh Dungarpur, dedicated to the preservation, restoration, documentation, exhibition, and study of India's film heritage.

11.President Ram Nath Kovind presented Baton of Honor to Ex-Puducherry LG Kiran Bedi

- President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday presented a Baton of Honour and a letter of appreciation to former Puducherry Lieutenant Governor Kiran Bedi at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi. The Baton of Honor has the emblem of the Indian Republic.
- The former Puducherry Lieutenant Governor was recognised for her services to the Union Territory of Puducherry.
- Kiran Bedi was removed as the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry on February 16 by the President of India and Tamilisai Soundararajan took additional charge as the Lieutenant Governor on February 18.

12.Niger's President won African Leadership award

- Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou won the 2020 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership.
- Issoufou is the sixth recipient of the Ibrahim Prize, which is awarded on criteria of good governance, democratic election and respect of terms limits.
- In the face of the most severe political and economic issues, including violent extremism and increasing desertification, President Mahamadou Issoufou has led his people on a path of progress.
- The number of Nigeriens living below the poverty line has fallen to 40%, from 48% a decade ago. While challenges remain, Issoufou has kept his promises to the Nigerien people and paved the way for a better future.

13.Deepika Padukone joined the list of WEF's new Young Global Leaders

- Actor Deepika Padukone and several Indian citizens and India-origin persons on Wednesday joined the list of the Young Global Leaders (YGLs) compiled by the World Economic Forum.
- Announcing its 2021 class of YGLs, the WEF said these are the world's most promising 112 tomorrow's leaders under the age of 40 and are involved in activities ranging from advocating for public healthcare to campaigning for inclusivity in medical research.

14.63rd Edition of Annual Grammy Awards Winners 2021 announced

- The 63rd edition of Annual Grammy Awards ceremony was held in Los Angeles on March 14, 2021.
- The 2021 Grammy awards recognized the best recordings, compositions, and artists of the eligibility year, between September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020.
- The award is presented by the Recording Academy to recognize achievements in the American music industry.
- Two Grammy icons set historic marks as Beyoncé, who led all Grammy nominees with nine, is now the most winning performer-singer in Grammys history after multiple wins; and Taylor Swift also made history as the first woman to win album of the year three times. Billie Eilish was the big winner at last year's Grammy Awards, sweeping the big four categories: song, record, album and new artist.

15. Book 'Battle Ready for 21st Century' released at Centre for Land Warfare Studies

- A book titled "Battle Ready for 21st Century" co-edited by Lt Gen AK Singh, Distinguished Fellow CLAWS and Brig Narender Kumar, Visiting Fellow CLAWS was released by Gen Bipin Rawat, CDS and Gen Deepak Kapoor, Former Chief of the Army Staff at Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) on 17 March 2021.
- The book "Battle Ready for the 21st Century" has endeavoured to postulate and define emerging areas of conflict, desired capabilities and doctrinal issues that need careful examination. The authors with hands-on experience and domain specialisation have endeavoured to define and suggest the ways and means necessary to secure India from emerging security challenges on land, air, sea, space, cyber domain and even cognitive domain. The book is dwelling on future conflicts that India may face and need to build capabilities to dissuade and prevent accidental wars.

16. Gandhi Peace Prizes for 2019, 2020 awarded to Sultan Qaboos and Mujibur Rahman

- India announced that the Gandhi Peace Prize for the past two years will be conferred on late Omani Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said and Bangladeshi leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for their contributions to social and political transformation through non-violent methods.

- A special exception was made for the award to be conferred on the two leaders, as the selection procedure for the prize does not allow it to be awarded posthumously.
- The jury for the prize, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, met on March 19 and unanimously selected Rahman as the recipient of the prize for 2020 and Sultan Qaboos, who died last year, as the recipient for 2019.
- People familiar with developments said on condition of anonymity that the selection procedure does not allow the Gandhi Peace Prize to be awarded posthumously.

17.67th National Film Awards Full Winners List Announced

- The 67th National Film Awards have finally been announced. Delayed by one year due to the coronavirus pandemic, the awards were announced during a press conference in Delhi.
- Hindi films won big in the feature film category. While the Best Actor award went to Manoj Bajpayee (Bhosle) and Dhanush (Tamil), Kangana Ranaut won the Best Actress award for her performance in Manikarnika and Panga. Marakkar: Arabikadalinte Simham emerged as the Best Feature Film while the Best Feature Film (Hindi) went to Sushant Singh Rajput's Chhichhore.

18.Hindi Writer Prof. Sharad Pagare to be conferred with Vyas Samman - 2020

- Well known Hindi writer Prof. Sharad Pagare will be conferred with the prestigious Vyas Samman - 2020 for his novel 'Patliputru Ki Samragi.' The Vyas Samman, started in 1991, is given by K K Birla Foundation for an outstanding literary work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years. It carries an award of four lakh rupees along with a citation and plaque

19.Samir Soni turns Author with book on Anxiety and Self-Discovery

- Actor Samir Soni is all set to make his debut as an author. He is gearing up to write a book titled "My Experiments with Silence", about anxiety and self-discovery.
- Slated for release this year, Soni's book aims to be a personal account of his dialogues with himself during his growing-up years in Delhi, his stint at Wall Street and his time in Bollywood.
- He feels the post-pandemic scenario is apt for such a book.

20.Legendary Singer Asha Bhosle to be honoured with Maharashtra Bhushan Award

- Playback singer Asha Bhosle is known for her contribution in Hindi cinema. Her career began in the year 1943 and has spanned over 7 decades, during which she received several accolades.
- Recently, Asha Bhosle was honoured with the highest level of honour the Maharashtra Government can award, the Maharashtra Bhushan Award.

- Ms Bhosle, whose sister Lata Mangeshkar won the award for 1997, said she got to know from Mr. Thackeray that she has been selected for the award for 2020. Ms Bhosle received the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2000.

SPORTS

1. Indian men's skeet team wins bronze in ISSF World Cup

- The Indian trio of Mairaj Ahmed Khan, Angad Vir Singh Bajwa and Gurjoat Khangura won the bronze medal in men's skeet team event at the International Shooting Sport Federation tournament (ISSF) Shotgun World Cup in Cairo.
- The Indians defeated the Kazakhstan team of David Pochivalov, Eduard Yechshenko and Alexandr Mukhamediyev 6-2 in the bronze medal match on the third competition day of the International Shooting Sport Federation tournament.

2. R Vinay Kumar announced retirement from all forms of cricket

- R Vinay Kumar, a pace bowler who has represented India in all formats and has led Karnataka to consecutive Ranji Trophy titles, announced his retirement from cricket.
- The 37-year-old pace bowler, Vinay Kumar has represented India in all formats, playing single Test, 31 ODIs and 9 T20Is for India between 2010 and 2013.
- He has led Karnataka to consecutive Ranji Trophy titles, in his 17-year domestic career.

3. Vinesh Phogat bagged Gold in Ukraine wrestling event

- Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat had won the gold medal in the women's 53-kg category at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine. Vinesh Phogat defeated world number seven Vanesa Kaladzinskaya of Belarus in the finals to win the gold medal and make a winning return to her first competitive outing since the Covid-19 induced lockdown.
- The Asian Games and Commonwealth Games gold medalist had defeated Romania's Ana A by fall in the semi-final to reach the summit clash. Vinesh has already booked a place in the Tokyo Olympics for the 53kg category. Since the coronavirus halted all competitions last year, it was the first competition for Vinesh, who is the only Indian woman wrestler to have qualified for the Tokyo Games. The 26 year old will be seen in action in the season's first ranking tournament from March 4-7 in Rome.

4. Deepak Kumar won silver at Strandja Memorial Tournament in Bulgaria

- Deepak Kumar (52kg) won the silver medal at the 72nd Strandja Memorial Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria after losing the final face-off in a split decision against Bulgaria's Daniel Asenov in the men's flyweight.

- The Boxing Federation of India in its tweet said "The result may not be in favour of Deepak Kumar but the Indian boxer surely won the hearts with his attacking game. A beautiful mix of the uppercut, left jabs and feet movement, a SILVER medal and a dream run at the 72nd Strandja Cup. India is proud of you".

5.Indian Women's League 2020-21 to be hosted in Odisha

- The All India Football Federation (AIFF) confirmed Odisha as the venue for the forthcoming Indian Women's League (IWL) 2020-21 edition.
- The dates for the tournament will be announced soon. AIFF appreciated Odisha Government's longstanding partnership with Indian Football wherein the latter have been providing its stadia and state of the art training facilities to national teams across various age groups and genders - all in an effort to take Indian Football forward together.

6.Virat Kohli became first cricketer to cross 100 million followers on Instagram

- India captain Virat Kohli had recorded another century, albeit not on the pitch this time, as he became the first cricketer in the world to have 100 million followers on social media platform Instagram.
- The 32-year-old Kohli is also the first person in the Asia-Pacific region to achieve the feat.
- Kohli is also the fourth most followed sportsperson on Instagram.
- Portugal football star Cristiano Ronaldo tops the chart with 265 million followers, ahead of Argentina football captain and FC Barcelona legend Lionel Messi and Brazil's Neymar, who are second and third in the list with 186 million and 147 million followers respectively.
- The others in 100 million club are Hollywood actor and former pro-wrestler Dwayne (The Rock) Johnson, American singer-songwriter Beyonce, and Ariana Grande.

7.Second ODI National Zone Cricket Championship League for Deaf begins

- The Indian Deaf Cricket Association (IDCA) affiliated & recognized by the Deaf International Cricket Council (DICC) are the organizers for this tournament. The 50-over tournament will witness deaf cricketing talent from across the country competing for the championship title. Besides the silverware after victory, the tournament will also be of extreme importance to the players as their performance during this tournament will also get them a chance to be part of the Deaf ICC World Cup 2022.
- The tournament will also hand over handsome prize money for various categories of awards. The 'Champion Winner' team will get a cash reward of INR 1,00,001 while the 'Runner-up' team will be given a cash prize of INR 50,001. There are additional prizes for The Man of the Series, the Best Bowler, and best Batsmen of the series and the Man of the Match for every match.

8.Indian shuttlers Varun, Malvika win Uganda International titles

- Indian shuttlers Varun Kapur and Malvika Bansod registered hard-fought wins to clinch the men's and women's singles titles respectively at the 2021 Uganda International in Kampala.
- Varun had to sweat it out to get the better of seventh seeded Sankar Muthusamy
- 21-18 16-21 21-17 in the men's singles final, while second seed Malvika notched up a come-from-behind 17-21 25-23 21-10 victory over compatriot Anupama Upadhyaya in the women singles summit clash.
- The junior world no. 2 Varun, who has been a consistent performer on the junior circuit and clinched his sixth title earlier this year, won the first game convincingly before losing the second.

9.Kieron Pollard became third man to hit 6 Sixes in an Over in International Cricket

- West Indies white-ball captain Kieron Pollard on Wednesday became only the third man to hit 6 sixes in an international match during the opening T20I against Sri Lanka. Pollard followed in the footsteps of South Africa's Herschelle Gibbs (2007 World Cup against Netherlands) and India's Yuvraj Singh (2007 T20 World Cup against England) to achieve the rare feat.
- Akila Dananjaya was the bowler who was the recipient of the onslaught, as Pollard took him apart with consummate ease. Pollard was on 4 runs off 4 balls when he decided to launch the attack on Dananjaya, who interestingly in his previous over had claimed a hat-trick that had put the hosts on the back foot.

10.IPL 2021 began on April 9 in Chennai, Final on May 30 in Ahmedabad

- The BCCI announced the schedule for the Indian Premier League 2021. The IPL 2021 season will begin on April 9 in Chennai, with defending champions Mumbai Indians taking on Royal Challengers Bangalore. The final will be played on May 30 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. The previous season's runners-up Delhi Capitals will begin their season on April 10 against Chennai Super Kings in Mumbai. The tournament will be held in six cities -- Chennai, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Bengaluru and Kolkata.
- Each team will play in four of the six designated venues during the league stage.
- Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru will host 10 matches each while Ahmedabad and Delhi will host eight matches apiece during the league stages.
- The knockout stages of the competition will be played entirely in Ahmedabad, the largest cricket stadium in the world.

11.Wrestler Bajrang Punia clinched gold in Matteo Pellicone World ranking series in Rome

- In wrestling, World Championship bronze medalist Bajrang Punia has clinched a gold medal by defeating his familiar rival Tugba Tumur Ochir of Mongolia in the Matteo Pellicone World Ranking Series event in Rome. Bajrang defeated Ochir 2-2 by criteria in the final of the 65kg freestyle.
- Bajrang, who was trailing Ochir 0-2 kept his composure and prevented Ochir from stretching his lead by showcasing quality defensive skills. The Indian wrestler walked away with a Gold medal after getting a 2-pointer in the last 30 second
- This is Bajrang's second consecutive gold medal at the Matteo Pellicone event as he had finished on the top of the series in January 2020 as well.

12.Vinesh Phogat clinched gold medal in Rome event, reclaims top rank

- Star Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat won her second gold medal in the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series event and reclaimed the top rank in her category in Rome. The 26-year-old World bronze medalist Vinesh blanked Canada's Diana Mary Helen Weicker 4-0 in the 53kg title clash. She is the only Indian woman wrestler to have qualified for the Tokyo Games.
- Vinesh had won a gold medal in Kiev last week and this performance would definitely boost her confidence for the biggest sporting event. She entered the event as world number three but is back to world number one by jumping 14 points.

13.Indian boxers finish with 10 medals including one gold

- Continuing his splendid run in the tournament, Manish Kaushik clinched the gold medal as Indian boxers concluded their impressive campaign at the Boxam International Tournament with 10 medals in Castellon, Spain.
- The 2018 Commonwealth Games silver medallist Kaushik, who returned into the ring for the first time after the Asian Olympic Qualifiers held in March last year, beat Denmark's Nikolai Terteryan with a split 3-2 decision in the men's 63kg summit bout. However, the World Championship bronze medallist Vikas Krishan went down fighting 4-1 against local favourite Ndiaye Sissokho to settle for a silver medal in the men's 69kg.

14.Ravichandran Ashwin declared Player of the month by ICC

- India's premier off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin was named the ICC men's Player for the Month of February for his stellar show against England in a four-match Test series at home which India won to qualify for the World Test Championship final.
- England's Tammy Beaumont was adjudged the women's Player of the Month.
- Ashwin who played in three tests in the four match series scored a 106 in the second innings of India's second Test victory over England at Chennai and took his 400th Test wicket in the third Test victory at Ahmedabad.

- Besides the century, Ashwin scalped 24 wickets against England last month to help India pocket the four-match Test series 3-1 and help his team secure its spot in the WTC final against New Zealand at Lord's in June.
- Ashwin who scored a total of 176 runs across these games and took 24 wickets, was the unanimous choice to win in the men's category for February and garnered the most votes in the fan vote, the ICC said in a statement.

15. Bhavani Devi became first Indian fencer to qualify for Olympics

- Tamil Nadu's C.A. Bhavani Devi has become the first ever Indian fencer to qualify for the Tokyo Olympic Games. The sabre fencer secured a spot in the World Cup in Hungary after the hosts lost in the quarterfinals of the team event, allowing South Korea to progress to the semi-final.
- Bhavani Devi qualifies through the Adjusted Official Ranking (AOR) Method.
- Two individual spots were up for grabs for the Asia and Oceania region based on the World Rankings as of April 5, 2021. She is ranked 45th and occupies one of the two available slots based on the ranking.

16. Rawalpindi's KRL Stadium renamed after Pakistan's fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar

- The KRL Stadium in Rawalpindi has been renamed after former Pakistan speedster Shoaib Akhtar. The development was confirmed by the former cricketer on Twitter, and he also expressed his gratitude to everyone, thanking them for their trust and support.
- The former fast bowler said he had done his "best" to serve Pakistan with the "utmost dedication and passionate determination".
- He said that he had done so to always keep the country's "flag high", adding that he had always worn the Star and Crescent on his chest with pride.
- Akhtar played 47 Tests, 163 ODIS and 15 T20Is for Pakistan in his career. During his time in international cricket, the pacer took 444 wickets in total.

17. Ramban District Administration developed mobile app named e-Suvidha to deliver public services

- In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the District Administration, Ramban has developed a mobile application named e-Suvidha, which shall bring many public delivery services and departments on the digital platform. The initiative has been taken on the directions of Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat.
- Deputy Commissioner, Ramban, Mussarat Islam, cleared the decks for the launch of the Mobile App which will be launched after a final trial run next week. Pertinently, the e-Suvidha Mobile App will be available on the Google Play-store and will be a game changer as it will provide access to the people to all basic services like plumbing, electric works,

mobile and laptop troubleshooting, masonry, carpentry and skilled jobs on a digital platform with a click on the mobile phones.

- The application shall also link many important departments like Health, Community Service Centres, Food & Civil Supplies, Banks and other financial institutions.

18. Virat Kohli became first cricketer to score 3,000 runs in T-20 International

- India skipper Virat Kohli has become the first-ever batsman to score 3,000 runs in T-20 International. Kohli achieved the milestone during the second T20-International against England at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad last night.
- The skipper was just 72 runs behind from touching the landmark figure and with his unbeaten knock of 73 runs, he crossed the 3,000-run mark. He now has 3,001 runs from 87 T20I matches. New Zealand's Martin Guptill is second on the list of leading run-getters in T20I cricket, having scored 2,839 runs in 99 matches. India's Rohit Sharma comes third in the list with 2,773 runs in 108 matches.

19. Government to set up Winter Sports Institute in Gulmarg, says Kiren Rijiju

- Youth Affairs & Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has announced to set up Winter Sports Institute in Gulmarg, Kashmir.
- Mr. Rijiju informed that the Khelo India Winter Games this season witnessed unprecedented participation of Kashmiri youth. He added that the government is committed to promote and ensure active participation of people from Kashmir in all Olympic sports along with other games including football and Cricket. He also announced inauguration of 100 small sports centres under Khelo India mission.

20. UAE players Shaiman Anwar and Mohammad Naveed given eight-year bans for anti-corruption breaches

- An ICC anti-corruption tribunal found both former captain Naveed and batsman Shaiman guilty of two breaches.
- The first was "being party to an agreement or effort to fix or contrive or otherwise influence improperly the result, progress, conduct or other aspect(s) of a match or matches at the ICC men's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019."
- The second was "failing to disclose to the (anti-corruption unit) full details of any approaches or invitations received to engage in corrupt conduct under the code at the ICC men's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019."

21. Tamil Nadu's Dhanalakshmi beats Dutee Chand in Federation Championships

- National record holder Dutee Chand was beaten to second place by S Dhanalakshmi, in a much-anticipated women's 100m sprint final in the Federation Cup Senior National Athletics Championships in Patiala on

16th march. The 22-year-old Dhanalakshmi of Tamil Nadu took the gold by clocking 11.39, seconds ahead of Dutee (11.58) of Odisha to become the fastest woman of the championships on the second day of competitions at the National Institute of Sports Campus. Another Tamil Nadu runner Archana Suseendran was third in 11.76.

- However, Hima Das was disqualified after a false start. Hima, who was running in the shorter sprint races of 100m and 200m instead of her usual event 400m. The much-anticipated final did not live up to the expectations as Hima was shown the red card, while Dutee and Dhanalakshmi did not come anywhere near the Olympic qualification mark of 11.15 seconds.

22. Divyansh Singh Panwar won Bronze in 10m Air Rifle in ISSF World Cup

- Indian shooter Divyansh Singh Panwar, the world No. 1 in the men's 10m Air Rifle has won bronze in men's 10m Air Rifle event at the ISSF World Cup 2021 in New Delhi.
- Also, the Indian team bagged the air rifle men's team event with a cumulative score of 185.9. The USA stood second with score of 180.8 followed by South Korea with 180.3.
- The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup 2021 is being held at Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi from March 18, 2021. The event will end on March 29, 2021.
- It is the first international event of 2021 by ISSF.
- More than 300 shooters from as many as 43 countries are participating in the World Cup being held in all three disciplines – shotgun, rifle, and pistol.

23. India's Singhraj clinches gold in 2021 World Shooting Para Sport World Cup

- India's Singhraj displayed his skills to win a gold medal at the Al Ain 2021 World Shooting Para Sport World Cup.
- He bagged the top honours in P1 men's 10m air pistol SH1 finals.
- Singhraj, the Sydney 2019 World Championships medallist, pipped Rio 2016 bronze medallist Server Ibragimov by 2.8 points.
- The final score read 236.8-234. In fact, after the penultimate final series, Ibragimov was leading by just 0.1 point.
- In the final series, the Indian had better control as he shot a 9.9 and 10.4, while the Uzbekistan shooter managed 9.5 and 7.9 to settle for the silver.
- Turkey's former Paralympic champion Muharrem Korhan Yama took the bronze with 214.4 points.
- World Championships medallist Manish Narwal, who had qualified in second place, had to settle for fourth place with 194.3 points.

24. Yashaswini won first gold for India, Manu Bhaker clinches silver

- Yashaswini Deswal bagged the first gold medal for India in the Women's 10M Air Pistol final of the International Shooting Sport Federation

(ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun here at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting range (DKSSR).

- Deswal accumulated 238.8 points to lead in her category. Another Indian shooter Manu Bhaker won a silver medal with 236.7 points.

25. Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia wins All England Badminton C'ships Men's title; Nozomi Okuhara clinches Women's title

- Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia has won the All England Badminton Championships men's title as he defeated Denmark's Viktor Axelsen in the summit clash.
- The 22-year-old defeated Axelsen 30-29, 20-22, 21-9 in the summit clash which lasted for one hour and 14 minutes. With this win, Malaysia's title drought came to an end and it is after four years, that someone from the country has managed to win the All England Open. Lee Chong Wei had last won the All England Open for Malaysia in 2017. Japan's Nozomi Okuhara won the women's title as she defeated Pornpawee Chochuwong 21-12, 21-16 in the finals.

26. India Legends defeated Sri Lanka Legends by 14 runs in the final of Road Safety World Series to clinch the title

- India Legends defeated Sri Lanka Legends by 14 runs in the final of Road Safety World Series to clinch the title. Yusuf Pathan was the star of the day and he was adjudged player of the match for his all-round performance in the summit clash. Yusuf smashed an unbeaten 62 and picked up two wickets in his four-over spell to help his side win the inaugural Road Safety World Series T20 tournament. Sachin Tendulkar, captain of the India Legends, finished the tournament as the third-highest run-getter with 233 runs from seven matches.
- India Legends, after being sent in to bat, put on a huge total of 181 for four from their allotted 20 overs. Yuvraj Singh continued his good form with the bat and scored 60 runs off just 41 balls, he smashed four sixes and four boundaries.
- Farveez Maharoof was the pick of the bowlers for Sri Lanka Legends, returning with figures of one for 16 from his four-over spell. Rangana Herath, Sanath Jayasuriya and Kaushalya Weeraratne also picked up one wicket each.

27. India finished para shooting World Cup with 7 medals

- Para shooter Sidhartha Babu won a bronze as India ended their campaign with seven medals, including two gold medals, at the Al Ain 2021 Shooting World Cup that concluded here.
- On the final day of the competition, Babu, who secured a Tokyo 2020 Paralympics quota at the Sydney 2019 World Championships, settled for the bronze after being eliminated with 223.6 points in the R6 mixed 50m rifle prone SH1.

- India finished in third place behind Ukraine with 11 medals (five gold, five silver and one bronze) ahead of hosts UAE which won five medals (three gold and two silver).

OBITUARIES

1.Papua New Guinea's first PM Michael Somare dead

- Michael Somare, a pivotal figure in Papua New Guinea's independence and the South Pacific island nation's first Prime Minister, had died. He was 84.
- Mr. Somare was Papua New Guinea's longest-serving leader after it became independent of Australia in 1975. He was Prime Minister for 17 years during four separate periods.
- He died February 26 after being diagnosed with a late-stage pancreatic cancer and admitted to a hospital on February 19, his daughter Betha Somare said.

2.BJP MP Nand Kumar Singh Chauhan passed away

- Nand Kumar Singh Chauhan, the BJP Lok Sabha member from Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh, died at a hospital in Gurugram, family sources said on Tuesday. He was 69.
- The six-term MP, who was suffering from COVID-19 and was airlifted to Medanta Hospital in Gurugram last month in a serious condition.

3.Veteran Marathi actor Shrikant Moghe died at 91

- Veteran Marathi actor Shrikant Moghe died in Pune. He was 91. He was active in Marathi Stage and Film industry for more than 50 years.
- Moghe was famous for his roles in Marathi films like Madhuchandra, Sinhaasan, Gammat Jammat, Umbaratha and Vasudev Balwant Phadke; and Marathi stage plays Varyavarchi Varaat, Tuze Aahe Tujapashi and Lekure Udand Jali.
- He was honoured with many awards like Maharashtra State Cultural award, Kashinath Ghanekar award, Prabhakar Panashikar Stage Lifetime achievement award among others.
- Last rites were performed on mortal remains of Shrikant Moghe late last night.

4.Kannada poet Lakshminarayana Bhatta passed away

- Well-known Kannada poet, critic and translator N.S. Lakshminarayana Bhatta passed away in Bengaluru early on March 6 morning.
- The poet, many of whose bhavageetes (lyrical poems) were set to tune and popularised through cassettes in the 80s, was ailing for some time. He is survived by his wife and two children.
- Born in 1936 in Shivamogga district, he was a prolific writer, publishing several collections of poems besides critical works and translations. He taught Kannada literature in Bengaluru University until he retired. Some

of his best known songs are - Thaye ninna madilali, Marege ninthu kayuthiruva karulu yaavudu, Baare nanna Deepika among others.

5. Veteran Indian Athlete Ishar Singh Deol died at 91

- Veteran Indian athlete Ishar Singh Deol, a recipient of the Dhyan Chand National Sports Award, has died at the age of 91.
- The mortal remains of Deol, who passed away evening, were consigned to fire at Jalandhar on Sunday, a Punjab government release said.
- Punjab Sports Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi condoled the demise of Deol and shared his heartfelt sympathy with the bereaved family, relatives and friends.
- Deol had won many medals for the country and the state since 1951 and was awarded the Dhyan Chand National Award in 2009 for his lifelong contribution towards sports.

6. Ivory Coast Prime Minister Hamed Bakayoko died at 56

- Ivory Coast's Prime Minister Hamed Bakayoko has died from cancer in the German city of Freiburg, where he was receiving medical treatment.
- His death on Wednesday came two days after his 56th birthday and some eight months following the passing away of his predecessor.

7. Kathakali maestro Guru Chemancheri died at 105

- Veteran Kathakali exponent Guru Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair, one of the oldest practitioners of the classical art form, died at his ancestral house in Koyilandy in north Kerala. He was 105.
- His Krishna and Kuchela characters were favourites of classical dance connoisseurs. He was conferred Padma Shri in 2017 in recognition of his contributions to Kathakali.
- He could not study beyond the primary level and was more drawn to the classical dance form. Leaving his home at the age of 14, he became a disciple of famous Kathakali maestro Guru Karunakara Menon. In 1944 he established the first classical dance school in Kannur, Bharatiya Nritya Kalalayam.

8. Renowned Padma Bhushan awarded painter Laxman Pai died at 95 age

- Renowned painter and Padma Bhushan awardee Laxman Pai died at his residence in Goa, sources close to him said. He was 95.
- He breathed his last at his home in Dona Paula.
- Born in Goa in 1926, Pai was honoured with several prestigious awards, including Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri, Nehru Award and Lalit Kala Akademi Award.

9. Himachal Pradesh BJP MP Ram Swaroop Sharma found dead at Delhi residence

- BJP MP from Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, Ram Swaroop Sharma, was found dead at his residence in Delhi today. Police said they are investigating whether it was a case of suicide. Mr. Sharma, 62, was found hanging in his room. Following news of his death, the BJP cancelled its parliamentary party meeting this morning. Sharma was first elected to Lok Sabha in 2014. He was reelected from Mandi in the 2019 general elections.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed grief over the demise of Ram Swaroop Sharma. In a tweet Mr. Modi said Ram Swaroop Sharma was a dedicated leader, who was always committed to solving people's problems. Mr. Modi said Ram Swaroop Sharma worked tirelessly for the betterment of society

10.Senior BNP leader Moudud Ahmed passed away at 81

- Barrister Moudud Ahmed, a standing committee member of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), has passed away. He was 81.
- He breathed his last around 6:30pm (Bangladesh time) at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore, according to the BNP's media wing.
- He was hospitalized in Dhaka on December 30 with serious weaknesses as his haemoglobin level dropped, said Mominur Rahman Sujon, Moudud's personal assistant.
- On February 1, the senior BNP leader was admitted to Mount Elizabeth Hospital for advanced treatment. He was shifted to the intensive care unit of the hospital on March 9 following the deterioration of his condition.
- He had been struggling for a few days due to lung congestion. Besides, he had serious kidney complications, according to BNP leaders.

11.Former SEBI chairman GV Ramakrishna passed away

- Former chairman of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) GV Ramakrishna passed away in Chennai after a brief illness. He was 91. He is survived by his wife, son and daughter.
- Born in 1930 in Bengaluru, he started his career as a biochemist and then opted for civil services in 1952. In his 50 years of government service, he headed several assignments, including diplomatic, like the minister of economic affairs at the embassy in Washington in 1972 and ambassador to the European Economic Community (European Union) in 1989.
- Known for his stellar administrative performance, Ramakrishna was appointed as the chairman SEBI in 1990 when it lacked legal status. Among his many works, he was known for strongly advocating to ban the badla stock trading system in 1994. He headed SEBI till that year and then became the first chairman of the Disinvestment Commission in 1996.

12.Egyptian feminist icon and author Nawal el-Saadawi died at 89

- Nawal el-Saadawi, a renowned Egyptian feminist, psychiatrist and novelist, whose writings have stirred controversy for decades in an

overwhelming conservative society, died of age-related health problems in Cairo. She was 89.

- Egypt's Culture Minister Inas Abdel-Dayem mourned Saadawi's passing, saying her writings had created a great intellectual movement.
- Born in October 1931 in a Nile Delta village, just north of Cairo, Saadawi studied medicine in Cairo University and the Columbia University in New York. She worked as a psychiatrist and university lecturer and authored dozens of books. She was also a regular writer in Egyptian newspapers.

13. Acclaimed Polish poet Adam Zagajewski died at the age 75

- Adam Zagajewski, one of Poland's greatest poets who wrote a poem that came to symbolise the world's sense of shock and loss after the September 11 attacks in the US, has died in Krakow. He was 75. Zagajewski's death, which was UNESCO's World Poetry Day, was confirmed by publisher Krystyna Krynicka. No cause of death was given.
- Zagajewski's poem Try to Praise the Mutilated World was published in the New Yorker magazine just days after the September 11 attacks and became representative for the outpouring of grief around the world. He taught poetry workshops at Krakow's Jagiellonian University, as well as creative writing at the University of Houston.

14. Noted journalist and author Anil Dharker passed away at 74

- Noted journalist and author Anil Dharker passed away in Mumbai. He was 74. He was undergoing treatment for a heart ailment. Anil Dharker was the founder and director of the Mumbai International Literary Festival.
- In his five-decade-long illustrious career, Dharker had been a columnist and writer, an architect, a member of the advisory committee of the film certification board and more. Dharker had been the editor of a variety of publications, starting with 'Debonair', 'Mid-Day'; 'The Independent' and 'The Illustrated Weekly of India'. He was a columnist for The Indian Express newspaper and has authored 'The Romance of Salt', a book on Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi March. Dharker had also worked as a TV show producer and anchor. He was also a member of the Advisory Boards of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Children's Film Society of India.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. National Science Day 2021: 28 February

- The National Science Day is celebrated on 28 February each year in India to spread the message about the importance of science in the daily life of the people.
- Theme for 2021 – "Future of STI: Impact on Education, Skills and Work".
- Purpose – To commemorate the discovery of Raman Effect.

- Indian physicist Sir C V Raman discovered the Raman Effect on 28 February 1928 and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930 for it.

2.Zero Discrimination Day 2021: 01 March

- Zero Discrimination Day 2021 aims at highlighting the urgent need to take action to end the inequalities surrounding income, sex, age, health status, occupation, disability, sexual orientation, drug use, gender identity, race, class, ethnicity and religion that are prevalent around the world.
- Zero Discrimination Day 2021 aims at ending inequalities, discrimination existing in the world, especially after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. You can be a part of ending discrimination by participating in this year's Zero Discrimination Day by shining a light on inequalities and doing your part in helping to address them.
- The United Nations has been promoting the day by organizing various campaigns and activities to celebrate an individual's right to live life with dignity and honour irrespective of their age, sex, religion, caste, colour, nationality, height, weight and profession.

3.World Wildlife Day 2021: 03 March

- On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 3 March – the day of signature of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1973 – as UN World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild animals and plants.
- The UNGA resolution also designated the CITES Secretariat as the facilitator for the global observance of this special day for wildlife on the UN calendar. World Wildlife Day has now become the most important global annual event dedicated to wildlife.
- World Wildlife Day will be celebrated in 2021 under the theme "Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet".

4.National Security Day 2021: 04 March

- The day was celebrated in 1972 to mark the foundation day of the autonomous body namely National Safety Council. It is a non-profit, self-financing and tripartite apex body at the national level.
- In 1965, the government for the first time organised a conference on Industrial Safety in the presence of the then President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. On this day, the need for Safety Councils on national and state levels was agreed upon.
- In 1966, the proposal for a National Safety Council was accepted in the 24th Session of the Standing Labour Committee. The Council has been set up on 4 March 1965 in order to raise awareness among people and bring them together for a voluntary movement on Safety, Health, and Environment.

5.Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana Diwas observed in Manipur

- As part of weeklong observation of Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP), the Janaushadhi Diwas was observed in Manipur today. The observation function held at PMBJP Kendra at Chingmeirong Imphal was graced by Manipur MP (Inner) Dr. R.K. Ranjan.
- Dr. R.K. Ranjan said that the scheme provides generic medicines at affordable prices to the low income group. The scheme was introduced by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi after considering the economic instability of the people living in poor conditions.
- To create awareness about Janushadhi, the first week of March is being celebrated as Janaushadhi Week across the nation with the theme of ‘Janaushadhi-Seva Bhi, Rozgar Bhi’. The last day of the week - March 7 is being celebrated as ‘Janaushadhi Diwas’.

6. International Day of Mathematics 2021: 14 March

- International Day of Mathematics is annually celebrated on March 14. The day was recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) during its general conference in 2019. Before this, the day was marked as Pi Day.
- The day was first celebrated in 1988 after Physicist Larry Shaw. The day is written in the MM/DD format so that it represents the value of Pi that is 3.14. Moreover, mathematician and physicist, Albert Einstein was also born on this date.
- The value of Pi was first calculated by a mathematician who was called Archimedes of Syracuse. However, the value was officially accepted by the scientific community only after Leonhard Euler came up with the symbol of Pi in 1737.
- This year, the theme of the International Day of Mathematics is “Mathematics for a Better World”.

7. World Consumer Rights Day 2021: 15th March

- World Consumer Rights Day is observed every year on March 15, since 1983. The day was inspired by President John F Kennedy’s special message to the US Congress on March 15, 1962. Kennedy addressed the issue of consumer rights and laid emphasis on its importance and became the first world leader to talk about consumer rights. On this day every year, various organisations like Consumer International hold events and campaigns to inform more and more people about consumer rights.
- The theme of the World Consumer Rights Day 2021 is “Tackle plastic pollution”. Plastic pollution is one of the most pressing issues facing our planet. Consumer awareness of the plastics crisis is growing around the world.

8. National Vaccination Day 2021: March 16

- Every year on the 16th of March, India observes National Vaccination Day. The day is also known as National Immunization Day, and the reason for 16th March to be the date this day is observed is the fact that

on this very day in the year 1995, the first dose of an oral vaccine against polio was given in India.

- The prime purpose behind the celebration of National Vaccination Day is to make all people aware of arming against polio and eradicating it completely from the world. And hence, on this day, millions of children in India are given immunization against polio with the polio vaccine.
- Through vaccination, a long list of preventive infectious diseases can be prevented, some of which are polio, measles, smallpox, and tetanus, among others.

9.Global Recycling Day 2021: 18 March

- Every year, the earth yields billions of tons of natural resources to transform into consumables. At some point, there will be nothing left. That's why we must, as a planet, think again about what we throw away seeing not waste, but opportunity.
- Global Recycling Day was created in 2018 to help recognize, and celebrate, the importance recycling plays in preserving our precious primary resources and securing the future of our planet. It is a Day for the world to come together, and put the planet first.
- The theme for this year's Global Recycling Day is "Celebrating our Recycling Heroes".

10.International Day of Forests 2021: 21 March

- Every year, March 21 is celebrated as the International Day of Forests. The day is aimed at raising public awareness about the values, significance, and contributions of the forests to balance the life cycle on the earth. Various organisations, private and government, work together on this day to enlighten people not only about the forests at large but also the trees and vegetation that exists outside of the forested areas.
- Previously, the 16th session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) voted to "World Forestry Day" in 1971. Then, from 2007 to 2012, the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) held six Forest Days. Partnering with Collaborative Partnership on Forest, 2011 was declared as the Year of Forests.
- Each year, the Collaborative Partnership on Forest (which is an arm of United Nations Forum on Forests) decides on a theme for the forest day. International Day of Forests 2021 theme has been declared as is "Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well-being".

11.World Water Day 2021: 22nd March

- World Water Day is observed every year on March 22 since 1993, focuses on the importance of freshwater. It is also observed to spread awareness about water scarcity and other issues. This year's theme for World Water Day is 'Valuing Water'. It is about what water means to people, its true value, and how we can better protect this vital resource.
- The idea for a World Water Day was put forward in 1992, at the Rio de Janeiro United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution by which March 22 of each year was declared World Day for Water, to be observed starting in 1993.

- The main focus of the day is to “support the achievement of sustainable development goal (SDG) 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.”
- The campaign will be undertaken across the country, in both rural and urban areas, with the theme "catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls".

12. Shaheed Diwas or Martyr's Day observed annually on 23rd March

- India observes Shaheed Diwas on 23rd March to commemorate the sacrifice of freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru. On this day in 1931, the young freedom fighters were hanged in a Lahore jail.
- To mark their sacrifice, the day is observed across India and tributes are paid to the freedom fighters. Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were in their early 20s when the trio sacrificed their lives for the nation.
- Lala Lajpat Rai was attacked by the British officers during a protest and the injuries resulted in the death of one of the tallest leaders of the Indian freedom movement. To avenge his death, young freedom fighters decided to kill James A Scott, the officer responsible for the lathi charge.
- The day is significant as it reminds the sacrifices made by the previous generations for the country's freedom. The freedom fighters, who were hanged on this day, were young but they decided to face death in order to inspire others in the fight for independence.
- Shaheed Diwas is observed twice in India - one is on 23rd March and the other on 30th January, the day when Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated

13. World Tuberculosis Day 2021: 24th March

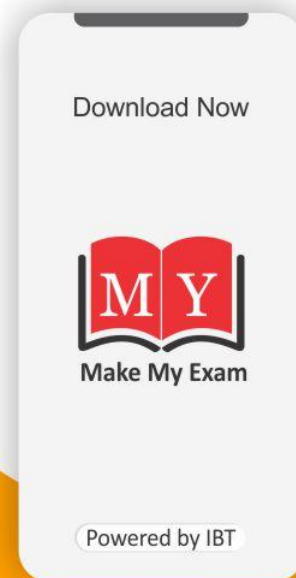
- World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is observed on 24 March to mark the discovery of the cause behind the deadly disease. The day is meant to spread awareness about tuberculosis and its devastating health, social and economic consequences.
- On this day in 1882, Dr. Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium which causes tuberculosis. He claimed that Mycobacterium tuberculosis, a bacillus causes the infection. This discovery paved the way towards diagnosing and curing the disease. According to Stop TB Partnership, at the time when Koch made the discovery, tuberculosis was the reason behind the death of one out of every seven people in Europe and America.
- Every year, World Tuberculosis Day is observed with a particular theme. In 2021, the theme is 'The Clock is Ticking'. According to WHO, it emphasizes that the world is running out of time to act on the commitments made by the global leaders to end tuberculosis.

14. International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

- First observed in 2008 after a December 2007 resolution, the day honours and remembers the more than 15 million men, women and children who were brutalized under a slavery system that endured for more than 400 years. The legacy of the inhumane forced migration – 96 per cent of captives arrived in South America and the Caribbean islands – is the large population of people of African descent in the Americas.
- Despite its abolition, slavery continues in modern forms to this day, the ultimate violation of the right to autonomy. Another legacy of a barbaric system when human beings are regarded as “other” and “less than”: racism and prejudice. This year’s theme is “Ending Slavery’s Legacy of Racism: A Global Imperative for Justice,” reflecting the global movement to end injustices rooted in the slave trade and teaching history so as to acknowledge slavery’s impact on today’s world and spur action to address its long-lasting effects.

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VIDEO COURSE

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