

CURRENT AFFAIRS

february 2020



Summary and Multiple Choice Questions



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Current Affairs – February 2020

This is a guide to provide you a precise summary and a huge collection of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) covering national and international current affairs for the month of **February 2020**.

This guide will help you in preparing for Indian competitive examinations like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade and Officer Grade, etc.

Audience

Aspirants who are preparing for different competitive exams like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade, Officer Grade, etc.

Even though you are not preparing for any exams but are willing to have news encapsulated in a roll, which you can walk through within 30 minutes, then we have put all the major points for the whole month in a precise and interesting way.

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Appointments

1. Center appointed M Ajit Kumar as Chairman of CBIC

The Government of India appointed M Ajit Kumar IRS (C&CE 84) as Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC). M Ajit Kumar is a 1984 batch IRS officer hailing from Kozhikode.



M Ajit has experience of working as Directorate of Vigilance in New Delhi; Directorate of Revenue Intelligence in Mumbai; Principal Chief Commissioner of GST Zone for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and Principal Chief Commissioner of Customs zones in Chennai. He was honored with World Customs Organisation certificate of merit for the year 2019.

2. Ajay Bisaria appointed as India's next Ambassador to Canada

India's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ajay Bisaria was appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to Canada. Prior to this appointment, he was serving as High Commissioner of India to Pakistan. Ajay Bisaria replaced Vikas Swarup. Recently, Pakistan urged India to recall its envoy due to rising tensions between India and Pakistan after New Delhi scrapped Article 370, a constitutional provision that granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir.



Taranjit Singh Sandhu was appointed as the next Indian ambassador to the United States. He replaced Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

3. Gopal Baglay appointed as India's next Ambassador to Sri Lanka

Gopal Baglay appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. He will replace Taranjit Sandhu. Prior to this appointment, he was serving as Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office.



Baglay has held many key positions including spokesperson of the MEA. 1992 IFS officer Baglay has served as Deputy High Commissioner of India to Pakistan and handled sensitive PAI (Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran) division in the MEA.

4. Karen Pierce appointed as Britain's next ambassador to U.S.

Britain appointed its current United Nations envoy Dame Karen Pierce as the next ambassador to the United States. She became the first woman to hold the position. Pierce joined Foreign Office in 1981. She has been posted to Tokyo, the Balkans and Geneva. She served as the UK's ambassador to Afghanistan in 2015 and 2016.



Britain's previous ambassador to US, Kim Darroch, had resigned in 2019 over his controversial comments on US President Donald Trump in leaked diplomatic cables.

5. Rajiv Bansal appointed as CMD of Air India

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Rajiv Bansal as the Chairman and Managing Director of Air India for a second time. Bansal is a 1988-batch IAS officer of the Nagaland cadre and is currently the Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.



Mr Bansal replaced Ashwani Lohani. Bansal was in August 2017 named as Air India's interim CMD for three months. The government has announced 100% stake sale of the debt-ridden national carrier.

6. Rear Admiral Puruvir Das assumed charge as the Flag Officer Commanding Gujarat Naval Area

Rear Admiral Puruvir Das, Nau Sena Medal took over the reins of the Gujarat, Daman and Diu Naval Area from Rear Admiral Sanjay Roye, Vishisht Seva Medal as its fourth Flag Officer Commanding. In a career spanning 30 years, he has held numerous specialist, staff and operational appointments.



The Navy gives very high priority to the frontline state of Gujarat; due to its strategic location, vast coastline and economic importance for India. The FOGNA is responsible to the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command for all Naval operations in Gujarat, Daman and Diu Naval Area.

7. Rear Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan took over as Eastern Fleet Commander

The command of the Eastern Fleet was handed over to Rear Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan, NM by Rear Admiral Suraj Berry, AVSM, NM, VSM. The Eastern Fleet comprising of frontline warships of the Indian Navy are deployed across the indo-pacific region to safeguard the nation's maritime interest.



Rear Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan is a Gunnery & Missile systems specialist and has vast experience at sea and ashore. He has commanded missile vessels Vibhuti and Nashak and has also been the commissioning Commanding Officer of the indigenously constructed state-of-the-art stealth frigate Sahyadri.

8. Atul Kumar Gupta elected as new ICAI President

Atul Kumar Gupta was elected as President of The Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICAI) for the year 2020-21. Nihar Niranjan Jambusaria was elected as the Vice President of the ICAI for 2020-21. Atul Kumar has served as Chairman of SAFA Committee on Education, Training & CPD and Director of XBRL India and ICAI-Accounting Research Foundation (ARF).



Nihar has served as the Chairman of – IndAS Implementation Committee, ICAI, International tax Committee and various other important Committees/ Board of ICAI.

9. G Narayanan to head space PSU NSIL

Veteran space scientist G Narayanan has been named as the chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation's newly formed commercial entity New Space India Ltd (NSIL). Prior to this appointment, he worked as deputy director (systems reliability and quality assurance) at the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC). LPSC develops liquid propulsion stages for launch vehicles.



NewSpace India Limited is a Central Public Sector Enterprise of Government of India, meant to scale up industry participation in Indian space programmes and excel in providing space related products.

10. IndusInd Bank names Sumant Kathpalia as MD & CEO

IndusInd Bank has appointed Sumant Kathpalia as the MD & CEO for three years, effective March 24, 2020. Kathpalia currently heads the bank's Consumer Banking business. He will take over from Romesh Sobti, the current MD & CEO.



Kathpalia has been with the bank since 2008. Before joining IndusInd Bank, he led the consumer banking business of ABN AMRO. He has also worked with Citibank and Bank of America.

11. Vinay Dube appointed as GoAir new CEO

GoAir appointed Vinay Dube, the former chief executive officer (CEO) of Jet Airways, as its new CEO. His duties will be to achieve long term growth objectives of the company, to streamline operations, open new markets, keep margins intact and look after management of the airline. The budget airline did not have a CEO since the departure of Cornelis Vrieswijk in March 2019.



GoAir is an Indian low-cost airline based in Mumbai, India, owned by Wadia Group. In 2017, it was rated as the fifth largest airline in India with an 8.4% passenger market share.

12. Sunil Gurbaxani appointed as new MD and CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank

Dhanlaxmi Bank appointed Sunil Gurbaxani as Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of the Bank for three years from the date of taking charge under RBI approval. Prior to this appointment, Sunil Gurbaxani was working with Axis Bank.



New Logo

Gurbaxani has handled various roles such as Credit officer, Operations Head, Assistant General Manager, Assistant Vice President, Vice President, Senior Vice President and Executive Vice President in Axis Bank.

Dhanlaxmi Bank Ltd is an old private sector bank headquartered in Kerala.

13. Rajlaxmi Singh Deo was elected as President of Rowing Federation of India

Rajlaxmi Singh Deo was re-elected as the President of the Rowing Federation of India (RFI) for four years till 2024. Rajpal Singh, G Bhasker, Souvik Ghose and Sreekumara Kurup will serve as the Vice-Presidents. Krishna Kumar Singh and Chirajit Phukan were elected as the joint secretaries. Jasbir Singh, Venkateswara Rao, Ismail Baig, Jacob and Manjunatha are the executive committee members.



The Rowing Federation of India is the central body for the game of rowing in India. It is affiliated with the Indian Olympic Association and Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d'Aviron.

14. USIBC appointed Vijay Advani as new Chairman of Global Board

The US-India Business Council (USIBC) appointed Vijay Advani as new Chair of its Global Board of Directors. Prior to this, he served as Executive Chairman of the Board. Lockheed Martin International Senior Vice President Tim Cahill and GE South Asia President & CEO Mahesh Palashikar were selected as two new members of the Global Board of Directors.



Advani has worked at the World Bank, advising governments on developing financial markets. The U.S.-India Business Council encourage the private sectors of both India and United States to enhance investment flows.

15. Bhaskar Khulbe and Amarjeet Sinha appointed as Advisers to PM

Retired IAS officers Bhaskar Khulbe and Amarjeet Sinha were appointed as Advisors to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointments in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in the rank and scale of Secretary on contractual basis initially for a period of two years.



Bihar cadre's Amarjeet Sinha retired as the Rural Development Secretary in 2019. Bengal cadre's Bhaskar Khulbe has served in the PMO.

16. Sanjay Kothari appointed as new Central Vigilance Commissioner

Sanjay Kothari was appointed by a high-powered committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the new Central Vigilance Commissioner. Prior to this appointment, he was serving as the Secretary to the President. Bimal Julka was appointed as the Chief Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission. Prior to this appointment, he was serving as an Information Commissioner.



The three-member panel appointed Suresh Patel as Vigilance Commissioner and Anita Pandove as Information Commissioner.

17. Nriya Gopal Das elected as the President of Ram Mandir Trust

Mahant Nriya Gopal Das was elected President and Champat Rai as General Secretary of the Ram Temple Trust at its first meeting held in New Delhi to oversee the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya. The trust has been mandated by the Central Government to complete the construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya.



The trust announced to create a Committee to decide on the construction of the temple. Nripendra Misra, former principal secretary of Prime Minister Modi will be the head of the temple construction committee.

Awards

1. International Gandhi Awards for Leprosy

President Ram Nath Kovind presented the International Gandhi Awards for Leprosy to Dr N.S. Dharmashaktu in the individual category and the Leprosy Mission Trust in the institutional category. The Award is presented once in two years and consists of Rs. 2 lakhs as cash award, a Medallion and a Citation.



Dr. N S Dharamshaktu has been recognized for dedicating several years of his life towards fighting leprosy. Leprosy Mission Trust India has been tirelessly working for and with the people afflicted by Leprosy for over a century.

2. Waheeda Rehman honoured with Kishore Kumar Samman

Noted yesteryear actor Waheeda Rehman was conferred with the Madhya Pradesh government's National Kishore Kumar Samman. She received a cash prize of Rs 2 lakh and a citation. Popular director Priyadarshan was also honored with Kishore Kumar Samman.



Waheeda Rehman appeared in many Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Bengali and Malayalam films. Prior to this, Waheeda Rehman has been honored with Padma Bhushan and Filmfare award for best actress.

3. Shaktikanta Das named best central banker in Asia Pacific

The Reserve Bank of India governor Shaktikanta Das won the 'Central Banker of the Year 2020' for the Asia-Pacific region by financial intelligence magazine "The Banker". He was honored for his outstanding steps taken to bring banking in India up to standard via a restrained approach to governance. The magazine lauded Shaktikanta Das for setting up a college for supervisors, and mandating banks to select external benchmarks for linking their lending rates.



Other awardees include Jorgovanka Tabakovi, National Bank of Serbia as the Global Central Banker of the Year.

4. 2020 EE British Academy Film Awards held in London

The 2020 EE British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) winners were announced during the award ceremony held at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

Category	Winners
Leading Actress	Renee Zellweger (Judy)
Leading Actor	Joaquin Phoenix (Joker)
Best Film	1917
Best Director	Sam Mendes (1917)
Supporting Actress	Laura Dern (Marriage Story)
Supporting Actor	Brad Pitt (Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood)
Outstanding British Film	1917
EE Rising Star Award	Micheal Ward

5. South Korean film 'Parasite' won Best Film Oscar

It was for the first time in the history of awards that a non-english film 'Parasite' won four prizes at 92nd Oscar awards. 'Parasite' movie won awards for best director, best international film and best screenplay. Parasite is a 2019 South Korean dark comedy thriller film directed by Bong Joon-ho, who also co-wrote the screenplay with Han Jin-won. Parasite dominated the nominations such as movie '1917', 'Once Upon a Time In Hollywood' and 'The Irishman'.



Joaquin Phoenix won the best actor for "Joker" and Renee Zellweger bagged the best actress for "Judy".

6. Prez Kovind presented President's Colour to Indian Navy's INS Shivaji

President Ram Nath Kovind presented President's Colour to Indian Navy's INS Shivaji at Lonavala on the occasion of Platinum Jubilee of this premier training establishment. The President's Colour is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon any military unit.



The motto of INS Shivaji is Karmasu Kaushalam which translates to imbining the concept of Skill at Work in all facets of human endeavour. The establishment has rendered 75 years of glorious service to the nation by imparting training in engineering discipline to personnel of Indian Navy, Coast Guard, other sister services and friendly foreign Countries.

7. Pullela Gopichand honoured with lifetime achievement award by IOC

Chief national badminton coach Pullela Gopichand was honored in the male category of the prestigious 2019 International Olympic Committee's Coaches Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of the role he played in the development of the game in the country. He became the first Indian coach to be honored with this Lifetime award by the Olympics Committee.



Pullela Gopichand is a former Indian badminton player. Prior to this, Pullela was honored with Dronacharya award for coaching.

8. South Indian Bank bagged two awards at the Banking Technology 2019 awards by IBA

South Indian Bank has bagged two awards at the Banking Technology 2019 awards instituted by the Indian Banks' Association. The Bank emerged winner in the 'Most Customer Centric Bank Using Technology' category and runner up in the 'Best Payments Initiative' category amongst small Banks'. Mr. Raphael T J, C.G.M and C.I.O and Mr. Sony A, J.G.M received the awards on behalf of South Indian Bank. Morgan Stanley received award for 'best digital initiative' and HSBC won for 'best use of emerging technology'.



Banking Technology Awards recognise excellence and innovation in the use of IT in financial services worldwide.

9. India's pioneering feminist Gita Sen wins Dan David Prize 2020

India's pioneering feminist scholar and activist Gita Sen won the prestigious Dan David Prize 2020 for her pioneering work in the fields of population. She is popularly known for her efforts in the fields of women's rights, reproductive and sexual health and poverty eradication. At present, Gita Sen is serving as the director of the Ramalingaswami Centre on Equity and Social Determinants of Health at the Public Health Foundation of India.



The Dan David Prize is an international award, endowed by the Dan David Foundation that grants annually three prizes for outstanding achievement in the field of innovative research.

10. BioAsia 2020 announced Genome Valley Excellence Award

American immunologist and oncologist Dr. Carl H June and Novartis CEO Dr. Vasant Narsimhan were honored with Genome Valley Excellence Award at BioAsia 2020 for their contributions to life sciences. BioAsia 2020 was organized by Telangana government annual global biotechnology & life sciences forum.



Carl H June proved breakthrough research in developing CAR-T therapy for treatment of Cancer and development and commercialization of world's first FDA-approved gene therapy. Vasant Narsimhan showed exemplary work in development of over 20 novel medicines, including advances cell and gene therapies as well as vaccines.

11. Election Commission of India gets 'Silver' award

The Election Commission of India has been awarded 'Silver' for Excellence in Government Process re-engineering for digital transformation for the year 2019-20. The award was given for the ERONET from ECI. ERONET is a common database for all States and UTs with data of 91 crore electors. It provides bedrock of electoral roll in providing various web services to Conduct of Elections applications of Election Commission of India.



The award was presented during the 23rd National Conference on e-Governance at Mumbai by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Government of India.

12. CSIR-CDRI Scientist Dr. Niti Kumar gets SERB Women Excellence Award-2020

Dr Niti Kumar, Senior Scientist from Division of Molecular Parasitology and Immunology, CSIR-CDRI, Lucknow, was conferred the SERB Women Excellence Award-2020. Her research group is trying to understand the protein quality control machinery in human malaria parasite for exploration of alternative drug targets for malaria intervention.



This award is given to women scientist below 40 years of age who have received recognition from national academies. The women researchers will be supported by research grant of 5 lakhs per annum for 3 years by Science and Engineering Research Board, Department of Science & Technology, Government of India (SERB-DST).

13. Mukesh Ambani won Iconic Business Leader of the Decade Award

Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani was recognised as the Iconic Business Leader of the Decade at the 15th Indian Business Leader Awards held in Mumbai. Rajesh Gopinathan, CEO and Managing Director of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) won the Outstanding Business Leader of the Year award.



TCS also bagged the iconic company of the decade award. Former Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley was posthumously given the Hall of Fame award for his contribution to the Indian economy. Most Promising Company of the Year award was given to Vinati Organics. HDFC Bank won the Outstanding Company of the Year award. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella was honoured with the 'Global Indian Business Icon'.

14. 65th Amazon Filmfare Awards 2020 Announced

The 65th Filmfare Awards ceremony, presented by The Times Group were organized in Guwahati, Assam. This is the first time in six decades that a Filmfare Award ceremony was held outside Mumbai.

Category	Winner
Best Actor	Ranveer Singh
Best Actress	Alia Bhatt
Best Film	Gully Boy
Best Director	Zoya Akhtar (Gully Boy)
Best Film (Critics)	Article 15 and Sonchiriya
Best Debut Director	Aditya Dhar - Uri: The Surgical Strike

15. Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2020 held in Mumbai

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2020 were announced in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The key winners of the awards are:

Category	Winner
Best Film	Super 30
Best Actor	Hrithik Roshan (Super 30)
Best Actor in Television Series	Dheeraj Dhoopar
Most Promising Actor	Kiccha Sudeep
Best Actress in Television	Divyanka Tripathi
Best Reality Show	Bigg Boss 13
Best Television Series	Kumkum Bhagya
Best Playback Singer Male	Armaan Malik

16. Veteran Indian actor Manoj Kumar honored by World Book of Records, London

Padam Shri Manoj Kumar was honored by the World Book of Records, London with the WBR Golden Era of Bollywood. He was honored for being a legendary actor and for his contribution to Indian Cinema through highlighting patriotic, social, cultural feelings in Hindi Cinema. Some of his best performances were in films like Hariyali Aur Raasta, Who Kaun Thi, Himalaya Ki God Mein, Upkar and Patthar Ke Sanam.



Manoj Kumar was known for acting in and directing films with patriotic themes, and have been given the nickname Bharat Kumar. He was honored by Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2015.

Bills and Acts

1. Union Cabinet approved Pesticide Management Bill 2020

The Union Cabinet has approved the Pesticide Management Bill 2020. The legislation will promote organic pesticides in the country and regulate the business of pesticides. The bill will now be presented in the Parliament.

The bill includes the provision of compensating the farmers in case of losses of crops due to the use of spurious or low quality of pesticides. The Bill aims to replace the existing Insecticides Act of 1968.



2. Union Cabinet approved the Major Ports Authority Bill 2020

The Union Cabinet approved the Major Ports Authority Bill 2020 that will replace a 1963 law governing country's 12 major ports which will be introduced in the ongoing session of Parliament. The proposed law is aimed at enhancing the overall efficiencies of the ports.

India has 12 major ports - Deendayal (erstwhile Kandla), Mumbai, JNPT, Marmugao, New Mangalore, Cochin, Chennai, Kamarajar (earlier Ennore), V O Chidambarnar, Visakhapatnam, Paradip and Kolkata (including Haldia). The 12 major ports in India would get a boost through the new law.



3. Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996 amended to make arbitration process user friendly

The Union Government has amended the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 by the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2015 in order to make arbitration process user-friendly, cost-effective and ensure speedy disposal and neutrality of arbitrators.

The Amendment provides for the creation of an independent institution Arbitration Council of India-ACI. ACI will be headed by a Chairperson, who has been a Judge of the Supreme Court or a Chief Justice or Judge of a High Court or an eminent person, having special knowledge and experience in the conduct or administration of arbitration. Besides, it will also have two Full-time Members and a Part-time Member.



4. Government amended provisions of Arms Act, 1959 and Arms Rules, 2016

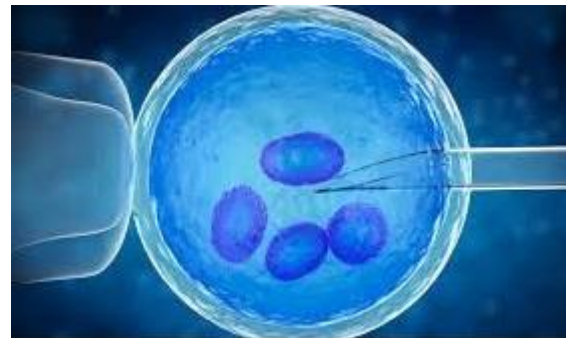
The Ministry of Home Affairs has amended the provisions of the Arms Act, 1959 and the Arms Rules, 2016 to provide adequate firearms and ammunition to the shooters for their practice.

- The amendment has increased the number of additional weapons kept by International Medalists/Renowned Shooters to 12 from 7 under the exempted category.
- For .22 LR rifle / pistol, 5000 ammunition can be purchased instead of 1000, for other type of Pistol/Revolver, 2000 instead of 600 can be purchased and for shotgun calibers 5000 instead 500 can be purchased by the shooters.



5. Cabinet approved the Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation Bill 2020

The Union Cabinet has approved a historic Bill for the welfare of Women in the Country – the Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation Bill 2020. The bill makes provisions for safe and ethical practice of assisted reproductive technology services in the country.



The major benefit of the Act would be that it will regulate the Assisted Reproductive Technology services in the country. Consequently, infertile couples will be more ensured/confident of the ethical practices in ARTs. The government in the recent past has introduced the Surrogacy Regulation Bill 2020 and the approval of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Bill 2020.

6. Cabinet approved the IIT Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020

The Union Cabinet approved Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The Bill will declare the remaining 5 IIITs-PPP along with the existing 15 Indian Institutes of Information Technology in Public Private Partnership mode as 'Institutions of National Importance' with powers to award degrees. This will entitle them to use the nomenclature of B.Tech or M.Tech or Ph.D degree as issued by a University or Institution of National Importance.



The objective of the approval is for formalization of IIITs at Surat, Bhopal, Bhagalpur, Agartala and Raichur.

Books & Authors

1. Ekushey Book Fair began in Dhaka

The month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2020 has started on Bangla Academy premises and at Suhrawardy Udyan in Dhaka. This year Bangla Academy has set the theme of the fair as "Birth Centenary of Bangabandhu".

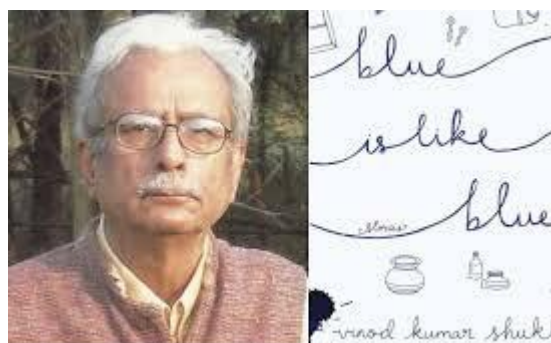
Amar Ekushey Book Fair starts on 1st February every year and continues throughout the month. It is the longest book fair of the world. The Book Fair is arranged to commemorate the glorious sacrifices of language martyrs of the



Language Movement of 21 February in 1952.

2. Vinod Shukla won 1st Mathrubhumi Book of the Year award

Noted Hindi poet-novelist and Sahitya Akademi award winner Vinod Kumar Shukla won the inaugural Mathrubhumi Book of the Year award for his translated book "Blue Is Like Blue". It is a translated book from Hindi by Arvind Krishna Mehrotra and Sara Rai, and published by HarperCollins India. Vinod Kumar Shukla received cash prize of Rs 5 lakh and a memento.



Blue is Like Blue is a collection of short stories detailing the 'smaller-than-life people' who all live in inherent fear about their situation.

3. Vice President released the book 'A Child of Destiny'

The Vice President of India, and Chairman of Rajya Sabha Shri M Venkaiah Naidu released a book titled, 'A Child of Destiny', an autobiography penned by Prof. K. Ramakrishna Rao. Prof. K. Ramakrishna Rao is a pre-eminent scholar and accomplished researcher. He has authored 20 books and 300 research papers. He was honored with "The Civilian Honour of Padma Shri in 2011".



The book guides on how one can get its dreams fulfilled through the examples of true life events and how the fight of faith is won by absolutely trusting God with an unwavering faith.

4. Dharmendra Rai's book "The Thin Mind Map Book" launched

Mind Map & Brain Literacy Pioneer launched a book titled as "The Thin Mind Map Book" written by Dharmendra Rai. The book aims to make anyone an expert in mind mapping by devoting 2 full days to reading and performing all the experiential exercises described in the book.

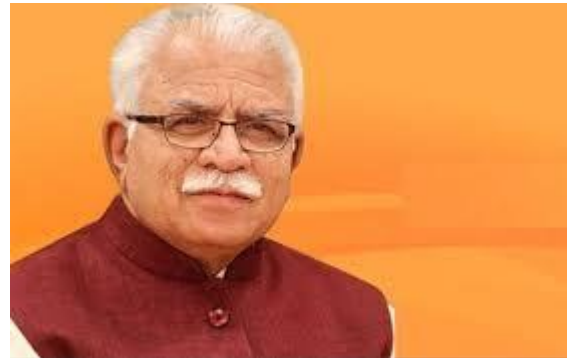


AN INTRODUCTION

Dharmendra Rai, with 25 years' experience and having trained over 1,900 startups, is the first person in the world to talk on TEDxOn Creativity & Mind Mapping. He has conducted seminars for executives of Fortune 500 companies like Amazon, Google, LinkedIn, Adobe.

5. Haryana Chief Minister released the book "A Commentary and Digest on The Air, Act 1981"

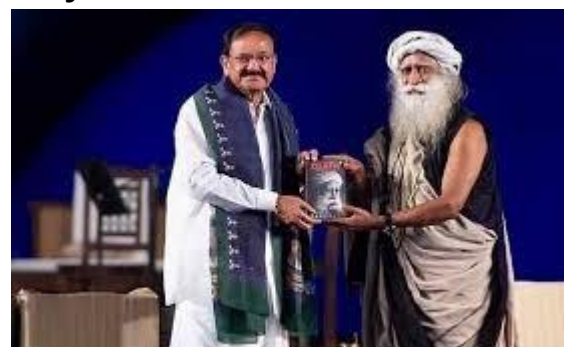
Haryana Chief Minister (CM), Manohar Lal Khattar, released a book titled "A Commentary & Digest on The Air, Act 1981". The book is authored by Dr K K Khandelwal and published by The Bright Law House. The book not only details about law devised to prevent air pollution but also creates awareness on preventing and controlling air pollution.



The book provides analysis & explanatory notes on various provisions along with case laws. Dr K K Khandelwal is Chairman, Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (HRERA, Gurgaon).

6. 'Death: An Inside Story' book released by Venkaiah Naidu

The Vice President of India M Venkaiah Naidu released the book titled 'Death - An Inside Story: A book for all those who shall' authored by Jaggi Vasudev, but famously known as Sadhguru, Founder of Isha Foundation. The book details about on what preparations one can make for one's death, how best we can assist someone who is dying and how we can continue to support their journey even after death.



The book was released on the occasion of Mahashivaratri celebrations in Tamil Nadu. Mahashivratri is significant because of the immense spiritual benefits it offers due to natural planetary positions.

Committees

1. BCCI constituted 3-members in Cricket Advisory Committee

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced the appointment of its Cricket Advisory Committee. The three-member committee comprises Mr Madan Lal, Mr Rudra Pratap Singh and Ms Sulakshana Naik. The term of appointment will be for one year.



The newly-formed CAC will succeed the trio of Kapil Dev, Anshuman Gaekwad, and Shanta Rangaswamy. The CAC will now be responsible to select the Indian selection committee, including the appointment of chief selector and another member in the selection committee.

2. 15th Finance Commission forms panel on defence, internal security funding

The Fifteenth Finance Commission has constituted a five member group on Defence and Internal Security to examine if India needs a separate mechanism to fund defence and internal security. The panel will be headed by Chairman of the Commission N.K. Singh. It will comprise of the following members:

- AN Jha, Member of the 15th Finance Commission
- Secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs
- Secretary of Ministry of Defence Expenditure Secretary



The Finance Commission, in its report for 2020-21, had said there's merit in ensuring a predictable and stable flow of funds for defence and internal security.

3. Finance Commission constitutes High Level Expert Group on Agriculture Exports

The 15th Finance Commission (FFC) set up a high level expert group on farm exports, which will be headed by ITC Chairman and Managing Director Sanjiv Puri. It will recommend measurable performance incentives for States to encourage agri exports as well as to promote crops to enable high import substitution.



The Committee will also identify the impediments for private sector investments along the agricultural value chain and suggest policy measures and reforms that would help attract the required investments. It will

submit its recommendations within three months for further consideration of the Commission.

4. Assam Accord's Clause 6 panel submits its report to CM Sarbanand Sonowal

The high level committee on the Clause Six of Assam Accord has submitted its report to Chief Minister Sarbanand Sonowal. The committee headed by Justice (retired) Biplab Kumar Sarma has recommended measures to protect the interest of the indigenous people of the state.



The Assam government will send the report to the Home Ministry for the follow up action. The Centre and the Assam government have already assured that steps would be taken to implement the Clause Six of the Assam Accord.

5. SEBI formed Municipal bonds development committee

In order to make recommendations to SEBI on policy matters pertaining to development of municipal debt securities market, SEBI constituted a Municipal Bonds Development Committee headed by Sujit Prasad, Executive Director, SEBI and comprising of representatives from ministry, municipal corporation, lawyers, professionals and market practitioners as members.



Committee would be responsible to advise SEBI on issues related to regulation and on matters required to be taken up for changes in legal framework, on matters relating to regulation of intermediaries and recommend SEBI on measures to facilitate issuers.

Deaths

1. Hollywood veteran actor Kirk Douglas passed away

Hollywood legend and veteran actor Kirk Douglas passed away at the age of 103 years. Douglas was prolific as a film actor, with more than 90 credits to his name - ranging over six decades from the 1940s to the 2000s.

Douglas is best-known for his role as Spartacus, which won four Oscars and was so popular that its iconic "I am Spartacus" scene entered the pop culture lexicon. He received the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor from President Jimmy Carter in 1981.



2. Veteran social activist and feminist writer Vidya Bal passed away

Veteran social activist and feminist writer Vidya Bal passed away. She was best known for her heroic oppressive practices such as fight for women's rights and equality with men. Vidya wrote several books such as Katha Gaurichi, Shodh Swatahacha, Tumachya Majhyasathi, Sanwad etc. Her books described freedom of women, feminism and rehabilitation of women's rights.

Miloon Saryajani, famous women's magazine was edited by Vidya. She served as editorial staff of monthly Stree and worked as full-time editor in Stree.



3. Sahitya Akademi Awardee Jaswant Singh Kanwal passed away

Eminent Punjabi writer and Sahitya Akademi Award winner Jaswant Singh Kanwal passed away. He was best known for his book 'Pakhi' (Hand Fan) for which he was honored with Sahitya Akademi Fellowship award. He was also honored with Sahitya Akademi award for his novel 'Taushali Di Hanso' in 1998.

Jaswant Singh received the Sahitya Shiromani Award of the Punjab government in 2007. Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, conferred on Kanwal the degree of Doctor of Literature (Honoris Causa) for his contribution to Punjabi literature.



4. Odia revolutionary poet Rabi Singh passed away

Eminent Odia poet and freedom fighter Rabi Singh passed away. Some of his best written collections were 'Patha Prantara Kabita', 'Charama Patra', 'Sithila Balga', 'Lal Pagoda Ra Preta O Anya Kabita', 'Bhrukuti' 'Bidirna', 'Padatika' and 'Apritikara Kabita'.

Rabi Singh was honored with Atibadi Jagannath Das Samman by Odisha Sahitya Akademi in 2017 for his contribution to Odia literature. He was popularly known as 'Biplabi Kabi' (the revolutionary poet) for his patriotic writings.



5. Former Assam Speaker Pranab Kumar Gogoi passed away

Former Speaker of Assam Legislative Assembly Pranab Kumar Gogoi passed away. He was an Indian lawyer and politician from Assam belonging to Indian National Congress. He has served as a minister in Tarun Gogoi-led cabinet from 2006-2011 and as Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly in 2011. He was first elected to the Assam assembly in 2001.

In 2015, Pranab Kumar took the definition of the term 'Assamese'. During the previous Congress government, Pranab Gogoi had come out with a definition of the term 'Assamese'.



6. Renowned writer P Parameswaran passed away in Kerala

Renowned writer and the founder director of Bharatiya Vichara Kendram, P Parameswaran, passed away in Kerala. He authored several books on Indian philosophy and society such as 'Vishwa Vijayi Vivekanandan', 'From Marx to Maharshi', 'Gita's Vision of an Ideal Society' and 'Heart Beats of Hindu Nation'.

P Parameswaran served as President of Vivekananda Kendra. He worked as editor of the magazine 'Kesari' and 'Manthan' He was awarded Padma Vibhushan in 2018, Hanuman Prasad Poddar Award and Padma Shri in 2004.



7. Padma Shri awardee Giriraj Kishore passed away

Veteran Hindi novelist and Padma Shri awardee Giriraj Kishore passed away. He was best known for his novel "Pehla Girmitya" that was based on Mahatma Gandhi's stay in South Africa. Some of his best literature works were 'Baa (Kasturba Gandhi- a bio fiction)', 'Aanjaney jayate', 'Dhaai Ghar', 'Parishishta' and 'Pahla Girmityaa'.

He was awarded the Padma Shri and Sahitya Akademi award. He was also conferred the Vyas Samman in 2000, and an honorary Ph.D. by Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj University in 2002.



8. American Author Roger Kahn passed away

American Author Roger Kahn passed away. He was best known for his book 'Boys of Summer'. The book was considered as one of the finest books ever written about sports. He wrote at least 20 books in his lifetime such as 'Inside Big League Baseball', 'The Seventh Game', 'A Season in the Sun' and 'The World of John Lardner'.

He wrote biography of legendary boxer Jack Dempsey before Jack got banned from the game. He was honored with National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame and E. P. Dutton Award for best sports magazine article.



9. Veteran cricket journalist Raju Bharatan passed away

Veteran cricket journalist and film historian Raju Bharatan passed away. He worked as columnist for Sportstar and Indian cricket for many years. He was associated with 'The Illustrated Weekly of India', and an Indian films weekly newspaper, Screen.

Raju Bharatan directed the first full-length cricket documentary for Films Division named as "The Victory Story" in 1974. He penned various books such as "Rivals in the Sun"(1952), "Indian Cricket - The Vital Phase" (1977) "Lata Mangeshkar - A Biography" (1995), "A Journey Down Melody Lane" (2009) and "Naushadnama: The Life and Music of Naushad" (2013).



10. Veteran journalist Nandu R Kulkarni passed away

Veteran journalist Nandu R Kulkarni passed away. He served as Bureau Chief of the Kolkata-based newspaper The Statesman since 1992. He was considered as an authority on political and banking beats. He reported on a wide range of subjects including politics, business, related scams of the early 1990s and other fields.

Nandu R Kulkarni started his career in 1976 with 'The Indian Express' and worked there for 16 years.



11. Padma Shri awardee Wendell Rodricks passed away

Internationally-famed fashion designer and Padma Shri awardee Wendell Rodricks passed away. He penned various books such as Greenroom, Poskem: Goans in the shadows and Moda Goa- History & Style. He has served as social activist for queer rights and environmental issues in India. He supported local education, cultural associations, the Red Cross and the Alliance Francaise in Goa.



Rodricks was honored with Padma Shri in 2014 and Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres (Knight of the order of arts and letters) in 2015.

12. Nobel Prize awardee Rajendra Kumar Pachauri passed away

Former Chairman and Director General of The Energy Resources Institute (TERI) Rajendra Kumar Pachauri passed away. He served as chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and was succeeded by Hoesung Lee. The IPCC was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize during his tenure in 2007.



Environmentalist Pachauri received Padma Vibhushan in 2008, Padma Bhushan in 2001, Officer of the Legion of Honour' and Order of the White Rose of Finland. He penned books such as Return to Almora and Moods and Musings.

13. Veteran Bengali actor and former TMC MP Tapas Pal passed away

Popular Bengali film actor and former Trinamul Congress MP Tapas Pal passed away at the age of 61 years. He won a Filmfare Award for his role in Saheb (1981). He was last seen on screen in the 2013 movie Khiladi.



Pal was a two-term MP from Krishnanagar and MLA from Alipore. In 2016, the actor was arrested by CBI officials for alleged involvement in the multi-crore Rose Valley chit fund scam. He was awarded bail 13 months after the arrest.

14. Greatest woman golfer, Mickey Wright passed away

Mickey Wright, often described as the greatest woman golfer of all times, passed away at the age of 85 years. Her haul of 13 major victories included four US Women's Open titles and four US Women's PGA Championships.



Wright had accumulated 82 titles of Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Tour titles during a professional career which stretched from 1954 to 1969. She won the 1954 World Amateur Championship before turning professional. She retired at an early age of 34.

15. Former Indian footballer Ashok Chatterjee passed away

Former Indian footballer Ashok Chatterjee passed away. He made 30 appearances for the senior national team and scored 10 goals for India. He was known for playing with bronze-medal winning teams in the Merdeka Cup in 1965 and 1966. He was honoured with Mohun Bagan Lifetime Achievement Award by the club in 2019 and represented Bengal in Santosh Trophy in 1964 (runners-up).



Ashok Chatterjee was part of the winning East Bengal teams in Calcutta Football League (1970, 1971), IFA Shield (1970), Durand Cup (1970), and the Rovers Cup in 1969.

16. Egypt's former President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak passed away

Egypt's former President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak, who ruled the country for 30 years, passed away at the age of 91 years. A former air force chief, Mubarak became President of Egypt in 1981. He provided slow but steady economic growth to Egypt.



After almost three decades in power, Mubarak, was forced to resign on February 11, 2011, following 18 days of protests around the country. Mubarak's ouster came in the heady Arab Spring days, soon after Tunisians overthrew their leader Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in 2011.

1. Government sets target of 5 billion dollars for defence exports in next five years

The government has set a defence export target of 5 billion dollars in the next five years. The export of defence equipment from India was about 2,000 crore rupees in 2014. In the last 2 years, it has gone up to 17,000 crore rupees. In the next five years, the target is export of 5 billion US dollars, which is about 35,000 crore rupees.



Between 2013 and 2017, India was the world's top arms importer, accounting for 12% of total imports globally, with Russia, Israel and the United States among the top suppliers.

2. 9th edition of India-Bangladesh joint military exercise held in Meghalaya

The ninth edition of Indo-Bangladesh Joint Military Exercise SAMPRITI-IX was held at Umroi, Meghalaya. The main focus of the fourteen days joint exercise was on Counter-Terrorism Operations in mountainous and jungle terrain.



During the joint military exercise SAMPRITI-IX a Command Post Exercise (CPX) and a Field Training Exercise (FTX) was conducted. Exercise SAMPRITI is an important bilateral defence cooperation endeavour between India and Bangladesh and is hosted alternately by both countries.

3. Department of Military Affairs created as new department of military affairs

Department of Military Affairs (DMA) with Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) as Secretary was created to facilitate optimal utilization of resources and promote jointness among the three Services. As per the Second Schedule to Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961, Armed Forces of the Union, namely, Army, Navy and Air Force were allocated to DMA.



The Second Schedule to Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 clearly

identifies the functions of all the five Departments of the Ministry of Defence and thus there will not be any duplication of functions among them.

4. First indigenous bio-jet fuel aircraft of IAF landed successfully in Leh

First indigenous bio-jet fuel powered IAF aircraft landed successfully in Leh. This is the first time that both engines of the aircraft were powered by the bio-jet indigenous fuel. The aircraft was flight tested and its performance was validated at Chandigarh Air Base prior to undertaking the operational flight to Leh.



This successful test flight also demonstrates IAF's capabilities to absorb newer technology, while sponsoring indigenization. Leh at an altitude of 10,682 ft above mean sea level, is amongst one of world's highest and most difficult operational airfield.

5. Coastal Security Exercise 'Matla Abhiyaan' conducted by Indian Navy

The Indian Navy conducted a coastal security exercise named 'Matla Abhiyan' in Kolkata, West Bengal. It was conducted with an aim to interact with coastal communities to spread awareness on coastal security and understand the navigational complexities in the Sunderban deltaic waters.



During the exercise, the two boats undertook patrol in the Sunderban delta, and along the Indo-Bangladesh protocol route. The personnel launched operations in the Matla and Hooghly rivers and the narrow creeks of Sunderbans.

6. HAL & Israel Aerospace Industries signed partnership pact to make armed UCAVs

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the 1st time, signed a partnership pact with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) at the DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. It was signed to manufacture advanced Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs) in India.



An unmanned combat aerial vehicle carries aircraft ordnance such as missiles, ATGMs, and/or bombs and is used for drone strikes. These drones are usually under real-time

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human control, with varying levels of autonomy.

7. DRDO signed contract with Rosoboronexport, Russia

Defence Research Development Organization signed an agreement with Rosobornexport of Russia to develop Advanced Pyrotechnic Ignition Systems for missile propulsion. The agreement was signed with the HEMRL (High Energy Materials Research Laboratory) of DRDO.



This technology development will facilitate design and development of state of art solid rocket motors for upcoming products. High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) is the DRDO laboratory working in the development of spectrum of high energy materials required for missiles, rockets and guns.

8. World's first bulletproof helmet developed by Indian Army

An Indian Army Major Anoop Mishra who had earlier developed a bulletproof jacket for protection against sniper bullets, has now developed the world's first bulletproof helmet. This helmet can withstand an AK-47 bullet round fired from a distance of 10 meters.



Indian Army Major Anoop Mishra has been part of the Indian Army's College of Military Engineering. Indian Army's College of Military Engineering had developed India's first and world's cheapest gunshot locator that can locate the exact location of the bullet from a distance of 400 meters.

9. World's cheapest gun-shot locator developed by Indian Army

Indian Army's College of Military Engineering had developed India's first and world's cheapest gunshot locator named as 'Parth' that can locate the exact location of the bullet from a distance of 400 meters. Parth's gun locator can further help in locating and neutralize terrorist faster. It costs much cheaper than the imported ones. 'Parth' costs Rs. 3 lakh and if inducted would replace imported item which costs around 65 lakhs.



College of Military Engineering is a premier technical and tactical training institution of the Indian Army Corps of Engineers of the Indian Army.

10. Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR-2020

The fifth edition of Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR-2020 between India and United Kingdom Army was held at Salisbury Plains, United Kingdom. The aim of exercise was to conduct training of troops in counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations in both Urban and Semi Urban areas.



The exercise is conducted alternatively in the United Kingdom and India. The other joint exercises between India and UK are Navy: Konkan and Air Force: Indradhanush.

11. DRDO developing new strike range Pranash ballistic missile

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has started developing a 200-km strike range tactical ballistic missile 'Pranash' so as to enhance the firepower of Army and Air Force. This new advanced version of the 150-km strike range Prahar missile would also be used for exports to friendly foreign countries as its strike range is within the permissible limits of international regimes on missile sales.



The Defence Research and Development Organisation is an agency charged with the military's research and development.

12. CDS General Bipin Rawat announced plan to create Peninsula Command

Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat has announced to create a Peninsula Command with Navy's Eastern and Western Command under it. India is also looking at setting up two to five theatre commands which are expected to be rolled out by 2022. During the theatre of war, all the three services are under the operational control of a three-star general.



India has an operational theatre command only in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. A theatre command places the resources of all forces at the command of a senior military commander.

13. Fifth edition of IAF-RAF joint exercise Indradhanush

The fifth edition of joint exercise Indradhanush between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and Royal Air Force (RAF) of the United Kingdom concluded at the Air Force Station Hindan. The joint exercise provided the participating forces an opportunity to enhance expertise in conduct of Special Forces Operations.

Indradhanush is a joint air force exercise conducted between IAF and RAF to strengthen relationship and enhance operational capabilities. The aim of the exercise is to enhance mutual operational understanding, exchanging tactics, techniques and procedures.



1. CBDT issued clarification on the new provision in Finance Bill 2020

Central Board of Direct Taxes has issued clarification on the Finance Bill, 2020. It has proposed that an Indian citizen shall be deemed to be resident in India if he or she is not liable to be taxed in any country or jurisdiction.



Central Board of Direct Taxes
(CBDT)

CBDT noted that the interpretation that Indians who are bonafide workers in other countries, including in the Middle East, and who are not liable to tax in these countries, will be taxed in India on the income that they have earned there is incorrect.

2. January GST collection crossed Rs 1.1 lakh crore

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) monthly collections have crossed the Rs 1.1 lakh crore mark for the second time since implementation of the new tax regime in 2017. The gross GST revenue collected in the month of January, 2020 is Rs 1,10,828 crore of which CGST is Rs 20,944 crore, SGST is Rs 28,224 crore, IGST is Rs 53,013 crore (including Rs 23,481 crore collected on imports) and Cess is Rs 8,637 crore (including Rs 824 crore collected on imports).



It is also the sixth time that the monthly GST revenue has topped Rs 1 lakh crore. The total revenue earned by the centre and state governments after regular settlement in January 2020 is Rs 45,674 crore for CGST and Rs 46,433 crore for SGST.

3. India bans exports of all kinds of personal protection equipment

India has banned exports of all kinds of personal protection equipment, including clothing and masks used to protect people from air borne particles. The move assumes significance as there could be a spurt in demand for such products due to outbreak of novel Coronavirus in China.



The Directorate General of Foreign Trade, DGFT, has also banned imports of stock lot papers. These are kind of discarded, improper sized and unused papers. The move aims at cutting down imports of non-essential items into the country.

7. Tax Concessions announced for Sovereign Wealth Funds of Foreign Governments

In order to incentivize the investment by the Sovereign Wealth Fund of foreign Governments in the priority sectors, the Union Budget proposed to grant 100% tax exemption to the interest, dividend and capital gains income in respect of investment made in infrastructure and other notified sectors before 31st March, 2024 and with a minimum lock-in period of 3 years.



A sovereign wealth fund is a state-owned investment fund that invests in real and financial assets such as stocks, bonds, real estate, precious metals, or in alternative investments such as private equity fund or hedge funds.

8. Deadlines for relaxation for affordable housing extended by one year

Finance Minister proposed to extend the date of loan sanction, for availing this additional deduction by one more year so as to ensure that more persons avail this benefit and to further incentivise the affordable housing.



For realisation of the goal of 'Housing for All' and affordable housing, an additional deduction of up to one lakh fifty thousand rupees for interest paid on loans taken for purchase of an affordable house was announced in budget. The deduction was allowed on housing loans sanctioned on or before 31st March, 2020.

9. 16 Action points to focus on farmer's income proposed in budget

Union minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman proposed 16 action points focusing on doubling farmer's income in horticulture sector, food storage, animal husbandry and blue economy.



Action points are as follows:

- To expand PM-KUSUM to 20 lakh farmers for setting up solar pumps and help another 15 lakh farmers solarise their grid connected pump sets.
- To operationalize scheme to enable farmers to set up solar power generation capacity on their fallow/barren lands.
- Integration of negotiable warehousing receipts (e-NWR) and National Agricultural Market (e-NAM).

- Encourage balanced use of all kinds of fertilizers and Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF).

10. Union Budget 2020-21 allocated Rs.99300 crore for education and skill development

Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister, Smt Nirmala Sitharaman allocated a total outlay of Rs.99,300 crore for the education sector in 2020-21 and Rs.3000 crore for Skill Development. About 150 Higher Educational Institutions will start apprenticeship embedded diploma courses by March 2020-21 to improve the employability of students in the general stream.



A National Police University and a National Forensic Science University have also been proposed in the domain of policing science, forensic science, cyber-forensics, etc. In order to meet the requirement of qualified medical doctors, it is proposed to attach a medical college to an existing district hospital in PPP mode.

11. IOC signed first term contract for Russian crude

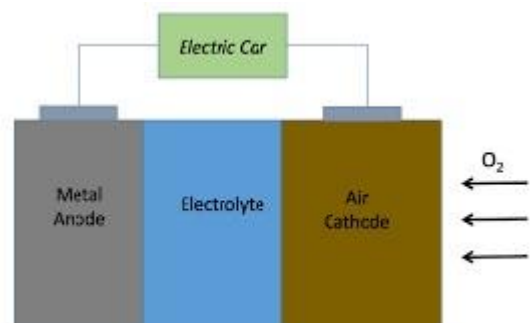
Indian Oil Corporation has signed an agreement with Russia's state-owned firm Rosneft or exporting 2 million tonne of Urals-grade crude oil to India this year. Rosneft is also expected to bid for Indian government-owned Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL).



The agreement is a part of India's strategy for diversifying the country's crude oil supplies from non-OPEC countries. The crude oil, being sourced under the contract, will be loaded in Suezmax vessels at Novorossiysk port of Russia and will come to India, bypassing Straits of Hormuz.

12. IOC signed JV with Phinergy to produce metal-air batteries

Indian Oil Corp has bought a minority stake in Israel's Phinergy and signed a joint venture deal to produce metal-air batteries, an alternative to more mainstream lithium technology. The IOC and Phinergy will set up a joint venture in India to manufacture Al-Air batteries and to facilitate development of supporting infrastructure.



Al-Air battery technology would complement lithium-ion batteries to provide a hybrid solution for the large-scale adoption of electric vehicles.

13. Eastern Railways partnered with Amazon India to set up kiosk

Amazon India entered into a partnership with Eastern Railways to set up a pick-up kiosk at the buzzing Sealdah railway station in Kolkata, West Bengal. The kiosk will be treated like a small open-fronted hut or cubicle from where newspapers, refreshments, tickets, etc., will be sold. The same initiative was also done by Mumbai across four railway stations.



Amazon.com, Inc. is an American multinational technology company based in Seattle. The Amazon India Shopping App markets over 17 crore products.

14. Fitch predicted India's GDP growth at 5.6% for Financial Year 2021

Fitch Ratings predicted India's GDP growth of 5.6% in the next FY21 and affirmed India at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook in its India Economic Outlook. It expected growth to slow to 4.6% in the financial year ending March 2020 (FY20), from 6.8% in FY19. Fitch Ratings Inc. is an American credit rating agency and is one of the big three credit rating agencies.



Other predictions are:

- Government debt will remain 70% of total GDP.
- It expected growth to recover to 5.6% in FY21 and 6.5% in FY22.
- Rise in risk of more significant fiscal loosening in the event of continued weak GDP growth.

15. Fiscal Deficit of government touched 132% of full year target

The government's fiscal deficit touched 132.4% of the full-year target at December-end mainly due to slower pace of revenue collections.



Controller General of Accounts data unveiled the following facts:

- Fiscal deficit or gap between expenditure and revenue was ₹9,31,725 crore.
- Center restricted the gap at 3.3% of the GDP, or ₹7,03,760 crore, in the year ending March 2020.
- The deficit was 112.4% of 2018-19 Budget Estimate

- The government's revenue receipts were ₹11.46 lakh crore or 58.4% of the 2019-20 BE.

16. India-China Trade Deficit

As per the data provided by DGCIS, India's trade with China decreased from USD 89.71 billion in 2017-18 to USD 87.07 billion in 2018-19. During this period, India's imports from China declined from USD 76.38 billion in 2017-18 to USD 70.32 billion in 2018-19 and exports grew from USD 13.33 billion in 2017-18 to USD 16.75 billion in 2018-19.

As a result, India's trade deficit with China reduced from USD 63.05 billion to USD 53.57 billion in the said period.



17. Decline in growth rate in Food and Grocery Retail Sector

As per NAS 2019 estimates, the food processing sector is growing at the annual average rate of 8.19% during the last five years ending 2017-18. Data on growth rate specific to retail (food & grocery) sector is not available. For promoting growth in food processing sector, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) is implementing an Umbrella Scheme-PRADHAN MANTRI KISAN SAMPADYA YOJANA (PMKSY) with an outlay of ₹6,000 crore for its implementation during 2016-17 to 2019-20.



MoFPI is also implementing the scheme "Operation Greens" under the PMKSY since November 2018 for integrated development of value/supply chain exclusively of tomato, onion and potato (TOP) crops in selected States on pilot basis.

18. Birla Estates introduced "LIDEA" on WhatsApp for its customers

Birla Estates launched AI Powered ChatBot solution "LIDEA" for its customers. LIDEA is enabled to provide authentic information and answer the queries around Birla Estates developments and debuts with its Whitefield, Bengaluru project. LIDEA can enable the users to access authentic information of the projects which can be used for the evaluation of the residential developments of Birla Estates.



The artificial intelligence empowered Chatbot will also offer features like viewing location, configurations, amenities, virtual tours and accepting site visit requests.

19. US surpassed China to become India's top trading partner

The United States has surpassed China to become India's top trading partner. According to the Commerce Ministry data, the bilateral trade between the US and India stood at nearly 88 billion dollars in 2018-19 fiscal. During the period, India's trade with China was at 87.1 billion dollars.



Similarly, during April-December 2019-20, the bilateral trade between the US and India stood at 68 billion dollars against a nearly 65 billion dollars trade with China in the same period. In 2018-19, India has a trade surplus of 16.9 billion dollars with America, but a deficit of 53.6 billion dollars with China.

20. India ranked as second largest producer of crude steel

As per World Steel Association data, India became the second largest producer of crude steel after China in 2018 and 2019, by replacing Japan. India's crude steel production in 2018 was at 109.3 million tonnes, up by 7.7% from 101.5 million tonnes in 2017.



The production moved up to 111.2 million tonnes in 2019. China remains number one with 920 million tonnes of production in 2018 and 996.3 million tonnes in 2019. Japan ranks third globally with 104.3 million tonnes of crude steel production in 2018 and 99.3 million tonnes in 2019.

21. SC directs telcos to pay AGR of Rs 1.47 lakh crore

The Supreme Court directed the Managing Directors and Directors of telcos and other firms to pay adjusted gross revenue (AGR) of 1.47 lakh crore rupees to the Department of Telecommunications, DoT. The legal battle over the AGR controversy, a nearly 15-year-old dispute, came to an end in October 2019, when the apex court ordered that the telecom companies pay over Rs 1.4 lakh crore including the original demand, interest and penalty charges.



Telecom companies had approached the Supreme Court in January, seeking modification in its verdict to get more time to pay up. The court had rejected the plea.

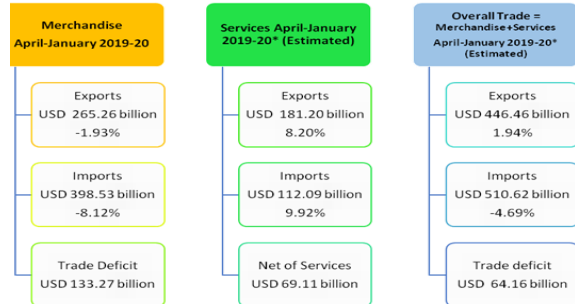
22. INDIA'S FOREIGN TRADE: January 2020

India's overall exports (Merchandise and Services combined) in April-January 2019-20 are estimated to be USD 446.46 billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 1.94% over the same period last year. Overall imports in April-January 2019-20 are estimated to be USD 510.62 billion, exhibiting a negative growth of (-)4.69% over the same period last year.

Merchandise: Total exports was USD 265.26 billion down 1.93% while total imports was USD 398.53 billion down 8.12%. The trade deficit was USD 133.27 billion.

Services: Total exports was USD 181.20 billion up 8.20% while total imports was USD 112.09 billion up by 9.92%. The net of services was USD 69.11 billion.

Overall Trade; Total exports was USD 446.46 billion up by 1.94% while total imports was USD 510.62 billion down 4.69%. The trade deficit was USD 64.16 billion.



23. WPI at 3.1% in January 2020

The official Wholesale Price Index for 'All Commodities' (Base: 2011-12=100) for the month of January, 2020 rose by 0.1% to 122.9 (provisional) from 122.8 (provisional) for the previous month. The annual rate of inflation, based on monthly WPI, stood at 3.1% (provisional) for the month of January, 2020 (over January, 2019).



The rate of inflation based on WPI Food Index consisting of 'Food Articles' from Primary Articles group and 'Food Product' from Manufactured Products group decreased from 11.05% in December, 2019 to 10.12% in January, 2020.

24. CCI approved formation of a joint venture between Mahindra & Mahindra and Ford Motor

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved formation of a joint venture between Mahindra & Mahindra and Ford Motor and the transfer of the automotive business of Ford India to the joint venture. The proposed combination envisages the formation of a joint venture, namely Ardour Automotive Private Limited and the transfer of the automotive business of Ford India Private Limited (FIPL) to the joint venture.



In October 2019 M&M said it would buy 51% stake in Ardour Automotive Pvt Ltd for around ₹657 crore. The automotive business includes vehicle manufacturing plants of Ford India in Chennai and Sanand.

25. India out of US' developing nations list for trade benefits

The office of the US Trade Representative (USTR) removed India from its list of developing countries that are exempt from investigations into whether they harm American industry with unfairly subsidised exports. This makes India ineligible for benefits given by Washington to developing countries.



The United States Trade Representative eliminated other such nations such as Brazil, Indonesia, Hong Kong, South Africa and Argentina. India was removed from the list and declared as 'developed nation' for being a G-20 member and having a share of 0.5% or more of world trade.

26. Moody's Investors Service slashed India's growth forecast to 5.4% for 2020

Moody's Investors Service has slashed India's growth forecast to 5.4% for 2020 from 6.6% projected earlier. In its Global Macro Outlook, Moody's highlighted India's economy has decelerated rapidly over the last two years and expects economic recovery to begin in the current quarter.



The growth projections are based on calendar year and as per its estimates, India has clocked a GDP growth of 5% in 2019. Global GDP growth forecast has been revised down, and Moody's now expect G-20 economies to collectively grow 2.4% in 2020, followed by a pickup to 2.8% in 2021.

27. India's sugar export may cross 5 million tonne

According to industry body ISMA, India's sugar export may cross 5 million tonnes in the marketing year ending September 2019, on higher demand from overseas amid a global deficit of 8-9 million tonne. For the current year, the government has allowed export of 6 million tonne of sugar under Maximum Admissible Export Quota to help deal with the surplus sugar.



The country's sugar production has reached nearly 17 million tonnes till February 15 of the current marketing year.

28. Exports from SEZs achieve USD 100 Billion mark

The Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have achieved 100-billion-dollar worth of exports in FY 2019-20, as on 17th February 2020. The services segment was driver of the export growth at 23.69%. There was almost 4% growth in manufacturing segment also.



The other sectors which reflected healthy growth in this financial year include Gems & Jewelry (13.3%), Trading & Logistics (35%), Leather & Footwear (15%), Non-Conventional Energy (47%), Textiles & Garments (17.6%).

Number of operational SEZs has grown to 241 as against 235 at the end of FY 2018-19.

29. Centre released Rs 19,950 cr as GST compensation to states, UTs

The Central Government has released 19,950 crore rupees as GST compensation to states. With this release of GST compensation, the Central Government has released a total of over 1.20 lakh crore rupees towards GST compensation to the states during current fiscal.



In the financial year 2018-19, an amount of over 95,000 crore rupees was collected as GST compensation cess of which over 69000 crore rupees was released to the States and Union Territories as GST compensation.

1. Cauvery Delta of Tamil Nadu declared Protected Agricultural Zone

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi Palanisamy declared Cauvery Delta region as a Protected Special Agriculture Zone. Cauvery Delta region includes eight Cauvery delta districts of Tamil Nadu including the rice bowl, Thanjavur. It is done with an aim to ensure food security of the State. Tamil Nadu government will not permit hydrocarbon exploration projects in Cauvery Delta region.



The Cauvery delta region is an important agriculture region in Tamil Nadu and farmers continue to do agriculture, despite climate challenges.

2. PM Modi inaugurated 13th COP of Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 13th Conference of Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals at Gandhinagar in Gujarat. As the host, India was designated the President for the next three years. India will now preside over it till 2023.



India is a signatory to the Convention on Conservation of Migratory wild Animals since 1983. The government has been taking the necessary actions to protect and conserve migratory marine species.

3. Kerala to host global meet on climate change, ocean health

ClimFishCon 2020, a three-day international conference on the impact of climate change on 'hydrological cycle, ecosystem, fisheries and food' was organized at Kochi, Kerala. Various delegates such as scientists, researchers, administrators, policymakers, academicians, and entrepreneurs participated in the conference.



Conference witnessed strategies on climate emergency, vulnerability and resilience of coastal communities, changing hydrological cycles, blue economy, aquatic biodiversity based on theme 'Climate Change-Effective Adaptation for a Secure Future'. A major workshop titled Impact of Climate Change on Coastal Wetlands was also organized.

4. International protection for Great Indian Bustard, Bengal Florican and Asian Elephant

India's proposal to include Great Indian Bustard, Asian Elephant and Bengal Florican in Appendix I of UN Convention on migratory species was unanimously accepted at the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Inclusion of these species in Appendix I of CMS will aid in trans-boundary conservation efforts.



- Asian Elephant: The Government of India has declared Indian elephant as National Heritage Animal.
- Great Indian Bustard: The Great Indian Bustard is a Critically Endangered species with a small population of about 100–150 individuals that is largely restricted to Thar desert in Rajasthan, India.
- Bengal Florican: The Bengal Florican an iconic, critically endangered species of topmost conservation priority.

5. Delhi's IGI Airport becomes first single-use plastic-free airport of India

Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport has become free of single-use plastic usage. The Confederation of Indian Industry-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development (CII-ITC CESD) that supports the business community towards achieving sustainability has certified DIAL for its successful voluntary implementation of single-use plastic-free airport measures within IGI Airport's operations.



In September 2018, following the World Environment Day theme of 'Beat Plastic Pollution,' Delhi Airport was the first Indian airport to make 'single-use plastic-free' commitment in 2019.

6. “Bezos Earth Fund” launched by Jeff Bezos to combat climate change

Amazon founder Jeff Bezos launched new ‘Bezos Earth Fund’ to help preserve and protect the natural world against the climate change. Around \$10 billion is contributed by Jeff Bezos in the fund. The fund will help in issuing grants to climate-oriented scientists and activists. Climate change is the biggest threat to planet Earth.



Jeff Bezos founded e-commerce colossus Amazon in 1994. He is Founder, Chief Executive Officer, and President of Amazon. Amazon.com Inc focuses on e-commerce, cloud computing, digital streaming, and artificial intelligence.

1. Cabinet approved amendment to bring cooperative banks under regulatory control of RBI

The Union Cabinet has approved the amendments to bring Cooperative banks under the regulatory mechanism of Reserve Bank of India. It will empower the central bank to have greater control over cooperative banks, in order to prevent malpractices and ensure better regulation.



Currently, cooperative banks are governed by dual control of cooperative societies as well as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). While the role of cooperative society includes incorporation, registration, management, recovery, audit, supersession of board of directors and liquidation, central bank's role is responsible for regulatory functions.

2. RBI increases insurance on bank deposits from Rs one lakh to five lakh

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to increase the limit of insurance cover in case of bank failure on deposits to ₹5 lakh from ₹1 lakh. RBI has given approval for raising deposit insurance cover.



Deposit insurance is provided by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the RBI. It was static at Rs 1 lakh since 1993. As the insurance cover stands increased, the banks will pay a premium of 12 paise against 10 paise per Rs 100 deposit.

3. Paytm launched Android POS device for SMEs & merchant partners

Paytm launched All-in-One Android POS device for small businesses and merchant partners across the country. This innovative device will help merchants to accept payments through all modes, including Paytm Wallet, all UPI based apps, Debit & Credit Cards and most importantly 'Cash'.

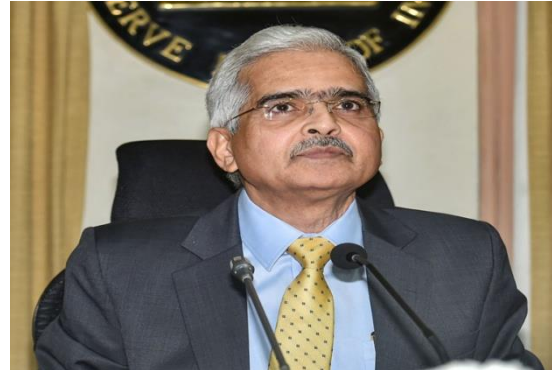


All-in-One Android POS is a fully-loaded payment acceptance device with many industry-first features & services. The device can be used to accept payments, print bills and scan items for faster checkout at the

counter. All-in-One Android POS will support many industry-specific solutions that will help SMEs to automate their business processes.

4. RBI keeps repo rate, reverse repo rate unchanged

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India decided to keep the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) unchanged at 5.15%. Consequently, the reverse repo rate remains unchanged at 4.90% and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate at 5.40%.



Consumer Price Inflation surged 4.6% in October 2019 to 5% in November and further to 7.4% in December, hitting the highest level since July 2014.

5. Key Announcements of MPC

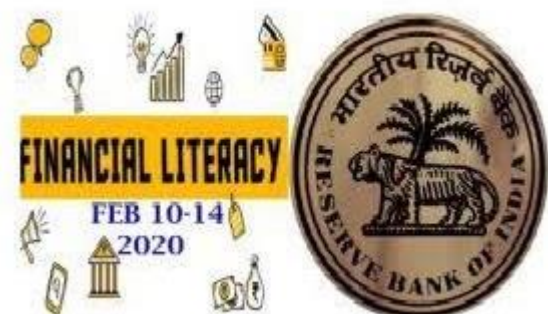
In order to ensure availability of adequate liquidity in the banking system and also to encourage banks to lend more to productive sectors of the economy, the Monetary Policy Committee announced that it will soon start conducting long-term repos of one-year and three-year tenors of appropriate sizes for up to a total amount of Rs 1,00,000 crore.



RBI also announced that banks will now be allowed to deduct the equivalent of incremental credit disbursed by them as retail loans from their net demand and time for maintenance of cash reserve ratio. This exemption will be available for incremental credit extended up to the fortnight ending 31st July 2020 and only be valid for retail loans offered for automobiles, residential housing and loans to micro, small and medium enterprises.

6. Financial Literacy Week 2020

Reserve Bank of India observed Financial Literacy Week (FLW) from February 10 to February 14, 2020. The theme selected for current year FLW was "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)". Focus of MSME theme will be on creating awareness about aspects relating to formalisation, collateral free loan, discounting of receivables, rehabilitation of stressed units and timely repayment.



Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been conducting Financial Literacy Week (FLW) every

year since 2016 to propagate financial education messages on a particular theme across the country. FLW 2018 and FLW 2019 were focused on “Consumer Protection” and “Farmers” respectively.

7. PFRDA raised minimum net worth for pension fund managers to Rs 50 cr

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), the regulator of the National Pension System (NPS) raised the minimum net worth criteria for pension fund managers to ₹50 crore from the ₹25 crore. It is done so as to pave the way for rediscovery of charges which will help the pension sector to grow. PFRDA has also made provision for licenses to have indefinite validity.



The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority, a statutory body, is the pension regulator of India. It is to promote old age income security by establishing, developing and regulating pension funds.

8. WhatsApp received NPCI’s approval to expand its UPI project to 10 million users

NPCI approved WhatsApp to expand its UPI project 10 million users through “WhatsApp Pay”. The UPI is developed by the National Payments Corporation of India. This facility enables the users do business transactions or to pay others directly through their bank accounts using ‘WhatsApp Pay’.



WhatsApp Messenger is a freeware, cross-platform messaging and Voice over IP service owned by Facebook, Inc. WhatsApp Pay is an UPI Based in-chat payment feature that allows users to make payments to anyone from whatsapp contact list.

9. Lending from CRR buffer to get 5-year exemption

The Reserve Bank of India has said the special lending window with CRR exemption was open from February 14 and incremental loans disbursed under this facility will have CRR exemption for the next five years. This means that banks will not be needed to make an additional cash reserve ratio against any incremental loans disbursed to the targeted segments.



The window will open for six months ending 31st of July 2020, but the Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL) will be calculated as of 31st of January.

10. IndusInd Bank topped list of 'highest increase in brand value'

IndusInd Bank topped list of 'highest increase in brand value' among global banks in 'Banker's Top 500 Banking Brands 2020' report. It was unveiled that the brand value of IndusInd Bank has increased by 122% over the past 12 months, making it the highest placed for growth in brand value, across the globe.



"The Banker" is the world's most premiere financial affairs publication owned by The Financial Times Ltd. The list of "Top 50 by Total Brand Value by Country" was topped by China followed by U.S.A. and Canada. India ranked 8th in this list.

11. SEBI decided to permit the use of regulatory sandbox

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has decided to permit the use of regulatory sandbox, a system that will allow live testing of new products, services and business models by market players on select customers.



The proposed 'regulatory sandbox' is intended to serve as a testing ground for new business models and technologies that benefit investors, Indian markets and the economy at large. Under this framework, the eligible entities will be granted certain facilities and flexibilities to experiment with fintech solutions in a live environment.

भारतीय प्रतिभूति और विनियम बोर्ड
Securities and Exchange Board of India

Important Days

1. World Cancer Day

The World Cancer Day is celebrated every year on 4th February to raise awareness of cancer. The day unites the world's population in the fight against cancer.

2020 marks the midway point of the 3-year 'I Am and I Will' campaign. 'I Am and I Will' is an empowering call-to-action urging for personal commitment and represents the power of individual action taken now to impact the future. The primary goal of the World Cancer Day is to significantly reduce illness and death caused by cancer by 2020.



2. World celebrated "World Wetlands Day" on 2nd of February

World Wetlands Day is celebrated on February 2 of every year internationally. The international theme for World Wetlands Day 2020 was 'Wetlands and Biodiversity'. Wetland biodiversity contributes to ecosystem resilience, clean water, water supply, storm protection, carbon storage, health and well-being, tourism and recreation and jobs.

February 2 is marked as the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands i.e. on February 2, 1971. Since then, every year, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and groups of citizens at all levels of the community, celebrate World Wetlands Day to increase the public awareness about the benefits of the wetlands.



3. International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation

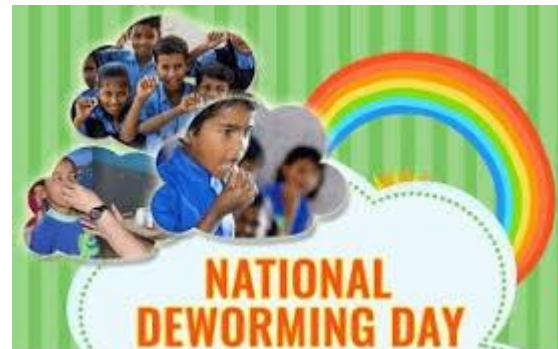
International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation is observed globally on 6 February. In 2012, the UN General Assembly designated February 6th as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, with the aim to amplify and direct the efforts on the elimination of this practice.

The theme of 2020 was "Unleashing Youth Power: One decade of accelerating actions for zero female genital mutilation." Female genital mutilation (FGM) is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women.



4. National Deworming Day was observed on February 10th

The National Deworming Day was observed on February 10th. The objective of the day was to deworm children and adolescents to reduce the prevalence of parasitic worms in the intestine. Children and adolescents, who miss the dose, get dewormed on the 17th February.



Children and adolescents in the age group of 1 to 19 years were administered single dose of a safe medicine Albendazole in all states and Union Territories on the occasion.

5. World Pulses Day observed globally on 10 February

World Pulses Day is observed every year on 10 February to raise the public awareness of the nutritional and environmental benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production. Pulses, also known as legumes, are the edible seeds of leguminous plants cultivated for food. The nitrogen-fixing properties of pulses improve soil fertility.



World Pulses Day has been designated on Feb 10 each year since 2019 by the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly as global event to recognize the importance of pulses (chickpeas, dry beans, lentils, dry peas and lupins among others) as a global food.

6. International Day of Women and Girls in Science observed globally on 11 February

The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is celebrated on February 11 of every year. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly with the objective to promote full and equal access to and participation in science for women and girls.



The Day reminds that women and girls play a critical role in science and technology communities. The celebration is managed by UNESCO and UN-Women, in collaboration with institutions and civil society partners that promote women and girls' access to and participation in science.

10. UN celebrated World Radio Day on 13th of February

The World Radio Day is observed annually on 13th February. It is a day to remember the unique power of radio which touches lives and brings people together from every corner of the globe. This edition of WRD 2020 was divided into three main sub-themes- 'Advocating for pluralism in radio', 'Encouraging representation in the newsroom' and 'Promoting a diversity of editorial content and programme types'.

The objectives of the day are to raise greater awareness among the public and the media of the importance of radio.



11. 9th World Pangolin day 2020

World Pangolin Day is celebrated on the 3rd Saturday of February. The Ninth Annual World Pangolin Day was celebrated on February 15, 2020. World Pangolin day is an opportunity for raising awareness about these unique mammals and their plight. Pangolins are one of the most heavily trafficked mammals in the illegal wildlife trade.

This international effort raised awareness about pangolin species and mobilized various stakeholders to speed up conservation efforts.



12. First anniversary of National War Memorial observed

The first anniversary of the iconic National War Memorial was observed on 25th February. The memorial is a fitting tribute to those heroes who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty during various wars and internal security challenges since Independence. The monument was dedicated to the nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25th February 2019.



National War Memorial consists of names of 25,942 soldiers martyred after Independence engraved on its walls. It has been in the form of four concentric circles around an obelisk. The obelisk has an 'eternal flame', which represents the immortal soldier (Amar Jawan).

13. National Science Day

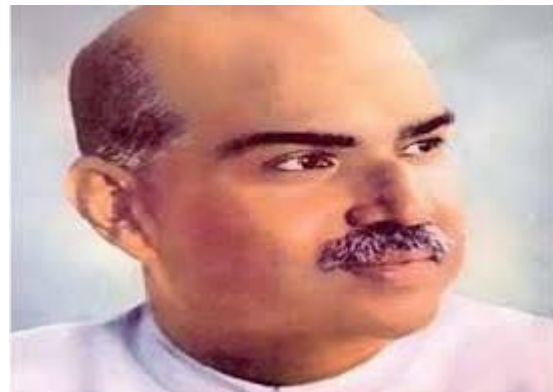
National Science Day is celebrated in India on February 28 of every year. It is celebrated to mark the discovery of the Raman effect by the Indian Physicist Sir C V Raman on February 28, 1928. The day is celebrated every year to widely spread a message about the Importance of science used in the daily life of the people.



The theme of the year 2020 is "Women in Science." The theme aims to appreciate the contribution of women in the field of science.

14. 4th Anniversary of Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission observed on 21st February

The fourth Anniversary of the launch of Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM) was observed on 21st February 2020. It was launched on 21st February 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to transfer the Rurban clusters by stimulating local economic development, enhancing basic services and creating well planned Rurban clusters.



NITI Aayog proposed a new and extended programme for over 1,000 clusters in next three years. In Sikkim, three such clusters are being developed in the South, East and West districts.

15. Arunachal Pradesh celebrated Statehood Day on 20th of February

Arunachal Pradesh celebrated its 34th Statehood Day on 20th February. The state became full-fledged state on this day in 1987. It was known as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) till 1972 but gained the status of Union Territory on January 20, 1972.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched a slew of projects on the occasion in Arunachal Pradesh. He launched Arunachal Pradesh Industrial and Investment Policy, 2020 and inaugurated the Joram Koloriang Road constructed by BRO.

16. 19th February observed as Soil Health Card Day

The Soil Health Card Day is observed on 19 February. The day commemorates the day Soil Health Card Scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 19th February, 2015 in Rajasthan. The scheme aims to issue soil health card to farmers every two years to provide a basis to address nutritional deficiencies in the soil. The scheme ensures additional income to farmers by increase in yields and it also promotes sustainable farming.



A regional workshop was organized in Meghalaya. The event included overview of Soil Health Cards, Integrated Nutrient Management, presentation and experience sharing by representatives.

17. Central Excise Day celebrated on 24th February across India

Central Excise Day is celebrated every year on February 24 across India to encourage the employees of excise department to carry out the central excise duty in a better way and honour the service of Central Board of Excise and Custom (CBEC) to the country.

CBEC officers, every year perform checking of corruption in goods from manufacturing sector. The day is celebrated to commemorate the legislation of Central Excise and Salt act in 24 February, 1944.



18. 20th February globally observed as World Day of Social Justice

The United Nations' (UN) World Day of Social Justice is annually observed on February 20 to encourage people to look at how social justice affects poverty eradication. It also focuses on the goal of achieving full employment and support for social integration.

The theme of 2020 World Day of Social Justice was "Closing the Inequalities Gap to Achieve Social Justice". Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. The ILO Declaration on Social Justice was adopted in 2008.



19. International Mother Language Day

UNESCO celebrates International Mother Language Day (IMLD) annually on February 21. The theme for 2020 is "Languages without borders." The day has been observed every year since February 2000 to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.

The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day was the initiative of Bangladesh. On this day in 1952 students demonstrated for recognition of their language, Bangla, as one of the two national languages of the then Pakistan, were shot and killed by police in Dhaka.



1. US President Donald Trump acquitted of all impeachment charges

The United States President Donald Trump has been acquitted of all impeachment charges. The US Senate had acquitted President Trump on two articles of impeachment that are- abuse of power and obstruction to Congress.



The Republican-majority Senate voted 52-48 to acquit him of abuse of power and 53-47 to acquit him of obstruction of Congress. The ruling Republican party has 53 seats while the Democrats have 47. Republican Senator Mitt Romney, who was the party's presidential nominee in 2012, voted against the president on the first charge.

2. China's central bank lowers interest rates to boost economic activities

China's central bank has lowered the interest rates on reverse repurchase agreements by 10 basis points to boost economic activities. The People's Bank of China has also injected a total of 173 billion US dollars (1.2 trillion yuan) into money markets through reverse bond repurchase agreements.



PBOC lowered the seven-day reverse repo rate to 2.40% from 2.50%, and cutting the 14-day tenor to 2.55% from 2.65%. The move of the central bank is aimed at offsetting the impact of reverse repos maturing and concentrated maturing of financial market funds.

3. New natural gas field discovered in UAE

The United Arab Emirates announced the discovery of a new natural gas field containing 80 trillion standard cubic feet of gas in the cross-border area of the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. This new gas field, spanning an area of 5,000 square kilometres, represents one of the largest natural gas discoveries in the UAE.



The discovery of the Jebel Ali gas field will contribute to achieving gas self-sufficiency for the nation and support the next phase of its major development projects in line with the nation's strategic development plan for the coming 50 years.

4. Hong Kong economy plunged into recession, shrank 1.2% in 2019

The Hong Kong economy plunged into recession in 2019, suffering its first annual contraction in a decade as the city buckled under the twin pressures of the US-China trade war and months of furious pro-democracy protests.



Official figures showed Hong Kong's gross domestic product shrank 1.2% on-year for 2019. The fourth quarter -- which witnessed the worst violence between police and protesters -- clocked a 2.9% contraction, the third straight quarter of declines. 2019 was the worst for Hong Kong's growth since 2009, when the financial hub was hit hard by the global financial crash.

5. Maldives rejoins Commonwealth

President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih of Maldives announced that the island nation has once again become a member of the Commonwealth of nations. Commonwealth Secretary-General, Patricia Scotland, confirmed Maldives' reinstatement into the organization as its 54th member state.



The Maldives first became a member of the Commonwealth in 1982 but former President Abdulla Yameen decided to leave it in October 2016, amid mounting pressure from the group over corruption and deteriorating human rights.

6. 13th edition of International Children's Film Festival of Bangladesh

The 13th edition of the International Children's Film Festival of Bangladesh concluded in Dhaka. The Best Feature Film award in the international section was given to the Dutch film Romy's Salon, directed by Mischa Kamp. The Finnish director Merja Maijanen bagged the best director award for her film Good Girl.



German film Day X, directed by Katharina Rivilis won the Best Short Film Award. The Bangladeshi director Ragib Mahmud Shafayet Shah got the Young Talent Award for his film The Smoker while Sudipto Shah won the Social Film Award for his film Khoka Jokhon Chhotto Chhilen.

7. Global health Emergency declared over Coronavirus by WHO

World Health Organization declared an international emergency over the novel coronavirus from China, as the disease has spread to 18 other countries apart from China where it originated.



The second meeting of the Emergency Committee convened by the WHO Director-General under the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005) regarding the outbreak of novel coronavirus 2019 in the People's Republic of China provided public health advice or formal Temporary Recommendations as appropriate. The WHO Secretariat provided an overview of the situation in other countries. 83 cases were reported in 18 countries.

8. Pakistan declared national emergency over locust swarms

The Pakistan government declared a national emergency to eliminate the attacking swarms of desert locusts which are destroying crops on a large scale in Punjab province, country's main region for agricultural production. Locusts are insects have a swarming phase.



The swarms of locust have been destroying crops of Pakistan-India border along Cholistan. Pakistan's Prime Minister formed a committee to be headed by Bakhtiar to take decisions at the federal level for the elimination of insects.

9. Iraqi president appointed Mohammad Tawfiq Allawi as prime minister

Iraqi President Barham Saleh appointed Mohammad Tawfiq Allawi as Prime Minister of Iraq. Mohammad Tawfiq Allawi replaced Adil Abdul-Mahdi who resigned in November 2019 due to anti-government protests.



Prior to this appointment, Mohammad Tawfiq Allawi has served as a communications minister under the government of former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in 2006 and 2010. He joined Interfaith International, a Swiss based NGO, that supported the human rights of Muslim minorities during the Yugoslav Wars.

10. Prince Charles unveiled children’s protection fund for India

Britain’s Prince Charles has unveiled a new children’s protection fund for India as part of British Asian Trust. The charity was founded by him in 2007 to fight poverty in South Asia.



The trust has appointed popular American singer Katy Perry as the ambassador of the new fund. It will be focussed on reducing the exploitation of children by 50% in India over 10 years. The main areas of focus for the British Asian Trust’s Children’s Protection Fund will cover child sexual abuse, child labour and trafficking.

11. 5th Dhaka Art Summit held at Bangladesh

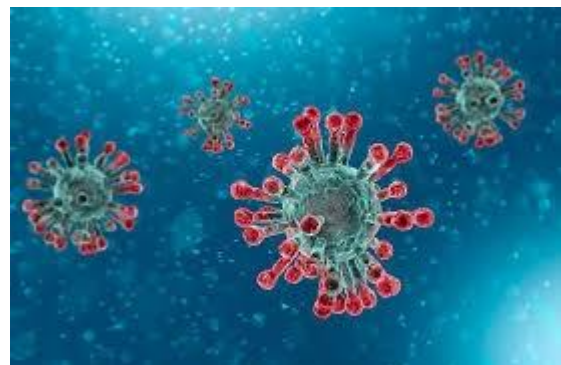
The fifth edition of Dhaka Art Summit was held in Bangladesh. Varied art-forms including live performance, photography and painting were performed during the festival. More than 500 artists, sculptors, architects and art professionals from various countries participated in the Summit. The Summit featured live events, panel discussions and puppet shows among other things.



A special exhibition on the life of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was organized to pay tribute to Bangabandhu on the occasion of his birth centenary. Dhaka Art Summit is the premier art festival of Bangladesh.

12. WHO called for USD 675 million to fight the novel corona virus

World Health Organization called for 675 million US dollar in donations for a plan to fight the novel corona virus, mainly through investment in countries considered particularly "at risk". WHO announced to launch a strategic preparedness and response plan thereby requesting 675 million dollar to fund the plan for the next three months.



60 million US dollar of the funds would be for WHO operations while the remainder would go to countries requiring assistance to guard against the deadly virus. With these funds, WHO sent 500,000 masks and 40,000 respirators to 24 countries from its warehouses in Dubai and Accra.

13. ADB approved the funding of \$2 million to combat Novel Coronavirus

The Asian Development Bank approved the funding of USD 2 million to support efforts to combat the spread of the novel coronavirus. The funds will be used to stop the outspread of novel coronavirus by supplementing ongoing regional technical assistance, improved outbreak investigation and surveillance in rural areas, procurement of medicines and medical equipment and strengthening health systems' resilience and response capacity in China, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Myanmar.



Coronaviruses (CoV) causes illness ranging from the common cold to more severe respiratory diseases. A novel coronavirus is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

14. Africa Union Summit held at Addis Ababa

The annual African Union Summit has kicked off in Addis Ababa. The AU summit was held under the theme of the year 2020, "Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development." It comprised of 55-member pan-African bloc.



Key discussions are:

Implementation of Africa's peace and security agenda.

Sustainable funding of Africa's development agenda.

Operationalization of the Africa continental free trade area (AFCFTA).

Promote awareness about the status of treaties of the African union.

Best Performing Smart Cities paired up with least performing to work as SISTER CITIES.

15. Rishi Sunak appointed as UK's new Finance Minister

Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy's son-in-law, Rishi Sunak has been appointed as UK's Finance Minister. He replaced Pakistani Chancellor Sajid Javid. Three Indian origin Members of Parliament are now a part of Britain's most diverse cabinet led by UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson.



Priti Patel has been appointed as the Home Minister and Alok Sharma has been appointed as the Business Secretary in the British Cabinet. Along with these three, 15 Indian-origin MPs are among 65 non-whites elected to the new 650-member House of Commons.

16. UN Security Council adopted resolution for "lasting ceasefire" in Libya

UN Security Council has adopted a resolution calling for a "lasting ceasefire" in war-torn Libya. The text, drafted by Britain, was approved by 14 votes out of 15. Libya, Africa's most oil-rich nation, has been mired in chaos since the 2011 NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed longtime leader Moamer Kadhafi.



UN Security Council

Since April 2019, the UN-recognized Government of National Accord has fought back against an offensive by military commander Khalifa Haftar, who is supported by Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

17. Sudan to hand over Ex-Prez Omar al-Bashir to International Criminal Court

Sudan's rulers have agreed to hand over ex-President Omar al-Bashir to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to face genocide and war crimes charges. Bashir is accused of serious crimes in a conflict that broke out in Darfur in 2003 which led to the deaths of three lakh persons.



Former President and others charged by the ICC, should appear at The Hague to face a tribunal. The commitment came at peace talks between Sudan's Government and rebel groups from the Darfur region.

18. EIU lowered global growth forecast for 2020

The Economist Intelligence Unit lowered its global growth forecast for 2020 to from 2.3% to 2.2% owing to novel coronavirus outbreak in China. Prior to origin of Corona virus, global growth was sluggish throughout 2019 due to trade tensions and slow real GDP growth in the US, China and India. EIU has lowered real GDP forecast for China in 2020 to 5.4% from 5.9%.



EIU predicted that there is a risk that the coronavirus will spread to other countries that do not have the resources to implement robust quarantine policies.

19. 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety

The 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety "Achieving Global Goals 2030" took place on 19–20 February 2020 in Stockholm, Sweden. The conference was co-hosted by WHO. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari represented India in the conference.



The objective of the two-day conference was to bring road safety on the global agenda and renew the world community's commitment to safer roads. Road safety is an urgent health and development matter. The number of deaths on the world's roads remains unacceptably high, with an estimated 1.35 million people killed each year.

20. S Jaishankar inaugurated Indian pavilion at Berlin International Film Festival

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar inaugurated the Indian pavilion at the Berlin International Film Festival. Three feature films and one documentary from the country were selected for the festival. Information and Broadcasting ministry in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) participated in the 70th edition of the festival.



The Indian Delegation at Berlinale 2020 aims to promote Indian films across linguistic cultural and regional diversity and also promote the 51st edition of International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

21. Indian-origin UK Minister Alok Sharma to lead UN climate summit

Indian-origin Alok Sharma was named the new UK Minister in charge of the crucial UN climate talks to be hosted by Britain in November 2020. He has been promoted to the post of Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Cabinet reshuffle.



Mr Sharma will take charge of the crucial summit 'COP26' as its former president, Claire Perry O'Neill, was removed amid controversy.

22. Japan economy suffered worst drop in over five years

Japan's economy suffered its worst quarterly contraction in more than five years at the end of 2019 after a tax hike and typhoons. Its gross domestic product in the three months to December shrank 1.6% from the previous quarter.

The disappointing data snapped four quarters of expansion and was the biggest contraction since the second quarter of 2014 when the economy shrank 1.9% after the first sales tax hike in 17 years was introduced.



23. Australia appointed Barry O'Farrell as next high commissioner to India

Australia has appointed former New South Wales Premier Barry O'Farrell as the next high commissioner to India. Mr O'Farrell will succeed Harinder Sidhu who has been in the office since 2016. He will also have non-resident accreditation to Bhutan.

Mr. O'Farrell served in the New South Wales Parliament from 1995-2015 and the 43rd Premier of the province. He has served as New South Wales' Special Envoy for India and made a significant contribution as the Deputy Chair of the Australia- India Council Board.



24. Bangladesh to sign Free Trade Agreement with Nepal

Bangladesh and Nepal have agreed to sign a Free Trade Agreement to enhance trade between the two countries. A committee will be formed to work out the modalities of the agreement. Bangladesh has also agreed to allow Nepal to use its Saidpur airport located in its northernmost district of Nilphamari close to Nepal.

Bangladesh exports commodities worth \$38 million to Nepal and imports goods worth around \$18 million.



25. Ashraf Ghani secured 2nd term as President of Afghanistan

Ashraf Ghani has secured a second term as President of Afghanistan. However, his closest opponent Abdullah Abdullah has refused to recognize the results and declared himself winner potentially endangering peace negotiations with the Taliban. Abdullah has announced to establish an inclusive government.



The Election Commission announced that Ghani garnered 50.64% of votes while Abdullah received 39.52%. Ghani and Abdullah head a fragile national unity government that was put together under the US pressure after both leaders claimed victory in Afghanistan's 2014 elections.

26. FATF decided to retain Pakistan in 'Grey List'

The global terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) decided continuation of Pakistan in the 'Grey List'. The plenary has noted that Pakistan addressed only a few of the 27 tasks given to it in controlling funding to terror groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and the Hizbul Mujahideen.



FATF has instructed Pakistan to swiftly complete its full action plan by June 2020. Pakistan was placed on the 'Grey List' by the FATF in June 2018.

27. BIMSTEC to connect Myanmar-Thailand to India through 3,000 km long power grid

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is working on connecting about 3,000-kilometre long power grid from Myanmar-Thailand to India. Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) are interested in investing in BIMSTEC regional power grid.



BIMSTEC countries had signed a Memorandum of Understanding for establishing a regional power grid in 2018. BIMSTEC is a regional grouping with seven countries from South and Southeast Asia including Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal and Bhutan.

28. IFAD Governing Council 2020 held in Rome, Italy

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) 43rd Governing Council meeting was held in Rome, Italy. It was based on theme “Investing in sustainable food systems to end hunger by 2030”. The importance of theme lied in IFAD’s role and experience in supporting sustainable, inclusive, nutritious and efficient food systems uniquely place it in a position to contribute to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG2).



The Council discussed the sequences of climate change and its impacts on agriculture will push around 100 million people to poverty by 2030.

29. South Sudan leader Riek Machar sworn in as Vice President

South Sudan rebel leader Riek Machar was sworn in as Vice President of Republic of South Sudan. South Sudan was brought back to peace after ravaged by six years of war. Salva Kiir is the President of South Sudan. He dissolved his old government and formed the new government. The newly formed government will serve for 36 months.



Riek Machar served as the inaugural Vice President of South Sudan from its independence in 2011 until his dismissal in 2013. He was re-sworn as Vice President following a peace agreement with Salva Kiir.

30. SCO’s Defence Experts Working Group meeting was held in Pakistan

The 9th Defence and Security Expert Working Group (EWG) meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was held in Islamabad, Pakistan. The meeting was the part of the ‘Shanghai Cooperation Organization Defense & Security Cooperation Plan 2020’. The forum discussed different aspects of cooperation between the SCO member states’ and regional security and efforts to preserve peace and stability.



China, Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and India including Pakistan participated in the event. Pakistan and India participated in Tsentr-2019 military exercises in Russia.

31. Pakistan conducted a successful flight test of the cruise missile Ra'ad-II

Pakistan conducted a successful flight test of the air launched cruise missile Ra'ad-II with a range of 600 km. Ra'ad-II missile is aimed to be attached with Mirage aircraft or F-16 fighter jets of the Pakistan Air Force and is aimed at enhancing the air delivered strategic standoff capability of the military on land and at sea.



Ra'ad-II weapon system is fully equipped with state of the art guidance and navigation systems ensuring engagement of targets with high precision.

32. China's CPI rose at their highest rate in more than 8 years

China's consumer price index (CPI) rose at their highest rate in more than eight years with inflation more than expected on the back of Lunar New Year demand and a deadly virus outbreak.



The consumer price index stood at 5.4% in January 2020 with food prices spiked 20.6%. The rise in January was the highest since October 2011 when CPI inflation was 5.5%. Beijing had already been battling a slowing domestic economy before the Novel Coronavirus emerged, disrupting businesses, travel and supply chains.

Miscellaneous

1. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved the proposal of Ministry of Home Affairs for extending the deputation tenure of IPS Abhinav Kumar, Inspector General, Border Security Force (BSF), up to June 27, 2021, in relaxation of IPS Tenure Policy.
2. Indian Railways has renamed its security force RPF (Railway Protection Force) as Indian Railway Protection Force Service.
3. India's gold imports fell about 7%, to 20.6 billion dollars during April to November 2019-20.
4. Reserve Bank of India bought 10,000 crore rupees of long-term government securities and sold 8,501 crore rupees of three short-term bonds.
5. Pragati Maidan Metro station was renamed as Supreme Court Metro Station.
6. The Appointments Committee of Cabinet has approved the reappointment of Vinod Kumar Yadav as Chairman, Railway Board for a period of one year.
7. The Union Ministry of Science and Technology have awarded Swarna Jayanti Fellowships to 14 scientists to pursue basic research in frontier areas of science and technology.
8. Senior Nationalist Congress Party leader and former MP, D P Tripathi passed away in Delhi.
9. The 5th Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) National Ice Hockey Championship -2020 has begun in Leh, Ladakh.
10. The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) is to conduct Asiatic Lion Census in May 2020. The Institute will use 10,000 cameras to conduct the census.
11. National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India has taken suo motu cognizance of media reports about the death of more than 100 children at a government run hospital in Kota district of Rajasthan.
12. Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) leader and Nagaland Assembly Speaker Vikho-o Yhoshu passed away.
13. "Lawn bowls" and "cycling" will be included in the 3rd edition of Khelo India Games. The two games will be included in the event for the first time.
14. President Ram Nath Kovind laid foundation stone to Lakshadweep's first Super Specialty Hospital at Kavaratti.
15. World No.1, Youth Olympics champion and Asian Games gold medalist, Saurabh Chaudhary won the men's gold in 10-metre air pistol in the 63rd National shooting championship.
16. The Journalists' Day was celebrated on 6th of January in the state of Maharashtra. It is celebrated in the memory of late thespian journalist Balshashtri Jambhekar.
17. ASCEND 2020 Global Investors Meet was held in Kochi, with the aim of lending pace to the Ease of Doing Business in the state.
18. The CISF will observe 2020 as the 'year of mobility' that will have a special focus on creation of more residential units and implementation of various welfare measures for the troops.
19. India's P Magesh Chandran lifted the title in the 95th edition of the prestigious Hastings International Chess Congress at Hastings in England.
20. The 5th Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference was held at Pune and it was organized by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research.
21. India's leading Digital lending startup, RevFin has joined hands with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company to offer protection to the RevFin's customers by bundling life insurance cover on their loans.

22. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has enabled select banks in India to offer round-the-clock (24×7) trading in the Indian rupee to allow Indians to safeguard their foreign exchange (Forex) risks at any time.
23. Indian women weightlifter Sarbjeet Kaur has been banned for 4 years from the sport by the National Anti-Doping Agency.
24. Three Colonial structures re-dedicated to Kolkata.
25. India erects "steel fence" across Pakistan, Bangladesh border.
26. Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated the submarine cable works on laying between Chennai – Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
27. The Ukrainian aircraft "Boeing 737" boarding 176 people crashed in Tehran, Iran.
28. The Cabinet approved conferring the status of Institution of National Importance to a cluster of Ayurvedic institutions.
29. Securities and Exchange Board of India stock market regulator has deferred the deadline to 1st April 2022, for the separation of the posts of Chairman & Managing Director or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for 500 listed companies.
30. In a major landmark for indigenous Indian aviation, the naval version of the Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA) made a successful short landing with arrestor wires on the Shore Based Test Facility (SBTF) in Goa.
31. Postal Ballot facility has been made available for the Super Senior Citizens (over 80 years of age) and PwDs in the Delhi Assembly Election.
32. Alok Kansal, a senior officer of the 1983 batch of Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE), took over the charge as General Manager of Western Railway.
33. The famous Parshuram Kund Mela was celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh.
34. Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism, Prahlad Singh Patel launched exhibition titled Indian Heritage in Digital Space and a two day long first international heritage symposium in Delhi.
35. The fifth edition of Science Film Festival of India (SCI-FFI) 2020 was held in Panaji, Goa.
36. The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) celebrated its 15th Raising Day.
37. India's first-ever, global Mega-Science exhibition, 'Vigyan Samagam', was held New Delhi. This was fourth such exhibition after being organised at Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata.
38. The Department of Biotechnology organized an International Summit on Women in STEM – "Visualizing the Future: New Skylines" at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.
39. Meghalaya celebrated the 48th anniversary of statehood day on 21st January with cultural fanfares immersed in remnants of the 'Hill State Movement' that led up to the declaration of Meghalaya as a separate state in the year 1972.
40. Puducherry Chief Minister Narayanasamy launched the Intensified Pulse Polio Immunization (IPPI) programme in the Union Territory.
41. Vinesh Phogat won her first gold medal of the 2020 season at the Rome Ranking Series while teen sensation Anshu Malik settled for a silver in 57kg competition.
42. Union Minister for Heavy Industries Prakash Javadekar inaugurated ELECRAMA 2020, the flagship showcase of the Indian electrical industry, in Greater Noida.
43. Sania Mirza and her Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok have won the women's doubles title of the WTA International trophy at Hobart in Australia.
44. In Assam, the militant outfit National Democratic Front of Bodoland signed a tripartite Suspension of Operation Agreement with the Centre and the Assam Government.
45. 'Women with wheels', a unique taxi service has been launched at the Indira Gandhi International Airport.

46. Maharashtra Government has made the reading of the Preamble of the Constitution mandatory for the Maharashtra schools.
47. Indian airports have started thermal screening of passengers arriving in India from China and Hong Kong to stop the Corona Virus spread in India.
48. The Bilateral International Treaty organization, an international arbitration tribunal recently dismissed all the claims against India.
49. Union Minister Arjun Munda was elected as President of the Archery Association of India (AAI).
50. Eminent journalist and chairman of "The Hindu Group" N Ram honoured by Kerala Media Academy.
51. In a major push to development in Jammu and Kashmir, around 1,256 projects worth 2280 crore rupees financed under J&K Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation, are being completed by end of March 2020.
52. Himachal Pradesh celebrated its 50th Statehood Day. It was on this day in 1971 when Himachal Pradesh was carved out as the 18th State of the country.
53. Defence Public Sector Undertakings (PSU) Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) is set to deliver anti-submarine warfare stealth corvette INS Kavaratti to the Navy.
54. The Union Minister Piyush Goyal announced that Indian Railways will run 100% on electricity by 2024.

1. Cabinet approved to confer the status of Institution of National Importance to five IIITs

The Union Cabinet approved introduction of the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The bill proposes to declare five IIITs in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode as Institutions of National importance.



With this, the Five IIITs in PPP mode at Surat, Bhopal, Bhagalpur, Agartala and Raichur will now be able to use the nomenclature of Bachelor of Technology, BTech or Master of Technology or PhD degree. These IIITs are already functioning as Societies registered under Societies Registration Act of 1860.

2. Cabinet gave in principle approval to set up a new major port in Maharashtra

The Union Cabinet has given its 'in-principle' approval for setting up a Major Port at Vadhavan near Dahanu in Maharashtra. The total cost of the project is likely to be Rs.65,544.54 crore.



Vadhavan port will be developed on "land lord model". A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) will be formed with Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) as the lead partner with equity participation equal to or more than 50% to implement the project. With the development of Vadhavan port, India will break into the countries with top 10 container ports in the world.

3. Centre notified setting up of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust

The Union Government has given approval to proposal for creation of 'Shri Ram Janma Bhoomi Tirtha Kshetra' trust. The Trust will oversee the construction of a Ram Temple in Ayodhya, as ordered by the Supreme Court.



There will be 15 trustees in Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, of which 1 will always be from Dalit community. The government also decided that whole of the approximately 67.703 - acre acquired land would be transferred to the Sri Ram Janmabhoomi Tirtha Kshetra Trust.

4. India, Maldives sign five MoUs for establishing Addu Tourism zone

India and Maldives signed five memorandum of understanding (MoUs) for establishing the Addu Tourism zone in five islands of Addu atoll at a cost of 2.49 million dollars. A 6th MoU to set up a bottled water plant in Hoarafushi was also signed.



All six projects are grant projects falling under India's High Impact Community Development Scheme (HICDP). These projects are driven by the needs of communities on the islands. HICDPs constitute an important dimension of the dynamic development partnership between India and the Maldives.

5. 5G Hackathon launched by Telecommunications Department

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) launched '5G Hackathon' in association with government, academia and industry stakeholders. Hackathon aimed at shortlisting India's focused cutting edge ideas that can be converted into workable 5G products and solutions.



The 5G technology provides quantum leap over 4G in terms of speed, peak data rate, latency, spectrum efficiency and connection density. The Hackathon converted innovating ideas into products and solutions in different verticals and develop India specific use cases around 5G.

6. Cabinet approved dispensation to Alliance Air

The Union Cabinet approved dispensation to M/s. Alliance Air, a 100% subsidiary of Air India, to fly on international sectors between India and Sri Lanka. A special dispensation is allowed for the interim period till M/s. Alliance Air deploys minimum of 20 Aircraft or 20% of total capacity, whichever is higher for domestic operations.



The initiative has been taken to increase connectivity and to expand people to people contacts between the two countries. Prior to this approval there was no commercial operation scheduled from Palaly and Batticaloa airports.

7. SC appointed retired Kerala HC judge to prepare inventory of ornaments at Sabarimala temple

The Supreme Court appointed retired Kerala High Court judge C N Ramachandaran Nair to prepare an inventory and valuation report of ornaments of Lord Ayyappa of Sabarimala temple. The court granted four more weeks to the state government to prepare draft legislation regarding the administration of the historic Sabarimala temple.



Different sects of the Pandalam Royal family have claimed those ornaments. According to legend, Pandalam place is where Lord Ayyappa, the presiding deity of Sabarimala, had his human sojourn as the son of the Raja of Pandalam.

8. Bodo Peace Accord 2020

The Union Government signed a tripartite agreement with the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU), National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and the Assam Government, providing political and economic benefits without acceding to the demand for a separate state or Union Territory. A commission would be formed to determine the boundaries of the Bodo Territorial Area Districts (BTAD).



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his visit to Kokrajhar, announced a package of Rs 1,500 Crore to benefit Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri of the BTAD.

9. NCL sets up 'SARAS' to promote innovation & R&D

Coal India's flagship subsidiary NCL has set up a centre named "Science and Applied Research Alliance and Support" (SARAS) to promote Innovation, Research & Development and skill development. The centre will also help improve company's operational efficiency and utilize resources at optimum level.



The centre has been set up in collaboration with IIT (BHU) and has already commenced 6 varied domain projects worth ₹ 60 Million. NCL accounts for 15% of India's coal production and 10% of thermal power generation of the country. It produces more than 100 million tonnes of coal every year.

10. SC directs states to issue notification for establishing 'Gram Nyayalayas'

The Supreme Court has directed the states to come out with notifications for establishing Gram Nyayalayas. While some states like Gujarat, Haryana, Telangana, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Odisha have not yet filed their affidavits on this issue, other states except Kerala, Maharashtra and Rajasthan have issued notifications for establishing Gram Nyayalayas but all of them were not functioning.



An Act passed by Parliament in 2008 provided for setting up of Gram Nyayalayas at the grassroots level for providing access to justice to citizens at the doorstep.

11. FICCI in partnership with Central Asian countries launched India-Central Asia Business council

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) launched the India-Central Asia Business Council in partnership with five of the epic industry bodies of Central Asian countries namely Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The council was formally declared to collaborate and provide an industry view to the governments of the six countries.



The council will share its recommendations to promote business in the region and with each other. It will examine the viability of establishing air corridors between India and Central Asia to boost trade in perishable goods, agricultural and food products.

12. Supreme Court upheld constitutional validity of SC/ST Amendment Act, 2018

The Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of the SC/ST Amendment Act, 2018 which ruled out anticipatory bail in case of atrocities against SC/STs. The anticipatory bail can only be granted in cases where prima facie case is not made out. A preliminary inquiry is not essential before lodging an FIR under the act nor is the approval of senior police officials. The bench was headed by Justice Arun Mishra.



The SC/ST Amendment Act 2018 was brought to nullify the effect of a Supreme Court ruling which had diluted the provisions of the stringent Act.

13. Central government issued advisory to States/ UTs to implement vehicle registration system

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways issued an advisory to all States to implement the system of vehicle registration as per Rules notified under the Central Motor Vehicle Act 1988.



The Advisory states that the VAHAN system provides a mechanism for the inventory of vehicles being uploaded by the vehicle manufacturers against valid type-approval certificates. Transport Departments of States and UTs will implement the system of registration of vehicles based on the production of type approval certificate and Form 22. Form 22 is a quality certificate for compliance with pollution standards, safety standards of components and roadworthiness.

14. Web Portal launched for star rating of mines in India

In order to promote green, safe and sustainable mining practices using technology as a tool, Ministry of Coal (MoC) launched a web portal for star rating of coal mines. It enables all operational coal mines across India for self-rating, their subsequent validation by Coal Controller's Organization (CCO), further evaluation and finally award of star rating.



Based on the star ratings obtained through a well-defined mechanism on this web portal, the highest scoring mines in the country will be awarded in a public ceremony. All the mines will be given an official certificate by the CCO.

15. NCL established R&D centre 'SARAS' for sustainable coal mining

The Northern Coalfields Ltd (NCL) established a R&D centre i.e. Science and Applied Research Alliance & Support (SARAS) in collaboration with Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) to work on the sustainable model for development in coal mining. The R&D centre will be the centre of excellence, infrastructure up-gradation and IT initiatives.



SARAS emphasis is on enhancing the overall productivity of mines as well as developing greener technologies. Initiatives such as development of Solar Wind Hybrid System for electricity generation, development of composite membrane reactor for hydrogen production has been taken up by SARAS.

16. India-UK signed MoU to strengthen Defence and Aerospace Relations

UK-India signed MoU to strengthen defence ties. It was signed on sidelines of the DefExpo 2020 in the presence of UK Minister for Defence Procurement James Heapey.



MoU features

-MoU will help in building partnerships and capabilities in the Aerospace and Defence sector.

-It will advance India's defence acquisition process but also foster long-term technology and hardware transfers.

-To boost India's defence sector and support between the two defense industries.

17. India and Portugal signed 14 agreements

India and Portugal signed 14 agreements to boost cooperation in a range of areas between the two nations. Portugal President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa was on his first state visit to India.



India and Portugal signed agreements in the fields of maritime heritage, maritime transport and port development, migration and mobility, start-ups, intellectual property rights, aerospace, nano-biotechnology, audiovisual co-production, yoga, diplomatic training, scientific research and public policy.

18. EK Bharat Shrestha Bharat programme

Under the central government's Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat programme, the following states have been paired with each other for the year 2019-2020.

- A. Meghalaya, Arunachal and UP
- B. Delhi paired with Sikkim
- c. Ladakh paired with Tamil Nadu
- D. Mizoram paired with Bihar
- E. Andhra Pradesh and Punjab
- F. Gujarat partners with Chhattisgarh
- G. Goa paired with Jharkhand



The programme aims to establish cultural exchanges between people of different regions to further human bonding and a common approach to nation building. States and union territories have been paired to carry out a structured engagement between them in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events and tourism in a focused campaign.

19. Third private passenger train of IRCTC flagged off

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the IRCTC Kashi Mahakal Express from Varanasi. It is the third private passenger train of IRCTC after the successful run of Lucknow-Delhi Tejas Express and Ahmedabad-Mumbai Tejas Express trains.



The train has several comforts for passengers such as on-board passenger information and entertainment system, modular bio-toilets, special vegetarian meals, free travel insurance, tea/coffee vending machines, CCTVs, fire and smoke detection and suppressant system, comfortable berths etc.

20. Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra in New Delhi renamed as Sushma Swaraj Bhawan

The Union Government has decided to rename Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra in New Delhi as Sushma Swaraj Bhawan and Foreign Service Institute in the national capital as Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service in the honour of the legacy and decades of public service of the former External Affairs Minister.



During her four decade long career, Sushma Swaraj was elected to the Lok Sabha four times and thrice to Rajya Sabha. She served as Minister for External Affairs, Information and Broadcasting, Parliamentary Affairs, Health and Family Welfare.

21. Cabinet approved changes in 'Vivad se Vishwas Bill'

The Union Cabinet has approved the changes in the 'Direct Tax Vivad se Vishwas (No dispute but trust) Bill, 2020' to increase its scope to cover litigations pending in various debt recovery tribunals (DRTs). The Bill was introduced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Union Budget 2020.



The Bill seeks to provide resolution for disputed tax cases involving Rs 9.32 lakh crore. It will cover disputes pending in DRTs, Arbitration, Tribunal, Court cases, revisions issues, and all tax disputes under the scheme.

22. Cabinet approves proposal for capital infusion for OICL, NICL and UIICL

The Union Cabinet has given in-principle approval for capital infusion of Rs 2,500 crore in three Public Sector General Insurance Companies in the wake of the critical financial position and breach of regulatory solvency requirements. They are Oriental Insurance Company Limited (OICL), National Insurance Company Limited (NICL) and United India Insurance Company Limited (UIICL).



Against the minimum stipulated level of 1.5, National Insurance's solvency ratio dropped to just 1.04 at the end of FY19, while United India's hit 1.05 in the second quarter of the current fiscal. Oriental Insurance's ratio stood at 1.56 in the first quarter of this fiscal.

23. India, Portugal sign agreement to enhance maritime transport co-operation

India and Portugal signed an agreement to enhance co-operation in the field of maritime transport and ports. It will help promote maritime transport between the two countries for better operation of their merchant fleets, co-operation to harmonise and unify their position with International Organization Institution.



The agreement will also help both the countries to co-ordinate accession to international conventions so that the objectives of this agreement can be strengthened.

24. India and Portugal sign agreement to set up National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal

India signed an agreement with Portugal to set up a world class National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal in Gujarat. The MoU was signed between the Ministry of Shipping of GoI and Ministry of National Defence, Republic of Portugal.



The MoU on National Maritime Heritage Complex, Lothal will pay the way for co-operation between the two countries for showcasing common Maritime Heritage. NMHC will consolidate all diverse and rich artefacts from ancient to modern times. It will provide access to public and make them aware about India's rich Maritime Heritage.

25. Cabinet approved MoU between India and Iceland in the field of Sustainable Fisheries Development

The Union Cabinet was apprised of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Iceland in the field of sustainable fisheries development. The MoU was signed on 10th September, 2019. The salient features of the MoU are:



- Creation of facilities for exchange of scientists and technical experts and their proper placement
- Provision of training to fisheries professionals from key fisheries institutions
- Exchange of scientific literature research findings and other information
- Exchange of experts / expertise to study the prospects of fishing

26. Cabinet approved protocol amending the Agreement between India and Sri Lanka for avoidance of double taxation

The Union Cabinet has approved the Signing and Ratification of the Protocol amending the Agreement between India and Sri Lanka for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income. The Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) will result in curbing of tax planning strategies which exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules.



The existing Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) between India and Sri Lanka was signed on 22nd January, 2013. Both nations are required to implement the minimum standards under G-20 OECD BEPS Action Reports in respect of their DTAA's with Inclusive Framework countries.

27. Medical devices to come under CDSCO's purview from 1st April

The Government of India issued a final notification to consider all medical devices as drugs, bringing them under the purview of the drugs regulator and tightening regulations for them to improve safety and quality. With the implementation from 1st April 2020, all the medical devices will come under the purview of the Central Drugs and Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).



The medical devices that will be re-categorized are devices used for life support, devices used to disinfect other medical devices and all medical devices that are sold in the market.

28. India becomes first country to make Haj process 100 percent digital

Union Minister for Minorities Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has said that India has become the first country in the world which has made the entire Haj-2020 process 100% digital. Digital services like online application, e-visa, Haj mobile app and Masiha health facility have provided all the information in India regarding accommodation or transportation in Mecca-Madina to the Indian Muslims going for Haj.



Also for the first time this year more than 21,000 Muslim women will go to Haj without Mahram or the male companion.

29. SC appointed interlocutors submit report on Shaheen Bagh protests

Supreme Court appointed interlocutors Sanjay Hegde and Sadhana Ramachandran submitted their report on the ongoing protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act at Shaheen Bagh in New Delhi to the Supreme Court. The report was submitted before the bench of justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and KM Joseph.



Supreme Court had appointed the interlocutors to speak to the protesters to find ways to end a roadblock at the protest site. The protest at Shaheen Bagh began on December 15, 2019 and has continued since then, blocking a major road.

30. IDSA to be renamed as Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses

Union Government has decided to rename the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, IDSA as Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses to honour the commitment and legacy of late Manohar Parrikar. It will align the vision and aspiration of the premier defence institute with the contribution of the former Defence Minister and Padma Bhushan awardee.



An epitome of integrity and dedication in public life, throughout his career, late Manohar Parrikar, was Defence Minister from 9th November 2014 to 14th March 2017.

31. India and Norway strengthen partnership on blue economy

Union Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan and Norway's Minister for Climate and Environment, H.E. Mr Sveinung Rotevatn opened the India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development. The two countries also commenced a new collaboration on Integrated Ocean Management & Research. The two Governments signed a Letter of Intent to develop a new framework for collaboration on Integrated Ocean Management and Research.



The India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development was launched jointly by the Indian Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi, and the Norwegian Prime Minister Ms Erna Solberg, during her visit to India in January 2019.

32. CCI approved the acquisition of 100% shareholding of WABCO by ZF Friedrichshafen AG (ZF)

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved acquisition of WABCO Holdings Inc. (WABCO) by ZF Friedrichshafen AG. ZF will acquire all outstanding shares of WABCO for USD 136.50 per share in an all-cash transaction for an equity value of over USD 7 billion (about ₹49,700 crore).



WABCO is a global supplier of primarily pneumatic braking control systems, technologies and services that improve safety, efficiency and connectivity of commercial vehicles including trucks, buses and trailers.

33. India, US ink \$3 billion defence deals

India and the US signed defence deals worth \$3 billion during the visit of President Donald Trump. The deals include procurement of 24 MH-60 Romeo helicopters by India from the US at a cost of \$2.6 billion and six AH-64E Apache helicopters for \$800 million. The two nations also signed three MoUs:

- Memorandum of Understanding on Mental Health
- Memorandum of Understanding on the Safety of Medical Products
- Letter of Co-operation between Indian Oil Corporation Limited and Exxon Mobil



- Letter of Co-operation between Indian Oil Corporation Limited and Exxon Mobil
- India LNG Limited and Chart Industries Inc, US

34. Government approved constitution of 22nd Law Commission

Government has formally announced the constitution of the 22nd Law Commission. The law panel advises the government on complex legal issues and has a term of three years. The panel will have a full-time chairperson, four full-time members (including a member secretary), and law and legislative secretaries in the law ministry as ex-officio members.



Law Commission of India

The chairperson usually is a retired Supreme Court judge or a retired chief justice of a high court. The term of the previous commission had ended on August 31, 2018.

35. NITI Aayog organised Sustainable Development Goals Conclave 2020

NITI Aayog organised Sustainable Development Goals Conclave 2020: Partnerships, Cooperation and Development of North Eastern states- in Guwahati, Assam. The three-day event saw representations from the North Eastern states, Central Ministries, academia, civil society and international development organizations.



NITI Aayog has the mandate of overseeing the adoption and monitoring of SDGs at the national and sub-national level. Progress in the northeast region is crucial in this decade of action for the country to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

36. Government to set up Central Consumer Protection Authority by first week of April

The government will set up the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) by the first week of April 2020. The CCPA to be set up under Consumer Protection Act 2019, will address issues related to consumer rights, unfair trade practices, misleading advertisements and impose penalties for selling spurious and adulterated products.



An investigative wing will be formed under the aegis of the authority and it will carry out inquiries in matters related to unfair trade practices and misleading advertisements. The rules related to Consumer Protection Act will be finalized within one and half months.

37. India, Sri Lanka sign MoU for up-gradation of infrastructure in plantation schools for estate workers of Indian origin

India and Sri Lanka have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for up-gradation of infrastructure in plantation schools for estate workers of Indian origin. The project envisages up gradation of infrastructure of 9 plantation schools as identified by Sri Lanka under an Indian grant assistance of 30 crore rupees.



These projects are in continuation of Government of India's people-oriented development cooperation with Government of Sri Lanka. India's overall commitment of development assistance to Sri Lanka stands at a total of around 3.5 billion US dollars and among these, 560 million US dollars under grants.

38. CCI approved acquisition of 74.50% of THDC by NTPC

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of 74.50% of the issued and paid-up share capital of THDC India Limited by NTPC Limited from Government of India. THDC is a government company with 74.50% of its total shares held by the Government of India and 25.50% of its shares held by the Government of Uttar Pradesh as on 31 March 2019.



टीएचडीसी इंडिया लिमिटेड
THDC INDIA LIMITED

NTPC is a Maharatna Company having presence in the power generation business. The principal business activity of the company is electric power generation through coal based thermal power plants.

39. CCI approved acquisition of 100% of NEEPCO by NTPC

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the acquisition of 100% of the issued and paid-up share capital of North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) by NTPC Limited from Government of India. NEEPCO is a power utility, primarily operating in the north-eastern region of India. The principal business activity of the Target is generation of power through hydro, thermal and solar power stations.



NTPC is a Maharatna Company having presence in the power generation business. The principal business activity of the company is electric power generation through coal based thermal power plants.

40. Cabinet approved the Constitution of an empowered “Technology Group”

The Union Cabinet has approved the constitution of an empowered 12-Member “Technology Group” with the Principal Scientific Adviser to Government of India as its Chair. The Technology Group will:



- render the best possible advice on technology to be developed for a technology supplier and the technology procurement strategy;
- develop in-house expertise in aspects of policy and use of emerging technologies; and
- ensure sustainability of public sector technology developed/being developed at PSUs, national labs and research organisations.

41. Cabinet approved revamping of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

The Union Cabinet has approved revamping of "Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)" and "Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS)". Few of them:



- Allocation of business to Insurance Companies to be done for three years.
- Central Subsidy under PMFBY/RWBCIS to be limited for premium rates up to 30% for un-irrigated areas/crops and 25% for irrigated areas/crops.
- Enrolment under the Scheme to be made voluntary for all farmers (Both PMFBY/RWBCIS).
- Central Share in Premium Subsidy to be increased to 90% for North Eastern States from the existing sharing pattern of 50:50.

42. Cabinet approved MoU signed between SEBI and FCA, UK

The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal of Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to sign an updated Alternative Investment Fund Managers Directive (AIFMD) MoU signed between SEBI and Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), UK, pursuant to UK's exit from the European Union.



The UK exited the EU on 31st January 2020. FCA, UK had submitted to SEBI that no transitional measures would be available if the amended MoU is not signed before the date when the UK exits the European Union (Brexit), and requested SEBI to sign an updated MoU as early as possible.

43. Cabinet approved elevation of BISAG as BISAG(N) under MEITY

The Union Cabinet has approved Elevation of Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG), Gujarat as Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG(N)) under Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MEITY), Government of India.



It will help to maintain efficiency and innovation of services, the current skilled manpower working at BISAG may join the national level institute on as-is and where-is basis. It will also facilitate implementation of expanded scope of activities, efficient rollout of GIS projects, aid research & development and technology development.

44. Cabinet approved Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase-II

The Union Cabinet has approved the Phase II of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) [SBM (G)] till 2024-25, which will focus on Open Defecation Free Plus (ODF Plus), which includes ODF sustainability and Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM).



The program will also work towards ensuring that no one is left behind and everyone uses a toilet. SBM (G) Phase-II will be implemented with a total outlay of Rs. 1,40,881 crores.

45. CCEA approved upward revision of interest subvention under the scheme DIDF

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the upward revision of interest subvention from 2% to 2.5% under the Dairy processing and Infrastructure Development Fund (DIDF) scheme with the revised outlay of Rs 11184 Cr. The scheme envisages to have interest subvention component of Rs 1167 crore to be contributed by DAHD.



The scheme also has a loan component of Rs. 8004 crore to be contributed by NABARD. Rs. 2001 cr shall be contributed by Eligible End Borrowers and Rs. 12 cr would be jointly contributed by National Dairy Development Board/National Cooperative Development Corporation.

46. CCEA approved to form and promote 10,000 new FPOs

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for 10,000 FPOs (Farmer Produce Organizations) to be formed in five years period from 2019-20 to 2023-24 to ensure economies of scale for farmers. Support to each FPO will be continued for 5 years from its year of inception.



The total budgetary provision is Rs. 4,496.00 crore for five years with a further committed liability of Rs. 2,369.00 crore for period from 2024-25 to 2027-28 towards handholding of each FPO for five years from its aggregation and formation.

47. South Central Railways zone becomes 1st in India to have energy-neutral stations

The Indian South Central Railways (SCR) zone became India's first to have 13 energy-neutral stations on the network. 13 railway stations into "energy neutral" stations, is the highest amongst all the zones across the Indian Railways network.



With the help of this initiative, SCR can achieve 100% energy requirements by tapping into solar power through solar photovoltaic panels which have been commissioned at the station buildings and 100 per cent energy requirements by tapping into solar power through solar photovoltaic panels which have been commissioned at the station buildings.

48. India signed USD 450 million loan agreement with World Bank

The Government of India signed USD 450 million loan agreement with the World Bank to improve groundwater management and support the national programme "Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY). Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY) is a National Groundwater Management Improvement Programme which will be implemented in the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Haryana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh and cover 78 districts.



This financial aid will help the Union Government to enhance the recharge of aquifers, introduce water conservation practices, promote water harvesting and create an institutional structure for sustainable groundwater management.

49. Indian Railway launched AI based ASKDISHA chatbot

In order to resolve queries of railway passengers over the internet pertaining to various services offered, Indian Railways had introduced the services of Artificial Intelligence based ASKDISHA chatbot. The customers can now ask queries to ASKDISHA in Hindi language by voice as well as text.



The chatbot is a special computer programme designed to simulate conversation with users, especially over the internet. The first-of-its-kind initiative by IRCTC is aimed at facilitating accessibility by answering users' queries pertaining to various services offered to railway passengers.

50. India's first floating jetty inaugurated in Goa

India's first floating jetty was inaugurated by the Union Minister of State for Shipping Mansukh Mandaviya at a cruise terminal in Vasco at Goa. The first such floating jetty, made of cement concrete is expected to boost inland waterways. Goa receives 45 international cruises annually in addition to domestic cruise boats.



Floating jetties are environment friendly and can be built in a short time. A floating jetty is a platform supported by pontoons. It is usually joined to the shore with a gangway.

Persons in News

1. Monika Nagpure, Rutvik Bhajiwala won 31st Veer Savarkar Akhil Bharatiya Samudra Taran Spardha

Monika Nagpure and Rutvik Bhajiwala have won the 31st Veer Savarkar Akhil Bharatiya Samudra Taran Spardha. The annual all India Sea swimming competition was held off Gir Somnath coast of Gujarat.



Monika who had won this competition in previous two occasions also, completed 16 nautical mile distance in 4.39.02 hours, while Rutvik completed 16 nautical mile distance in 7.04.38 hours. Unmit Surti, Kapil Bhavsar, Darshna seller and Mehali Bhajiwala were the other winners.

2. Avishek Dalmiya becomes youngest CAB President

Avishek Dalmiya became the youngest President of Cricket Association of Bengal. Avishek, 38, was holding the post of Joint Secretary before his elevation. He has become the 18th President of CAB. The CAB president's post was lying vacant after former India captain Sourav Ganguly took over the reins of BCCI.



Snehasish Ganguly, brother of BCCI President Sourav Ganguly, is the new Joint Secretary. Debasish Ganguly is the treasurer of CAB while Naresh Ojha is vice-president.

3. Mo O'Brien became the 1st deaf person to row Atlantic Ocean

Mo O'Brien created history by becoming the first deaf person to row across the Atlantic Ocean in the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge. She finished a 3,000-mile journey across the Atlantic with her daughter Bird Watts, and their friend Claire Allinson. It is considered as world's toughest row.



With this achievement, Oarsome Foursome team has raised £50,000 for three UK charities: Cornwall Blood Bikes, Carefree, and Exmouth & Lympstone Hospiscare. There are currently 466 million people with disabling hearing loss worldwide, predicted to reach over 900 million by 2050.

4. Kaamya Karthikeyan became the youngest girl to summit Mount Aconcagua in South America

Kaamya Karthikeyan, a student of Navy Children School (NCS), Mumbai, became the youngest girl in the world to summit Mt. Aconcagua, the highest peak in South America and outside of Asia. She summited the mountain peak of 6962 m height and unfurled the Indian tricolour.



Kaamya has conquered several peaks including scaling Mt. Kilimanjaro (5,895 metres) the highest peak in Africa, Mt; Elbrus (5,642 metres), the highest mountain in Europe and then Australia's tallest mountain Mt. Kosciuszko (2,228 metres).

5. Adline Castelino crowned as Miss Diva Universe 2020

Mangalore's Adline Castelino was crowned Miss Diva Universe 2020. She will represent India at the Miss Universe pageant. Aavriti Choudhary of Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh was crowned as LIVA Miss Diva Supranational 2020. She will represent India at Miss Supranational 2020. Pune's Neha Jaiswal was crowned Miss Diva Runner-up.



Miss Diva 2020 was the 8th edition of Miss Diva contest held on 22 February. A total of twenty contestants were shortlisted from various auditions across the country.

6. 11-year-old Jiya Rai creates world record in open water swimming

Jiya Rai, an 11-year-old student of Navy Children School Mumbai, created a world record by becoming the fastest specially-abled girl to swim 14 km in the open water swimming category. She swam from Elephanta Island to Gateway of India for 3 hours 27 minutes and 30 seconds under the supervision of the Swimming Association of Maharashtra.



Jiya is a special child as she was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Delay in Speech at age of 2. The record is registered in India Book of Records, Asia Book and Limca Book of Records.

1. Jaipur city included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site

Director-General of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay dedicated the certificate regarding the inclusion of walled city of Jaipur in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites to the people. She handed over the certificate to Urban Development Minister of the state Shanti Dhariwal.



UNESCO declared the Walled City of Jaipur world heritage site in July 2019 which is famous for its grid plan-based architecture and buildings constructed with the pink façade. The International Council on Monuments and Sites had earlier inspected the city in 2018 after its nomination.

2. Defence Expo-2020 held in Lucknow

The 11th edition of biennial Defence Expo-2020 was held in Lucknow. The main theme of the DefExpo India- 2020 was 'India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub' and the focus was on 'Digital Transformation of Defence'.



Defence ministers of 40 countries and over 3,000 delegates from 70 nations attended the event. The first India-Africa Defence Ministers' Conclave was held during the DEFEXPO INDIA 2020. Over 200 partnerships involving Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs), Transfer of Technology (ToTs), Product launches were concluded on the third day of DefExpo 2020, at ceremony titled "Bandhan".

3. International Seafood Show in Kochi

The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), under Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, in association with the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI), organized the 22nd edition of India International Seafood Show (IISS) 2020 in Kochi from 7-9 February 2020.



The theme of this year's seafood show was "Blue Revolution - Beyond Production to Value Addition". The 21st edition of IISS was held in Goa in January 2018.

4. 5th India-Russia Military Industrial Conference held in Lucknow

The fifth India-Russia Military Industrial Conference was held on the sidelines of the Def Expo 2020 in Lucknow. Over 100 Russian and over 200 Indian industry leaders participated in the conference. 14 MoUs were signed between Indian and Russian companies under the Make in India initiative.



The MoUs were related to production of different defence equipment such as parts of T-72, T-90, radar systems, ASW Rocket launchers and 3D modeling. Major companies which are part of these MoUs includes BHEL, Bharat Dynamics Limited and Vista control from Indian side and INVERZIA, UVZ and BEML Ltd. from the Russian side.

5. National Conference on e-Governance 2020 concluded

The National Conference on e-Governance 2020 concluded in Mumbai with deliberations on transforming governance using digital technologies. The theme was 'India 2020: Digital Transformation'. The Mumbai Declaration on e-Governance was unanimously adopted on the final day. Declaration seeks to take forward the roadmap for e-Governance outlined in the Shillong Declaration of 2019.



In recognition of excellence in the implementation of e-Governance initiatives, the National e-Governance Awards 2020 were presented at the valedictory session.

6. Two-day 'Conference on Combating Drug Trafficking' for BIMSTEC held in New Delhi

The BIMSTEC 'Conference on Combating Drug Trafficking' was held in New Delhi. The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) organised the two-day conference. The conference aimed to provide an opportunity to all the member nations to deliberate on the increased threats posed by drug trafficking and the collective steps that were required to negate such threats.



The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Co-operation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation comprising seven countries — India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

7. 2nd BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise 2020

The 2nd Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Co-operation (BIMSTEC), Disaster Management Exercise (BIMSTEC DMEx-2020) was held at Puri, Odisha. National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) was the nodal agency of the exercise.



80 delegates from 05 member countries namely Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Nepal participated in the exercise. The complete exercise comprised of a Table Top Exercise (TTX), Field Training Exercises (FTXs) on Flood and an After-Action Review (AAR).

8. First ever Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival held in Mumbai

The first-ever 'Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival' was held in Mumbai, Maharashtra to showcase the special links and promote artistic and cultural ties between India and Israel. The two-day festival screened Israeli famous cinema 'The Mossad', promoted artistic cooperation in the diverse fields of culture, created a platform for future fruitful cooperation among artists and demonstrated special fusion meals.



The festival created opportunities in various potential fields, such as tourism, cinema, high-tech. Jerusalem has become an international cultural centre and source of inspiration for creators and artists.

9. Chitra Bharati Film Festival held at Ahmedabad

The three day long Chitra Bharati Film Festival (CBFF) was held at Gujarat University in Ahmedabad. It was the third edition of the festival - the first was held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, in 2016, and the second at Delhi's Siri Fort Auditorium in 2018.



The themes for the festival include Bharatiya culture and values, constructive work, Bharatiya family, social harmony, folk art, water, trees and cleanliness, women, national security, valour, nationhood and education for nation building. The aim of this film festival is to establish a 'Bharatiya' narrative in Indian cinema.

10. International Judicial Conference 2020

The International Judicial Conference 2020 was held in New Delhi. The theme of the conference was 'Judiciary and the Changing World'. Important Topics of discussion at the Conference included :

- Gender Justice,
- Contemporary Perspectives on Protection of Constitutional Values
- Dynamic Interpretations of the Constitution in a Changing World
- Harmonisation of Environment Protection vis-à-vis Sustainable Development and
- Protection of Right to Privacy in the Internet Age



11. Difficult Dialogues 2020 began in Goa

The 5th edition of Difficult Dialogues was held in Panji, Goa. Difficult Dialogues is an annual forum examining issues of contemporary relevance in South Asia. The theme of Difficult Dialogues 2020 was "State of Law". Various global experts, policymakers and community - level workers discussed on issues related to law and the legal framework.



Dialogues 2020

- Accountability v/s Independence Of Judiciary: Is the Balance Right?
- After the Aadhar Judgment: Do Individuals Have the Right To Privacy In India?
- Discrimination Law and Minorities: Is Justice Done?
- Reforms in the Administration Of Justice: What Can Help?

Regional

1. Uttar Pradesh State government approved five-acre land to Sunni Waqf Board in Ayodhya

The Uttar Pradesh state government has approved five acre land to Sunni Waqf Board in Ayodhya. The cabinet meeting has approved the land at village Dhannipur under Sohawal Tehsil in Ayodhya district. The proposed land is 18 kilometer from Ayodhya.



The supreme court in its historic decision on 9th November 2019 had ordered to allot five acre land in Ayodhya to Sunni Waqf Board for construction of a Mosque.

2. Madhya Pradesh bagged first position for implementation of PMMVY

Madhya Pradesh has bagged the first position for the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana. Indore district has also bagged the first place for better performance of the scheme. The main objective of the Matru Vandana Yojana is to provide incentives of five thousand rupees for the loss of wages of working women.



MP registered more than 14.55 lakh beneficiaries under the PMMVY. The first installment has been paid to about 13.40 lakh women, while second installment to around 12 lakh and third installment has been paid to 8.80 lakh beneficiaries.

3. India's biggest rural technical festival 'Antahpragnya 2020' kicked off

India's biggest rural technical festival titled 'Antahpragnya 2020' was held in Telangana. The theme for the year 2020 was "Spot and encourage rural tech innovators". The three-day technical fest displayed 300 plus prototype working models created by 4000 rural ignited minds from the RGUKT varsity. RGUKT is the first institute in India to implement Block-chain Technology.



People witnessed technologies such as automatic switch for water, homemade electricity, smoke absorber, automatic-street lighting system, smart dustbins, zero budget farming, automatic irrigation and others.

4. Karnataka Government launched Janasevaka scheme

The Karnataka government launched a doorstep delivery scheme - Janasevaka scheme. The government also launched a website - janasevaka.karnataka.gov.in, to provide citizens with easy access to important government services.



The Janasevaka scheme will enable citizens of the state to get home delivery of 53 important government services including issuance of ration card, health card, senior citizen identity card, revenue khatas and marriage registration certificate. The service will cost a citizen Rs 115.

5. Telangana CM inaugurated JBS-MGBS corridor-II of Hyderabad Metro Rail

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao has inaugurated the Jubilee Bus Station (JBS) - Mahatma Gandhi Bus Station (MGBS) corridor -II of Hyderabad Metro Rail (HMR). The JBS - MGBS stretch is part of 14.78 km JBS - Falaknuama metro corridor. With the inaugural of this stretch, a total of 69.2 km metro corridor comes into operation.



Hyderabad Metro Rail is considered as the world's largest Public-Private Partnership (PPP) project in the metro sector. With the inaugural of corridor - II, Hyderabad Metro Rail is poised to be the second biggest metro network in the country after Delhi Metro.

6. MP government to use drones for mapping villages

The Madhya Pradesh state government has decided to use drones for mapping villages. Currently, land survey work is being done either manually or with the help of satellite images in the state.



55 thousand villages of the state have been selected for mapping. Now, the map of the population area will be made on a scale of 1: 500, which will give a clearer picture of the population area. The state has entered into an agreement in this regard with Survey of India, the country's national mapping agency.

7. West Bengal presented Rs. 2,55,677 crore budget for next fiscal

The West Bengal Finance Minister, Dr. Amit Mitra proposed 2,55,677 crore rupees budget for the next fiscal in the state assembly.



The Budget for 2020-21 shows a limited deficit of eight crore rupees. Dr. Mitra proposed Revenue Receipts of 1,79,398 crore rupees while receipts from public debt and loans around 80,000 crore rupees. The Budget puts emphasis on employment generation and economic development besides launching of several social sector schemes. A new incentive scheme for MSME named "Bangashree" and soft loan subsidy for the new income-generating project up to 2 lakh rupees was proposed.

8. Tripura organised Hornbill festival to raise awareness for bird conservation

Tripura government for the first time organised two-day Hornbill Festival to raise awareness for forest bird conservation "Hornbill" and to boost the livelihood of the people through tourism. The first-ever hornbill festival in Tripura was celebrated at Barmura Eco park. Indian hornbill is the large and colourful forest bird, which is displayed in the folklore of most of the tribes among the tribals in northeast India. The northeastern region has the highest diversity having five hornbill species.



Various tourists including foreigners visited the park as a new conservation centre for hornbills is the major attraction.

9. Lt. Governor of J&K to head reconstituted Science Technology and Innovation Council

Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu will head 24 members reconstituted Jammu and Kashmir Science Technology and Innovation Council (STIC). Members of the council include five representatives from Jammu and Kashmir government, 10 from universities and research and development institutions and eight from the Science and Technology Department of the Central Government. Chief Secretary J&K B V R Subrahmanyam has been nominated as the chairman of the six-member executive committee of STIC.



J&K STIC endeavors to harness the potential of science and technology as an instrument of socio-economic change. The council conducts science popularisation programmes and confers awards to scientists.

10. Uttarakhand's first Heli Services under UDAN flagged off

Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) operationalised the first ever helicopter services from Dehradun's Sahastradhara helipad to Gauchar, and Chinyalisaur under the Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) of Government of India. The inauguration of the heli routes in the Uttarakhand region is in line with the objective of the Ministry of Civil Aviation to enhance the aerial connectivity of the hilly areas in the country.



MoCA awarded the Sahastradhara-Gauchar-Chinyalisaur route to Heritage Aviation under the UDAN 2 bidding process. Heritage Aviation will operate helicopter services from Sahastradhara to Gauchar and Chinyalisaur twice daily.

11. Andhra Pradesh state launched the first Disha Police Station

Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy launched the first Disha Police Station in Rajamahendravaram city of Andhra Pradesh to provide speedy justice for female victims of Sexual assault (rape), Sexual harassment and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. A 'disha app' was also launched to help women in distress.



Disha station is first of the 18 police stations that are set to open up under the Disha Act which looks at the completion of an investigation of heinous crimes against women and children within seven days, trial in 14 working days and conviction in court to 21 days.

12. India's first underwater train lines inaugurated in Kolkata

Railway Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated the first phase of East-West Metro in Kolkata. It will be country's first underwater train lines where trains will play in tunnels under river Hooghly. The 4.88-km section of the metro corridor connects Sector V with Salt Lake Stadium.



The 16.6-km-long rapid transit system, connecting the twin cities of Kolkata and Howrah is expected to be completed by mid - 2022. More than 2,400 crore rupees have been spent for first phase of East-West Metro.

13. Uttarakhand CM inaugurated web portal of Badrinath-Kedarnath Mandir Samiti

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat launched the web portal of Shri Badrinath and Shri Kedarnath temple committee. He also released Shri Badrinath and Kedarnath temple committee's diary and calendar.



The web portal has been developed by Uttarkhand state National Informatics Centre. It will provide all the important information regarding Chardham yatra to the people from any part of the world. Badrinath and Kedarnath are one of the most visited pilgrimage centers of India, having recorded 10,60,000 visits.

14. Manipur CM launched 'Anganphou Hunba' programme

The Manipur state government has launched the 'Anganphou Hunba' (Early Paddy Crop) programme. The 260-crore rupee project is awaiting the Centre's approval. It will provide irrigation facilities by pumping ground water.



Manipur government has planned to provide irrigation water by the Minor Irrigation Department to places having adequate arable land and large number of farmers. The government has also taken up steps to produce sufficient quantity of fishes by providing loans to 800 selected fish farmers.

15. 'Hunar Haat' held at Delhi's India Gate Lawns

The 20th 'Hunar Haat' was held at India Gate Lawns, Rajpath, New Delhi. It was organised by the Ministry of Minority Affairs and the theme of the haat was 'Kaushal Ko Kaam'.



Master artisans, craftsmen, and culinary experts from across the country participated in the haat. Similar 'haats' are being organised across India as part of an effort to empower master artisans. The next Hunar Haat will be organised at Ranchi from 29 February to 8 March, and in Chandigarh from 13 to 22 March.

16. India's 1st glass floor suspension bridge to be built in Rishikesh

The Uttarakhand Government approved a glass-floor suspension bridge, to be built across the river Ganga in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand. It is first of its kind in the country to have a floor made of toughened transparent glass. The bridge is similar to the iconic Lakshman Jhula, almost 94 years old, which was closed in 2019 due to safety reasons.



Public Works Department has designed the bridge of 1.5m in width on both sides on 2.5m wide road.

17. Ground Water Act-2020 approved by UP Government

Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved Ground Water Act-2020 to improve falling ground water levels.

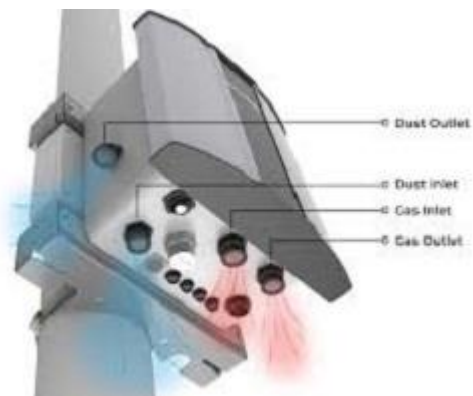
As per act-

- Registration made compulsory to install sub marine pumps.
- Provision of penalty and punishment who pollutes groundwater through boring pipes.
- Mandatory registration for boring companies.
- Government schools and hospitals to have compulsorily 'rainwater harvesting system'.
- Private buildings government map will be cleared only, if they have provision of rainwater harvesting system'.
- Waiver of fee for farmers and domestic users.



18. Largest air quality monitoring network of India to be installed in Mumbai

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) approved the setting up of an air quality monitoring network of 90 stations in Mumbai, Maharashtra. With this, Mumbai will be first city to have largest air quality monitoring network in India. BMC approved project cost at Rs₹9.5 crores to install 80 real-time air monitoring stations. At present, Delhi has 38 monitors.



Mumbai witnessed particulate matter concentration rise by 80% from 2007 to 2018.

Mumbai's PM10 concentration was considered as highest in 20 years in 2018 at 162 microgrammes per cubic metre ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$).

19. Arvind Kejriwal sworn in as Chief Minister of Delhi for third time

Aam Aadmi Party convenor Arvind Kejriwal took oath as Chief Minister of Delhi for the third consecutive time. Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Kejriwal.



Mr. Kejriwal's first term lasted only for 49 days and completed the full tenure in the second term. The Aam Aadmi Party swept the Delhi assembly polls with 62 out of 70 seats.

20. J&K, Ladakh to come under jurisdiction of CAT soon

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh will soon be covered by the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT). The CAT so far had jurisdiction only over central services issues in Jammu and Kashmir. Justice L. Narsimha Reddy is the Chairman of CAT.



An exclusive bench of the Central Administrative Tribunal will be set up in Jammu and Kashmir and till then the Chandigarh bench of the tribunal may attend to the service disputes and other cases from the Union territory.

21. Arunachal Pradesh government to form panel for Stilwell Road Development

Arunachal Pradesh state government will form a committee on Stilwell Road Development and would appeal Government of India for prioritising on restoration of the road. Both India and Myanmar would be mutually benefitted by the road. The re-opening of the Stilwell Road would also act as catalyst for cross border trade.



The Historic Ledo Road or Stilwell Road was constructed by the Allied Soldiers lead by America during the Second World War. The road links northeastern India with the Burma Road (Myanmar), and from Myanmar to China.

22. UP Budget 2020-21

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government presented a Rs. 5,12,860.72 crore budget for FY 2020-21 in the state assembly. The state government has made provisions worth Rs 10,967.87 crore for new schemes. Highlights:

- Rs. 2,000 crore for the Jewar Airport in Gautam Buddha Nagar.
- Rs. 180 crore for setting up a cultural centre in Varanasi and Rs. 200 crore for expansion and beautification of Kashi Vishwanath temple.
- Rs. 500-crore allocation for constructing an airport in Ayodhya.
- Rs. 2,000 crore for about 637 km long 'Ganga Expressway' from Meerut to Prayagraj.
- Rs. 783 crore for the improvement of education and basic infrastructure facilities.



23. Odisha budget 2020-21

Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari presented the annual budget of the Odisha state for 2020-21 with an outlay of 1.5 lakh crore rupees. He had presented a 1.39 lakh-crore rupees Budget last year.

Budget Highlights

- Expenditure for 2020-21 is estimated to be Rs 1,50,000 crore while Total receipts (excluding borrowings) to be Rs 1,24,550 crore.
- Fiscal deficit for the year 2020-21 is targeted at Rs 17,878 crore (3% of GDP).
- A Climate Budget has been introduced to provide an account of tracking climate public expenditure.
- A SAMRUDHI-Agriculture Policy 2020 has been proposed which is focused on farmers' well-being.



24. MP becomes first state to launch unified vehicle registration card

Madhya Pradesh has become the first state in the country to introduce the unified registration card and the second state to launch the unified driving license after Uttar Pradesh.

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) had issued the guidelines to bring uniformity in driving licenses and vehicle registration cards across the country in March last year. These cards are being issued in



compliance with these guidelines. The new cards will have more exhaustive information printed on both the sides of the cards. It will also bear a unique number recognised across the country.

25. Bihar state annual budget for 2020-21

The Bihar State annual budget for 2020-21 worth Rs 2,11,761 crore laid special emphasis on education, health and infrastructure. It has projected a fiscal deficit of Rs 20,374 crore, which is 2.97% of GSDP worth Rs 6,85,797 crore.



The government has earmarked Rs 21,264 crore (20.20%) for education, followed by Rs. 16,014 crore (15.21%) for rural development, Rs. 9,619 crore (9.14%) on rural works, Rs. 7,997 cr (7.6%) on social welfare, and Rs. 5,610 crore (5.33%) on health.

26. NABARD sanctioned over Rs. 400 cr. to boost infrastructure in J&K

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has sanctioned an amount of 400.64 crore rupees to UT of J&K during the current financial year for giving boost to the infrastructure in the rural areas. The funding is a part of the NABARD's 'Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) - Trench XXV'.



The Bank has sanctioned 209.87 crore rupees for construction of 82 rural roads and 03 bridges and 143.66 crore rupees has been sanctioned for implementation of 38 water supply schemes. The Bank also sanctioned an amount of 47.11 crore rupees towards improving the Animal and Sheep Husbandry sectors.

27. Rajasthan presents state budget for 2020-21

The Chief Minister, Mr. Ashok Gehlot, presented the Budget for Rajasthan for financial year 2020-21.



- Rs. 100 cr 'Nehru Baal Sanrakshan Kosh' to be established to prevent child labour and trafficking.
- Rs. 39,500 crore proposed for education.
- Rs. 100 crore of outlay for setting up of tourism development board
- The Gross State Domestic Product of Rajasthan for 2020-21 (at current prices) is projected to be Rs. 11,33,298 crore. This is an 11% increase over the revised estimate for 2019-20.
- Total expenditure for 2020-21 is estimated to be Rs. 2,25,731 crore, a 0.4% increase over the revised estimate of 2019-20.

28. World famous Goa carnival held in Panaji

The world-famous Goa Carnival was celebrated across Goa including the capital Panaji. The festival, which displays Goan art and culture, is celebrated with fun, frolic, pomp and splendor. The four day carnival is said to be one of the few most glamorous carnivals in Asia and also the only carnival celebration in India.



Goa carnival is a colourful and vibrant celebration. It is usually held in the month of either February or March. Goa Carnival was brought to India by the Portuguese settlers.

29. PM Modi inaugurated ‘Kashi Ek Roop Anek’ exhibition in Varanasi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 'Kashi Ek Roop Anek', a cultural arts and handicrafts exhibition in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. This exhibition displayed products from over 10,000 artisans from all over Uttar Pradesh. The state has established raw material banks, testing labs, common facility centres for artisans and weavers.



People witnessed launch of new scheme 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) in which one craft per district was identified. It was launched due to availability of more than 23 lakh artisans and weavers in Uttar Pradesh.

30. Kerala launched “Yodhavu” mobile app to combat drug menace

Kerala's Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan launched "Yodhavu" (Warrior) mobile app (application) at Kochi, Kerala. 'Yodhavu' (Warrior) is a mobile app through which public can inform police about drug abuse and its distribution. It was launched with an aim to curb the growing menace in the State. The unique feature of app is that the informer's identity could be kept secret.



A most modern cyberdomcyber crime police station was also inaugurated in Kochi, Kerala. The model of Kochi city police's new police complex being constructed at Marine Drive was also unveiled at the launch event.

31. First edition of Bharat-Bangla Paryatan Utsav commenced in Agartala

The 1st edition of the Bharat-Bangla Paryatan Utsav-Tourism festival started in Agartala, Tripura to promote tourism in Tripura. The festival was organised in remembrance of the contribution of Tripura in 1971 Bangladesh liberation war as well as to boost the tourism sector of Tripura.



The first-ever colourful Bharat-Bangla Paryatan Utsav registered massive gathering in the city. The artists from Tripura, Bangladesh and Kolkata enthralled the audience with their electrifying performances. Some of the tour operators and tourist guides were awarded in the programme.

32. Government of Haryana announced to open Atal Kisan – Majdoor canteens

Government of Haryana announced to open Atal Kisan – Majdoor canteens across the state. Haryana will also open sugar mills across the state to provide affordable and cheap meals to farmers and laborers at a concessional rate of 10 rupees per plate. These canteens have started functioning at five Market Committees namely, Karnal, Bhiwani, Nuh, Panchkula, Fatehabad Market Committee Mandi and at Karnal Co-operative Sugar Mill.



Haryana government will also provide free and concessional travel facility to 41 different categories of residents in the ordinary buses of Haryana Roadways.

33. Maharashtra passed bill proposing to make Marathi a compulsory subject

Maharashtra's Upper House has unanimously passed the Maharashtra Compulsory Teaching and Learning of Marathi Language in Schools Bill, 2020. The Bill proposes to make Marathi a compulsory subject in all schools across the state.



According to the legislation, schools found in non-compliance with the provisions of the bill would attract penalty of upto 1 lakh rupees. The bill covers all schools irrespective of the boards they are affiliated to.

Reports

1. India ranked 40th in Intellectual Property Index

India was ranked 40th out of 53 countries on a global intellectual property index. USA topped the index with an overall score of 42.66 points. UK, Sweden, France and Germany remained in the top five economies of index. India was appreciated in terms of scores when it comes to the protection of IP and copyright issues.



The GIPC Index consists of five key sets of indicators to map the national intellectual property environment for the surveyed countries.

2. TTCSP unveiled 2019 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report

Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) of the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania unveiled the 2019 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report. It ranked India's Observer Research Foundation (ORF) at 27th place among 176 global think tanks.



The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) of the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania conducts research on the role policy institutes play in governments and civil societies around the world.

3. IIMB ranked 3rd in the list of MOOCLab's Business School Rankings 2020

Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore (IIMB) was ranked 3rd in MOOCLab's Business School Rankings 2020 for its provision, design and delivery of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). IIM Bangalore has 43 open online courses available on the edX platform, as well as a professional certificate and 2 MicroMasters Programs. HEC Paris (France) topped the list followed by Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania (USA).



The 2020 edition of the rankings has surveyed 16 business schools across the world offering courses on the three leading MOOC platforms: Coursera, edX and FutureLearn.

4. NCRB unveiled report on women and child trafficking

A study by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) unveiled that highest incidence of children and women being trafficked were observed from the cities of Mumbai and Kolkata.



Highlights of report

- Maharashtra reported the maximum number in the case of missing women.
- Madhya Pradesh reported a maximum number of cases of missing children.
- Mumbai, Pune, and Thane are considered the most vulnerable.
- About 35% of the victims trafficked for forced labour.
- More than half of the victims of trafficking for forced labour were men.

5. “State of the World's Children Report 2019” of UNICEF

As per UNICEF's State of the World's Children Report 2019, the Under 5 Mortality Rate in India is 37 per 1,000 live births against Global average of 39 per 1,000 live births in 2018, which translates to more than 8 lakhs under 5 deaths in India. As per the Sample Registration System (SRS) 2010-13 report of Registrar General of India, major causes of child mortality in India are Prematurity & low birth weight (29.8%).



World
children
report by
UNICEF

Government of India has launched various programmes like POSHAN, PMMVY to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years.

6. Hindi ranked as 3rd most spoken language in the world

Hindi has been ranked as the 3rd most spoken language of the world in 2019 with 615 million speakers. The 22nd edition of the world language database Ethnologue stated English at the top of the list with 1,132 million speakers. Chinese Mandarin is at the second position with 1,117 million speakers.



Bangla has been ranked as the 7th most spoken language of the world. Ethnologue brings out an yearly database of living languages of the world, since its establishment in 1951. The current round of the database covers 7,111 living languages of the world.

7. Hurun Global Rich List 2020

Hurun released its Global Rich List for 2020. It has ranked 2,816 billionaires across the world. 34 new billionaires from India added into the list taking the total to 138. Mukesh Ambani is the top ranked Indian at ninth place with \$67 billion of networth.

RANK	NAME	WEALTH(US\$bn)	COMPANY
1	JEFF BEZOS	140	AMAZON
2	BERNARD ARNAULT	107	LVMH
3	BILL GATES	106	MICROSOFT
4	WARREN BUFFETT	102	BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY
5	MARK ZUCKERBERG	84	FACEBOOK
6	ARMANCIO OTEGA	81	ZARA
7	CARLOS SLIM HELU AND FAMILY	73	AMERICA MOVIL
8	SERGEY BRIN	68	GOOGLE
9	LARRY PAGE	67	GOOGLE
10	MUKESH AMBANI	67	RELIANCE

The top five in the list are:

Rank	Name	Networth	Company
1	Jeff Bezos	\$140 billion	Amazon
2	Bernard Arnault	\$107 billion	LVMH
3	Bill Gates	\$106 billion	Microsoft
4	Warren Buffett	\$102 billion	Berkshire Hathaway
5	Mark Zuckerberg	\$84 billion	Facebook

8. India ranked 77th on Sustainability Index

Lancet medical journal released by World Health Organization (WHO), UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) unveiled that India ranked 77th on a sustainability index that, takes into account per capita carbon emissions and ability of children in a nation to live healthy lives.



India was ranked at 131st on the Flourishing Index 2020 that, values the best chance at survival and well-being for children. Top performing countries on child flourishing measures and CO2 emissions were Albania, Armenia, Grenada, Jordan and Moldova. The Sustainability Index ranks countries on excess carbon emissions compared with the 2030 target.

9. India becomes world's 5th largest economy

According to a report published by a US-based think tank World Population Review, India emerged as the world's fifth-largest economy in the world with a GDP of \$2.94 trillion. The size of the UK economy is \$2.83 trillion and that of France is \$ 2.71 trillion.



In purchasing power parity (PPP) terms, India's GDP (PPP) is USD 10.51 trillion, exceeding that of Japan and Germany. Due to India's high population, India's GDP per capita is USD 2,170 (for comparison, the US is USD 62,794).

Resignations & Retirements

1. Maharashtra women's commission Chief Vijaya Rahatkar resigned

Maharashtra State Commission for Women Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar has tendered her resignation from the post. She submitted her resignation to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Ms. Rahatkar is the President of the BJP Mahila Morcha. She resigned against the backdrop of the Bombay High Court's observation regarding her continuance on the post despite the change in government in the state.



The Maharashtra State Commission for Women consists of the Chairperson, six non-official members, a Member-Secretary and the State Director General of Police as an ex-officio member.

2. LinkedIn's CEO Jeff Weiner stepped down

Jeff Weiner has stepped down as Chief Executive Officer of LinkedIn. He will assume the role of Executive Chairman at LinkedIn. Ryan Roslansky will join as the new CEO of the Microsoft Corp-backed company.



Weiner was hired by LinkedIn founder Reid Hoffman in 2008. Weiner with Roslansky helped increase the revenue of LinkedIn to more than \$7.5 billion from \$78 million. Weiner also assisted the company through its initial public offering and the acquisition by Microsoft for \$26 billion in 2016.

3. Pinelopi Koujianou has resigned from the World Bank as the Chief Economist

World Bank chief economist Pinelopi Koujianou Goldberg announced her resignation as the Chief Economist of the World Bank. Aart Kraay has been appointed as interim WB chief economist until the appointment of a new permanent chief economist. Goldberg took up her post at the end of April 2018. She served as first editor in chief of the American Economic Review and taught economics at Yale before joining the bank.



The World Bank is an international financial institution that provides loans and grants to the governments of poorer countries for the purpose of pursuing capital projects.

4. Pragyan Ojha announced retirement from international, 1st-class cricket

Indian left-arm spinner Pragyan Ojha announced retirement from international and first-class cricket with immediate effect. The 33-year-old last played for India in 2013 during Sachin Tendulkar's farewell Test against the West Indies in Mumbai.

In all, he played 24 Tests between 2009 and 2013 in which, he took 113 wickets. Ojha also has 21 wickets against his name in 18 ODIs. He also has 10 wickets in six T20Is.



5. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad resigned

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad announced his resignation over political issues. He also announced his resignation from being Chairman of Bersatu political party. He will act as an interim PM till next prime minister is selected for country.

Malaysia is a Southeast Asian country occupying parts of the Malay Peninsula and the island of Borneo. The head of state is the king, chosen from the hereditary rulers of the nine Malay states every five years.



6. Leo Varadkar resigned as Prime Minister of Ireland

Ireland's Indian-origin Prime Minister Leo Varadkar resigned from his post after defeat in a parliamentary vote. He will remain as interim leader until his successor has been appointed. Leo Eric served as the Leader of Fine Gael, and as Taoiseach and Minister for Defence in the Government of Ireland, since June 2017. He has also been a Teachta Dála (TD) for the Dublin West constituency since 2007.



Parties in the 160-seat chamber convened and nominated candidates to lead a new government but with none commanding a majority, the Dail was adjourned until March 5.

7. Maria Sharapova announced retirement from tennis

Maria Sharapova has announced her retirement from tennis with immediate effect. She had a glittering career that saw her complete a career Grand Slam, win 36 WTA titles, and spend 21 weeks as WTA World No.1.

Maria won her first Grand Slam at Wimbledon and became the third-youngest woman to win Wimbledon. Additionally, she won the 2004 WTA Tour Championships, the 2008 Fed Cup and a silver medal at the 2012 London Olympics. Sharapova finished her career having played in more than 800 matches.



1. US astronaut Christina Koch returned to Earth after record space station mission

NASA astronaut Christina Koch returned back to Earth after spending 328 days on the International Space Station (ISS). She arrived in space in March 2019 alongside European astronaut Luca Parmitano and Russian cosmonaut Alexander Skvortsov.



Koch broke the record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman, the record previously set by NASA astronaut, Peggy Whitson. During her time in space, Koch worked on a host of science experiments and performed spacewalks including the first ever performed by two women.

2. ISRO to prepare low-cost satellite launch vehicles

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) announced to prepare low-cost satellite launch vehicles costing around 30-35 crores each, which can put into orbit satellites weighing 500 kg. The first such launch from India is expected to take place by June 2020.



With these low cost satellites, ISRO will be able to cater to micro, mini and medium segments of the market, Haridas TV etc. ISRO has planned \$1,600 million for launch vehicles.

3. Indian government unveiled new vaccine to control classical swine fever

The government of India unveiled a new indigenously developed vaccine for controlling classical swine fever. CSF is a highly contagious fatal pig disease. Uttar Pradesh-based Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) - Indian Veterinary Research Institute developed the new vaccine.



Features of vaccine

- It gives immunity for two years as compared to 3 to 6 months protection under the currently used vaccines.
- It is much cheaper than previous one.
- The new vaccine will be a part of the government's One Health Initiative.

4. Astronomers discovered Ultramassive Galaxy XMM-2599 from early universe

The International team of astronomers led by scientists at the University of California, United States(US) discovered Ultramassive Galaxy XMM-2599 from early universe that grew rapidly in the universe's early days and then went quiet surprisingly fast. Ultramassive Galaxy XMM-2599 was formed by a mass of more than 300 billion suns, even before the universe was 2 billion years old.



XMM-2599 formed most of its stars in a huge frenzy when the universe was less than 1 billion years old, and then became inactive by the time, the universe was only 1.8 billion years old.

5. NASA planned to send probes to map poles of the sun

NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) of the United States and the ESA (European Space Agency) has planned to send space probes toward the Sun to take a unique look at its blazing poles. NASA's newly launched European spacecraft called as 'Solar Orbiter' will take the first photos of the sun's poles and probe its violent eruptions.



Solar orbiter can take images of the largest holes in its atmosphere and can take measurements of the mysterious forces that create space.

6. Pangolin identified as the host of Corona Virus in China

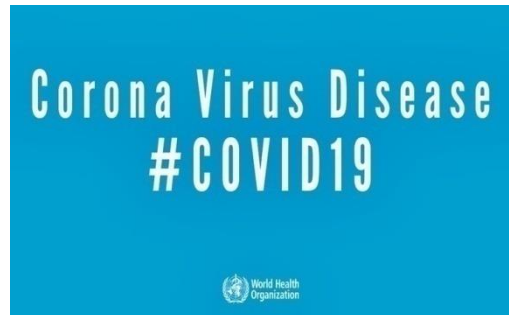
The pangolin was reported to be the most likely intermediate host of Corona Virus in China. Pangolin is the animal that passed the new virus to humans. Pangolins or scaly anteaters are mammals. They are considered to be the world's most trafficked non-human mammal. The deadly coronavirus outbreak in China spread from bats to humans through the illegal traffic of pangolins.



Coronaviruses (CoV) causes illness ranging from the common cold to more severe respiratory diseases. A novel coronavirus is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

7. COVID-2019 is official name for disease caused by new corona virus

According to the World Health Organization(WHO), the official name for the disease caused by the new corona virus is COVID-2019. The International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV) has named the new virus as "severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)".



The new name is taken from the words "corona", "virus" and "disease", with 2019 representing the year that it emerged (the outbreak was reported to the WHO on 31 December).

8. UK's start-up launched 1st big batch of satellites

The UK-based OneWeb company launched 34 satellites into orbit on a single Soyuz rocket, from Baikonur port, Kazakhstan so as to have the full network in operation by the end of 2021. The satellite batch will be dropped into one of 12 planes planned for the constellation. It was Arianespace's 50th Soyuz mission. Arianespace has planned to perform 19 more medium-lift Soyuz from three spaceports by 2021.



OneWeb start-up is creating a mega-constellation in the sky to deliver broadband internet to all corners of the globe.

9. Scientists discovered the nearest known planet "2MASS 1155-7919 b"

Scientists of Rochester Institute of Technology discovered the nearest known baby giant planet named as "2MASS 1155-7919 b". The planet is situated in the Epsilon Chamaeleontis Association, at 330 light-years from solar system. 2MASS 1155-7919 b is closer to Earth and orbits a star that is about 5 million years old.



The discovery of new planet will unveil how gas giants form. 2MASS 1155-7919 b appears like cool young object with 10 times the mass of Jupiter.

10. ISRO planned to launch 10 Earth Observation Satellites in 2020-21

The Indian Space Research Organisation has planned to launch 10 Earth Observation Satellites in 2020-21. It includes new categories such as the first Geo Imaging Satellite, GISAT-1 along with three communication satellites and two navigation satellites. The upcoming EO satellites include radar imaging satellites RISAT-2BR2, RISAT-1A and 2A; Oceansat-3 and Resourcesat-3/3S.



EO satellites are used for military, for keeping an eye on the borders, land and agriculture watch, provides all-weather report and 24-hour information to security agencies.

1. Indian boxers bagged six gold at Golden Girl Championship in Sweden

India's junior and youth won 14 medals, including six golds, the overall championship trophy and the 'Best Boxer' award at the Golden Girl Championship in Boras, Sweden. While the junior women's team clinched five golds, three silvers and one bronze medal, the youth team secured a single gold and four bronze medals.

Haryana's Prachi Dhankar (50 kilogram), playing in the junior category, won the 'Best Boxer' award. A total of 75 teams participated in the championship.



2. Australian Open 2020

Novak Djokovic won his record 8th Men's singles title in Australian Open. He beat Dominic Thiem of Austria. It was 17th Grand Slam title for Novak. The other winners are:

- Women's Singles: Sofia Kenin (USA) against Garbine Muguruza (Spain)
- Mixed Doubles: Barbora Krejckova (Czech Republic) & Nikola Pietrangeli (Croatia)
- Men's Doubles: Rajeev Ram (United States of America) & Joe Salisbury (United Kingdom)
- Women's Doubles: Timea Babos (Hungary) & Kristina Mladenovic (France)



3. Goa 2020 National Games unveiled 'Rubigula' as official mascot

'Rubigula', Flame-Throated Bulbul was unveiled as the official mascot for the Goa 2020 National Games in Panaji, Goa. The 36th edition of the National Games will be hosted in Goa from 20th October to 4th November, 2020. The event will witness participation by 36 states and union territories, 12,000 athletes, officials and will host 37 sports disciplines across 24 venues in Goa.

The Flame-Throated Bulbul is the state bird of Goa. The National Games comprises various disciplines in which sportsmen from the different states of India participate against each other.



4. Rani Rampal becomes first ever hockey player to win World Games Athlete of the Year' award

Indian women's team captain Rani Rampal became the first-ever hockey player to win the prestigious 'World Games Athlete of the Year' award. Rani got 1,99,477 votes. Under Rani's leadership, the Indian women's team qualified for just the third Olympic Games in its history.

India won the FIH Series Finals in 2019 and Rani was named Player of the Tournament. Rani was recently named among the Padma Shri awardees.



5. Deepa Malik became President of Paralympic Committee of India

Para-athlete and India's lone woman Paralympic medallist Deepa Malik was elected as President of Paralympic Committee of India. Other elected members include Gursharan Singh as secretary general, Kavender Chaudhury and Shashi Ranjan Prasad Singh as vice presidents, M Mahadeva as treasurer, and Nale Nandkishor Baburao and Kantilal Parmar as joint secretaries.



Deepa Malik is the first Indian woman to win a medal in Paralympic Games and won a Silver medal at the 2016 Summer Paralympics in the shot put. Paralympic Committee of India is responsible for selecting athletes to represent India at the Paralympic Games.

6. Weightlifter Sambo Lapung won gold with national record of 188kg

Weightlifter Sambo Lapung from Arunachal Pradesh created a new record of 188 kg in clean and jerk event in the National Weightlifting Championships held in Kolkata. Earlier, the national record of clean and jerk of 187kg was with Rakhi Halder when she won the gold medal in the 64kg event.

Mirabai Chanu created national record for lifting 87 kg in snatch and 115 kg in clean and jerk, a total of 203 kg.



7. Sourav Ganguly to be Indian Team's Goodwill Ambassador for Tokyo Olympics

BCCI President Sourav Ganguly was invited as Goodwill Ambassador of the Indian contingent at the Tokyo Olympics. It is only the second time that the Indian contingent will have a 'goodwill ambassador.'

The 2020 Summer Olympics, officially known as the Games of the XXXII Olympiad and commonly known as Tokyo 2020 or the Recovery Olympics, is an upcoming international multi-sport event. The Tokyo Olympic Games will be held from July 24 to August 9.



8. Mizoram won Junior National Football Championship for Dr. BC Roy Trophy

Mizoram has won the final of the Junior National Football Championship for Dr. BC Roy Trophy at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Shillong. Mizoram beat Punjab 5-4 on penalties as both teams finished 1-1 in regulation and extra time.

The BC Roy Trophy is an Indian football tournament for players under 19 years of age. The competition is held every year between the under-19 teams representing states of India.



9. SAI and Hockey India launch 7 high performance hockey centres

Sports Authority of India and Hockey India announced the establishment of the high performance hockey centres in seven different locations across India. The move was aimed at grooming junior and sub-Junior players in view of 2024 and 2028 Olympic Games.

These seven high performance hockey centres will be set-up under the Khelo India scheme. While the National Hockey Academy at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, SAI Sundergarh, Odisha, SAI UDMCC, Bhopal and SAI, Bengaluru will be active within the next three months, the remaining three centres will be developed over the next 12 months.



10. Bangladesh won maiden Under-19 World Cup

Bangladesh beat India by three wickets to win maiden ICC U-19 World Cup cricket title in South Africa. Bangladeshi skipper Akbar Ali was declared the Player of the Match.

Yashasvi Jaiswal of India was awarded the Player of the tournament. Ravi Bishnoi of India was the highest wicket-taker with 17 wickets in the tournament. Yashasvi Jaiswal scored the most runs with 400 runs from 6 innings. India had won the 2018 edition of the tournament.



11. Ladakh Scouts won Khelo India Ice Hockey Championship

The Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre (LSRC) Red won the first Men's section Khelo India Ice Hockey tournament 2020. They defeated Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) team by 3-2 in the finals. Around 6,800 athletes across 37 teams participated in the 20 sports event.



Khelo India School Games are the national level multidisciplinary grassroot games in India. It is an initiative to strengthen the sports ecosystem by encouraging mass participation and promotion of excellence. The objective of Khelo India is to promote the importance of sports and fitness in our life.

12. Aditya Mehta won National Snooker Championship

Ace cueist Aditya Mehta won the National Snooker championship held at Pune. He defeated multiple-time world champion Pankaj Advani by 6-2 to win the National Snooker Championship. Prior to this, he has won the gold medal at the men's event at the 2013 World Games and team event at the 2009 Asian Games.



Karnataka's Vidya Pillai won women's snooker finals at National Snooker championship defeating Ameer Kamani of Madhya Pradesh by 3-2.

13. Bhawna Jat qualifies for 2020 Olympics

Bhawna Jat of Rajasthan qualified for the 2020 Olympics after setting a new national record in the 20-kilometer race walk category at the 7th National Open Race Walking Championships in Ranchi. It was her seventh National Pedestrian Championship.



Bhawna clocked 1hour 29 minutes and 54 seconds, well inside the Olympic qualification time of 1hour 31minute 00 seconds. The 2020 Olympics will be held in Tokyo from 24th July to the 9th of August this year.

14. India's Vivek Prasad, Lalremsiami won FIH Rising Star awards

India forward Lalremsiami has been named as the 2019 FIH Women's Rising Star of the Year by the International Hockey Federation. She took the prize ahead of Argentina's Julieta Jankunas and Frederique Matla of the Netherlands.



Indian men's hockey team's Vivek Sagar Prasad was announced the winner of 2019 FIH Men's Rising Star of the Year by the International Hockey Federation. He beat Argentina's Maico Casella and Blake Govers of Australia.

15. Kohli retains top spot in ICC ODI rankings

Virat Kohli continued to hold on to the top spot in the batting chart of the latest ICC ODI rankings while Rohit Sharma also maintained the second position.

ICC ODI RANKINGS - BATTING		
RANK	PLAYER	RATING
1	VIRAT KOHLI	869
2	ROHIT SHARMA	855
3	BABAR AZAM	829
4	ROSS TAYLOR	828
5	FAF DU PLESSIS	803
6	DAVID WARNER	796
7	QUINTON DE KOCK	782
8	KANE WILLIAMSON	773
9	JOE ROOT	770
10	AARON FINCH	769

Afghanistan's Mohammad Nabi emerged as the new world number one all-rounder. India's Ravindra Jadeja rose three spots to seventh. India pacer Jasprit Bumrah dropped to second place while Trent Boult was top ranked bowler in the list. England is the top ranked team in the ODI rankings followed by India at second and New Zealand at third.

the ODI rankings followed by India at second and New Zealand at third.

16. Joshna Chinappa clinched 77th Senior National Squash Championship

India's squash ace Joshna Chinappa has clinched 77th Senior National Championship in woman's category at the ISA courts in Chennai. With the win, she claimed her 18th title in the career. Saurav Ghosal won in Men's category bagging 13th title to his kitty.

Chinappa defeated Tanvi Khanna, 8-11, 11-6, 11-4, 11-7 in to add yet another national title to her record while Ghosal defeated second seed Abhishek Pradhan 11-6, 11-5, 11-6 to win the title.



17. Indian hockey captain Manpreet Singh named Player of the Year 2019 by IHF

The Indian men's hockey team captain Manpreet Singh was named Player of the Year for 2019 by the International Hockey Federation. Manpreet, a midfielder, became the first Indian to win the accolade, since the awards were introduced in 1999.

Manpreet beat competition from Belgium's Arthur van Dorren and Lucas Villa of Argentina, who came second and third respectively. Manpreet Singh made his debut in the Indian National Hockey Team in 2011. Since then, he has played over 260 matches for the national team.



18. Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre Red won 1st Khelo India Ice Hockey tournament

The Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre (LSRC) Red won the first Men's section Khelo India Ice Hockey tournament 2020. They defeated Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) team 3-2 in the final. 13 teams participated in the Khelo India Ice Hockey Championship.

Khelo India is an initiative taken by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to aware people about the importance of sports and fitness. The ultimate goal of the program is to develop India as a sporting nation and to promote sports in the country.



19. Australia presented with ICC Women’s Championship trophy

Australia was presented with the ICC Women's Championship trophy by England's World Cup champion Holly Colvin, which they have retained by taking a winning lead in the eight-team ODI competition played from 2017 to 2020. Captain Meg Lanning received the trophy.



Australia was at the top of the points table with 34 points from 18 matches. England finished with 29 points from 21 matches while South Africa finished 22 from 18.

20. Armand Duplantis broke Pole Vault world record

The son of a former elite American pole vaulter, Armand Duplantis broke his own pole vault world record by clearing 6.18m at the Indoor Grand Prix in Glasgow. Prior to this record, he cleared 6.17 meters in the pole vault to set a new world record followed by breaking his own world record with a 6.18 meter vault.



Armand "Mondo" Duplantis won gold as a 15-year-old in the boys' pole vault at the 2015 World Youth Championships and holds a number of age group world bests.

21. 13th edition of ESPN Cricinfo Awards 2019 announced

ESPN Cricinfo announced the 13th edition of the Annual ESPNcricinfo Awards 2019. The awards were presented under 12 categories.

Category	Winner
Captain of the year	Eoin Joseph Gerard Morgan (Ireland)
Debutant of the year	Jofra Archer (England)
ODI batting performance of the year	Ben Stokes (England)
ODI bowling performance of the year	Matt Henry (New Zealand)
Women’s batting performance of the year	Meg Lanning (Australia)
Women’s bowling performance of the year	Ellyse Perry (Australia)

22. Robin Singh appointed as UAE’s director of cricket

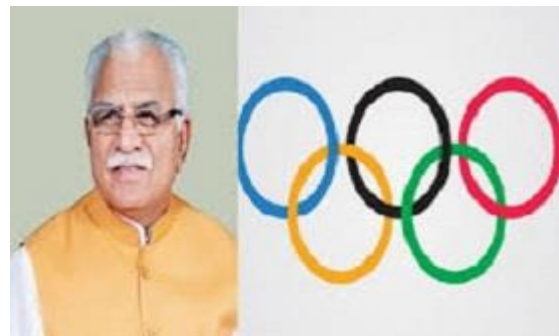
Former India all-rounder Robin Singh was appointed director of cricket of the United Arab Emirates by Emirates Cricket Board after the dismissal of head coach Douglas Robert Brown. Robin Singh has played 1 test and 136 ODIs (One Day International) between 1989 & 2001. He served as the coach of Hong Kong and the USA. He coached the Deccan Chargers and Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League.



United Arab Emirates Cricket Board is the official governing body of the sport of cricket in United Arab Emirates.

23. Haryana government announced Rs. six crore to those winning gold medals at Olympics

Haryana government has decided to give 6 crore rupees to players of the state that bag gold medals at the Olympic Games. The state government will also give 3 crore rupees to those winning gold medals at Asian Games and 1.5 crore rupees to the winners of yellow metal at Commonwealth Games.



An amount of 15 lakh rupees will be given to each player participating in the Olympic Games so that the players can make the state, as well as the country, proud.

24. Latest ICC T20 Rankings

Babar Azam of Pakistan is number one ranked batsman with 879 points followed by Lokesh Rahul with 823 points and Aaron Finch at third with 820 points. Rashid Khan of Afghanistan is top ranked bowler followed by his teammate Mujeeb Ur Rahman at second and Adam Zampa of Australia at third. Mohammad Nabi of Afghanistan leads the chart of all-rounder rankings.

RANK	TEAM	RATING
1	PAKISTAN	138
2	INDIA	126
3	ENGLAND	119
4	AUSTRALIA	117
5	SOUTH AFRICA	114
6	NEW ZEALAND	112
7	WEST INDIES	101
8	AFGHANISTAN	92
9	SR LANKA	83
10	BANGLADESH	77

Among the teams, Pakistan is the top ranked nation followed by Australia and England in the top three respectively. India is ranked fourth with South Africa at fifth.

25. Koneru Humpy won Cairns Cup Chess Tournament in US

World rapid champion Koneru Humpy won the Cairns Cup Chess Tournament at St Louis in USA. She ended with six points ahead of reigning champion Zu Wezun who finished with 5.5 points.



With this win, Humpy would be gaining five ELO rating points, the basis for international rankings and moving to no.2 in the world list. Humpy was crowned as the world champion in the last week of December 2019.

26. India to host Men's Hockey Junior World Cup in 2021

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced that India will host the Junior Men's World Cup 2021. India had earlier hosted the event in 2016 as well, becoming the first host nation to lift the trophy defeating Belgium 2-1 in the final.



India has already been named as the host for the 2023 Men's World Cup after the 2018 edition. The FIH also announced that the next women's Junior World Cup would be held for the first time ever in Africa, naming Potchefstroom, South Africa, as the host.

27. NADA bans javelin thrower Amit Dahiya for four years

National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) has banned javelin thrower Amit Dahiya for four years for evading sample collection and trying to cheat officials during the 2nd National Javelin Throw Open Championship 2019 held at SAI Centre in Sonipat.



NADA had issued the charge of notice to Dahiya on July 16 for violating rule 2.3 of the NADA. The doping agency presented the case to the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (ADDP) on January 9 where, the athlete's justification was found to be unsatisfactory.

28. Laureus World Sports Awards 2020

- Best Sporting Moment: Sachin Tendulkar being carried on the shoulders of his teammates following the 2011 World Cup victory
- Sportsman of the Year: Lionel Messi and Lewis Hamilton. Messi became the first footballer to win the World Sportsman of the Year award.
- Sportswoman of the Year: 22-year-old United States gymnast Simone Biles
- Comeback of the Year: Sophia Floersch
- Team of the Year: South Africa Men's Rugby Team
- Breakthrough of the Year: Egan Bernal
- Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability Award: Oksana Masters
- Lifetime Achievement Award: German basketball legend Dirk Nowitzki



29. AIFF received 'Grassroots Charter Bronze Level' membership of AFC

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has received the "Grassroots Charter Bronze Level" membership of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). This declaration accords AIFF the right to promote its grassroots events and activities with the support and recognition of the AFC in accordance with the applicable terms of the AFC Grassroots Charter.



Back in 2014, AIFF received President Recognition Award for Grassroots Football alongside Philippines and Tajikistan. Furthermore, in 2013, AIFF had achieved a podium finish for their work at the Grassroot levels along with Japan and Vietnam.

30. PM Modi inaugurated first-ever Khelo India University Games at Cuttack

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first-ever Khelo India University Games at Cuttack in Odisha. With this inauguration, India joined the league of nations where University Games are organised. It was held at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) campus with more than 4,000 athletes from 176 universities from across the nation participated in the games.



The 2020 edition included Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Fencing, Football, Hockey, Judo, Kabaddi, Rugby, Swimming, Table Tennis, Volleyball, Tennis, Weightlifting and Wrestling.

31. Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022 to be held in Chandigarh

The events of the shooting and archery as part of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games - 2022 will be held in Chandigarh. The Commonwealth Games Federation announced that the competitions would take place in Chandigarh in January 2021, with the main Games in Birmingham starting in July.



Birmingham decided not to include shooting or archery in its sports programme for 2022. However, after resistance from India, the Commonwealth archery and shooting championships was moved to Chandigarh.

32. ICC banned Oman player Yousuf Abdulrahim Al Balushi from all forms of cricket for 7 years

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has banned Oman player Yousuf Abdulrahim Al Balushi from all forms of cricket for seven years for his involvement in trying to fix matches. The charges are all related to the ICC men's T20 World Cup Qualifiers 2019 held in the United Arab Emirates.



Al Balushi breached Article 2.1.1 of the Anti-Corruption Code - being party to an agreement or effort to fix or contrive in any way the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of matches.

33. Ross Taylor becomes first player in the world to play 100 matches in all three formats

Veteran New Zealand batsman Ross Taylor became the first player in the world to play 100 matches in all three formats of cricket. The landmark achievement came as he took the field against India in the first Test at Basin Reserve in Wellington.



The 35-year-old played his 100th T20 International against India. He has also played 231 ODIs for New Zealand. The right-handed batsman is already New Zealand's leading run-scorer in Test and ODI.

34. ESPN India Awards 2019

Sr. No.	Award	Name Winner
1	Sportsperson of the Year (Female)	PV Sindhu (Badminton)
2	Sportsperson of the Year (Male)	Saurabh Chaudhary (Pistol shooter)
3	Emerging Sportsperson of the Year	Deepak Punia (Freestyle wrestler)
4	Coach of the Year	Pullela Gopichand (Badminton)
5	Team of the Year	Manu Bhaker-Saurabh Chaudhary (10m air pistol)
6	Lifetime Achievement award	Balbir Singh Sr. (Hockey)
7	Comeback of the Year	Koneru Humpy (Chess player)
8	Differently-abled Athlete of the Year	Manasi Joshi (Badminton)
9	Moment of the Year	PV Sindhu's World Championships final win
10	The Courage award	Dutee Chand (Athlete)

35. Asian Wrestling Championships 2020

The 2020 Asian Wrestling Championships was held at the KD Jadhav Indoor Stadium in Indira Gandhi Arena, New Delhi from February 18 – 23, 2020. Japan topped the medal tally with 16 medals (8 Gold, 4 Silver, 4 Bronze). While India finished 3rd rank with 20 medals (5 Gold, 6 Silver, 9 Bronze).



Iran was second in the medal's tally with 7 Gold, 3 Silver and 7 Bronze. The 2019 Asian Wrestling Championships was held in Xi'an, China from April 23 – April 28, 2019, where Iran clinched top spot in Medal tally.

36. India to host AFC Women's Asian Cup in 2022

The Women's Committee of the Asian Football Confederation awarded the hosting rights of the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 to India. The other two bidders were Chinese Taipei and Uzbekistan. The venues proposed by India – D. Y. Patil Stadium, Trans Stadia Arena and Fatorda Stadium – are also being used in the FIFA tournaments.



India is also to host the FIFA Women's U-17 World Cup in November 2020. India also hosted the AFC U-16 Championships in 2016 and the FIFA U-17 World Cup in 2017.

37. FIFA U-17 Women's Football World Cup to be hosted in 5 cities in November

The FIFA Under-17 Women's Football World Cup which kicks off on 2nd of November 2020, will be held in five cities including Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Kolkata and Navi Mumbai. The finals of the tournament will be played on 21st of November at Navi Mumbai.



U-17 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP
INDIA 2020

The cities will play host to 16 teams which will compete across 32 matches to lift the coveted title. The official slogan of the tournament is - Kick Off The Dream.

38. 'United by Emotion' chosen as Tokyo 2020 Olympics motto

'United by Emotion' was revealed as the motto for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics. The motto expresses the power of sport to bring together people from diverse backgrounds of every kind and allow them to connect and celebrate in a way that reaches beyond their differences.



"United by Emotion" expresses the hope that the spectators, volunteers and athletes from over 200 National Olympic Committees and the Refugee Olympic Team gathering in Tokyo. Tokyo 2020 will host the XXXII Olympic Summer Games from Jul 24 - Aug 9.

39. FC Goa became first Indian team to qualify for AFC Champions League

FC Goa scripted history as the club became the first Indian team to qualify for the group stages of the AFC Champions League. FC Goa sealed the top spot in the Indian Super League (ISL 2019-20) rankings beating Jamshedpur FC 5-0 in an Indian Super League match. Ferran Corominas, Hugo Boumous, Jackichand Singh and Mourtada Fall registered top goals for Goa.



AFC Champions League is viewed as Asia's top club competition. AFC is an annual continental club football competition organised by the Asian Football Confederation.

40. D Gukesh bagged 34th Cannes Open in France

India's Grandmaster D Gukesh won the 34th Cannes Open in France. Gukesh defeated Harutyun Bargseghyan of France in 50 moves to win the chess tournament. India's Siva Mahadevan ensured 10th place with six points.



Prior to this tournament, Gukesh won the Hillerod 110th Anniversary Open event in Denmark and became world's second youngest Grandmaster ever in 2019. Gukesh has not only won two open events, but also pumped up his rating to 2565. Cannes Open is a chess competition.

41. Russia to host AIBA World Cup 2020

Russia will host the International Boxing Association (AIBA) Team World Cup 2020. With this, Russia became first country to host the new format of AIBA Team World Cup in 2020. The tournament will be coinciding with the 75th anniversary of the victory in World War II under the motto "Boxing for peace".



World Cup was held before from 1979 to 1998 and also in period 2002-2006 as a team event. The last tournament was organised in Moscow in 2008, when Cuban team celebrated the victory.

Union Budget 2020-2021

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget structured on the overall theme of "Ease of Living". Further, three prominent themes of the budget are:-

- A. Aspirational India: Better standards of living with access to health, education and better jobs for all sections of the society.
- B. Economic Development for all: "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas".
- C. Caring Society: Both humane and compassionate.

Agriculture, Irrigation and Rural Development

1. Rs. 15 lakh crore target set for the year 2020-21.
2. PM-KISAN beneficiaries to be covered under the KCC scheme.
3. Rs. 1 lakh crore fisheries' exports to be achieved by 2024-25.
4. 200 lakh tonnes fish production targeted by 2022-23.
5. 3477 Sagar Mitras and 500 Fish Farmer Producer Organisations to involve youth in fisheries extension.
6. Kisan Rail to be setup by Indian Railways through PPP to build a seamless national cold supply chain for perishables.
7. Krishi Udaan to be launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
8. One-Product One-District for better marketing and export in the Horticulture sector.
9. Jaivik Kheti Portal – online national organic products market to be strengthened.
10. PM – KUSUM to be expanded.
11. Financing on Negotiable Warehousing Receipts (e-NWR) to be integrated with e-NAM.
12. Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana – 0.5 crore households mobilised with 58 lakh SHGs for poverty alleviation.
13. In Livestock, doubling of milk production capacity, and increase in artificial insemination sought.

Wellness, Water and Sanitation

1. Jan Aushadhi Kendra Scheme to offer 2000 medicines and 300 surgicals in all districts by 2024.
2. TB Harega Desh Jeetega campaign launched - commitment to end Tuberculosis by 2025.
3. Commitment to ODF - Plus in order to sustain ODF behaviour.
4. Rs. 69,000 crore allocated for overall Healthcare sector.

Education and Skills

1. New Education Policy to be announced soon.
2. National Police University and National Forensic Science University proposed for policing science, forensic science, and cyber-forensics.
3. Up to 1-year internship to fresh engineers to be provided by Urban Local Bodies.
4. Ind-SAT proposed for Asian and African countries as a part of Study in India program.
5. Rs. 99,300 crore for education sector and Rs. 3,000 crore for skill development in 2020-21 is allotted.

Industry, Commerce and Investment

1. Investment Clearance Cell proposed to be setup.
2. National Technical Textiles Mission to be setup to position India as a global leader in technical textile.
3. New scheme NIRVIK to be launched to achieve higher export credit disbursement. All Ministries to issue quality standard orders as per PM's vision of "Zero Defect-Zero Effect" manufacturing.
4. Rs.27,300 crore allocated for 2020-21 for development and promotion of Industry and Commerce.

Infrastructure

1. National Infrastructure Pipeline - More than 6,500 projects across sectors, to be classified as per their size and stage of development.
2. A National Logistics Policy to be released soon.
3. National Skill Development Agency to give special thrust to infrastructure - focused skill development opportunities.
4. Rs.100 lakh crore to be invested on infrastructure over the next 5 years.

Power

1. Expansion of national gas grid from the present 16,200 km to 27,000 km proposed.
2. Rs.22,000 crore proposed for power and renewable energy sector in 2020-21.

New Economy

1. Policy to enable private sector to build Data Centre parks throughout the country.
2. Rs.6,000 crore proposed for Bharat net programme in 2020-21.
3. Mapping of India's genetic landscape - Two new national level Science Schemes to be initiated to create a comprehensive database.
4. Knowledge Translation Clusters to be set up across different technology sectors including new and emerging areas.
5. Rs.8,000 crore proposed over five years for National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications.

Financial Sector

1. Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) permitted to increase Deposit Insurance Coverage to Rs. 5 lakh from Rs.1 lakh per depositor.
2. Co-operative Banks to be strengthened by amending Banking Regulation Act.
3. NBFCs eligibility limit for debt recovery reduced from: Rs. 500 crore to Rs. 100 crore asset size, Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 50 lakh loan size.
4. Government to sell its balance holding in IDBI Bank to private, retail and institutional investors through the stock exchange.

Financial Market

1. FPI limit in corporate bonds increased to 15% from 9% of its outstanding stock.
2. Debt Based Exchange Traded Fund expanded by a new Debt-ETF consisting primarily of Government Securities.
3. An International Bullion exchange(s) to be set up as an additional option for trade by global market participants with the approval of regulator.
4. Government to sell a part of its holding in LIC by way of Initial Public Offer (IPO).
5. For year 2020-21:Nominal growth of GDP estimated at 10%.

- Fiscal deficit of 3.8% estimated in RE 2019-20 and 3.5% for BE 2020-21.

Tax

- Around 70 of the existing exemptions and deductions (more than 100) to be removed in the new simplified regime.
- Corporate Tax- Tax rate of 15% extended to new electricity generation companies.
- Dividend Distribution Tax - DDT removed making India a more attractive investment destination.
- Start-ups - Start-ups with turnover upto Rs. 100 crore to enjoy 100% deduction for 3 consecutive assessment years out of 10 years.
- MSMEs - Turnover threshold for audit increased to Rs. 5 crore from Rs. 1 crore for businesses carrying out less than 5% business transactions in cash in order to boost less cash economy.
- Co-operative societies exempted from Alternate Minimum Tax (AMT) just like Companies are exempted from the Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT).
- Affordable Housing - Additional deduction up to Rs. 1.5 lakhs for interest paid on loans taken for an affordable house extended till 31st March, 2021.
- Income Tax Slabs for individuals below 60 years of age under new tax regime – Applicable to FY 2020-21 (AY 2021-22). The tax calculated on the basis of such rates will be subject to health and education cess of 4%. Any individual opting to be taxed under the new tax regime from FY 2020-21 onwards will have to give up certain exemptions and deductions.

Income Tax Slab	Tax Rate
Up to Rs 2.5 lakh	NIL
Rs 2.5 lakh to Rs 5 lakh	5%
Rs 5 lakh to Rs 7.5 lakh	10%
Rs 7.5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh	15%
Rs 10 lakh to Rs 12.5 lakh	20%
Rs 12.5 lakh to Rs 15 lakh	25%
Rs 15 lakh and above	30%

Highlights of Economic Survey

The Economic Survey 2019-20 was prepared by Chief Economic Advisor Krishnamurthy Subramanian and Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Economic Survey 2019-20 in the Parliament.

1. GDP growth pegged at 6 - 6.5% in the fiscal year starting April 1, up from 5% in current fiscal year.
2. Fiscal deficit target for current fiscal may need to be relaxed to revive growth.
3. Uptick in growth projected in second half of current fiscal based on 10 factors including higher FDI flows, build up of demand pressure, positive GST revenue growth.
4. Survey asks government to deliver expeditiously on reforms to revive growth.
5. Ethical wealth creation key to India becoming \$5 trillion economy by 2025.
6. Share of formal employment increased from 17.9% in 2011 - 12 to 22.8% in 2017-18 reflecting formalisation in the economy.
7. Theme of Survey is wealth creation, promotion of pro-business policies, strengthening of trust in the economy.
8. To achieve GDP of \$5 trillion by 2024 - 25, India needs to spend about \$1.4 trillion over these years on infrastructure.
9. 2.62 crore new jobs created in rural, urban areas between 2011 - 12 and 2017 - 18 among regular wage/salaried employees.
10. 8% increase in regular employment of women in 2017 - 18 over 2011 - 12.
11. Excessive government intervention in markets, especially when the market can do the job of enhancing citizens welfare perfectly well, stifles economic freedom.
12. Debt waivers disrupt the credit culture, reduces formal credit to same farmers.
13. Suggests government to systematically examine areas where it needlessly intervenes and undermines markets.
14. Calls for improving governance in public sector banks, more disclosures to build trust.
15. Calls for measures to make it easier to start new business, register property, pay taxes, enforce contracts.
16. Easing of crude prices lowers current account deficit; imports contract more sharply than exports in first half of current fiscal.
17. Declining inflation from 3.2% in April 2019 to 2.6% in December 2019, reflecting weakening demand pressure in the economy.
18. GST collections grew by 4.1% for the centre during April-November 2019.