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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (PIB) IAS UPSC – 26th October to 31st October – 2020

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Press Information Bureau (PIB) IAS UPSC – 26th to 31st October, 2020

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GS-1

Newly identified tectonically active zone in Himalayas could alter earthquake study & predictions

(Topic:)

The suture zone of the Himalayas or the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ) in the Ladakh region where Indian and Asian Plates are joined has been found to be tectonically active, as against current understanding that it is a locked zone. This could have major implications in terms of earthquake study, prediction, understanding the seismic structure of the mountain chains well as its evolution.

A group of Scientists have found through observations and detailed mapping of geological features that the suture zone of Himalaya that was conventionally thought to be locked is tectonically active. They carried out the mapping of the remote regions of Ladakh that forms the most hinterland part of the Himalaya. The study was published recently in the journal 'Technophysic'.

The geologists observed that sedimentary beds are tilted and thrust broken, the rivers are associated with uplifted terraces, and the bedrock shows brittle deformation that occurred at much shallower depths. These deformed geological features were then dated in the laboratory at Dehradun using a technique called Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) (method for carrying Luminescence dating of geological sediments) and data of seismicity and denudation rate reviewed. The combination of field and lab data suggested the region of the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ) has been neo-tectonically active since the last 78000 – 58000 years and a recent earthquake in 2010 of low magnitude 4.0 near the village of Upshi that occurred due to a thrust rupture.

Himalaya were known to be made up of north dipping thrusts like the Main Central Thrust (MCT), the Main Boundary Thrust (MBT), and the Main Frontal Thrust (MFT). As per the established models, all of these thrusts except MFT are locked, and overall deformation in Himalaya is being accommodated only along with the MFT. The new findings, which suggest a more remote fault at the suture zone being neo-tectonically active, could call for a serious relook into the existing evolutionary models using new techniques and a larger geological database.

GS-2

Basic Exchange And Cooperation Agreement (BECA) signed between India and USA

(Topic: International Relations)

In news

India and the United States signed the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) recently.

Key takeaways

- BECA, the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) and the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) which were signed earlier form foundational pacts for deep military cooperation between the two countries.
- BECA will help India get real-time access to American geospatial intelligence.
- The access will enhance the accuracy of automated systems and weapons like missiles and armed drones.

- The sharing of information on maps and satellite images will help India access topographical and aeronautical data, and advanced products that will aid in navigation and targeting.
- This could also be key to Air Force-to-Air Force cooperation between India and the US.

Eighteen more individuals declared as terrorists under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967

(Topic: Government schemes; Security and related issues)

Reinforcing the commitment of strengthening national security and its policy of zero tolerance to terrorism, the Government has declared the following eighteen more individuals as designated terrorists, under the provisions of the UAPA Act 1967 (as amended in 2019) and included their names in the Fourth Schedule of the said Act.

These individuals are involved in various acts of terrorism from across the border and have been relentless in their nefarious efforts of destabilizing the country.

About Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act

- The UAPA, an upgrade on the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act TADA (lapsed in 1995) and the Prevention of Terrorism Act – POTA (repealed in 2004) was passed in the year 1967
- It aims at effective prevention of unlawful activities associations in India.
- Till 2004, “unlawful” activities referred to actions related to secession and cession of territory.
- The **2004** amendment, added “terrorist act” to the list of offences.
- Under the act, the investigating agency can file a charge sheet in maximum 180 days after the arrests and the duration can be extended further after intimating the court.
- **Powers to Union Government:** If Centre deems an activity as unlawful then it may, by way of an Official Gazette, declare it so.
- It has death penalty and life imprisonment as highest punishments.

2019 Amendment of UAPA

- The act was amended to **designate individuals as terrorists** on certain grounds provided in the Act.
 - Earlier only organisations could be declared as such
 - Not designating individuals as terrorists, would give them an **opportunity to circumvent the law** and regroup under different name
- It empowers the Director General of NIA to grant approval of **seizure or attachment of property** when the case is investigated by NIA
Earlier it required the consent of State Police which delayed the process

- It empowers the officers of the NIA, of the **rank of Inspector or above**, to investigate cases of terrorism

This will help solve the human resource crunch in the NIA.

India hosts meeting of SCO Ministers handling economy and foreign trade

(Topic: International Relations)

The current crisis due to Covid-19 is a clarion call to the SCO countries to leverage the economic strength and explore partnerships that enhance trade and investment in the region. Cooperation should be continued to enhance intra-SCO trade and investment which would be critical in ensuring the speedy recovery from the aftermath of the pandemic. Every nation's world view is shaped by its civilization and philosophical tradition. India's ancient wisdom sees the world as one family – Vasudeva Kutumbakam.

In the meeting four documents were adopted. These were:-

Statement on the response to Covid-19: It reinforces the need for greater cooperation for access to medicines and facilitation of trade.

Statement on the Multilateral Trading System of Ministers of SCO Countries who are WTO Members: Highlights the importance of the rules based multilateral negotiations.

Statement on SCO Cooperation on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR): It relates to cooperation of intellectual property and include sharing information/experience on legislation and enforcement, cooperation in international organisations and other areas.

Action Plan for Implementation of MOU to stimulate cooperation within the framework of SCO in the field of MSMEs: It looks at number of areas of cooperation among MSMEs, including exchange of information, organisation of events and collaboration on research and capacity building.

10th Round of Ministerial UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue

(Topic: International Relations)

India and the United Kingdom enjoy close bilateral relations in diverse areas. India-UK economic ties are important as together they are two of the world's top seven economies with a combined GDP of over \$5 trillion. India-UK trade has more than doubled since the first EFD in 2007, with bilateral investment supporting over half a million jobs across both countries

- The Dialogue, inter alia, covered sharing of experiences on corona virus response, to enable both countries to be enriched through experiences of the other and collaboration in the G20 on finance track matters, including through G20 Framework Working Group and Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI).
- Issues related to international tax agenda including development of inclusive consensus based solution on the taxation of digital economy was discussed.
- Deliberations on furthering of Financial Services Collaboration with special emphasis on Fin-Tech and GIFT City, establishment of an annual India-UK Financial Market Dialogue and measures underway to reform financial markets were also discussed.
- Infrastructure development and promotion of Sustainable Finance were also discussed with a focus on green finance.
- It was also decided to establish bilateral India- UK Sustainable Finance Forum.
- Private sector initiatives under India-UK Financial Partnership (IUKFP) and India-UK Sustainable Finance Working Group were welcomed.

The Dialogue concluded with the formal signing of the Joint Statement by Finance Minister of India Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman and Chancellor of Exchequer of United Kingdom Mr Rishi Sunak.

GS-3

‘Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities’ report

(Topic: Energy)

By: NITI Aayog, Ministry of Power, Rockefeller Foundation, and Smart Power India

Based on a primary survey conducted across 10 states—representing about 65% of the total rural population of India and with a sample size of more than 25,000, including households, commercial enterprises and institutions—the report assesses 25 distribution utilities.

Aimed at capturing insights from both the demand (electricity customers) as well as supply side (electricity distribution utilities), the report seeks to:

- Evaluate the status of electricity access in India across these states and distribution utilities along all dimensions that constitute meaningful access
- Benchmark utilities’ capacity to provide electricity access and identify the drivers of sustainable access
- Develop recommendations for enhancing sustainable electricity access

Key findings of the report:

- As much as 92% of customers reported the overall availability of electricity infrastructure within 50 metres of their premises; however, not all have connections, the primary reason being the distance of households from the nearest pole.
- Overall, 87% of the surveyed customers have access to grid-based electricity. The remaining 13% either use non-grid sources or don't use any electricity at all.
- The hours of supply have improved significantly across the customer categories to nearly 17 hours per day.
- Nearly 85% of customers reported to have a metered electricity connection.
- Access to electricity is observed in 83% of household customers.
- A satisfaction index was created to assess the overall satisfaction level of customers with utility services. The study suggested that a total of 66% of those surveyed were satisfied—74% of customers in urban areas and 60% in rural areas.

Three key areas to focus on:

- Learnings from DBT schemes in Punjab
- Tariff simplification and rationalization
- Best practices from high-performing Indian discoms

Recommendations:

- Prioritizing the release of new connections for non-household customers
- Transfer of subsidies or other benefits directly into a customer's account
- Enhanced technology-driven customer service
- Ensuring 100% metering of customers
- Segregation of feeder lines—the concerned ministry to expedite these to maximize the benefits.

Need for long term solutions for management of biomedical waste

(Topic: Waste Management)

Biomedical waste is a threat to global public and environmental health. Worldwide, it is estimated that at least 5.2 million people, including 4 million children, die each year because of diseases related to unmanaged medical waste.

Objective

- To have a holistic understanding on various facets of waste management in context of COVID-19 along with socio-environmental impacts
- Managing bio-medical waste to ensure near-zero infections spread among waste management workers

There is a need for a multi-faceted approach which included strict segregation and containment of waste supported by instructional videos, professional training, development and roll-out of Covid-19 specific biomedical waste rules, identification and

promotion of suppliers of waste management related goods and services.

Considering the Covid-19 pandemic, the surge in infectious waste from healthcare facilities as well as residential and other sectors has become a new major threat to public health and the environment.

- Improper handling of biomedical wastes from hospitals adds to the spread of Covid-19, and hence safe handling and final disposal of this waste is therefore a vital element in an effective emergency response to the pandemic.
- Unsafe disposal of healthcare waste not only pollutes the environment but also poses a risk of infectious diseases such as hepatitis, cholera, typhoid, and respiratory complications, which are mainly caused by the reusing of the disposal of medical equipment or by scavenging the medical waste, as reported in different countries.

Effective biomedical waste management is critical as it can adversely affect the health of humans.

- Proper segregation, safe storage, and disposal of waste are key to the effective management of biomedical waste.
- Segregation of waste plays a serious role in improved biomedical waste management.
- It is important to scale back the quantity of infectious waste otherwise the quantum of waste will surpass the control of management.
- Proper use of medical waste disinfectant equipment by hospitals and medical centres is the need of the hour to contain a future epidemic.

Background

The sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 has imposed massive health and economic burdens on communities around the world and affected every sector of society, including the waste-water sector. Among all the categories of biomedical waste, liquid wastes pose a serious threat to human health and the environment because of their ability to enter watersheds, pollute groundwater and drinking water when improperly handled and disposed.

75% of the water goes to Agriculture, and there is also a nexus between water and health, especially in the times of COVID 19. Even when the COVID 19 would disappear from the world, water problems would still be there. Science & Technology is not the limiting factor to prevent the use and abuse of water. There are a whole lot of factors like economics of situation, public behaviour, and awareness in the society which need to be focused to prevent the abuse of water

Prelims oriented News

Infantry Day: 27th October, 2020

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas: 31st October; Observed on the Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, across the country today

Recent terrorist attack: Inside a church in Nice, France

World's first scientoon book "Bye Bye Corona" on Coronavirus released:

Written by 'scientoonist' Dr Pradeep Srivastava, former Senior Principal Scientist at CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), Lucknow

- The 220 pages book contains comprehensive information on novel coronavirus pandemic, its symptoms and its prevention through precautions. 'Bye Bye Corona' also has a very interesting chapter on the 'Art of Living with Coronavirus' highlighting the methods to deal with the virus in day to day life if it is here to stay for a longer time. The Book offers a perspective insight into the intricacies of the deadly pandemic without scaring the reader.
- A 'scientoon' is a cartoon communication based on science. Scientoons are meant to inform and sensitize people to science and scientific concepts in an intelligible and interesting way

Army launches Secure Application for Internet (SAI): In the quest for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', Indian Army has developed a simple and secure messaging application named the "Secure Application for Internet (SAI)". The application supports end to end secure voice, text and video calling services for Android platform over internet. The model is similar to commercially available messaging applications like Whatsapp, Telegram, SAMVAD and GIMS and utilises end to end encryption messaging protocol. SAI scores over on security features with local in-house servers and coding which can be tweaked as per requirements.

2020 Nobel Prize in Physics: For their contribution in understanding Black Holes:

- Roger Penrose (for the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity)
- Andrea Ghez and Reinhard Genzel (for the discovery of a supermassive black hole at the centre of our galaxy).

A black hole

- A black hole has two basic parts: the singularity and the event horizon. The singularity is at the centre and is where the mass resides.
- Black holes are of three types, classified on the basis of their mass – Stellar mass black holes, Mid- size black holes and Super Massive black holes.
- Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory – India and the role of India in the findings and research of black holes. India is part of the biggest research in the world that is working in the field of black holes. The construction of the LIGO is coming up in Hingoli district, Maharashtra.

- **Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory** – India is a planned advanced gravitational-wave observatory to be located in India as part of the worldwide network. The LIGO-India project will be built by the Department of Atomic Energy and the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, with a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Science Foundation (NSF), USA, along with several national and international research and academic institutions. The three institutes leading the project in India are Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics in Pune, Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology in Indore and the Institute of Plasma Research in Ahmedabad.

Cabinet approves Memorandum of Cooperation between India and Japan on cooperation in the field of Information and Communication Technologies

- Will contribute in strengthening bilateral cooperation and mutual understanding in the field of communications and will serve as a strategic initiative for India as Japan is an important partner with “Special Strategic and Global Partnership” status.
- Will help in cooperation between two countries in various fields like 5G network, telecom security, Submarine cable, standard certification of communication equipment, utilization of latest Wireless Technologies and ICTs, ICTs capacity building, Public Protection and Disaster Relief, Artificial Intelligence (AI) / Block Chain, Spectrum Chain, Spectrum Management, Cooperation on Multilateral platforms etc.
- Further enhance opportunities for India to get into global standardization process. Cooperation in ICTs technologies will help in strengthening ICTs infrastructure in the country. Cooperation in the development of future submarine cable networks and technologies will help in boosting connectivity of mainland India to remote areas.
- The MoC aims to promote human capacity building in field of ICTs and further development of startup ecosystem which will contribute in realizing the objectives of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Cabinet approves the Memorandum of Understanding between India and Cambodia on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine

The bilateral MoU will encourage cooperation between the two countries through joint initiatives and technology development in the health sector. It will strengthen bilateral ties between India and Cambodia. The MoU shall become effective on the date of its signature and shall remain in force for a period of five years. The main areas of cooperation between the two Governments include:

1. Mother and child health;
2. Family Planning;
3. HIV/AIDS and TB;
4. Drugs and Pharmaceuticals;
5. Technology Transfer;
6. Public Health and Epidemiology;

7. Disease Control (Communicable and Non-Communicable);
8. Medical Research and Development, subject to the approval of the National Ethic Committee of Cambodia and to the clearance by concerned Department/Ministry in India;
9. Medical Education;
10. Health manpower development in the field of public health;
11. Training in clinical, para-clinical and management skills

India Post and United States Postal Service (USPS) signs Agreement for Electronic Exchange of Customs Data related to postal shipments exchanged between the two countries:

- The agreement will make it possible to transmit and receive electronic data of international postal items prior to their physical arrival at the destination and would enable customs clearance of postal items in advance in line with the evolving global postal framework.
- This will also improve the performance of postal services in terms of reliability, visibility and security.
- USA is the top export destination for India (~17%) which is also reflected in exchange of goods through postal channel. In 2019, around 20% of outbound EMS and 30% of Letters & Small Packets transmitted by India Post were destined to USA whereas 60% of the Parcels received by India Post were originated from USA. Exchange of Electronic Advance Data (EAD) as per the Agreement will be a key driver towards promoting mutual trade with emphasis on the exports from different parts of India to USA through postal channel considering that USA is a major destination of MSME products, Gems & Jewelry, Pharmaceuticals and other local products from India. This will fulfill a major demand of export industry to expedite customs clearances of export items.

Indian Army launches Software for Infrastructure Management

Infrastructure development has gained significant importance in many of the Army stations where major works are planned to replace vintage accommodation of pre independence era. Land has also become a very scarce resource since all cantonments and military stations have now come closer to major population centres.

Presently all functions towards infrastructure development and management to include ascertaining availability of land, planning and monitoring of works, environment conservation and responsive quartering policies are carried out manually, which is not only time consuming but is also in-efficient.

Realising that automation is the key to empowering all stake holders to transform and become efficient, transparent and enhance accountability, Indian Army has introduced a software named the “Infrastructure Management System (IMS)’ software which was inaugurated by the COAS on the sidelines of the Army Commanders Conference on 28 October 2020. The scope of the software package developed includes the following –

- To automate works initiation, preparation of list and its approval by the MoD.
- To accord administrative approval and monitoring of execution by the CFA.
- To automate availability of CAO pool accommodation, plan vacation, re-allocation and undertake maintenance.
- To automate approval of accommodation allocation/extension for children education ground, special children and Battle/Physical casualty.
- Manage cantonment roads including emergency closure.
- Make land, works and quartering policies available on line
- Monitor land encroachment, Old Grant Bungalows, VIP references and transfer/exchange of land.

Launch of DST initiative SERB – POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research)

It is a scheme to mitigate gender disparity in science and engineering research funding in various S&T programs in Indian academic institutions and R&D laboratories. Integration of the gender dimension in research design has gained considerable attention in the global scenario.

Salient features of the SERB-POWER Fellowship:-

- Target: Women researchers in 35-55 years of age. Up-to 25 Fellowships per year and not more than 75 at any point in time.
- Components of support: Fellowship of Rs. 15,000/- per month in addition to regular income; Research grant of Rs. 10 lakh per annum; and Overhead of Rs. 90,000/- per annum.
- Duration: Three years, without the possibility of extension. Once in a career.

Salient features of the SERB – POWER Research Grants:

POWER Grants will empower women researchers by funding them under following two categories:

- Level I (Applicants from IITs, IISERs, IISc, NITs, Central Universities, and National Labs of Central Government Institutions): The scale of funding is up to 60 lakhs for three years.
- Level II (Applicants from State Universities / Colleges and Private Academic Institutions): The scale of funding is up to 30 lakhs for three years.

POWER Grant will be regulated through terms of reference conforming to SERB-CRG (Science and Engineering Research Board-Core Research Grant) guidelines. While a Search-cum-Selection Committee constituted for the purpose will help in identifying the POWER Fellowship, the existing Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) mechanism will be used to select the POWER Research Grants.

Bundi: Architectural Heritage of a Forgotten Rajput Capital

Bundi erstwhile capital of Hada Rajput province known as Hadauti located in south-eastern Rajasthan, is one such place. Bundi is also known as City of stepwalls, blue city and also as Chotti Kashi.

- In ancient times, the area around Bundi was apparently inhabited by various local tribes, of which the Parihar Tribes, Meena was prominent.
- Later the region was governed by Rao Deva, who took over Bundi from Jaita Meena in 1242, renaming the surrounding area as Haravati or Haroti.
- For the next two centuries, the Hadas of Bundi were the vassals of the Sisodias of Mewar and ruled by the title of Rao until 1569, when Emperor Akbar conferred the title of Rao Raja upon Rao Surjan Singh after the surrender of Ranthambore Fort and his submission.
- In 1632, Rao Raja Chhattar Sal became the ruler, he was one of the most valiant, principled and just kings of Bundi. He built the temple of Keshavarao at Keshoraipatan and Chathra Mahal at Bundi. He became king of Bundi after his grandfather Rao Ratan Singh, as his father Gopinath died while Ratan Singh was still ruling. Rao Chhattar Sal died fighting valiantly as the head of his Hada Rajput troops in the Battle of Samugarh in 1658 along with his youngest son Bharat Singh Rao Bhao Singh, the eldest son of Chhattar Sal succeeded his father to the throne of Bundi.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

India's first deputy prime minister and the minister of home affairs, went on to truly become—in the words of Shashi Tharoor—"the man who saved India". By integrating more than 560 princely states, Patel and his secretary of the ministry of states V.P. Menon imparted geographic coherence to India and prevented its Balkanization, a fate which many predicted would befall the newborn state.

Sardar Vallabhai Patel along with C Rajagopalachari can be considered as true Gandhians, who followed the footsteps of Gandhi and former's contributions in the Independence struggle is no less a feat.

Patel's contribution in Independence struggle:

- Led from front in Kheda and Bardoli satyagraha.
- Mobilization of masses.
- Salt Satyagraha and subsequent arrest.
- Role in Civil Disobedience.
- Role in defending fundamental rights and civil liberties during his congress presidency.
- Social work: Untouchability, Women empowerment, Caste discrimination, alcohol ban etc. in Gujarat.

Unification: After independence, Sardar Patel become India's first deputy prime minister and first home minister and placed a very significant role in unification of country.

- Accession of princely states into Indian Union.

- Operation Polo.
- Referendum in case of Junagarh.
- Effort to settle refugees fleeing Pakistan.
- Safeguarding and strengthen Civil services.

Unifying the nation- A task unmatched

Sardar Patel had the tough task of unifying the 500+ princely states into one homogenous country. The princely states covered almost 48% of the area. Legally, they were not part of British India but subordinate to the British crown. The British gave an option to the princely states to join India or Pakistan. The task of Sardar Patel was very tough from 1947 to 1950. Things were done in a context where lot of fast moving developments were taking place and the task given to him as one of the founders of republic is true.

The question of borders was the crucial new question that India had to face because suddenly it had two different borders, one on west which had been drawn up in very haphazard and hasty manner and other in the east, with the creation of east Pakistan, which created a problem with regard to the north east states that were now tenuously linked to rest of India and needed attention.

The whole effort of Sardar Patel was to make sure that an already complicated situation on the ground did not get further complicated. It had his commitment to a strong state and a strong union that motivated him to push him where rulers were hesitant, where the population and rulers belonged to different persuasion. There was a certain hesitation as which would be more advantageous option. He made it very clear that those within the borders had only one option and that was India.

Thus, if Gandhiji was the father of nation and Nehru was father of Indian state, Sardar Patel could legitimately claim to be father of Indian Union in the sense that it was his tireless efforts over period of 3 years from 1946-1949 that united India through persuasion, through diplomacy, sometimes through coercion and threat of military use. This process was a master stroke in lasting achievement to the building of Indian republic.

If no unification?

British colonial rule created a haphazard mix of territories and the boundaries that arose from the hazards and the opportunities given by military conquest or treatise with local rulers.

However, it made no sense on the ground. One of the planks of INC and national movement was that they would put this in order. They would recognise the socio cultural entities and boundaries and would redraw the map of India. Sardar Patel's contribution was to create the space for this reorganisation of state because if there were pockets and enclaves and territories which could not be integrated, it would not have made a unified India very difficult, if not impossible. Manipur was an important princely state. So was Tripura. They were active in the national movement but when it came to integration,

Sardar Patel was very clear that accession first and then rest would be seen. Thus, his contribution is immense in creating the unified country. However, many of the grievances cropped up later because these initial promises had been betrayed.

Contribution in saving J&K for India

Those were troubled times when the infiltrators from the other side of the border had begun moving in. One must also remember the delicate international context of the cold war and the various treaties in place. It is against that backdrop and also the enormous journey of the refugee movement and migration from either side of the border.

Sardar Patel as the Home Minister was resolutely looking after the protection of the population crossing the borders. His contribution in the Kashmir crisis remains as the taking of bold decision of airlifting of the troops and halting the advance of the infiltrators who had crossed over and occupied a certain portion of Kashmir.

Hyderabad crisis

Sardar came to know about the local militia, backed by the Nizam of Hyderabad, ransacking villages and holding people to ransom. Thus he ordered the military action against the Nizam of Hyderabad. There was a clear police action taken because of Sardar's quick decision making power. Had this not been done, Hyderabad would have been become hot bed of instability in the middle of the Deccan and splashing its negative effects in neighbouring areas.

Sardar was similarly firm in case of Goa but it was overruled as throwing the Portuguese by the use of armed force somehow did not appeal to the government of that time. But later, as known, there was no option and it had to be done.

Offer from Pakistan

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, offered the several of the bordering Rajas of princely states that they would retain their existence if they came to Pakistan. Sardar Patel countered that, especially the Rajputana princes and Patiala and some parts of Gujarat. Despite Jinnah's offer which looked lucrative then, Sardar managed to get these princes into India with his skilful combination of diplomatic persuasion of pointing to the larger long term interests of their population and also a certain amount of arm twisting and threats which made it clear that there would be a price to pay if they did not accept the conditions that Indian government was putting to them.

In those troubled circumstances where rulers hesitated balancing their own self-interests, their own loyalties, their own identities with the general well-being of their people, this firm intervention helped in making up their minds.

Sardar's persona

His strong will and decisiveness makes him stand apart from the crowd. That is why he is called the iron man. That aspect of his personality that he did not shirk at taking unpleasant and tough decisions and at the same time, he was very humane with undivided loyalty to Gandhiji, made him the initial choice as India's first PM.

Sardar Patel asked the princes to join him and gave them a privy purse for one time payout or annual pay out or grant for giving lands and revenues to the union of India. Some sort of compensation was in order because they were going to lose what they lived on and thus their maintenance was to be made. Also, it was needed as the union was being made and hence it was important to get cooperation. The privy purses at that time was seen as a diplomatic move.

An administrator by instinct, Patel sought to protect the privileges of the Indian Civil Service officers who were deemed to be compromised on account of their previous services to the British Raj. Sardar Patel was a hard-nosed realist and his clarity of thinking was matched only by Subhas Chandra Bose and B.R. Ambedkar among contemporaries.

Sardar's contribution was recognised at the time and despite the differences that he may have with his colleagues, what is needed to remember that he was a loyal and steadfast soldier of the Indian struggle for independence. He was committed to Gandhiji and so whenever there were differences, he bowed to Gandhiji and his opinion. This has sustained the partnership and helped India find its feet.

He died in 1950 and thus in that short period of Indian independence, he made an enormous contribution. In 1991, he was given Bharat Ratna.

Related Important events from 1946-1951 (Till Sardar Patel's death)

From 1946 to 1951, there was formation of constitution of India, independence of India and formation of states. Internal consolidation was focused upon. Equally important was the positioning of India on world map. The rise of iron curtain, the beginning of cold war and also the fact that new powers were rising, Afro Asian solidarity was coming into being and India not taking up the offer of UNSC seat and instead of it going to china, this has to be seen in wider context as Nehru was clear at that time that belonged to China. These events marked the final years of Sardar Patel's life.

Patel was among the few to see the dangers from China's imminent takeover of Tibet. One of the foremost chroniclers of Sino-India relations, John W. Garver records: "Patel advocated a series of practical measures designed to strengthen India's position: accelerated road building in the frontier areas, strengthening of India's military capabilities, moves to better integrate the northeastern territories into India."

Note:

Iron Curtain- the Iron Curtain was the name for the boundary dividing Europe into two separate areas from the end of World War II in 1945 until the end of the Cold War in 1991. The term symbolized efforts by the Soviet Union to block itself and its satellite states from open contact with the West and non-Soviet-controlled areas.

Physically, the Iron Curtain took the form of border defenses between the countries of Europe in the middle of the continent. The most notable border was marked by the Berlin Wall and its Checkpoint Charlie, which served as a symbol of the Curtain as a whole.

The events that demolished the Iron Curtain started in discontent in Poland



Picture

Credit: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/thumb/1/1e/EasternBloc_PostDissolution2008.svg/693px-EasternBloc_PostDissolution2008.svg.png

Sardar Vallabhai Patel was a great son of country whose contribution towards Independence struggle and preventing Balkanization of country is worth mentioning for ages to come. Majority of the credit goes to this tall man, if India is able to maintain its Unity and Integrity till today. For his feat he was fondly known as “Iron Man of India”.



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GS-2

Health Ministry's telemedicine service eSanjeevani completes 7 lakh consultations

(Topic: Govt. schemes and initiatives; Health)

With over 10,000 consultations being recorded on eSanjeevani per day, it is shaping into the largest OPD services set up in the country. An innovative intervention to deliver health services, eSanjeevani has started making impact in smaller towns and rural areas.

- It is a national telemedicine service that offers tele-consultations enabling patient to doctor consultations from the confines of their home, as well as doctor to doctor consultations.
- This eSanjeevani platform has enabled two types of telemedicine services viz. Doctor-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani) and Patient-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani OPD) Tele-consultations
- The former is being implemented under the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre (AB-HWCs) programme.
- The telemedicine platform is hosting over 40 online OPDs, more than half of these are speciality OPDs which include Gynaecology, Psychiatry, Dermatology, ENT, Ophthalmology, antiretroviral therapy (ART) for the AIDS/HIV patients, Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) etc.

The need and impact

While telemedicine is beneficial for the patients, it also is favourable for the doctors practicing telemedicine as it limits the contact with patients who are present virtually.

- Removed the requirement of doctor to be at a specific location to provide services
- Enables States especially the ones with large geographical area, to better management of their human resources
- Through eSanjeevani, patients desirous of seeking medical consultations are placed in a virtual queue and upon their turn can see a doctor who is available virtually but present in another city.

Each online OPD consultation generates an ePrescription which can be used to buy medicines or go for diagnostic investigations. States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu have already issued government orders to ensure that ePrescriptions are honored.

India-Italy Virtual Summit

(Topic: India and other countries)

A Virtual Bilateral Summit between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Italy Prof. Giuseppe Conte was held on 6th November, 2020.

The Summit provided an opportunity to the two leaders to comprehensively review the broad framework of the bilateral relationship. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen cooperation against common global challenges, including the Covid-19 pandemic.

They discussed on –

- The leaders discussed a wide range of issues including political, economic, scientific & technological, space and defence cooperation.
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- Together, India and Italy will be part of the G20 Troika from December, 2020.
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15 MoUs/Agreements in various sectors such as energy, fisheries, ship building, design etc. were signed coinciding with the Summit.

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Rs 1810 crore Investment Proposal of 210 MW Luhri Stage-I Hydro Power Project

- Located on river Sutlej which is situated in Shimla & Kullu districts of Himachal Pradesh
- This project will generate 758.20 million units of electricity annually.
- The power generated from the Project will help in providing Grid stability and will improve the power supply position.
- Besides adding valuable renewable energy to the Grid, the project would also lead to reduction of 6.1 lakh Tons of carbon dioxide from environment annually, thus contributing to improvement in air quality.
- The construction activities of the project will result in direct & indirect employment to around 2000 persons and will contribute to overall socio-economic development of the State.

- Further, Himachal Pradesh will benefit with free power worth around Rs. 1140 crore from Luhri Stage-I Hydro Electric Project, during Project Life Cycle of 40 years. The Project Affected Families will be provided with 100 units of free electricity per month for ten years.

Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between India and Spain to develop scientific and technical collaborations in astronomy

- The activities to be carried out under this MoU will lead to (i) new scientific results; (ii) new technologies; (iii) Capacity building through increased scientific interaction and training; (iv) joint scientific projects etc.
- The joint research projects, training programmes, conferences, seminars etc. under the MoU will be open to all qualified scientists, students and technologists and will be supported solely on the basis of scientific merit and experience.
- The development of segmented telescope technologies as well as the development of robotic telescopes and other future potential specific collaborations.

Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between India and United Kingdom on cooperation in the field of Telecommunication/ICTs

The MoU will contribute in strengthening bilateral cooperation and mutual understanding in the field of Telecommunications/ICTs. Post-Brexit, the MoU is also aiming for enhanced scope of cooperation and opportunities for India. The Parties have identified the following areas of common interest for cooperation in:-

- Telecommunications/ICT policy and regulation;
- Spectrum Management;
- Telecommunication connectivity including mobile roaming;
- Telecommunications/ICT technical standardizations and testing & certification;
- Wireless Communications;
- Technological development in Telecommunications/ICT including 5G, Internet of Things/Machine to Machine, Cloud Computing, Big Data etc.;
- Security of Telecommunication Infrastructure, Security in the provision and use of telecommunication services;
- Building capacity in high technology areas and exchange of expertise wherever possible;
- Collaboration and Sharing of information on Research & Development on emerging technologies and innovation where appropriate;
- Exploring opportunities for joint work in signatory countries and third countries on Telecommunications/ICT;
- Facilitating Trade, investment and technology activities through Telecommunication/ICT industry delegations and visits, events, exhibitions etc. as mutually agreed; and
- Other forms of cooperation in Telecommunications/ICT as mutually agreed upon by the Parties

Memorandum of Understanding between India and Israel on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine

The MoU covers the following areas of cooperation:

1. Exchange and training of medical doctors and other health professionals;
2. Assistance in development of human resources and setting up of health care facilities;
3. Exchange of information regarding regulation of pharmaceutical, medical devices and cosmetics;
4. Sharing expertise for vulnerability assessment for health of citizens against climate risk and public health actions targeted towards mitigation and adaptation;
5. Sharing of expertise for facilitating climate resilient infrastructure as well as providing support for development of 'Green Healthcare' (climate resilient hospitals);
6. Promote mutual research in various relevant areas; and
7. Any other area of cooperation as may be mutually decided upon.

Each Party shall encourage the participation of the representatives of their countries in round tables, seminars, symposia, workshops and conferences on issues of cooperation, organized by the other Party's relevant bodies.

Memorandum of Understanding between India and United Kingdom on cooperation in the field of Medical Products Regulation

The MoU will help in establishing a framework for fruitful cooperation and exchange of information between the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) and the United Kingdom Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (UKMHRA) of United Kingdom in matters relating to Medical products regulation in line with their international responsibilities. The main areas of cooperation between the two Regulatory Authorities include the following:

- Exchange of safety information, including Pharmacovigilance where there is a particular safety concern related to the other party. This includes safety concerns relating to medicines and medical devices.
- Participation in scientific and practical conferences, symposia, seminars and fora organized by India and the United Kingdom
- Exchange of information and cooperation on Good Laboratory Practices (GLP), Good Clinical Practices (GCP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Good Distribution Practices (GDP) and Good Pharmacovigilance Practices (GPvP)
- Capacity building in mutually agreed areas.
- Promote an understanding between the Parties of each other's regulatory framework, requirements and processes; and to facilitate future regulatory strengthening initiatives for both Parties.
- Exchange of information on laws and regulations regarding medicines and medical devices
- Information exchange to support efforts to control unlicensed exports and imports

- Coordination at the international fora

It would facilitate better understanding of the regulatory aspects between the two sides and could help in increased cooperation in the field of medical products regulation and better coordination in international fora.

GS-3

Bamboo – A part of India's Growth Story

(Topic: Major crops, Agricultural Marketing)

India is destined to play a major role in Post-COVID economic resurgence and North Eastern Region will play a crucial role in it with full exploitation of huge Bamboo resources. It is imperative to make Bamboo a Pan India perspective for its growth and utilization. Bamboo will be the new fuel of New Engine that is North East for India's growth story.

Recently, 22 bamboo clusters in 9 states were virtually inaugurated

- States covered: Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Karnataka.
- **Ministry:** Union Ministry for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare
- A logo for the National Bamboo Mission (NBM) has also been released.

Government's Efforts

- India is the world's second-largest cultivator of bamboo after China, with 136 species and 23 genera spread over 13.96 million hectares, according to the State of Environment report 2018.
- The National Bamboo Mission, under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, has been initiated to provide a boost to livelihood and environmental acreage.
- Additionally, in 2017, Parliament 'declassified' bamboo as 'a tree' on non-forest lands.
- Similarly, a scheme called SFURTI (Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries) is being implemented by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in order to boost traditional industries and bamboo artisans.
- Amendment has been brought about in the 100 year old Indian Forest Act brought about by the Central government in 2017, as a result of which, home grown bamboo has been exempted from it in order to enhance livelihood opportunities through bamboo.

- **Bamboo Technology Parks** were also set up in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh –
 - Objective: To make Bamboo basketry, Agarbatti and Bamboo Charcol.
 - A Mega Bamboo Industrial Park at Ghati near Jammu and Bamboo Technology Training Centre will also come up in the region.
 - It will provide direct employment to nearly 25 thousand people.

Bamboo shoots

- Bamboo shoots are emerging as high-value and safe edibles.
- They are being grown globally along with all other value-added bamboo products.
- The protein content in fresh bamboo shoots, considered as nutraceutical, can range between 1.49-4.04%.
- They also contain 17 amino acids, eight of which are essential for the human body.

Important value additions

- According to the National Bamboo Mission, India has the highest area (13.96 million hectares) under bamboo and is the second richest country after China in terms of bamboo diversity with 136 species.
- The annual production of bamboo in India is 14.6 million tonnes and the bamboo-rattan industry in the country was worth ₹28,005 crore in 2017.
- Bamboo could be among the cheapest immunity boosters for increasing the human body's resistance to viral attacks.
- Bamboo sticks may be reduced to bamboo bales so that moisture is removed therefore making transportation easier and further cheaper as also increasing its calorific value.

Do you know?

- The bamboo is considered the grass of life in the northeast India.
- Bamboo has been a key ingredient in new antimicrobial soaps and hand mists developed by Filipino scientists to fight the novel coronavirus.
- The term 'nutraceutical' is used to describe medicinally or nutritionally functional foods.
- Bamboo shoots are the edible sprouts of the perennial grass.

Ganga Utsav 2020

(Topic: Environment)

- The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) celebrates the festival every year.
- **Aim:** To promote stakeholder engagement and ensure public participation.
- It celebrates river Ganga through storytelling, dialogues with eminent personalities, displaying traditional art forms, dance and music performance, etc.
- Ganga Task Force (GTF) also conducted an afforestation drive with National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets and educational tour for youth.

- Mini Ganga Quest was also held which was designed to make youth and students aware of environmental issues and explain their role in conservation.

Ganga Rejuvenation Monitoring

Recently, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has observed that the pollutants are still being discharged into the river Ganga, despite several directions of various courts.

- **Constitutional Right:** Pollution-free environment is the constitutional right of every citizen and constitutional obligation of States. However, the states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and West Bengal are certainly failing in providing pollution free Ganga.
- **Monitoring:** The NGT has directed the above states to periodically monitor the rejuvenation of the Ganga.
- **Joint Meetings:** It has also called for periodic joint meetings of the above states to consider vital issues like pooling of human resources and sharing best practices for rejuvenation of Ganga.
- The meetings shall be focussed on preventing discharge of sewage and other pollutants in Ganga directly or through its tributaries or drains connected thereto.

Initiatives Taken to Clean Ganga:

- **Ganga Action Plan:** It was the first River Action Plan that was taken up by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in 1985, to improve the water quality by the interception, diversion, and treatment of domestic sewage.
- The National River Conservation Plan is an extension to the Ganga Action Plan. It aims at cleaning the Ganga river under Ganga Action Plan phase-2.
- **National River Ganga Basin Authority (NRGBA):** It was formed by the Government of India in the year 2009 under Section-3 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

National Ganga Council (NGC)

- The National Ganga Council (NGC), which is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi met for the first time at Kanpur since its inception in 2016, with the proposal to save and enhance the population of the Gangetic Dolphin
- The council also discussed the concept of “River Cities” and an action plan to provide sewer connection to every household in towns along the Ganga and its tributaries.
- The council consists of chief ministers from five states along the Ganga — Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Jharkhand along with nine Union ministers and NITI Aayog vice-chairman.
- The central objective of the council is to work on the “protection, prevention, control and abatement of environmental pollution in River Ganga and its rejuvenation to its natural and pristine condition and to ensure continuous adequate flow of water”.

About Gangetic River Dolphins

- The Gangetic river dolphins were officially discovered in 1801 and are one of the oldest creatures in the world along with some species of turtles, crocodiles and sharks, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
- In 2009, the Gangetic dolphins were declared India's National Aquatic animal
- It is placed under the "endangered" category by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- The Gangetic river dolphins can only live in freshwater and prefer deep waters
- They are blind and catch their prey in a unique manner, using ultrasonic sound waves.

River Ganga

- It is the longest river of India.
- It is revered by Hindus as the most sacred river on earth.
- It originates in the Gangotri Glacier in the Himalayas as the Bhagirathi River.
- The Ganga river basin is one of the most fertile and densely populated areas of the world.
- The Ganges River Dolphin, an endangered animal, specifically inhabits this river.
- It ends its journey by emptying into the Bay of Bengal.
- Ganga was declared as the National River of India on 4th November 2008.

Successful launch of PSLV-C49/EOS-01 Mission

(Topic: Space technology)

India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, in its fifty first flight (PSLV-C49), successfully launched EOS-01 along with nine international customer satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota on November 07, 2020.

PSLV-C49 is the 2nd flight of PSLV in 'DL' configuration (with 2 solid strap-on motors).

- PSLV-C49 lifted-off from the First Launch Pad of SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota . After 15 minutes and 20 seconds, EOS-01 was successfully injected into its orbit.
- Subsequently, nine commercial satellites were injected into their intended orbits.
- After separation, the two solar arrays of EOS-01 were deployed automatically and the ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network at Bengaluru assumed control of the satellite. In the coming days, the satellite will be brought to its final operational configuration.

EOS-01 is an earth observation satellite, intended for applications in agriculture, forestry and disaster management support.

The nine customer satellites from Lithuania (1), Luxembourg (4) and USA (4) were launched under a commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL).

Enhanced version of PINAKA Rocket System successfully Flight Tested

(Topic: Space technology)

Developed by: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)

- Development of Enhanced Pinaka system was taken up to achieve longer range performance compared to earlier design with reduced length.
- The design and development has been carried out by Pune based DRDO laboratories, namely Armament Research and Development Establishment, ARDE and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, HEMRL.
- A total of six rockets were launched in quick succession and the tests met complete mission objectives. Rockets tested have been manufactured by M/s Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur, to whom the technology has been transferred. All the flight articles were tracked by Range instruments such as telemetry, radar and Electro Optical Tracking Systems which confirmed the flight performance.
- Enhanced version of the Pinaka rocket would replace the existing Pinaka Mk-I rockets which are currently under production.

Prelims oriented News

President of Tanzania: H.E. John Pombe Magufuli

MALABAR-2.0

- Phase 1 of the Exercise MALABAR 20 involving participation by Indian Navy (IN), United States Navy (USN), Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF), and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) is set to commence off Visakhapatnam in Bay of Bengal from 03 to 06 November 2020.
- MALABAR series of maritime exercises commenced in 1992 as a bilateral IN-USN exercise. JMSDF joined MALABAR in 2015. The 2020 edition will now witness participation of the RAN in this joint maritime exercise.
- The exercise, being conducted as a 'non-contact, at sea only' exercise in view of COVID-19 pandemic, will showcase the high-levels of synergy and coordination between the friendly navies, which is based on their shared values and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order. MALABAR 20 Phase 1 would witness complex and advanced naval exercises including surface, anti-submarine and anti-air warfare operations, cross deck flying, seamanship evolutions and weapon firing exercises.

Mission Sagar – II

The Government of India is providing assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries to overcome natural calamities and COVID-19 pandemic, and towards the same INS Airavat is carrying a consignment of 100 Tonnes of food aid for the people of Sudan.

- Mission Sagar-II, follows the first 'Mission Sagar' undertaken in May-June 2020, wherein India reached out to Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros, and provided food aid and medicines. As part of Mission Sagar-II, Indian Naval Ship Airavat will deliver food aid to Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea.
- Mission Sagar-II, is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her maritime neighbours and further strengthens the existing bond. The Indian Navy is progressing this mission in close coordination with the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs, and other agencies of the Government of India.

3600 video-immersive experience in circular dome and Digital Exhibits on Mahatma Gandhi: Installed at Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat, in New Delhi; this was part of two-year long commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Country's first demonstration plant which produces compressed biogas from biomass: Developed by Praj technologies in Pune

Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) Scheme: A major credit-linked subsidy programme aimed at generating self-employment opportunities through establishment of micro-enterprises in the non-farm sector. Any individual above 18 years of age is eligible to avail benefits of the program.

Prasar Bharati signs MoU with Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-Informatics

To ensure: Education for all

- Under the ambit of this MoU, 51 DTH education TV channels comprising of Swaymprabha (22 channels) (M/o Education), e-Vidya for classes 1 to 12 (12 channels) of NCERT, Vande Gujarat (Govt. of Gujarat) (16 channels) and DigiShala under M/o Electronics and IT (1 channel) shall be available as DD co-branded channels to all DD FreeDish viewers.
- This move aims to bring quality educational programmes to every household, including those in rural and remote areas. The services will be available free of cost for all the viewers 24x7, in line with Government's commitment towards skill development and providing quality education to the last person in the country.

Five years of historic decision to implement OROP

- **Brought in:** To benefit more than 2.5 million ex- servicemen and war widows; Armed Forces Personnel retired upto 30.06.2014 were covered under this Order.
- OROP implies that uniform pension be paid to the Armed Forces Personnel retiring in the same rank with the same length of service regardless of their date of retirement. Thus, OROP implies bridging the gap between the rate of pension of current and past retirees at periodic intervals.

India is a signatory to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

As part of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), India has three quantitative climate change goals viz.

- Reduction in the emissions intensity of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 33 to 35 percent by 2030 from 2005 level,
- Achieving about 40 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel based energy resources by 2030 and
- Creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030

New online system of MSME/Udyam Registration

More than 11 lakh MSMEs have successfully registered themselves by now.

This portal is seamlessly integrated with CBDT and GST networks as also with the GeM. It may be noted that through this integration, now MSME registration is a totally paperless exercise.

- 3.72 lakh enterprises have registered under Manufacturing category whereas 6.31 lakh enterprises under Service sector.
- The share of Micro Enterprises is 93.17% whereas Small and Medium Enterprises are 5.62% and 1.21% respectively.
- 7.98 lakh enterprises are owned by Male whereas 1.73 lakh enterprises by Female entrepreneurs.
- 11,188 enterprises are owned by Divyangjan entrepreneurs.
- The Top 5 Industrial sectors of registrations are – Food Products, Textile, Apparel, Fabricated Metal products and Machinery & equipments.
- 1,01,03,512 persons have been given employment by these registered units.
- 5 leading States for Udyam registrations are Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat.

132nd birth anniversary of Prof. C.V. Raman

- An acclaimed Physicist, Nobel laureate and Bharat Ratna recipient who was instrumental in India's growth in the field of science and Physics in particular
- Sir C.V. Raman is known to have placed India on the world Science map. He was the first person from Asia to be awarded a Nobel Prize in any field of science for his work on Raman Effect.

The Raman effect has been very useful in many areas of science.

- It was found that when light was passed through a substance, a series of colours were seen that could be thought of as a fingerprint of the substance.
- This idea has been used in chemistry, medicine, biology and many other areas of science to find out what a substance is made of.

- **National Science Day** is celebrated every year on 28 February by the Government of India to commemorate the discovery of the 'Raman Effect'. designated 28 February as in 1986.
- On this day, Sir C.V. Raman announced the discovery of the 'Raman Effect' for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930

Other contributions

- Professor C V Raman was first to investigate the harmonic nature of the sound of the Indian drums such as the Tabla and the Mridanga.
- Raman also discovered the quantum photon spin which later proved the quantum nature of light.
- Today Raman spectroscopy, which relies on these 'fingerprints,' is used in laboratories all over the world to identify molecules and to analyze living cells and tissues to detect diseases such as cancer. It is being used in life sciences, nuclear science, drugs, bomb-detection, in forensics, in disease diagnosis and in RNA/DNA diagnosis.
- In 1943, he established the 'Raman Research Institute', near Bangalore.
- Raman and his student, Nagendra Nath, provided the correct theoretical explanation for the acousto-optic effect (light scattering by sound waves), in a series of articles resulting in the celebrated Raman–Nath theory. Modulators, and switching systems based on this effect have enabled optical communication components based on laser systems.
- Raman was a great scholar, physicist and mentor who not only received Noble Prize for his work Raman's effect but also encourages and trained hundreds of students in the field of science. He founded the Indian Journal of Physics and the Indian Academy of Sciences. In 1947, he was appointed as the first National Professor by the new government of Independent India.

Films Division is paying tribute to him by streaming a biopic, C.V. Raman (18 Min./ English) – The documentary on Prof Raman throws light into his life and works including the groundbreaking work he did in the field of light scattering which later became famously known in the scientific community as 'Raman Effect'.



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- The activities to be carried out under this MoU will lead to (i) new scientific results; (ii) new technologies; (iii) Capacity building through increased scientific interaction and training; (iv) joint scientific projects etc.
- The joint research projects, training programmes, conferences, seminars etc. under the MoU will be open to all qualified scientists, students and technologists and will be supported solely on the basis of scientific merit and experience.
- The development of segmented telescope technologies as well as the development of robotic telescopes and other future potential specific collaborations.

Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between India and United Kingdom on cooperation in the field of Telecommunication/ICTs

The MoU will contribute in strengthening bilateral cooperation and mutual understanding in the field of Telecommunications/ICTs. Post-Brexit, the MoU is also aiming for enhanced scope of cooperation and opportunities for India. The Parties have identified the following areas of common interest for cooperation in:-

- Telecommunications/ICT policy and regulation;
- Spectrum Management;
- Telecommunication connectivity including mobile roaming;
- Telecommunications/ICT technical standardizations and testing & certification;
- Wireless Communications;
- Technological development in Telecommunications/ICT including 5G, Internet of Things/Machine to Machine, Cloud Computing, Big Data etc.;
- Security of Telecommunication Infrastructure, Security in the provision and use of telecommunication services;
- Building capacity in high technology areas and exchange of expertise wherever possible;
- Collaboration and Sharing of information on Research & Development on emerging technologies and innovation where appropriate;
- Exploring opportunities for joint work in signatory countries and third countries on Telecommunications/ICT;
- Facilitating Trade, investment and technology activities through Telecommunication/ICT industry delegations and visits, events, exhibitions etc. as mutually agreed; and
- Other forms of cooperation in Telecommunications/ICT as mutually agreed upon by the Parties

Memorandum of Understanding between India and Israel on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine

The MoU covers the following areas of cooperation:

1. Exchange and training of medical doctors and other health professionals;
2. Assistance in development of human resources and setting up of health care facilities;
3. Exchange of information regarding regulation of pharmaceutical, medical devices and cosmetics;
4. Sharing expertise for vulnerability assessment for health of citizens against climate risk and public health actions targeted towards mitigation and adaptation;
5. Sharing of expertise for facilitating climate resilient infrastructure as well as providing support for development of 'Green Healthcare' (climate resilient hospitals);
6. Promote mutual research in various relevant areas; and
7. Any other area of cooperation as may be mutually decided upon.

Each Party shall encourage the participation of the representatives of their countries in round tables, seminars, symposia, workshops and conferences on issues of cooperation, organized by the other Party's relevant bodies.

Memorandum of Understanding between India and United Kingdom on cooperation in the field of Medical Products Regulation

The MoU will help in establishing a framework for fruitful cooperation and exchange of information between the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) and the United Kingdom Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (UKMHRA) of United Kingdom in matters relating to Medical products regulation in line with their international responsibilities. The main areas of cooperation between the two Regulatory Authorities include the following:

- Exchange of safety information, including Pharmacovigilance where there is a particular safety concern related to the other party. This includes safety concerns relating to medicines and medical devices.
- Participation in scientific and practical conferences, symposia, seminars and fora organized by India and the United Kingdom
- Exchange of information and cooperation on Good Laboratory Practices (GLP), Good Clinical Practices (GCP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Good Distribution Practices (GDP) and Good Pharmacovigilance Practices (GPvP)
- Capacity building in mutually agreed areas.
- Promote an understanding between the Parties of each other's regulatory framework, requirements and processes; and to facilitate future regulatory strengthening initiatives for both Parties.
- Exchange of information on laws and regulations regarding medicines and medical devices
- Information exchange to support efforts to control unlicensed exports and imports

- Coordination at the international fora

It would facilitate better understanding of the regulatory aspects between the two sides and could help in increased cooperation in the field of medical products regulation and better coordination in international fora.

GS-3

Bamboo – A part of India's Growth Story

(Topic: Major crops, Agricultural Marketing)

India is destined to play a major role in Post-COVID economic resurgence and North Eastern Region will play a crucial role in it with full exploitation of huge Bamboo resources. It is imperative to make Bamboo a Pan India perspective for its growth and utilization. Bamboo will be the new fuel of New Engine that is North East for India's growth story.

Recently, 22 bamboo clusters in 9 states were virtually inaugurated

- States covered: Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Karnataka.
- **Ministry:** Union Ministry for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare
- A logo for the National Bamboo Mission (NBM) has also been released.

Government's Efforts

- India is the world's second-largest cultivator of bamboo after China, with 136 species and 23 genera spread over 13.96 million hectares, according to the State of Environment report 2018.
- The National Bamboo Mission, under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, has been initiated to provide a boost to livelihood and environmental acreage.
- Additionally, in 2017, Parliament 'declassified' bamboo as 'a tree' on non-forest lands.
- Similarly, a scheme called SFURTI (Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries) is being implemented by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in order to boost traditional industries and bamboo artisans.
- Amendment has been brought about in the 100 year old Indian Forest Act brought about by the Central government in 2017, as a result of which, home grown bamboo has been exempted from it in order to enhance livelihood opportunities through bamboo.

- **Bamboo Technology Parks** were also set up in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh –
 - Objective: To make Bamboo basketry, Agarbatti and Bamboo Charcol.
 - A Mega Bamboo Industrial Park at Ghati near Jammu and Bamboo Technology Training Centre will also come up in the region.
 - It will provide direct employment to nearly 25 thousand people.

Bamboo shoots

- Bamboo shoots are emerging as high-value and safe edibles.
- They are being grown globally along with all other value-added bamboo products.
- The protein content in fresh bamboo shoots, considered as nutraceutical, can range between 1.49-4.04%.
- They also contain 17 amino acids, eight of which are essential for the human body.

Important value additions

- According to the National Bamboo Mission, India has the highest area (13.96 million hectares) under bamboo and is the second richest country after China in terms of bamboo diversity with 136 species.
- The annual production of bamboo in India is 14.6 million tonnes and the bamboo-rattan industry in the country was worth ₹28,005 crore in 2017.
- Bamboo could be among the cheapest immunity boosters for increasing the human body's resistance to viral attacks.
- Bamboo sticks may be reduced to bamboo bales so that moisture is removed therefore making transportation easier and further cheaper as also increasing its calorific value.

Do you know?

- The bamboo is considered the grass of life in the northeast India.
- Bamboo has been a key ingredient in new antimicrobial soaps and hand mists developed by Filipino scientists to fight the novel coronavirus.
- The term 'nutraceutical' is used to describe medicinally or nutritionally functional foods.
- Bamboo shoots are the edible sprouts of the perennial grass.

Ganga Utsav 2020

(Topic: Environment)

- The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) celebrates the festival every year.
- **Aim:** To promote stakeholder engagement and ensure public participation.
- It celebrates river Ganga through storytelling, dialogues with eminent personalities, displaying traditional art forms, dance and music performance, etc.
- Ganga Task Force (GTF) also conducted an afforestation drive with National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets and educational tour for youth.

- Mini Ganga Quest was also held which was designed to make youth and students aware of environmental issues and explain their role in conservation.

Ganga Rejuvenation Monitoring

Recently, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has observed that the pollutants are still being discharged into the river Ganga, despite several directions of various courts.

- **Constitutional Right:** Pollution-free environment is the constitutional right of every citizen and constitutional obligation of States. However, the states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and West Bengal are certainly failing in providing pollution free Ganga.
- **Monitoring:** The NGT has directed the above states to periodically monitor the rejuvenation of the Ganga.
- **Joint Meetings:** It has also called for periodic joint meetings of the above states to consider vital issues like pooling of human resources and sharing best practices for rejuvenation of Ganga.
- The meetings shall be focussed on preventing discharge of sewage and other pollutants in Ganga directly or through its tributaries or drains connected thereto.

Initiatives Taken to Clean Ganga:

- **Ganga Action Plan:** It was the first River Action Plan that was taken up by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in 1985, to improve the water quality by the interception, diversion, and treatment of domestic sewage.
- The National River Conservation Plan is an extension to the Ganga Action Plan. It aims at cleaning the Ganga river under Ganga Action Plan phase-2.
- **National River Ganga Basin Authority (NRGBA):** It was formed by the Government of India in the year 2009 under Section-3 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

National Ganga Council (NGC)

- The National Ganga Council (NGC), which is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi met for the first time at Kanpur since its inception in 2016, with the proposal to save and enhance the population of the Gangetic Dolphin
- The council also discussed the concept of “River Cities” and an action plan to provide sewer connection to every household in towns along the Ganga and its tributaries.
- The council consists of chief ministers from five states along the Ganga — Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Jharkhand along with nine Union ministers and NITI Aayog vice-chairman.
- The central objective of the council is to work on the “protection, prevention, control and abatement of environmental pollution in River Ganga and its rejuvenation to its natural and pristine condition and to ensure continuous adequate flow of water”.

About Gangetic River Dolphins

- The Gangetic river dolphins were officially discovered in 1801 and are one of the oldest creatures in the world along with some species of turtles, crocodiles and sharks, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
- In 2009, the Gangetic dolphins were declared India's National Aquatic animal
- It is placed under the "endangered" category by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- The Gangetic river dolphins can only live in freshwater and prefer deep waters
- They are blind and catch their prey in a unique manner, using ultrasonic sound waves.

River Ganga

- It is the longest river of India.
- It is revered by Hindus as the most sacred river on earth.
- It originates in the Gangotri Glacier in the Himalayas as the Bhagirathi River.
- The Ganga river basin is one of the most fertile and densely populated areas of the world.
- The Ganges River Dolphin, an endangered animal, specifically inhabits this river.
- It ends its journey by emptying into the Bay of Bengal.
- Ganga was declared as the National River of India on 4th November 2008.

Successful launch of PSLV-C49/EOS-01 Mission

(Topic: Space technology)

India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, in its fifty first flight (PSLV-C49), successfully launched EOS-01 along with nine international customer satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota on November 07, 2020.

PSLV-C49 is the 2nd flight of PSLV in 'DL' configuration (with 2 solid strap-on motors).

- PSLV-C49 lifted-off from the First Launch Pad of SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota . After 15 minutes and 20 seconds, EOS-01 was successfully injected into its orbit.
- Subsequently, nine commercial satellites were injected into their intended orbits.
- After separation, the two solar arrays of EOS-01 were deployed automatically and the ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network at Bengaluru assumed control of the satellite. In the coming days, the satellite will be brought to its final operational configuration.

EOS-01 is an earth observation satellite, intended for applications in agriculture, forestry and disaster management support.

The nine customer satellites from Lithuania (1), Luxembourg (4) and USA (4) were launched under a commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL).

Enhanced version of PINAKA Rocket System successfully Flight Tested

(Topic: Space technology)

Developed by: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)

- Development of Enhanced Pinaka system was taken up to achieve longer range performance compared to earlier design with reduced length.
- The design and development has been carried out by Pune based DRDO laboratories, namely Armament Research and Development Establishment, ARDE and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, HEMRL.
- A total of six rockets were launched in quick succession and the tests met complete mission objectives. Rockets tested have been manufactured by M/s Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur, to whom the technology has been transferred. All the flight articles were tracked by Range instruments such as telemetry, radar and Electro Optical Tracking Systems which confirmed the flight performance.
- Enhanced version of the Pinaka rocket would replace the existing Pinaka Mk-I rockets which are currently under production.

Prelims oriented News

President of Tanzania: H.E. John Pombe Magufuli

MALABAR-2.0

- Phase 1 of the Exercise MALABAR 20 involving participation by Indian Navy (IN), United States Navy (USN), Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF), and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) is set to commence off Visakhapatnam in Bay of Bengal from 03 to 06 November 2020.
- MALABAR series of maritime exercises commenced in 1992 as a bilateral IN-USN exercise. JMSDF joined MALABAR in 2015. The 2020 edition will now witness participation of the RAN in this joint maritime exercise.
- The exercise, being conducted as a 'non-contact, at sea only' exercise in view of COVID-19 pandemic, will showcase the high-levels of synergy and coordination between the friendly navies, which is based on their shared values and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order. MALABAR 20 Phase 1 would witness complex and advanced naval exercises including surface, anti-submarine and anti-air warfare operations, cross deck flying, seamanship evolutions and weapon firing exercises.

Mission Sagar – II

The Government of India is providing assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries to overcome natural calamities and COVID-19 pandemic, and towards the same INS Airavat is carrying a consignment of 100 Tonnes of food aid for the people of Sudan.

- Mission Sagar-II, follows the first 'Mission Sagar' undertaken in May-June 2020, wherein India reached out to Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros, and provided food aid and medicines. As part of Mission Sagar-II, Indian Naval Ship Airavat will deliver food aid to Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea.
- Mission Sagar-II, is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her maritime neighbours and further strengthens the existing bond. The Indian Navy is progressing this mission in close coordination with the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs, and other agencies of the Government of India.

3600 video-immersive experience in circular dome and Digital Exhibits on Mahatma Gandhi: Installed at Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat, in New Delhi; this was part of two-year long commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Country's first demonstration plant which produces compressed biogas from biomass: Developed by Praj technologies in Pune

Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) Scheme: A major credit-linked subsidy programme aimed at generating self-employment opportunities through establishment of micro-enterprises in the non-farm sector. Any individual above 18 years of age is eligible to avail benefits of the program.

Prasar Bharati signs MoU with Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-Informatics

To ensure: Education for all

- Under the ambit of this MoU, 51 DTH education TV channels comprising of Swaymprabha (22 channels) (M/o Education), e-Vidya for classes 1 to 12 (12 channels) of NCERT, Vande Gujarat (Govt. of Gujarat) (16 channels) and DigiShala under M/o Electronics and IT (1 channel) shall be available as DD co-branded channels to all DD FreeDish viewers.
- This move aims to bring quality educational programmes to every household, including those in rural and remote areas. The services will be available free of cost for all the viewers 24x7, in line with Government's commitment towards skill development and providing quality education to the last person in the country.

Five years of historic decision to implement OROP

- **Brought in:** To benefit more than 2.5 million ex- servicemen and war widows; Armed Forces Personnel retired upto 30.06.2014 were covered under this Order.
- OROP implies that uniform pension be paid to the Armed Forces Personnel retiring in the same rank with the same length of service regardless of their date of retirement. Thus, OROP implies bridging the gap between the rate of pension of current and past retirees at periodic intervals.

India is a signatory to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

As part of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), India has three quantitative climate change goals viz.

- Reduction in the emissions intensity of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 33 to 35 percent by 2030 from 2005 level,
- Achieving about 40 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel based energy resources by 2030 and
- Creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030

New online system of MSME/Udyam Registration

More than 11 lakh MSMEs have successfully registered themselves by now.

This portal is seamlessly integrated with CBDT and GST networks as also with the GeM. It may be noted that through this integration, now MSME registration is a totally paperless exercise.

- 3.72 lakh enterprises have registered under Manufacturing category whereas 6.31 lakh enterprises under Service sector.
- The share of Micro Enterprises is 93.17% whereas Small and Medium Enterprises are 5.62% and 1.21% respectively.
- 7.98 lakh enterprises are owned by Male whereas 1.73 lakh enterprises by Female entrepreneurs.
- 11,188 enterprises are owned by Divyangjan entrepreneurs.
- The Top 5 Industrial sectors of registrations are – Food Products, Textile, Apparel, Fabricated Metal products and Machinery & equipments.
- 1,01,03,512 persons have been given employment by these registered units.
- 5 leading States for Udyam registrations are Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat.

132nd birth anniversary of Prof. C.V. Raman

- An acclaimed Physicist, Nobel laureate and Bharat Ratna recipient who was instrumental in India's growth in the field of science and Physics in particular
- Sir C.V. Raman is known to have placed India on the world Science map. He was the first person from Asia to be awarded a Nobel Prize in any field of science for his work on Raman Effect.

The Raman effect has been very useful in many areas of science.

- It was found that when light was passed through a substance, a series of colours were seen that could be thought of as a fingerprint of the substance.
- This idea has been used in chemistry, medicine, biology and many other areas of science to find out what a substance is made of.

- **National Science Day** is celebrated every year on 28 February by the Government of India to commemorate the discovery of the 'Raman Effect'. designated 28 February as in 1986.
- On this day, Sir C.V. Raman announced the discovery of the 'Raman Effect' for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930

Other contributions

- Professor C V Raman was first to investigate the harmonic nature of the sound of the Indian drums such as the Tabla and the Mridanga.
- Raman also discovered the quantum photon spin which later proved the quantum nature of light.
- Today Raman spectroscopy, which relies on these 'fingerprints,' is used in laboratories all over the world to identify molecules and to analyze living cells and tissues to detect diseases such as cancer. It is being used in life sciences, nuclear science, drugs, bomb-detection, in forensics, in disease diagnosis and in RNA/DNA diagnosis.
- In 1943, he established the 'Raman Research Institute', near Bangalore.
- Raman and his student, Nagendra Nath, provided the correct theoretical explanation for the acousto-optic effect (light scattering by sound waves), in a series of articles resulting in the celebrated Raman–Nath theory. Modulators, and switching systems based on this effect have enabled optical communication components based on laser systems.
- Raman was a great scholar, physicist and mentor who not only received Noble Prize for his work Raman's effect but also encourages and trained hundreds of students in the field of science. He founded the Indian Journal of Physics and the Indian Academy of Sciences. In 1947, he was appointed as the first National Professor by the new government of Independent India.

Films Division is paying tribute to him by streaming a biopic, C.V. Raman (18 Min./ English) – The documentary on Prof Raman throws light into his life and works including the groundbreaking work he did in the field of light scattering which later became famously known in the scientific community as 'Raman Effect'.



PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (PIB) IAS UPSC – 15th November to 22nd November – 2020

 iasbaba.com/2020/11/press-information-bureau-pib-ias-upsc-15th-november-to-22nd-november-2020

Date November 26, 2020



Press Information Bureau(PIB) IAS UPSC – 15th November to 22nd November – 2020

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 - Scientists establish empirical relationships for identifying M Dwarf stars that can be potentially habitable

ARCHIVES

GS-2

Virtual court and e-challan project launched in Assam

(Topic: Judiciary)

- Maharashtra's 2nd virtual court called "NyayKaushal" was recently inaugurated
- With this 9 virtual courts become functional across the country
- Over 30 lakh cases have been handled by 7 virtual courts
- In over 10 lakh cases, online fine of more than Rs.123 Cr has been realized till 9th November

About Virtual Court and E-challan Solution

E-challan solution is an initiative of the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) whereas the software has been developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC). It will replace the present concept of manual challan with an electronically generated digital challan.

Virtual court is an initiative of E-Committee of Supreme Court along with Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice, and Government of India.

- Virtual Court is an online court being managed by Virtual Judge (which is not a person but an algorithm) whose jurisdiction can be extended to entire state and working hours may be 24x7.
- There is no brick & mortar building of the court. In a trial by Virtual Court, neither litigant shall come to the court nor will Judge have to sit physically in the court to adjudicate the case.

- The communication may only be in electronic form and the sentencing and further payment of fine or compensation will also be online. Only single process is allowed and there can be no argument.
- It may be proactive admission of guilt by the accused or proactive compliance of the cause by defendant on receipt of the summons in electronic form. On payment of Fine, such matters may be treated as disposed off.
- Citizen neither have to wait in lines in courts nor have to confront Traffic Police man. It will increase productivity of citizen as well as judicial officers. It will promote greater accountability and less corruption in Traffic Police Department thus bettering life of people.

Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) initiative

(Topic: Government schemes and policies)

- SATAT is an initiative aimed at providing a Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) as a developmental effort that would benefit both vehicle-users as well as farmers and entrepreneurs.
- It is a joint initiative of IndianOil, BPCL and HPCL to turn waste into green energy.
- Petroleum Ministry with PSU Oil Marketing Companies inviting Expression of Interest (EoI) from potential entrepreneurs to set up Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) production plants and make available CBG in the market for use in automotive fuels.
- Government of India, under the SATAT initiatives envisages setting up of 5000 CBG plants by 2023-24 with production target of 15 MMT, facilitating the creation of new employment opportunities and enhancing farmers' income towards further invigorating the rural economy.
- Benefits out of the SATAT will go to our farmers, rural areas and tribals. With inclusion of forest waste, Agri-waste, animal husbandry waste and marine waste, SATAT involves a multi-pronged approach. With liberalized policy regime ensuring ease of doing business for entrepreneurs, off-take guarantee, financing and technology support, SATAT is all set to contribute towards doubling farmer's income, generating employment for the youth and ensuring clean energy for sustainable development.
- Over the last two years, SATAT has grown into one of flagship programs of MoPNG. SATAT will establish an ecosystem for the production of Compressed Bio Gas from various waste and biomass sources in the country leading to multiple benefits viz. reduction of natural gas import, reduction of GHG emission, reduction in burning of agriculture residues, remunerative income to farmers, employment generation, effective waste management etc. The initiative is in line with the goals of AatmaNirbhar Bharat, Swachh Bharat Mission and boosting MSME sector.

Rs. 2 lakh crore to be invested for setting up 5000 Compressed bio-gas in the country: To boost availability of affordable and clean transport fuels, a MoU was signed today between MoPNG and leading oil & gas marketing companies & technology providers to establish Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plants across India

Benefits of Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG)

There are multiple benefits from converting agricultural residue, cattle dung and municipal solid waste into CBG on a commercial scale:

- Responsible waste management, reduction in carbon emissions and pollution
- Additional revenue source for farmers
- Boost to entrepreneurship, rural economy and employment
- Support to national commitments in achieving climate change goals
- Reduction in import of natural gas and crude oil
- Buffer against crude oil/gas price fluctuations

Do you know?

The Government of India had launched the GOBAR-DHAN (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources) scheme earlier this year to convert cattle dung and solid waste in farms to CBG and compost.

\$120 million loan signing between Government of India and the World Bank

(Topic: Role of international organizations)

For: The implementation of Meghalaya Integrated Transport Project (MITP)

- To improve and modernise the transport sector of state of Meghalaya
- Will help Meghalaya to harness its vast growth potential for high-value agriculture and tourism
- Will improve about 300 km of strategic road segments and stand-alone bridges by using innovative, climate resilient, and nature-based solutions
- Will also support innovative solutions such as precast bridges to reduce both time and cost of construction.
- Help Meghalaya develop reliable, climate resilient and safe roads which is crucial for the economic development of the state and its people as economic growth of any region is closely linked to its road infrastructure.

Within the state, it will provide the much-needed transport connectivity. It will also position Meghalaya as a major connecting hub for international trade through the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and the Nepal Corridor.

This operation will also support state government's "Restart Meghalaya Mission" to revive and boost development activities affected due to COVID-19 pandemic. It will help restore transport services and generate direct employment of about 8 million person days.

Government of India & NDB Sign Agreement for USD 500 Million

(Topic: Role of international organizations)

The Government of India, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, National Capital Region Transport Corporation Limited and the New Development Bank (NDB) today signed a loan agreement for lending USD 500 million for the 'Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System Project' to provide fast, reliable, safe and comfortable public transport system in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The NCR is among the world's largest urban agglomerations and a major economic centre of India. Due to lack of efficient public transport options, the number of private vehicles in NCR has increased. The daily passenger traffic along the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor in NCR is estimated at 0.69 million, of which 63% utilize private vehicles for commuting. Due to traffic congestion, it can take about 3 to 4 hours to travel between Delhi and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh by road during peak hours. Rapid growth in vehicular traffic has made NCR one of the most polluted regions in the world. By 2030, NCR is projected to become the most populous urban agglomeration in the world, which will increase pressure on basic infrastructure such as housing, water supply, electricity and transport.

Fast transit system will

- Support in achieving the goal of sustainable urban development in NCR region including National Capital Territory of Delhi
 - Activate processes which will enable sustainable economic and social development with environmental protection, for future generations.
 - The environment friendly and very low emission RRTS will carry many times more people at high speed (average speed 100 kmph) while occupying just 3 m space on land thus reducing congestion on the roads.
 - Overall it will significantly reduce the total emissions from the transport sector in NCR.
-

15th G20 Leaders' Summit

(Topic: International organizations)

Convened by: Saudi Arabia

Theme: Realizing Opportunities of 21st Century for All

Focus: On an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19.

- During the G 20 Summit, the leaders will discuss pandemic preparedness and the ways and means to restore jobs.
- The leaders will also share their vision for building an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future.

India will enter the G20 Troika, along with Saudi Arabia when Italy will take over the Presidency of the G-20 on 1st December, 2020.

India's Stand –

Called for a new Global Index for the Post-Corona World that comprises four key elements –

Creation of a vast Talent Pool

Ensuring that Technology reaches all segments of the society

Transparency in systems of governance

Dealing with Mother Earth with a spirit of Trusteeship

For inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery in a Post COVID world, effective global governance is required and reformed multilateralism through improvement in character, governance and processes of multilateral institutions is the need of the hour.

- India is following the same principle in the 'Reform-Perform-Transform' strategy to move forward and inclusive development efforts that are participative.
- With the changing situation in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, India has adopted a 'Self Reliant India' initiative. Following this vision, based on its competence and dependability, India will become an important and reliable pillar of World Economy and Global Supply Chains. At a global level, India also took the initiative of establishing institutions such as the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.
- There is a need to fight Climate Change in an integrated, comprehensive and holistic manner. India is not only meeting Paris Agreement targets, but will be exceeding them. India has been inspired by its traditional ethos of living in harmony with the environment and has adopted a low carbon and climate resilient development approach.
- For humanity to prosper, every single individual must prosper and that we should not merely see labour as a factor of production. Instead, we should focus on human dignity of every worker. Such as approach would be the best guarantee for safeguarding our planet.
- Dealing with environment and nature as trustees rather than owners will inspire us towards a Holistic and Healthy Life Style, a principle whose benchmark could be a Per Capita Carbon Footprint.
- Noting that 'Work from Anywhere' is a new normal in the post-COVID world, India suggested creation of a G20 Virtual Secretariat as a follow up and documentation repository.

G20 Riyadh Declaration

Called for coordinated global action, solidarity, and multilateral cooperation to overcome the current challenges and realize opportunities of the 21st century for all by empowering people, safeguarding the planet, and shaping new frontiers.

On **COVID-19**, the EU championed a multilateral solution to the coronavirus pandemic. EU leaders called on the G20 to uphold and deepen its commitment to fight the COVID-19 crisis, notably by ensuring the affordable and equitable access for all people of diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines. The Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) initiative and its COVAX facility are the main tools to do so.

On **climate change**, the Summit agreed on a unified paragraph in the G20 Riyadh Declaration, after three consecutive G20 Summits where such consensus could not be reached. EU leaders urged all G20 members to work towards the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. The EU also promoted a recovery based on green, inclusive, sustainable, resilient and digital growth in line with the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

On **debt relief** for the most fragile countries, Leaders reconfirmed their support through the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative that will provide debt relief and free resources to fight the pandemic. They committed to implementing the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) including its extension through June 2021. EU leaders stressed that additional steps might be needed, and the Summit endorsed a common multilateral framework for further debt treatments.

On **trade and taxation of the digital economy**, Leaders recalled their support to the WTO reform process in the lead up to the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference and recognized the contribution that the Riyadh Initiative on the Future of the WTO has made. They also agreed to strive to find a consensus-based solution for a globally fair, sustainable, and modern international tax system by mid-2021, built on the ongoing work of the OECD.

Upcoming G-20 Presidencies: Will be held by

- Next: Italy
- Indonesia in 2022
- India in 2023
- Brazil in 2024

12th BRICS Virtual Summit

(Topic: International organizations)

Hosted by: Russia

Theme: Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth

- During the 12th summit, held in the backdrop of the 75th anniversary of the UN and in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, leaders will be discussing intra-BRICS cooperation and key issues in the global context, including the reform of the multilateral system
- Discuss measures to mitigate the impact of the ongoing pandemic, cooperation in counter terrorism, trade, health, energy and people to people exchanges.

The purpose of the Russian BRICS chairmanship in 2020, as it is for multifaceted cooperation between the BRICS countries, is to contribute to raising living standards and quality of life of our people

BRICS counter-terrorism strategy

The member countries calls upon all nations to take appropriate measures to prevent the use of their territories for terrorist bases or the perpetration or organization of terrorist acts intended to be committed against other States or their citizens.

It also stressed on the need for all States to refrain from organizing, instigating, facilitating, participating in, financing, encouraging or tolerating terrorist activities and to take appropriate practical measures to ensure that their territories are not used for terrorist bases or preparation or organization of terrorist acts intended to be committed against other States or their citizens.

The BRICS declaration countries also underlined the cross-border movement of terrorists. BRICS countries recognize that acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations are activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, threatening territorial integrity, security of States, and that the international community should take the necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism, including cross-border movement of terrorists.

- While Russia was the key drafting country as the host and chair of BRICS this year, China also signed off on the declaration which talked about “respect for territorial integrity” of Syria, Libya, Iraq and in the context of the UN.
- However, there was no mention of the over six-month border stand-off between India and China.

PM Modi at BRICS

- **‘Self-reliant India’ Campaign:** The campaign is based on the belief that a self-reliant and resilient India post-Covid can be a force multiplier for the global economy and make a strong contribution to the global value chains. India was able to send essential medicines to more than 150 countries due to the capability of the Indian pharma industry. Our vaccine production and delivery capacity will also work in the interest of humanity like this.

- **On BRICS economies:** BRICS economies will play a crucial role in the global recovery after the pandemic. We have more than 42 per cent of the world's population, and our countries are among the main engines of the global economy. There is a lot of scope for increasing mutual trade between BRICS countries. Our mutual institutions and systems—such as BRICS Inter-Bank Cooperation Mechanism, New Development Bank, Contingent Reserve Arrangement and Customs Cooperation—can also make our contribution effective in the global recovery.
- **Terrorism:** It is the “biggest problem” facing the world and asserted that there was a need to tackle the menace in an organised manner. We have to ensure that the countries that support and assist the terrorists are also held guilty.
- **Reform of UNSC:** Underlined the need to reform of the United Nations Security Council as well as multilateral bodies like the World Trade Organisation and the International Monetary Fund.

China at BRICS

Offered to cooperate with India and other BRICS nations in the development of vaccines against the coronavirus:

- Chinese companies are working with their Russian and Brazilian partners on phase three clinical trials for vaccines.
- To support the development of BRICS Vaccine R&D centre, China has designated its own national centre. China proposed a BRICS symposium on traditional medicine to explore its role in coronavirus prevention and treatment
- China will open the BRICS partnership on a new industrial revolution innovation centre in the Chinese city of Xiamen.

About BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa)

On November 30, 2001, Jim O'Neill, a British economist who was then chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, coined the term 'BRIC' to describe the four emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, and China.

- Established in 2009, BRICS represents the collective voice of the Global South with Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa as its members.
- After its establishment more than a decade ago, BRICS became the first-ever compact non-Western, inter-continental multilateral club.
- It was lauded as a unique experiment to bring together politically, economically and culturally diverse countries who share a range of concerns and interests with regard to the functioning of the western liberal international order.
- BRICS has been driven by the idea to challenge, if not dismantle, western hegemony and bring new ideas on the table for global governance.
- The BRICS is mainly portrayed as a grouping of fast-emerging economies with huge market potential.
- Bilateral relations among BRICS nations are conducted on the basis of non-interference, equality, and mutual benefit.

- There are two components that make up the financial architecture of BRICS:
 - New Development Bank (NDB) (BRICS Development Bank)
 - Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA).

NOTE:

A. BRICS 5G Innovation Base

- BRICS 5G innovation base has been proposed by China.
- **Objective:** To take forward 5G and Artificial Intelligence (AI) cooperation BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

Key takeaways

- Due to ongoing tensions between India and China, India is reluctant to join the programme while other countries are willing to allow China's participation in their 5G networks.
 - India has made clear that a return to normalcy cannot be possible while tensions along the Line of Actual Control remain unresolved.
 - India has also recently joined the 'Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)' as a founding member.
- Russia has agreed to work with China on 5G.
- In South Africa, Huawei is providing services to provide 5G networks.
- Brazil has allowed participation of Huawei in 5G trials.

B. Counter-Terrorism Strategy by BRICS

The five-nation grouping BRICS has adopted a new counter-terrorism strategy to effectively deal with terrorism.

Key takeaways

Objective:

- To complement and strengthen the existing bilateral and multilateral ties among the BRICS countries;
- To make a meaningful contribution to the global efforts of preventing and combating the threat of terrorism.

The BRICS countries reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any act of terrorism committed is a crime and has no justification. They also recognized that the international community should take the necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism, including cross-border movement of terrorists.

World Fisheries Day

(Topic: Agriculture, Food processing)

On: 21st November, 2020

Aim: To draw attention to overfishing, habitat destruction and other serious threats to the sustainability of marine and inland resources.

The Fisheries sector is responsible for providing nutritional security, livelihood support and employment to millions of Indians.

- India is the second major producer of fish through aquaculture in the world.
- It is the 4th largest exporter of fish in the world.
- It contributes 7.7% to the global fish production.
- Fish constituted about 10% of total exports from India and almost 20% of agriculture exports in 2017-18.
- The fisheries and aquaculture production contribute around 1% to India's GDP and over 5% to the agricultural GDP.
- Around 28 million people are employed in the fisheries sector in India.

The importance –

It is estimated that the world's population will exceed 9 billion by 2050. With the increase in the population, the demand for nutritional security also goes on parallel lines. The agriculture and the allied sectors have to contribute the food demand and supply will play an important role combined with other food sectors to meet the nutritional demands of the growing population.

The marine capture fisheries of our country has become stagnant and there is a paradigm shift from capture to culture based fisheries. Aquaculture activities have to be taken up in India as the alternative way of meeting the growing demand of nutritional security.

Indian Government's Effort to Improve Fisheries Sector

- **Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) during 2018-19:** It will cater to creation of fisheries infrastructure facilities both in marine and inland fisheries sectors to enhance the fish production in the country.
- **Extension of Kisan Credit Cards (KCC)** facilities to fishers and fish farmers to help them in meeting their working capital needs.
- **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana:** It aims to achieve 22 million tonnes of fish production by 2024-25. It is also expected to create employment opportunities for 5.5 million people. At a total estimated investment of Rs. 20,050 crores, intends to address critical gaps in fish production and productivity, quality, technology, post-harvest infrastructure and management, modernisation and strengthening of value chain, traceability, establishing a robust fisheries management framework and fishers' welfare.

- **Blue Revolution:** It focuses on creating an enabling environment for integrated development and management of fisheries for the socio-economic development of the fishers and fish farmers.

The Way Forward

- **There is a need to streamline policies and programs to take R&D benefits** to the farmers and fishers for orderly and sustainable utilisation of all potential resources with focus on increasing efficiency and reducing environmental footprint.
- **We need to diligently explore the resources available in the country** such as waterlogged area, wetlands, lakes, reservoirs, canals, ponds, tanks, floodplains, backwaters, lagoons, low saline inland areas for increasing the fish production.
- **Lay special thrust on increasing productivity in inland fisheries along with full utilisation of the country's deep sea fishing potential.**
 - It is true that China has the innate advantage of more than twice the coastal line of India and has larger areas of inland water resources and reservoirs. But, that should not deter India because it has one of the largest Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) areas of over 2 million sq km compared to China's 0.88 million sq km.
 - The development of EEZ calls for new systems and large-scale deployment of offshore aquaculture activities of high value species.
 - Ocean ranching is one area which will yield rich social dividends, without damaging the ecosystem.
 - India also needs a single uniform national data on marine fisheries because authentic data truly reflect ground realities which in turn help in efficient planning for the future.'
- **Role of logistics**
 - Food processing and marketing cannot become complete in the absence of logistics. A robust logistics support requires complementary infrastructural facilities like cold chain and storage facilities to handle peak harvests.
 - Creation of cold chains can help reduce spoilage losses which are currently at 30-35 per cent.
 - Marketing infrastructure and cloud-based market intelligence should also be put in place.
 - India should also take the lead in empowering the discernible fish fans across the world by allowing them to trace the back history of the fish it cultivates as to how they were grown, what they were fed with and the methods by which they were caught and processed. It means a quality certification authenticating globally accepted good management practices involving the twin elements of sustainability and traceability both for the marine and inland sectors.
 - Sustainability being the pivot of 2030 Master Plan, there should also be efforts to integrate aquaculture and agriculture to boost farmers' income.

Key takeaways

- For the first time, the Indian Government will award best performing States in the Fisheries Sector.
- **Best States:** (1) Odisha (amongst Marine states); (2) Uttar Pradesh (amongst Inland states); (3) Assam (amongst Hilly and NE states).

Answer: Developing entrepreneurship in the field of livestock and fisheries can be a game changer for the rural economy. Elucidate.

India's IRNSS is now part of World Wide Radio Navigation System

(Topic: Space; Science and Technology)

The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) has been accepted as a component of the World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS) for operation in the Indian Ocean Region by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

- This will enable merchant vessels to use IRNSS for obtaining position information similar to GPS and GLONASS to assist in the navigation of ships in ocean waters within the area covered by 50°N latitude, 55°E longitude, 5°S latitude and 110°E longitude (approximately up to 1500 km from Indian boundary).
- IRNSS is an independent regional navigation satellite system developed by India. It is designed to provide accurate position information service to assist in the navigation of ships in Indian Ocean waters.

Scientists establish empirical relationships for identifying M Dwarf stars that can be potentially habitable

(Topic: Space; Science and Technology)

The clouds are becoming clearer in the search for a new kind of life in the universe. Scientists have established some empirical relationships enabling the use of spectral indices for finding the fundamental parameters of M dwarf stars that could identify them as potentially habitable.

M dwarfs are the tiniest of the stars that have masses ranging from about 8 percent to about 50 percent of the Sun's mass. More than 70% of all stars in our Galaxy are M dwarfs (also known as red dwarfs), dominating the stellar populations by number. For long, scientists have considered them unlikely host of habitable planets.

As new evidence that the chances of the occurrence of planetary systems, especially Earth-like planets orbiting in 'habitable zones', increases with decreasing stellar mass and radius, M dwarfs are becoming attractive targets for potentially habitable extra-planet searches due to their proximity, small size, and low mass. NASA's Kepler mission suggests that M dwarfs are swarming with rocky planets, making the characterization of these low-mass stars crucial.

- A total of 53 M dwarfs were studied using the TIFR Near-Infrared (NIR) Spectrometer and Imager (TIRSPEC) instrument on the 2-m Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT) at Hanle, India.
- A new medium resolution spectra of M-type dwarf stars (MoV–M7V) covering the NIR wavelength was derived.
- Using effective temperature (Teff), radius, and luminosity of nearby bright calibrator stars, the team has created new empirical relationships among those fundamental parameters and spectral indices of M dwarfs.
- The determination of stellar parameters in M dwarfs have been a challenging task as these M dwarfs are smaller, cooler, and fainter than Sun-like stars. These new empirical relationships could help overcome this challenge.

Prelims oriented News

CM of Bihar: Nitish Kumar

National Newborn Week 2020: 15th through 21st November

- **Aim:** To reinforce the importance of newborn health as a key priority area of the health sector and to reiterate the commitment at the highest level.
- **Theme:** 'Quality, Equity, Dignity for every newborn at every health facility and everywhere'.

World Toilet Day: 19th November

- Conferred the Swachhata Awards 2020 on the 20 best performing districts for making significant contribution towards ODF Sustainability and ODF Plus goals
- The 20 awardee districts are namely West Godavari and East Godavari (Andhra Pradesh), Siang (Arunachal Pradesh), Kanker and Bemetara (Chhattisgarh); Vadodara and Rajkot (Gujarat); Bhiwana and Rewari (Haryana); Ernakulam and Wayanad (Kerala); Kolhapur and Nashik (Maharashtra); Kolasib and Serchhip (Mizoram); Moga and Fatehgarh Sahib (Punjab); Siddipet and Peddapalli (Telangana); and Cooch Behar (West Bengal).

Naturopathy Day: 18th November

- The day on which Mahatma Gandhi become a Life Member of the Nature Cure Foundation Trust and signed the deed; Gandhiji is considered the founding figure of Naturopathy in India, as it was largely through his efforts that this practice which originated in Europe became popular in India.
- The future will be the era of Physiology, not Pathology. Health through Medicine is obscure and Health in the coming years will be more reliant on Naturopathy. Without a core change in the mindset of people, the planet will be sicker and sicker day by day. Therefore, the innovation of a new model of Naturopathy treatment is the demand of the day, along with its integration with other modern science.

Must Read: [Link 1](#)

REINVEST- 2020

- The virtual 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-INVEST 2020)
- Provide an international forum for investment promotion in renewable energy.
- It will also send signals to the global renewable community about India's commitment to the development and scaling up of renewable energy to meet its energy requirements in a sustainable manner.

Mission Purvodaya

Will drive eastern India towards self-reliance and contribute to making of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat; the need for focused development of the Eastern India to harness the untapped potential of this region to fuel next wave of national growth is the essence of Mission Purvodaya.

Both petroleum as well as steel sector have to play an important role in Mission Purvodaya.

- Building an Integrated Steel Hub in eastern India which would add to the competitiveness of the steel sector and facilitate regional development with job creation.
- The steel clusters will drive employment opportunities across the value chain, creating both direct and indirect jobs and spurring entrepreneurship, including in under-developed areas.
- It will spur development of other manufacturing industries and will be accompanied with social infrastructure in the form of cities, schools, hospitals, skilling centers etc.

Indian gas grid is being expanded to new markets in eastern and north- eastern part of the country with Government's supports of capital grants under the Indradhanush North Eastern Gas Grid projects. Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga (PMUG) project is directed to provide piped cooking gas to the millions of households in eastern states.

India has also recorded a landmark milestone with operationalisation of more than 50,000 Ayushman Bharat Health & Wellness Centres (HWCs)

- Ayushman Bharat was launched in 2018 with its twin pillars of Health & Wellness Centers (HWCs) and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) with bidirectional linkages between the two for providing the full range of services across the continuum of care.
- The Health & Wellness Centers provide CPHC services to people and sustain the efforts for provision of reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child, adolescent and nutrition (RMNCHA+N) services and control of communicable diseases. They also focus on disease prevention, especially for chronic and non-communicable diseases, wellness through community engagement and creating awareness about health lifestyles, appropriate nutrition and physical activities such as Yoga.

- HWCs also provide a strong backbone for the implementation of the eSanjeevani platform of Health Ministry which includes the eSanjeevani Patient-to-Doctor OPD and eSanjeevani-HWC which provides Doctor-to-Doctor teleconsultation service. 23,103 HWCs have started providing teleconsultation services to citizens. More than 7.5 lakh teleconsultations have already been conducted through these platforms.

Health Ministry's eSanjeevani completes 8 Lakh consultations

- It is a national telemedicine service that offers tele-consultations enabling patient to doctor consultations from the confines of their home, as well as doctor to doctor consultations.
- This eSanjeevani platform has enabled two types of telemedicine services viz. Doctor-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani) and Patient-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani OPD) Tele-consultations
- The former is being implemented under the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre (AB-HWCs) programme.
- The telemedicine platform is hosting over 40 online OPDs, more than half of these are speciality OPDs which include Gynaecology, Psychiatry, Dermatology, ENT, Ophthalmology, antiretroviral therapy (ART) for the AIDS/HIV patients, Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) etc.

SIMBEX-20: The 27th edition of India – Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise

- The SIMBEX series of exercises between IN and Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), being conducted annually since 1994, are aimed at enhancing mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices from each other.
- The scope and complexity of these exercises has increased steadily over the past two decades to include advanced naval drills covering a wide spectrum of maritime operations.

SITMEX-20: The SITMEX series of exercises are conducted to enhance mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices between IN, Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and Royal Thai Navy (RTN). Besides improving inter-operability between the friendly navies, SITMEX series of exercise also aim to strengthen mutual confidence and develop common understanding and procedures towards enhancing the overall maritime security in the region.

Exercise Malabar 2020: Involved participation by Indian Navy (IN), United States Navy (USN), Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) and Royal Australian Navy (RAN)

Indo-Thai Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT): India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy

- As part of Government of India's vision of SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region), the Indian Navy has been involved in assisting countries in the Indian Ocean Region with EEZ Surveillance, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), and other capacity building and capability-enhancement activities, on their request.
- India and Thailand have especially enjoyed a close and friendly relationship covering a wide spectrum of activities and interactions, which have strengthened over the years.
- To reinforce maritime links, the two navies have been carrying out CORPAT along their International Maritime Boundary Line twice a year since 2005, with the aim of keeping this vital part of the Indian Ocean safe and secure for commercial shipping and international trade.
- CORPAT builds up the understanding and interoperability between navies and facilitates institution of measures to prevent and suppress Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing, drug trafficking, maritime terrorism, armed robbery and piracy.
- It further enhances the operational synergy by exchange of information for prevention of smuggling, illegal immigration and for conduct of SAR operations at sea.

Mission Sagar-II: The Government of India is providing assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries to overcome natural calamities and COVID-19 pandemic, and towards the same INS Airavat is carrying food aid for the people of South Sudan.

- Aligned with Prime Minister's vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and reiterates India's position as a dependable partner in Indian Ocean Region (IOR) with Indian Navy as the principle maritime agency and first responder in the maritime domain.
- The mission also highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with South Sudan and further strengthens the existing bond. The strong bonds of friendship and brotherly relations between India and countries in Africa have been forged and strengthened over several centuries. India has always stood in solidarity with the countries and people in Africa and has partnered in undertaking development, capacity building and humanitarian assistance programme.

3 Years of UMANG

- The UMANG mobile app (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) is a Government of India all-in-one single, unified, secure, multi-channel, multi-lingual, multi-service mobile app. providing access to high impact services of various organizations of Centre and States.
- UMANG was developed by National e-Governance Division (NeGD), Ministry of Electronics & IT.
- Objective: to enable 'Ease of Living' for Citizens by facilitating simple and effortless access to major Government services from a single mobile app.

DIPAM signs an agreement with World Bank for advisory services on Asset Monetization

Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) has signed an agreement with World Bank today (16 Nov 2020). Under the agreement, World Bank is to provide advisory services to DIPAM for asset monetization.

- DIPAM is mandated with facilitating monetization of non-core assets of government CPSEs under strategic disinvestment or closure and enemy property of value of INR 100 crores and above.
- DIPAM has a framework for monetizing non-core assets.
- The World Bank advisory project, approved by the Finance Minister, is aimed at analyzing public asset monetization in India and benchmarking its institutional and business models against international best practices as well as supporting development of operational guidelines and capacity building for their implementation.
- It is expected that this project would facilitate and accelerate the non-core asset monetization process and help unlock the value of these un-used/ marginally used assets which has the potential to substantially augment financial resources for further investments and growth.

Release of Interest Sub-vented Loan from Micro-Irrigation Fund (MIF)

- Micro Irrigation Fund with a corpus of Rs. 5000 crore created with NABARD was operationalised in 2019-20.
- **Objective:** To facilitate the States in availing an interest subvented loan for expanding coverage of Micro Irrigation by taking up special and innovative projects and also for incentivising micro irrigation beyond the provisions available under PMKSY-Per Drop More Crop to encourage farmers to install micro irrigation systems.

Virtual ceremony for the launch of RuPay card Phase-II in Bhutan

- The implementation of Phase-I of RuPay cards in Bhutan has enabled visitors from India to access ATMs and Point of Sale (PoS) terminals across Bhutan. Phase-II will now allow Bhutanese card holders to access RuPay network in India.
- India and Bhutan share a special partnership, anchored in mutual understanding and respect, reinforced by a shared cultural heritage and strong people to people links.

PM unveils 'Statue of Peace' to mark 151st Birth Anniversary celebrations of Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj

- The Statue unveiled in the honour of the Jain acharya, has been named as 'Statue of Peace'.
- The 151 inch tall statue has been made from Ashtadhatu i.e. 8 metals, with Copper being the major constituent, and is installed at Vijay Vallabh Sadhana Kendra, Jetpura, in Pali, Rajasthan.

Personality in News

Rani Lakshmibai

- Queen of the princely state of Jhansi in North India currently present in Jhansi district in Uttar Pradesh, India
- One of the leading figures of the **Indian Rebellion of 1857** and became a symbol of resistance to the British Raj for Indian nationalists.
- She was named Manikarnika and was nicknamed Manu.
- After the death of the Maharaja in November 1853, because Damodar Rao (born Anand Rao) was an adopted son, the British East India Company, under Governor-**General Lord Dalhousie**, applied the **Doctrine of Lapse**, rejecting Damodar Rao's claim to the throne and annexing the state to its territories.
- She defended Jhansi against British troops when **Sir Hugh Rose** besieged Jhansi on 23 March 1858.
- A number of patriotic songs have been written about the Rani. The most famous composition about Rani Lakshmi Bai is the Hindi poem Jhansi ki Rani written by **Subhadra Kumari Chauhan**.

Indira Gandhi

- An Indian politician, stateswoman and a central figure of the Indian National Congress.
- She was the first and, to date, the **only female Prime Minister of India**.
- Indira Gandhi was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India.
- She served as Prime Minister from January 1966 to March 1977 and again from January 1980 until her assassination in October 1984 (assassins blamed her for the action code-named **Operation Blue Star**), making her the second longest-serving Indian Prime Minister after her father.
- She went to war with Pakistan in support of the independence movement and war of independence in East Pakistan, which resulted in an Indian victory and the **creation of Bangladesh**, as well as increasing India's influence to the point where it became the regional hegemon of South Asia.
- Citing fissiparous tendencies and in response to a call for revolution, Gandhi instituted a **state of emergency from 1975 to 1977** where basic civil liberties were suspended and the press was censored. Widespread atrocities were carried out during the emergency. In 1980, she returned to power after free and fair elections.

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