

NATIONAL NEWS

OAS PRELIMS 2020 CURRENT AFFAIRS

January 2020

- National Stock Exchange (NSE) Knowledge Hub inaugurated in New Delhi. The Hub will assist the banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) sector.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given its 'in principle' approval for strategic disinvestment of 4 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) namely Minerals & Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC), MECON, Bharat Heavy Electricals (BHEL) and National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) & 2 Odisha State PSUs namely Industrial Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha (IPICOL) and Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) in Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited (NINL).
- The union cabinet has granted the approval of giving the status of Institution of National Importance to a cluster of Ayurvedic institutions at Gujarat Ayurved University in Jamnagar. Jamnagar Ayurveda University will become the 1st Ayurveda institute to join the ranks of the IIT's and AIIMS.
- The Union Government has authorized the amount of Rs 5559 crore as Viability Gap Funding (VGF) or 1656 Km long Indra-dhanush Natural Gas Pipeline Grid project. The project will connect 8 North Eastern states: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim.
- Indian Railways is in the process of installing Internet Protocol (IP) based Video Surveillance System (VSS) at stations to enhance security.
- Census exercise India-2021 to begin on 1st April 2020 and will end on 30th of September 2020. It will be conducted through a mobile phone application.
- The "Paperless Licensing Process" has been launched by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), for Petroleum Road Tankers. The process has been launched through Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) & launched under the Petroleum Rules, 2002.
- The National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCCRP) and Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) was inaugurated in New Delhi. NCCRP enables people to report cyber crimes online. I4C will manage all kinds of cyber crimes comprehensively in coordinated manner.
- India has extended a line of credit of USD 75 million (over Rs 500 crore) to Cuba to finance solar parks in Cuba.
- The Kolkata Port has been renamed as Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Port on the occasion of 150th years celebration of Kolkata Port Trust.
- Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan will be inaugurated "Saksham" campaign. "Saksham" is a fuel conservation mega campaign of Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA).
- Union minister for women and child development and Member of Parliament from Amethi, Smriti Irani has launched 3 welfare schemes for women in Goa. The schemes are Yashaswini Scheme for Women Entrepreneurship, Swasthya Sahayak Project and breast cancer screening initiative handheld device facilitating detection of cancer.

- Union Minister of Steel launched mission PURVODAYA for the development of eastern India through integrated steel hub in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- The Income-Tax Department has launched a 24x7 control room to monitor black money and illegal inducements in poll-bound Delhi.
- India's Statue of Unity has become the part of '8 Wonders of SCO' list. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has included the Statue of Unity in its '8 Wonders of SCO' list.
- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu to inaugurate a new Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Telugu on January 21 in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh.
- Indian Army Officer Captain Tania Shergill, an officer with Army's Corps of Signals, will be the first woman parade adjutant for the Republic Day parade.
- Parshuram Kund Mela begins in Arunachal Pradesh. Parshuram Kund is a Hindu pilgrimage centre situated on the Brahmaputra plateau in the lower reaches of the Lohit River.
- Super Senior Citizens (over 80 years of age) and PwDs now vote through Postal Ballot in Delhi Assembly Election.
- Union Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel launched an exhibition titled "Indian Heritage in Digital Space" at National Museum, New Delhi.
- Union Minister for Heavy Industries Prakash Javadekar inaugurated ELECRAMA 2020 in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- 12th National Tribal Youth Exchange Programme was jointly organized by the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and Puducherry Government in Puducherry.
- The Integrated Check-Post (ICP) in Biratnagar has been inaugurated at India-Nepal border with modern facilities like electronic weighbridges, fire safety, warehousing facilities and 24x7 monitoring through CCTV.
- President of Brazil Jair Messias Bolsonaro will be the chief guest at the 71st Republic Day Parade at Raj Path, New Delhi on 26 January.
- The Government of India has created "National Startup Advisory Council" to advise the central government to create a strong ecosystem to nurture innovation and start-ups in India. Commerce Minister will be the chairman of the Council.
- India's first Mahatma Gandhi convention centre opens in Niger to honour the memory of Mahatma Gandhi.
- The Election Commission of India has received the approval from the Union Cabinet to sign MoU with Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission and Independent High Authority for Elections of Tunisia to enhance the cooperation in the field of electoral management and administration.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the agreements in the field of mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, cooperation in the field of early childhood care, oil and natural gas, and Geology and Mineral Resources between India and Brazil.
- A festival to celebrate the spirit of India "Bharat Parv 2020" has begun at Red Fort Ground in New Delhi. The objective of Bharat Parv is to encourage people to visit different tourist places of the country and to inculcate the spirit of 'Dekho Apna Desh'. The theme of this year's Bharat Parv is 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' and 'Celebrating 150 Years of Mahatma Gandhi.
- Union Minister of State for PMO Jitendra Singh launched the Bhuvan Panchayat V3 web Portal in Anthariksh Bhavan, ISRO Head Quarters in Bengaluru. This web Portal will enhance network application of gram panchayats. The Portal will function with the help of satellite technology develop by ISRO.
- Indian Railways has commissioned India's 1st governmental waste-to-energy plant in Mancheswar Carriage Repair workshop at Bhubaneswar under the East Coast Railway zone.

- World's largest meditation centre was inaugurated at Kanha Shanti Vanam in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- Minister of State (I/C) for Civil Aviation launched the Biometric enabled Centralised Access Control System (CACs) and 'e-BCAS Project Training Module'. The two projects aim to enhance security and ease of doing business at airports.
- NITI Aayog has released the 2nd edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index. According to the SDG India Index, India's composite score has improved from 57 in 2018 to 60 in 2019.
- Bengaluru will host the 107th edition of the Indian Science Congress. It will be the ninth time the city will host the annual convention. University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bengaluru will host the event.
- The Election Commission of India has launched a Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System (PPRTMS). The system enables the applicants to track the status of the applications for the party registration.
- The ISRO Chairman announced that the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will establish a 2nd launch port in Thoothukodi district in Tamil Nadu.
- Kerala became the 1st state in the country to pass a resolution against the Citizenship Amendment Act.
- The Indian Railways has renamed its security force RPF (Railway Protection Force) as Indian Railway Protection Force Service.

February 2020

- The Supreme Court has directed the states to establish Gram Nyayalayas within four weeks under Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008, to provide speedy and inexpensive justice to people in rural areas at their doorsteps.
- Jaipur "The Pink City" has been certified by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as the World Heritage site.
- Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog has begun a series of innovation demo days which aims to unite the stakeholders of the food processing and agriculture sector in India. The first innovation demo day was held in New Delhi.
- The Union Cabinet has approved to bestow the status of Institution of National Importance to the five Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs).
- The Union Cabinet has given its in-principle approval to set up a new Major Port at Vadhavan near Dahanu in Maharashtra on the basis of land lord model.
- India's biggest rural technical festival titled 'Antahpragnya 2020' was held in Basar, Nirmal District of Telangana with the theme "Spot and encourage rural tech innovators".
- Ministry of Coal (MoC) has launched a web portal for star rating of coal mines to promote the green, safe and sustainable mining practices with the help of technology.
- The Government of India has decided to consider all medical devices including implants and contraceptives as "Drugs". The notification regarding the re-categorization was issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. With the implementation, all the medical devices will come under the purview of the Central Drugs and Standard Control Organization (CDSCO). The recategorization will be implemented from 1st April 2020 in the phase manner.
- BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise 2020 has been started in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is organizing the BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise 2020 on behalf of the Government of India.

- National Workshop on e-office was inaugurated in New Delhi by Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh.
- India is switching to the world's cleanest petrol and diesel i.e. from Bharat stage-IV (BS-IV) to Bharat stage VI (BS-VI) from April 1, 2020.
- The Northeast Frontier Railway Construction Organisation has built India's tallest railway pier bridge which is 100 metres tall equivalent to a 33- storey building, across Makru river in the Tamenglong district of Manipur.
- The 4th Anniversary of the launch of Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM) was being observed which was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 21st February 2016.
- Symposium on "Emerging Opportunities for Indian Textiles and Crafts" which was chaired by Union Minister of Textiles and Women and Child Development Smriti Zubin Irani, was held in New Delhi. The symposium was organized by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts under the aegis of Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.
- Government of India will set up Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) by the first week of April 2020 under the Consumer Protection Act 2019.
- Union Cabinet has approved the 2nd Phase of the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen till 2024-25 to ensure that no one is left behind and everyone uses a toilet.
- Union Cabinet has approved the constitution of the 22nd Law Commission of India which will give recommendations on different aspects of law which are entrusted to it.
- The Delhi International Airport Ltd has declared "Indira Gandhi International Airport" of Delhi as India's first single-use plastic-free airport.
- The Ministry of Textiles has organized "Kala Kumbh" exhibition in New Delhi to promote Geographical Indication (GI) craft and heritage of India.
- The Indian Railways' South Central Railways (SCR) zone has become the 1st zonal railway in the country to have functional "energy neutral" railway stations on the network.
- Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar released the Reference Annual Bharat 2020 & India 2020 in New Delhi.
- The Indian Railways has launched the Hindi Version of Artificial Intelligence-based chatbot called "ASKDISHA". The hindi version has been launched to further enhance the customer services rendered and to further strengthen the services of the chatbot.
- The first anniversary of the iconic National War Memorial is being observed on 25th February. The memorial is a fitting tribute to those heroes who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty during various wars and internal security challenges since Independence.
- The Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) between India and Australia was held in New Delhi. This was the 16th edition of the session.
- Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal has launched the– Market Intelligence and Early Warning System (MIEWS) Web Portal. The portal can be accessed at <http://miews.nafedindia.com>.
- A Programme for Capacity Building of Scheduled Tribe Representatives in Local Self Governments has been launched in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The programme was launched by the Union Tribal Affairs Minister Shri Arjun Munda.
- The 91st Annual General Meeting of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Society was held in Delhi. The Annual General Meeting was chaired by the Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.
- The 24th Meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council will be held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The Meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council will be chaired by the Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Amit Shah.

- The National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom), in collaboration with Niti Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), launched an artificial intelligence (AI) based module for students of Indian schools.
- Ministry of Corporate Affairs has been launched 'SPICe+' Web Form (pronounced 'SPICe Plus') to offer 10 services by 3 Central Government Ministries/ Departments and of State Government of Maharashtra in a single web form.
- The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has approved Rs 162 crore under Operation Green scheme which has an outlay of Rs 500 crore to stabilize the supply of tomato, onion and potato (TOP) crops and to ensure their availability round the year without price volatility.

March 2020

- Road Transport and Highways Ministry will replace all level crossings on National Highways by Road Over Bridges or Road Under Bridges under the Setu Bharatam scheme.
- Health Ministry organized the national level Training Workshop on COVID-19 Management for all the states and hospitals in New Delhi.
- The National Water Mission organized the inaugural session of the workshop on "Increasing Water Use Efficiency in Industries" in New Delhi.
- India Trade Promotion Organisation has organized the 35th edition of AAHAR – the Food and Hospitality fair began in New Delhi.
- The National Security Guard (NSG) Regional Hub campus was inaugurated at Kolkata, West Bengal to provide adequate facilities to the brave NSG jawans.
- The mobile application named 'Fuel Humsafar' has been launched for delivery of diesel at doorsteps of Housing societies, hotels and hospitals in the national capital region.
- The multilingual version of "Incredible India" website and mobile app has been launched in three new languages i.e. Chinese, Arabic and Spanish.
- National Handicapped Finance Development Corporation (NHFDC) has organised "EKAM Fest" in New Delhi to promote Craftsmanship & Products of Divyang Artisans and Entrepreneurs.
- The 'Pension Adalat' and National Pension System (NPS) Awareness and Grievance Redressal Programme have been inaugurated in Jammu.
- India has bagged a deal of worth 40 million USD, to supply 4 indigenously built radars (capable of locating weapons) to Armenia in Europe.
- Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has stated that Sanitary napkin makers will be asked to supply a biodegradable bag with each napkin from January 2021.
- Union Minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Zubin Irani has inaugurated the "National Conference on Women in Police and CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces)".
- Government of India is planning to have at least one Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya JanAushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) Kendra in each block of India. The above plans are to be executed successfully by the end of year 2020. The above announcement was made during the 'Jan Aushadhi Diwas' celebrations held in Kathua, Jammu & Kashmir.
- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) celebrated its 35th Inception Day on 12th March 2020. On the occasion of inception day of NCRB, Union Minister of State for Home Shri Nityanand Rai launched Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) and National Cybercrime Training Centre (NCTC).
- Indian mountaineer Bhawna Dehariya has successfully scaled Mount Kosciuszko (2,228-metres), the highest mountain peak in Australia on the occasion of Holi.

- The Department of Posts, Kolkata (West Bengal circle), has launched free digital parcel locker service in 2 post offices Nabadiganta IT post office of Salt Lake City & post office in New Town's Action Area.
- The government of India has declared face masks and hand sanitizers as essential commodities for the next 100 days. Both masks (2ply & 3 ply surgical masks, N95 masks) and hand sanitisers have been brought under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.
- The Government of India has approved the proposal of setting up of National Technical Textiles Mission for a period of 4 years from 2020-21 to 2023-24, with an outlay of Rs. 1480 crores.
- Four convicts in Nirbhaya gangrape and murder case Pawan Gupta, Vinay Sharma, Akshay Kumar and Mukesh Kumar were hanged to death at Tihar jail in Delhi.
- Former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi took oath as a nominated member of Rajya Sabha.
- Indian Navy has established a Quarantine Camp at INS Vishwakarma in Eastern Naval Command (ENC) for Indian nationals being evacuated from COVID-19 affected countries.
- The Supreme court of India bench headed by Justice D Y Chandrachud has cleared permanent commission for women officers in the Indian Navy.
- Innovate for Accessible India campaign has been launched jointly by Microsoft India and NASSCOM Foundation to empower people with disabilities.
- Government of India pledged \$10 million toward a Covid-19 emergency fund.
- The Union Cabinet has approved a 4% hike in dearness allowance (DA) for central government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) to pensioners with effect from January 1, 2020. This is over the existing rate of 17 per cent of the Basic Pay/Pension.
- India celebrates "Shaheed Diwas" annually on 23 March to pay tribute to martyrs Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru. This day has a very important significance in the Indian freedom struggle.
- The Union Cabinet has approved Production Incentive Scheme for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing. Government will invest Rs 20 lakh crore in this sector to provide employment to 25 lakh people in next 5 years. It has also approved financial assistance to the Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters Scheme (EMC2.0) for development of world class infrastructure through Electronics Manufacturing Clusters.
- The United Kingdom has been confirmed as the first co-chair of the Governing Council of Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).
- "Mylab PathoDetect COVID-19 Qualitative PCR kit" has become the first 'Made in India' COVID19 Test Kit to get the CDSCO approval. Mylab Discovery Solutions Pvt Ltd is a Pune-based molecular diagnostics company which has developed the first made-in-India diagnostic test kit for COVID-19.
- India's biggest oil firm, Indian Oil Corporation Limited has started supplying BS-VI fuel across India. With this, Indian Oil Corporation Limited has become 1st company to begin supply of BS-VI fuel across its 28,000 petrol pumps.
- The Election Commission of India has deferred the Rajya Sabha elections amid rising risk of rapidly spreading coronavirus pandemic. Elections to 18 seats of Rajya Sabha were scheduled to be held on 26 March 2020.
- Indian Institute of Technology Madras is organising India's first Global Hyperloop Pod Competition named as 'Indian Hyperloop Pod Competition' to increase awareness and enthusiasm about Hyperloop in India.
- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced the extension of statutory deadlines related to income tax to 30 June 2020. The Finance Ministry has decided to extend the Income Tax Return (ITR) filing deadline for the Fiscal Year 2019 from 31st March 2020 to 30th

June 2020. The deadline for the linking of Aadhaar & Pan was supposed to end on 31st March 2020. This deadline has been extended to 30 June 2020.

- Election Commission of India has decided to permit usage of indelible ink on persons for stamping for home quarantine by health authorities in light of COVID-19. The Health Ministry may standardise the mark and therefore the location on the body where the mark has got to be applied in the order that it doesn't are available the way of conducting elections. The authorities shall even be instructed to make sure that the ink shall not be used for the other purpose.
- Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) has designated 285 beds for isolation wards in handling Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases.
- Government of India banned the export of antimalarial drug Hydroxychloroquine and formulations made up of it within the wake of COVID-19 outbreak.
- India's national Investment Promotion & Facilitation Agency, the Invest India has launched "The Invest India Business Immunity Platform". The Invest India Business Immunity Platform has been launched to assist businesses and investors in getting real-time updates on India's active response to COVID-19.
- Department of Science and Technology (DST) has set up a COVID-19 Task Force for mapping of technologies from Research and Development labs, academic institutions, start-ups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. The Department of Science & Technology plays a pivotal role in the promotion of science & technology in the country.
- The Union Ministry for Home Affairs (MHA) has issued the Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) to maintain the supply of essential goods. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) have been issued by the MHA in order to relieve the difficulties faced by people during the 21-day nationwide lockdown to fight against the Coronavirus outbreak.
- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has set up a CII COVID Rehabilitation and Relief Fund (CRR) for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to tackle Covid-19. The CII COVID Rehabilitation and Relief Fund (CRR) will assist small enterprises or MSME in rehabilitation. The setting up of Relief Fund is expected to curtail the impact of Coronavirus on the MSME sector.
- The Government of India's flagship fitness movement "Fit India" has teamed up with Bollywood actress and fitness icon Shilpa Shetty Kundra. The tie-up will provide free access of the Shilpa Shetty Kundra's premium 21-Day Weight Loss Programme during the 21-day lockdown owing to Covid-19 pandemic.
- Jana Small Finance Bank has rolled out a Unified Payments Interface (UPI) QR-based loan installment payment facility along with National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) for its customers. Initially the UPI QR-based loan installment payment facility will be only available to over 40 lakh customers of the Jana Small Finance Bank.
- The Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGN) has launched 'Project Isaac' to engage students in creative projects during the COVID-19 lockdown. The project aims to enhance the student's skills while they are confined in their homes.
- The Government of India has launched a coronavirus risk-tracking app called 'Corona Kavach.' Jointly developed by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- All National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) have been readied by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) as quarantine centres to fight the spread of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

April 2020

- Department of Science & Technology, Government of India has approved to set up a rapid response centre "Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID- 19 Health Crisis (CAWACH)" at a total cost of Rs 56 Crore at Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE), IIT Bombay.
- Naval Dockyard at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh has designed 'Portable Multi-feed Oxygen Manifold (MOM)' to supply oxygen to multiple patients at a time, which could be helpful in a contingency created by COVID-19 spread.
- National Cadet Corps has offered its volunteer cadets for national duty to fight COVID-19 under 'Exercise NCC Yogdan'.
- "Aarogya Setu" is the official COVID-19 tracking app that has been launched by the Government of India & has been developed by the National eGovernance Division of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in association with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- National Monitoring Dashboard on COVID-19 Grievances has been developed by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances to ensure timely implementation of COVID 19 Response Activities.
- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has extended the validity of documents that expired since 1st February 2020 till 30th June 2020. The documents include fitness, driving licence, permits (all types), registration or any other concerned document under the Motor Vehicle Rules.
- Ministry of Tourism has launched a portal 'Stranded in India' to help foreign tourists who are stuck in various parts of the country.
- World Bank has approved \$1 billion to the Indian government for a proposed India COVID-19 emergency response and health systems preparedness project.
- Civil services officers' associations have formed an initiative called 'Caruna' to support and supplement the government's efforts in fighting coronavirus. The acronym 'Caruna' stands for Civil Services Associations Reach to Support in Natural Disasters.
- IIT-Roorkee has developed a low-cost portable ventilator called 'Prana-Vayu' in association with AIIMS-Rishikesh. This closed-loop ventilator is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities & can prove useful in ensuring the safety of coronavirus patients.
- Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched the initiative called "Lifeline UDAN" to help India fight against COVID-19. Under this initiative, 132 cargo flights have been operated so far across the country to transport medical cargo including to remote and hilly areas.
- The innovation cell of the Ministry of Human Resource Development and All India Council for Technical Education has launched a mega ONLINE challenge called "SAMADHAN" to fight against covid19.
- During the 21 days nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19, pharmacists, popularly known as "Swasth ke Sipahi" of Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra are delivering essential services and medicines at doorstep of patients and elderly.
- Ministry of Human Resource Development has designated DigiLocker as the sole National Academic Depository. The ministry has directed the University Grants Commission (UGC) to implement NAD as a permanent scheme within DigiLocker.
- Amid 21-days nationwide lockdown in India, Defence Research and Development Organisation has been using scientific endeavours to develop products in an accelerated manner to combat COVID-19 pandemic. DRDO has developed Personnel Sanitisation Enclosures (PSE) and Full Face Mask (FFM) to protect primarily healthcare professionals from novel coronavirus.

- Government of India has launched an iGOT elearning platform to combat COVID-19 for all frontline workers to equip them with the training and updates in coping with Pandemic.
- Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has collaborated with UNICEF to develop a digital communication strategy for promoting a digital campaign for Self Help Groups. The partnership aims to highlight the importance of Social Distancing.
- National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) will run live counseling sessions on Swayam Prabha DTH Channel namely Panini, Channel Sharda and Channel Kishore Manch, for secondary and senior secondary levels respectively to overcome the loss of academic time of the students.
- A webinar series titled “#DekhoApnaDesh” has been launched by the Indian Tourism Ministry to provide information on many destinations and culture & heritage of Incredible India. First such semin was held with title “City of Cities: Delhi’s Personal Diary”.
- AIIMS Rishikesh partners with BEL (Bharat Electronics Limited) to set up India’s 1st remote health monitoring system in the state of Uttarakhand to monitor COVID-19 patients.
- Ministry of Labour and Employment has set up 20 control rooms to address wage related grievances arising in the backdrop of Covid-19. Control rooms have been set up under the Office of Chief Labour Commissioner.
- Government of India to set up a chain of 20 lakh retail shops called ‘Suraksha Stores’ across India to provide daily essentials to citizens while maintaining stringent safety norms in the wake of COVID-19.
- Ministry for Human Resource Development starts web-portal named YUKTI (Young India Combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation) to monitor and record the efforts and initiatives of the Ministry of HRD.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the unified e-GramSwaraj Portal and Mobile App on the occasion of National Panchayati Raj Day 2020. This is a new initiative of Ministry of Panchayati Raj which will provide the Gram Panchayats with a single interface to prepare and implement their Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).
- Government of India has launched a dashboard containing information of human resources for combating and containing Covid-19. This dashbaord has been created as an online portal on the website “covidwarriors.gov.in”.
- Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan starts an interactive platform ‘COVID India Seva’ to address citizens queries on coronavirus.
- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued a set of Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) as well as graded relaxations for seafarers.
- Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi has developed a mobile app named ‘WashKaro’. This mobile app helps to warn the people about a coronavirus containment zone nearby and helps them check whether a news item about the pandemic is genuine or fake.
- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) has developed “Feluda” a low-cost COVID-19 test strip. It was developed by two scientists Dr Souvik Maiti and Dr Debojyoti Chakraborty.
- Jammu and Kashmir State Legal Services Authority (JKSLSA) has launched a helpline under ‘Serve-theSeniors Initiative’.
- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) has rolled out a ‘Lockdown Learners’ series in India under its flagship “Education for Justice” initiative. It has launched ‘Lockdown Learners’ series of online dialogues with educators and students in India. The series emphasizes on COVID-19 and its impact on Sustainable Development Goals, peace and rule of law.

- The Indian government has put on hold the hike in dearness allowance for its government employees in a bid to contain the strain on its finances amid the COVID-19 induced crisis. The development comes less than a month after the union cabinet had approved a hike in DA from 4% to a much higher 21%. This decision of government will impact about 49.26 lakh central government employees and 61.17 lakh pensioners.
- To enhance its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of India has signed a \$1.5 billion loan with the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
- Vidut Vyapar Nigam Ltd, a subsidiary of National Thermal Power Corporation Limited has announced Global Expression of Interest to provide 10 Hydrogen Fuel Cell based electric buses and 10 Hydrogen Fuel Cell-based electric cars in Leh and Delhi.
- Unique Identification Authority of India permits the Common Service Centres that operate as banking correspondents (BCs), to provide Aadhaar updation facility to make Aadhaar updation easier for citizens.
- Lucknow's King George's Medical University (KGMU) has become the 1st government hospital in the country to successfully launch the plasma therapy treatment for COVID-19.

May 2020

- Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) has been launched by the Ministry of Coal (MoC) to facilitate early operationalisation of coal mines which have been allocated by the Central Government.
- National Council for Science & Technology Communication and Department of Science & Technology has launched a programme on health and risk communication 'Year of Awareness on Science & Health (YASH)' with focus on COVID-19.
- Government of India has increased the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP) of 49 items. The increase in MSP across various items of minor forest produce varies from 16% to 66%.
- CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CSIR-CRRI) has developed "Kisan Sabha App" to connect farmers to supply chain and freight transportation management system.
- Nation celebrates 480th birth anniversary of Maharana Pratap on 9 May. He was Born on 9 May, 1540.
- National e-commerce marketplace 'bharatmarket' will be launched by the traders' body Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT). 'Bharatmarket' will be launched for all retail traders, by CAIT in collaboration with several technology partners.
- National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti has jointly organised an IDEathon on "The future of River Management" with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA).
- Bamboo Conclave was held through Video Conference and featured the participation of representatives of Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), the Union Ministry of Agriculture and various other stakeholders from different sectors.
- Chandigarh government has launched a new mobile app named "CHDCOVID" to provide COVID-19 related information. The app has been developed in-house by the Society for Promotion of IT in Chandigarh (SPIC).
- NITI Aayog has virtually launched a campaign titled as "Surakshit Dada-Dadi & Nana-Nani Abhiyan", in association with Piramal Foundation to protect senior citizens during COVID-19. The campaign targets to cover 2.9 million senior citizens in 25 Aspirational Districts across various states such as Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, MP, Maharashtra, Rajasthan & Uttar Pradesh.

- Indian Institute of Technology(IIT) Alumni Council has launched a “COVID-19 test bus” in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It will reduce 80% of the testing cost without compromising on the testing capacity.
- Styrene gas leaked from LG Polymers Plant in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The changes in temperature inside a storage tank resulted in a leak.
- Government of India has launched its biggest-ever evacuation exercises named the “Vande Bharat Mission” in which the government will bring back nearly 15,000 Indian nationals stranded abroad due to the coronavirus lockdown.
- Union Health & Family Welfare Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan has recently launched the mobile application ‘AYUSH Sanjivani’ App and two AYUSH based studies related to COVID-19 situation.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated new 80-km road in Uttarakhand which connects close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and opens a new route for Kailash Mansarovar yatra via Lipulekh Pass. Border Roads Organisation achieved road connectivity from Dharchula to Lipulekh (China Border) known as Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra Route.
- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has approved a loan worth of \$500 million for India’s ‘COVID-19 Emergency Response.
- Government of India has started “Mission Sagar” to provide assistance to Eastern Indian Ocean Region Nations amid the coronavirus crisis. The mission is inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region). Under the mission, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kesari has been deployed.
- Supreme Court of India's bench of 5-judge, headed by Justice Arun Mishra has ruled that the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002, will now be applicable to state and multi-state cooperative banks.
- “CHAMPIONS (Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength)” portal has been launched by the Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). It aims to make the smaller units big.
- Emergency Assistance Program Loan of USD 1 billion has been approved by the New Development Bank (NDB) to India to support India in its attempt to curb the spread of COVID-19.
- Indian Railways has made the Aarogya Setu app mandatory for the passengers to travel by train.
- An assistance of \$3.6 million to India has been committed by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to enhance India’s response to the COVID-19 epidemic.
- In wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Bank has announced \$1 billion social protection package for India.
- The COBAS 6800 is the first fully automated, highend machine for performing RT-PCR tests for COVID- 19, procured by the Government of India for testing COVID-19 cases and has been installed at the National Centre for Disease Control in Delhi.
- “GOAL (Going Online As Leaders)” programme has been launched recently to offer mentorship to tribal youth via digital mode and intends to act as a catalyst to explore hidden talents of the tribal youth. It is a joint initiative of Facebook India with Ministry of Tribal affairs.
- The Government of India flagship social security scheme ‘Atal Pension Yojana’ (APY) has successfully completed five years of implementation.
- An online dashboard “National Migrant Information System (NMIS)” has been developed by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to secure information regarding the movement of migrants and to facilitate the smooth movement of stranded persons across States.

- India has provided USD 2 million aid for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency working for the welfare of Palestinian refugees. This aid is given for UNRWA core programmes and services, including education and health, amidst the coronavirus crisis.
- Ministry of Human Resources Development has launched a new mobile application called “National Test Abhyas” that was developed by the National Testing Agency to help the candidates to take mock tests for exams such as JEE Mains, NEET, etc.
- Indian Railways has operationalised its 1st 12,000 hp electric Locomotive- WAG12. The loco is named WAG12 with Number 60027. This Locomotive has manufactured by Madhepura Electric Loco Factory in Bihar.
- IGNOU’s Online Master’s Programme in Hindi has been launched by the Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ via Facebook Live session.
- As part of rehabilitation package, the Government of India has announced financial assistance of Rs 1,000 crore for cyclone hit West Bengal along with an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of the dead, and Rs 50,000 for the injured.
- As part of rehabilitation package, the Government of India has announced financial assistance of Rs 500 crore for cyclone hit Odisha along with an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of the dead, and Rs 50,000 for the injured.
- Ministry of Minority Affairs flagship programme ‘Hunar Haat’ will restart from September 2020 with the theme of “Local to Global”. There will be a special “Jaan Bhi, Jahaan Bhi” pavilion to create health awareness among the people with the theme of “Say no to panic, yes to precautions”.
- Department of Science and Technology, Government of Rajasthan has organized a webinar on “Van Dhan Scheme: Learnings for post COVID-19” in association with TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.
- TRIFED has partnered with UNICEF to initiate “Van Dhan Samajik Doori Jagrookta Abhiyaan” under which tribals will be provided with relevant information regarding COVID-19 along with several guidelines, nationwide and state-specific webinars and instructions on safety measures to be followed.
- Union Minister for Road Transport, Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated the 440 metre-long tunnel as part of the Chardham Connectivity Project in Chamba. The tunnel has been developed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).
- Manipur’s “Khudol” has been listed among the top 10 global initiatives for an inclusive fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The listing was done by the United Nations Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth.
- Indian Navy has formed “NavRakshak” PPE kit with innovative breathable fabric material to provide comfort to healthcare workers working against COVID-19 pandemic wearing multi-layered coverall PPE treating patients within the hot and humid condition. This PPE kit made by Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Arnab Ghosh.
- Former Supreme Court judge Justice, A K Sikri has inaugurated the Indian Dispute Resolution Centre (IDRC) in New Delhi that will provide a completely paperless dispute resolution environment. The centre offers offline as well as e-alternate dispute resolution (ADR) facility through its state-of-the-art earbitration, e-mediation and e-conciliation software portal.
- India has handover the war game centre named as “INDIA” to Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF). The centre was conceptualised by the Indian Military Team and built by the IAU in Jinja district, at a cost of over 1 billion Ugandan shillings or \$2,65,000.

June 2020

- National "Artificial Intelligence Portal" of India called "ai.gov.in" has been launched by the Union Minister for Electronics and IT, Law and Justice and Communications Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- National Program for the youth titled "Responsible AI for Youth" has been launched to empower the youth of India with appropriate new age tech mindset, hence making them digitally ready for the future.
- World Bank has approved a \$500 million for Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Program (STARS). The program seeks to improve the quality and governance of school education in 6 Indian states namely Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan.
- Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana will be extended till the end of November, an extension to cost over Rs 90 thousand crores.
- India and Bhutan has signed a pact for the construction of the 600 MW Kholongchhu joint venture hydroelectric project in Bhutan. The Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Limited is a joint venture between Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) and India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited (SJVNL).
- Government of India has launched a new initiative 'SWADES' (Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support) to conduct a skill mapping exercise of the Indian citizens returning from overseas under the 'Vande Bharat Mission'. This is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and therefore the Ministry of External Affairs.
- Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, R. K. Singh has launched the "#iCommit" initiative on the occasion of World Environment Day.
- Government of India has raised the Customs duty on bamboo imports from 10% to 25% with immediate effect.
- Government of India has allocated Rs 4000 crore to the State Governments under 'Per Drop More Crop' component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY- PDMC) for the year 2020-21.
- To expand the coverage of Micro Irrigation in the states, a Micro Irrigation Fund corpus of Rs 5000 crore has been created with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development.
- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs has launched its flagship programme "Turant Customs" at Bengaluru and Chennai to take a leap forward to take advantage of the technology for faster Customs clearance of imported goods.
- Tech Mahindra has signed a joint declaration with UN Global Compact, joining 155 global companies in calling for policies to build resilience against future shocks by supporting the activities targeted to hold global temperature rise to within 1.5°C above preindustrial levels, in order to reach net-zero emissions before 2050.
- 'COVID BEEP' app is India's 1st indigenous wireless physiological parameters monitoring system facilitated for COVID-19 affected patients. "COVID BEEP" stands for Continuous Oxygenation & Vital Information Detection Biomed ECIL ESIC Pod. It has been developed by ESIC medical college, Hyderabad in collaboration with IIT Hyderabad and the Department of Atomic Energy.
- India has recorded a 29% increase in the population of Asiatic Lions, count of which has increased from 523 in 2015 to 674 in 2020. The period from 2015 to 2020 also saw a 36% increase in the distribution area of the lions.

- The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has become the first development division to go “fully Digital”.
- Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers’ Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar has launched “Sahakar Mitra: Scheme on Internship Programme (SIP)” an initiative by National Cooperative Development Cooperation (NCDC).
- National Healthcare Supply Chain Portal named as “Aarogyapath” has been launched. It is an information platform developed by CSIR in partnership with Sarvodaya Infotech and institutional users and manufacturers / authorized suppliers of healthcare essentials.
- Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan has launched the Indian Gas Exchange (IGX). IGX is the first nationwide online delivery-based gas trading platform.
- India has joined the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI or Gee-Pay) as a founding member. This partnership aims to guide the responsible development as well as use of AI, grounded in human rights, diversity, innovation, inclusion, and economic growth.
- “e-Office” application has been launched in over 500 CGST and Customs offices across India by the Chairman of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), M. Ajit Kumar. The “e-Office” is a Mission Mode Project (MMP) under the National eGovernance of India. “e-Office” has been developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC) and is supported by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).
- Employees Provident Fund Organisation has launched a “Multi Location Claim Settlement” facility. The facility will cover claims such as provident fund, pension, partial withdrawal and claims and transfer claims.
- Trustees of the Prime Minister’s Citizens Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) fund has appointed, New Delhi based Chartered Accountants, SARC & Associates, as its auditors for the next three years. The SARC & Associates headed by Sunil Kumar Gupta is also the auditor of the PM’s National Relief Fund (PMNRF) appointed in 2019.
- India’s first mobile lab for COVID-19 testing “Infectious Disease Diag Lab (I-Lab) – Rapid Response Mobile Laboratory” has been developed with the support from the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology and Andhra Pradesh Med-tech Zone (AMTZ) under DBT-AMTZ COMManD (COVID Medtech Manufacturing Development) Consortia.
- India has been elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and will serve as the President of the UN body for the month of August, 2021.
- R&D Portal “Science and Technology Yojana for Aatmanirbhar Bharat in Mining Advancement (SATYABHAMA)” has been launched for Science and Technology Programme Scheme of Ministry of Mines. It has been designed, developed and implemented by National Informatics Centre, Mines Informatics Division.
- Union Minister Jitendra Singh has inaugurated two bridges Devika and Puneja at Udhampur and Doda districts respectively in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and IBM has partnered to unveil free Digital Learning Platform “Skills Build Reignite”. Along with “Skills Build Reignite”, IBM has also launched the Skills Build Innovation Camp.
- Republic of Mali has awarded the project management consultancy contract for the development of 500 megawatts (MW) solar park to National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC).
- Niti Aayog has formed a panel to develop a job platform for migrant labourers. In this panel, Niti Aayog has included top officials of tech companies like Google, Microsoft and Tech Mahindra.
- A Line of Credit (LOC) of USD 20.10 million has been extended by the Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) on behalf of the Government of India, to the Government of the Republic of

Nicaragua. This LOC has been extended for reconstruction of Aldo Chavarria Hospital in the Republic of Nicaragua.

- France has signed a loan agreement of 200-million euros with India to boost India's COVID-19 response. With this, France aims to increase the state and central governments' capacities to support India's most vulnerable people in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Minister of State for Shipping (I/C) and Chemicals & Fertilisers Mansukh Mandaviya has introduced India's largest 1st Virtual Healthcare & Hygiene EXPO 2020. It has been organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).
- Food Processing Edition of the "Exclusive Investment Forum" has been launched. It has been designed by the Invest India, the National Investment Promotion & Facilitation Agency of the Government of India.
- "Information about Country of Origin" has been mandated for the sellers by the Government eMarketplace (GeM), a Special Purpose Vehicle under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The sellers have been advised to mention "Information about Country of Origin" while registering all new products on GeM.
- India has pledged to contribute USD 10 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).
- A behaviour change campaign called "Navigating the New Normal" has been launched by the NITI Aayog in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Ashoka University, Centre for Social and Behavioural Change (CSBC), and the Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Women & Child Development.
- Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel, Dharmendra Pradhan has inaugurated a Product Application and Development Centre (PADC) set up by Indian Oil at Paradip, Odisha.
- TRIBES India store has been inaugurated on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM). It will help in facilitating purchases by Government. Along with the store, TRIFED's new website (trifed.tribal.gov.in) was also launched. It contains all important information about the schemes as well as initiatives underway to the benefit of tribal communities.
- The Ministry of Culture is celebrating the "Sankalp Parva" from 28th June to 12 July 2020. Under this, the ministry expects its Subordinate Offices, Academies, Attached Institutions as well as Affiliated Institutions to plant trees in its campus or at the surroundings wherever it is possible. It has also recommended 5 trees which represent the herbal heritage of our country. These are: Awla, Bel, Pipla, Bargad, Ashok.
- Battery Swapping Facility Quick Interchange Service (QIS) has been inaugurated at Chandigarh. A non-binding Strategic cooperation document has been signed between the Indian Oil and M/s Sun Mobility to explore the establishment of Energy infrastructure for Electric vehicle via Battery Swapping model across Indian Oil Retail outlets in select cities.
- The web portal of the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan has been launched to provide information to the public regarding the various district-wise and scheme-wise components of the Abhiyaan.

July 2020

- World Bank has approved a \$750 million MSME Emergency Response program for MSMEs in India to support increased flow of finance in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) which have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.
- First edition of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Newsletter "MATSYA SAMPADA", published by the Department of Fisheries, Ministry for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India and the Operational Guidelines of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana

(PMMSY), has been launched. It would be published on a quarterly basis starting from the first quarter of the year 2020-21.

- World Bank has approved a \$500 million for Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Program (STARS) which seeks to improve the quality and governance of school education in six Indian states namely Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan.
- TRIFED's new website (trifed.tribal.gov.in) has been launched. The website contains all important information about the schemes as well as initiatives underway to the benefit of tribal communities.
- Vice President of India, M. Venkiah Naidu has launched India's first social media super application, "Elyments".
- India's First No-Permission No-Takeoff (NPNT) compliant drone flight on the A200 Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) has been completed successfully by Quidich Innovation Labs and Asteria Aerospace.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has unveiled Asia's largest 750 MW Rewa ultra mega solar plant in the Rewa district of Vindhya region of Madhya Pradesh. It is one of the largest single-site solar power plants in Asia.
- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has released \$50 million loan to L&T Infrastructure Finance Ltd. This is the first tranche of a \$100 mn loan to L&T Infrastructure Finance Ltd for funding Renewable Energy projects in the country.
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has announced a partnership for clean energy development. The partnership has been established between the USAID-supported South Asia Group for Energy (SAGE) and MNRE's National Technical Institutions.
- Boeing India has delivered the last of the five AH- 64E Apache attack helicopters to the Indian Air Force (IAF) at the Hindan Air Force Station. With this, Boeing has completed delivery of all 22 new AH- 64E Apache to the IAF. Boeing also handed over the last five of the 15 CH-47F(I) Chinook heavy-lift helicopters to the IAF.
- NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has launched "ATL App Development Module" in collaboration with Indian startup Plezmo, for school students nationwide.
- According to the data of the Union Ministry of Commerce, United States was India's top trading partner in fiscal year 2019-20. The bilateral trade between 2 countries has increased from \$87.96 billion in 2018-19 to \$88.75 billion in the fiscal year 2019-20.
- Iran has dropped India from Chabahar rail project which comprises rail line from Chabahar port to Zahedan, along the border with Afghanistan.
- India has handed over outdoor fitness equipment for 61 islands across the Maldives under a cash grant of 8 million US dollars.
- 'Pragyata' guidelines have been released for Digital Education. It include 8 steps of online education that is, Plan, Review, Arrange, Guide, Yak(talk), Assign, Track, and Appreciate.
- Indian Railways has launched a 'Post COVID Coach' to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus infection. It has been developed by the Indian Railways' production unit, Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala.
- Railways Minister has announced India's first cable stayed Railways bridge "Anji Khad Bridge" to connect Katra and Reasi in Jammu and Kashmir. It would be developed by Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL).
- India's first fully indigenously developed Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Conjugate Vaccine

- (Pneumonia vaccine) has received Drug Controller General of India's (DCGI) approval. It has been developed by Serum Institute of India Pvt Ltd, Pune.
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development has launched development projects of worth Rs 44 lakhs in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Under this, there would be focus on the formation and skill development of Self-Help Groups to promote rural entrepreneurship at micro level.
- Opening session of the Digital Indo-Italian Business Mission on Food Processing was addressed by the Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal.
- First on-line NISHTHA programme has been launched for 1200 Key Resources Persons of Andhra Pradesh. It would be conducted through DIKSHA and NISHTHA portals by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).
- The fourth edition of the All India Tiger Estimation 2018 has created the Guinness World Record for being the world's largest camera trap wildlife survey.
- An e-Portal named "Automobile Solutions Portal for Industry, Research & Education (ASPIRE)" has been launched by the International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT).
- India's first public EV (Electric Vehicle) charging plaza has been inaugurated at Chelmsford Club in New Delhi. It has been established by Energy Efficiency Services Limited in collaboration with New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) to make mobility ubiquitous and convenient in India.
- "Manodarpan" is an initiative of Ministry of Human Resource Development launched to ensure mental well-being of the students.
- Asian Development Bank has approved USD 3 million grant to India from its Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund to support the government's emergency response to COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the change in the name of "Ministry of Human Resource Development" to "Ministry of Education".
- India has handed over 10 broad-gauge railway locomotives to Bangladesh. Locomotives were flagged off from the Gede station of the Eastern Railway in West Bengal's Nadia district while the receiving station will be of Darshana on the other side.
- Three high throughput COVID-19 testing facilities have been launched by the PM Narendra Modi at three testing facilities located at the National Institutes of Indian Council of Medical Research, at Kolkata, Noida and Mumbai.
- International Crops Research Institute for the SemiArid Tropics, the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune and the India Meteorological Department has developed the mobile app "Mausam" for weather forecasts.
- India-Russia Joint Technology Assessment and Accelerated Commercialization Programme has been launched by the Department of Science and Technology in partnership with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), and Foundation for Assistance to Small Innovative Enterprises (FASIE) of the Russian Federation. DST will fund up to Rs 15 Crores to 10 Indian SMEs/Startups for a period of two years.
- Government of India has extended medical assistance worth about USD 1 million in the form of anti-tuberculosis medicines to North Korea. The medical assistance was extended in response to a request received from the WHO.

August 2020

- The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has launched one-stop knowledge portal named as "MSME Saksham" in association with TransUnion CIBIL.

- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Harsh Vardhan has launched 'Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan, 2020-21'. It is a national programme which has been launched to popularize science among school students of Class 6th to 11th.
- A two-day international webinar on 'Lokmanya Tilak – Swaraj to Self-Reliant India' was inaugurated by Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah.
- In Himachal Pradesh, Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has laid the foundation stone of Indian Institute of Management (IIM) at Dhaula Kuan in Sirmour district.
- The Indian railways begin its "Kisan Rail" services to transport perishable goods. India's first 'Kisan Rail' will run between Devlali in Maharashtra's Nashik and will reach Danapur in Bihar. The train will cover the journey of 1,519 km.
- Indian Railways has launched an Overhead Equipment (OHE) Inspection app which will help in minimizing the train delays and long waits due to technical snags.
- India gives USD 15.5 million to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, under its commitment to supporting developing nations in their developmental priorities across all the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN) is an innovative technological solution implemented under National Health Mission (NHM) by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).
- Line of Credit of worth 18 million US dollars has been extended by the Government of India to the Government of Maldives, with the primary objective of expanding the fishing facilities at Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company (MIFCO).
- Bangladesh has decided to construct a monument for the Indian soldiers who died in 1971 during the Bangladesh's struggle for independence from Pakistan.
- Submarine Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) connecting Andaman & Nicobar Islands to the mainland has been launched. The 2300 Kms long submarine cable will boost the endless opportunities in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands by providing better internet & mobile connectivity.
- National Portal on Human-Elephant conflict called "SURAKHSYA" has been launched to collect real-time information and to manage conflicts on a real-time basis.
- National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) Online Dashboard has been launched. NIP will act as one stop solution for all stakeholders seeking for information on infrastructure projects in New India.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi rolled out the platform for "Transparent Taxation – Honoring the Honest". The new platform will carry forward the journey of direct tax reforms and will also reward the honest taxpayers.
- Indian Railways is observing "Cleanliness Week" from 10th August in order to mark the Independence Day.
- 2nd edition of Student Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP 2.0) has been rolled out by the Niti Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) in collaboration with Dell Technologies. It will enable young innovators of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) to work closely with Dell volunteers.
- Reliance Foundation has launched the "W-GDP Women Connect Challenge" across India in association with US Agency for International Development (USAID) and Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP).
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced the "One Sun, One World, One Grid" (OSOWOG) plan. Under this, there will be a trans-national electricity grid, for supplying solar power across the globe.
- A campaign on "Ayush for Immunity" has been launched by the Ministry of AYUSH. The webinar was streamed by the Ministry of AYUSH on its new digital communication platform Ayush Virtual Convention Centre (AVCC).

- Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched the Tribal Health and Nutrition Portal “Swasthya” and enewsletter on health and nutrition “ALEKH”. The ministry has also announced the opening of National Overseas Portal and National Tribal Fellowship Portal.
- An “Innovation Challenge Fund” of £3 Million has been launched by the government of United Kingdom (UK) in India. The newly launched fund aims to support research and development (R&D) proposals to address the challenges posed to the economy and the environment, by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Drone based surveillance system has been introduced by the Indian Railways for Railway security. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has decided to employ large number of drones for the purpose of Railway security.
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs has signed a joint communication with Ministry of Rural Development to promote sustainable livelihood opportunities. Through the joint communication, both ministries will together promote sustainable livelihood opportunities among tribal women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM).
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unfurled the national flag and delivered his seventh consecutive Independence Day speech from the iconic Red Fort. In the 1 hour 26-minute speech, he focused on the themes of “Aatma Nirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India)”, “Vocal for local” and “Make in India to Make for World”.
- Union Minister for road transport and highways, Nitin Gadkari has launched a mobile app named ‘Harit Path’ to monitor plantation along national highways.
- An online system of Registration and Renewal of Jewellers has been launched along with the online system of recognition and renewal of the Assaying and Hallmarking Centres. These systems are expected to bring about ease of doing business for the jewellers as well as the entrepreneurs. Hallmarking of precious metals will become mandatory from 1st June 2021.
- “Tribes India Showroom” has been e-inaugurated in Indian Globe Chambers of LIC Western Zonal Office, Fort, Mumbai. It is an initiative of TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs to promote the livelihood of the tribal people marketing.
- TRIFED has launched the “Tribes India on Wheels”, a van which brings various kinds of immunity boosting products like wild honey, organic haldi, amla, ginger, black pepper etc. It will boost the sales and enhance tribal income in these challenging times.
- The longest river ropeway of India has been inaugurated in Assam. It is 1.8 Km long and connects Guwahati and North Guwahati over Brahmaputra river.
- The India Component of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)–Transport Initiative for Asia (TIA) will be launched by the NITI Aayog. It aims to set up a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform to decarbonize transport in India.
- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal has virtually launched the “National GIS-enabled Land Bank system”.
- “Chunauti”, a Next Generation Startup Challenge Contest has been launched to further boost startups and software products with special attention on TierII towns of India.
- Government of India, the Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has signed a loan agreement for a \$500 million Mumbai Urban Transport Project-III.
- Department of Pension & Pensioners’ Welfare has decided to integrate the electronic Pension Payment Order (e-PPO) with Digi Locker.
- Government of Dubai Authority on commodities trade and enterprise, Dubai Multi Commodities Centre (DMCC) has rolled out a technology-driven agri-commodity trading and sourcing platform “Agriota E-Marketplace”.

September 2020

- India will receive an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan of an amount of JPY50 billion (approx. Rs. 3,500 crore) from the government of Japan as the COVID-19 Crisis Emergency Response Support in order to fight the COVID-19 crisis.
- Japanese government has committed Grant Assistance of an amount of JPY 1 billion (approx. Rs. 70 crore) for offering medical equipment to bolster the public health and medical system in India.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced to celebrate September 2020 as “Poshan Maah” or “Nutrition Month”. He also stated that the schools must introduce Nutrition Monitor and Nutrition Cards to increase the awareness of nutrition among the children.
- Union Department of Fertilizers is observing Swachhta Pakhwada from 1st to 15th September 2020.
- Union Territories Ladakh & Lakshadweep have been included in the ‘One Nation-One Ration Card’ scheme on ‘Integrated Management of Public Distribution System’ (IM-PDS). With this a total of 26 States /UTs Connected with the Scheme and will benefit about 65 crore people.
- Minister of State (MoS) (I/C) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Raj Kumar Singh launched the Pan-India "Green Term Ahead Market (GTAM)" in New Delhi virtually, for electricity. GTAM is the World's First Exclusive Product Market for the renewable energy sector.
- National Nutrition Week is observed every year from 1st September to 7th September since 1982.
- Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry have launched a toll-free mental health rehabilitation helpline “KIRAN”. The helpline was launched in view of the growing incidence of Mental Illness, particularly in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.
- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, has launched the Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-Atal New India Challenges. The programme will spur applied research and innovation in Indian MSMEs and startups. The initiative will help identify and promote innovations necessary for boosting the MSME sector.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will digitally launch the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana. Along with the scheme, the PM will also launch e-Gopala application. It aims to double the income of fish farmers. The PMMSY is a flagship scheme for focused and sustainable development of the fisheries sector in the country with an estimated investment of Rs. 20,050 crore.
- Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has launched a dispute redressal mechanism named "SAROD-Ports" (Society for Affordable Redressal of Disputes-Ports) to facilitate affordable and timely resolution of disputes for the maritime sector.
- India and the United States held a bilateral 2+2 Inter-sessional meeting in virtual mode. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the progress and developments in bilateral ties in defence, security, and foreign policy areas.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has addressed the ‘GrihPravesham’ event in Madhya Pradesh through video conferencing. Under this, 1.75 Lakh Families in Madhya Pradesh were delivered pucca houses under the PradhanMantriAwasYojana- Grameen (PMAYG).
- Central Government has constituted an Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) to oversee the process of the corporatisation of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB). Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is the chairman of this EGoM.

- The Lok Sabha has passed the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 on 15 September 2020. The bill seeks to cut salaries of all Members of Parliaments (MPs) by 30 per cent for a period of one year commencing April 1, 2020, to meet the urgent financial need arising out COVID-19 pandemic.
- Indian Railways is observing "Swachhta Pakhwara" from 16th to 30th September 2020. During the inaugural day of Pakhwara, Swachhta pledge was administered to Railway employees at all Zonal Railway HQs, Divisional Offices and other establishments. Railway Board through Northern Railway, in partnership with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), organised a webinar on "Swachhata and Environment".
- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare chaired 'Aarogya Manthan' 2.0 celebrating the 2nd Anniversary of Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (ABPMJAY).
- The Department of Biotechnology has launched the programme for "Strengthening Clinical Trial Research Capacity in Neighbouring Countries". The programme will help neighbouring countries, and LMICs (Low and Middle Income Countries) to build capacities for Covid-19 vaccine trials.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the 'Fit India Age Appropriate Fitness Protocols' at Fit India Dialogue. These fitness protocols have been prepared with the help of fitness enthusiasts for fitness and good health.
- A National webinar on "Curriculum Reforms & National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and Pedagogy" was organized under Shikshak Parv initiative. The webinar was organized to highlight the salient features of the New Education Policy (NEP 2020).
- A webinar was held between India and Israel, under the aegis of Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence through SIDM. The Theme of webinar was "Indian Defence Industry Global Outreach for Collaborative Partnership: Webinar and Expo".
- The 51st Edition of the International Film Festival of India, IFFI will be held from 16th to 24th January, next year in Goa. Earlier it was scheduled to be held from 20th November to 28th November, this year.
- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India has decided to block 118 mobile apps in view of the emergent nature of threats. 118 mobile apps have been blocked by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology by invoking its power under section 69A of the Information Technology Act read with the relevant provisions of the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking of Access of Information by Public) Rules 2009.
- Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah has inaugurated the "Destination North East-2020" festival. The festival will be held with the theme of "The Emerging Delightful Destinations" which speaks of the tourism destinations emerging stronger and more attractive when the Sector picks up momentum.
- Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan has launched the ICMR's vaccine web portal and National Clinical Registry for Covid-19. This vaccine web portal will provide information related to the COVID-19 vaccine development in India and abroad.
- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development will begin a Sanitation Literacy Campaign (SLC) in Karnataka to promote literacy on 'WASH' (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) in 2,000 villages covering one lakh rural population.

October 2020

- The Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Kiren Rijiju has launched the new logo of Sports Authority of India's (SAI) on 30 September 2020 at Delhi's Major Dhyan Chand Stadium.
- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has announced a special refinance facility of Rs 800 crore for Fiscal Year 2021. With this, NABARD will support the Government of India's Water, Sanitisation and Hygiene (WASH) programme.
- India and Myanmar are working towards the operationalization of the Sittwe port in the Rakhine state of Myanmar in the first quarter of 2021. The port is part of the Kaladan multi-modal transit transport project which is being viewed as India's gateway to Southeast Asia.
- Union Minister of Textiles, Smriti Irani has launched the first-ever Brand and Logo for Indian Cotton on Second World Cotton Day through video conferencing. Now India's premium cotton would be known as 'Kasturi Cotton' in the world cotton trade. The Kasturi Cotton brand will represent Whiteness, Brightness, Softness, Purity, Luster, Uniqueness and Indianness.
- The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs will integrate the application programming interface (API) between SVANidhi portal and various banks to expedite loan sanctioning and disbursement process under Modi government's PM SVANidhi scheme for nano entrepreneurs.
- To begin with, the ministry launched the API integration between the PM SVANidhi portal and SBI's eMudra portal. Ministry would perform similar integration with other banks as well for which a consultative meeting will be held shortly.
- The Union Minister Piyush Goyal has been assigned the additional charge of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution in addition to his existing portfolios, following the death of union minister Ram Vilas Paswan. Goyal is currently serving as the Union Minister of Railways and Minister of Commerce and Industry.
- The Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) on behalf of the Government of India has extended a Line of Credit (LoC) of USD 400 million (about Rs 2,932 crore) to the Maldives. The soft loan will be used for financing the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) in the Maldives, which is the single-largest connectivity and infrastructure project in the island nation.
- Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has approved the implementation of the Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS) project. The total project cost is Rs 5718 crore with the financial support of World Bank amounting to the USD 500 million (approximately Rs. 3700 crores). The project will cover 6 states namely Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha.
- India and France were re-elected as the president and co-president of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) for a term of two years at the virtual meeting of the third assembly.
- India has contributed one million dollars to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees in Near East. This aid will support the Agency's programmes and services, including education, health care, relief and social services.
- The Election Commission of India has set up a 2- member committee to examine the issue of revising the expenditure limit for candidates for Lok Sabha and assembly polls. The committee will comprise of Shri Harish Kumar, Ex. IRS and DG (Investigation), Shri Umesh Sinha, Secretary-General and DG (Expenditure).
- The country's largest para-military force, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has collaborated with IIT Delhi, Defence Research and Development Organisation, and Joint Advanced Technology Centre (JATC) to augment its Research and Development capabilities.

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India have signed a loan agreement worth USD 177 million, to upgrade 450 km of state highways and major district roads in Maharashtra.
- The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari virtually laid the foundation stone for the first-ever multi-modal logistic park of India, at Jogighopa, in Bongaigaon district of Assam.
- In India, the National Police Commemoration Day is observed on 21st October every year. The day is marked to remember and honour the brave policemen who have laid down their lives in the line of duty. On 21 October 1959, twenty Indian soldiers were attacked by Chinese troops in Ladakh's Hot Spring area, in which, ten Indian policemen lost their lives and seven were imprisoned.
- India has assumed the Chairmanship of the Governing Body of International Labour Organization (ILO), after a gap of 35 years. The Labour and Employment Secretary, Apurva Chandra, has been elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Body of the ILO for the period October 2020- June 2021.
- NITI Aayog has constituted a 14-member advisory committee to look into introducing reforms in the urban planning education system. The panel will be headed by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar. The members of the committee include Amitabh Kant, CEO of NITI Aayog and secretaries of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs(MoHUA), Ministry of Education(MoE) and Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism (I/C), Prahlad Singh Patel has virtually launched the "Life in Miniature" project, a collaboration between the National Museum, New Delhi, Ministry of Culture, and Google Arts & culture.
- Department of Posts (DOP), Ministry of Communications released a commemorative postage stamp on the 75th anniversary of the United Nations Organisations. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson, Anurag Srivastava stated India attaches the highest priority to the expansion of the UN Security Council so that it reflects contemporary realities of the world.
- The Vigilance Awareness Week 2020, is being celebrated from 27 October to 2 November 2020. The is observed every year by the Central Vigilance Commission during the week in which the birthday of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (31 October) falls. The theme for 2020 Vigilance Awareness Week is Vigilant India, Prosperous India (Satark Bharat, Samridh Bharat).
- Every year, October 27 is celebrated as Infantry Day by the Indian Army in Jammu & Kashmir (known by the nickname, Chinar Corps). The Chinar Corps celebrated the 74th Infantry Day on October 27, 2020, to honour the supreme sacrifice of the gallant soldiers in fighting the Pakistani invaders, in Jammu and Kashmir, in 1947.
- The Union Minister of State for Shipping (I/C), Mansukh Mandaviya has inaugurated the 'Direct Port Entry (DPE) facility' of V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust in Tamil Nadu. This will help in increasing Ease of Doing Business for the exporters, as the facility will bring efficiency and reduce dwell time, lower tariff cost and improve the competitiveness of shipper in the international trade.
- The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Arjun Munda has launched two Centers of Excellence (CoE) for Tribal Welfare in a collaboration between Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) and Art of Living (AoL) through video conference. The first CoE has been launched in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra for training about 10000 tribal farmers in the field of sustainable natural farming based on Go-Adharith farming techniques. Farmers will be helped in getting the Organic certification and marketing opportunities to make each of them Atmanirbhar Tribal Farmers.

- PM Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 4th India Energy Forum by CERAWEEK organised by HIS Markit. The theme of this edition is "India's Energy Future in a World of Change". India is the third largest and the fastest-growing aviation market in terms of domestic aviation and Indian carriers are projected to increase their fleet size from 600 to 1200 by 2024.

November 2020

- The Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad Arvind Bobde and Justice DY Chandrachud of the Supreme Court, jointly inaugurated India's first-ever E-resource centre and the virtual court called "Nyay Kaushal" at Judicial Officers Training Institute in Nagpur.
- As a part of Mission Sagar-II, the Indian Naval Ship (INS) Airavat has reached Sudan with 100 tonnes of food aid. Under Mission Sagar-II, INS Airavat will deliver food aid to Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Union Minister of State (IC) for Tourism & Culture, Prahlad Singh Patel virtually inaugurated the "Tourist Facilitation Centre" facility at Guruvayur, in Kerala. The facility has been constructed under the project "Development of Guruvayur, Kerala" under Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive' (PRASHAD) Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism, at the cost of Rs. 11.57 Crores.
- The Chief of Army Staff General, MM Naravane was conferred the honorary rank of General of the Nepali Army by President Bidya Devi Bhandari. He was honoured at a special ceremony at the President's official residence 'Shital Niwas' in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has constituted a four-member committee, to assess the existing Television Rating Points (TRP) of TV channels. The committee will be chaired by Prasar Bharati CEO, Shashi S Vempati. The committee will be responsible to address the 'needs of the stakeholders' and make necessary recommendations for a rating system which shall be 'robust, transparent and accountable'.
- The Ministry of Shipping is being expanded and renamed as the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. This information was given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 8 November 2020, during a launch event of Ro-Pax terminal at Hazira and flagging off the Ro-Pax ferry service between Hazira and Ghogha in Gujarat, which will reduce the 370- km road distance between the two places to 90-km by sea route.
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has issued a notification that FASTags will become mandatory for all four-wheelers, including old vehicles, from January 1, 2021.
- Digital/Online media has been brought under the purview of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Currently, there is no law or autonomous body governing digital content. The 2nd Schedule of the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 has been amended to include following entries viz. Films and Audio-Visual programmes, News and current affairs content. This means that digital content providers such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Hotstar will now be regulated by the Union ministry headed by Prakash Javadekar.
- Union Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has launched India's first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP) in Arunachal Pradesh. The solar-based lift water supply project is 'first of its kind' in the country, and has been commissioned at a cost of Rs 28.50 crore. However, such projects will be carried out in other parts of the country too.
- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) Chairman M. Ajit Kumar, along with members of the Board inaugurated the GST Bhawan, Panchkula, Haryana. The state of the art building will house the offices of Central GST at Panchkula. It has been built at a cost of about 31 crores rupees.

- The Government of India, the Government of Meghalaya and the World Bank has signed a \$120-million project to improve and modernize the transport sector of Meghalaya. This will help Meghalaya to harness its vast growth potential for high-value agriculture and tourism. The \$120 million loans from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), has a maturity of 14 years including a grace period of six years. The International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is a development bank administered by the World Bank.
- Union Minister of Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Law and Justice, Ravi Shankar Prasad has released a "My Stamp on Chhath Puja". My Stamp is an innovative concept initiated by the Department of Posts. Any common person or corporate organisation can now book order and get a personalised photograph or an image of a Postage Stamp.
- The Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan has addressed the 33rd Stop TB Partnership Board meeting in New Delhi through Video Conference. During the meet, the minister has stressed on the need to create a mass movement for the elimination of TB with strategized advocacy, thought leadership, disruptive social entrepreneurship, powerful, societal and political commitment. It must be noted that India is running the "TB Harega, Desh Jeetega" campaign that targets to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal target related to TB by 2025, five years ahead of the global target of 2030.
- Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering virtually launched RuPay card Phase-II, to allow Bhutanese cardholders to access RuPay network in India. In August 2019, PM Modi and his Bhutanese counterpart jointly launched Phase-I of the project. Phase-II will now allow Bhutanese cardholders to access RuPay network in India.
- India will host the Summit of the G20 Group in 2023. India was earlier slated to host the summit in 2022. India and Indonesia have swapped their respective hosting year of G20 as Indonesia would also chair the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2023. However, now the G20 Summit be hosted by Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.
- Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad has launched the UMANG mobile app International version in coordination with Ministry of External Affairs for select countries that include USA, UK, Canada, Australia, UAE, Netherlands, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.
- The 2020 Afghanistan Conference was organized in Geneva from 23-24 November 2020 virtually. The External Affairs Minister of India, Dr S. Jaishankar led the Indian delegation at the conference. India has introduced a brand new section of over 100 highimpact neighbourhood initiatives in Afghanistan value USD 80 million (Rs 592 crore) because the nation's growth portfolio within the war-ravaged nation has reached over USD three billion (Rs 22,200 crore) to this point.
- The Union Territory of Ladakh has got the largest solar power project set up under the Centre's 'Make In India' initiative at Leh IAF station to provide sustainable energy alternative to fossil fuel and traditional methods of energy generation. The project namely 'Provision of Solar Photo Voltaic Powerplant 1.5 MW' has been completed within 12 months well before the completion deadline of March 31, 2021.
- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of 16 National Highway projects in Uttar Pradesh. The construction cost of these infra projects is estimated to be around Rs 7477 crore.
- Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar has launched the "India Climate Change Knowledge Portal". The portal will have all the major steps the

Government is taking at both national and international levels to address the climate change issues.

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi embarked on a three-city visit on 28 November 2020, to personally review the COVID-19 vaccine development and manufacturing process at facilities in these cities. Facilities visited by PM Modi are: Zydus Biotech Park in Ahmedabad, Bharat Biotech in Hyderabad and Serum Institute of India in Pune.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chaired the 33rd PRAGATI meeting to review multiple projects, grievances and programmes. PRAGATI stands for "Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation".

December 2020

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- The Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar recently unveiled a new initiative called Sahakar Pragya. Sahakar Pragya is an initiative of National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), to help in capacity development of the cooperative sector in India, through the training programme.
- The Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, Arjun Munda has launched the first-ever virtual edition of Aadi Mahotsav – Madhya Pradesh. The event will showcase the tribal traditions of the various tribal communities by having their crafts and natural products on display.
- United Kingdom Prime Minister, Boris Johnson is expected to be the chief guest at 2021 Republic day with Prime Minister Narendra Modi formally inviting him. Johnson, on his part, has invited PM Modi to the G-7 summit in the United Kingdom next year. The last British prime minister at the Republic Day parade was John Major in 1993.
- The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar virtually inaugurated Honey Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) Programme in five states, for producing honey.
- The 9th edition of the International Sand Art Festival and the 31st edition of the Konark Festival has kicked-off in Odisha. International Sand Art Festival is being held at the Chandrabhaga Beach of Konark in Puri district of Odisha. About 70 artists from across the country are taking part in the festival. The world-renowned sand artist and Padmashree Awardee, Sudarsan Pattnaik, has been appointed as Chief Curator of the festival.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the construction work of the Agra Metro project in Agra, Uttar Pradesh. The Agra Metro project comprises 2 corridors with a total length of 29.4 km. It would connect major tourist attractions like Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Sikandra with railway stations and bus stands.
- The Union Cabinet has approved a scheme called the Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Initiative (PM-WANI), to improve wireless connectivity and pave the way for free wireless internet in public spaces across the country.
- The Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated the 1.5 km long Koilwar bridge over Sone river in Bihar through Video Conferencing. This newly

inaugurated bridge is a part of the six-lane bridge being made in place of the existing two-lane bridge, for both rail and road traffic, which is 138 years old.

- The Manila-based multilateral lending agency Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 2.5 million (about Rs 18 crore) technical assistance to support advanced biofuel development in India. The grant will be funded from the Asia Clean Energy Fund, financed by the Government of Japan under the Clean Energy Financing Partnership Facility, and the Republic of Korea's e-Asia and Knowledge Partnership Fund.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has delivered the inaugural address at FICCI's 93rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Annual Convention via video conferencing. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has organised the convention from December 11 to 14, 2020. The theme for the FICCI 93rd AGM is 'Inspired India'. The Prime Minister also inaugurated the virtual FICCI Annual Expo 2020.
- The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), India and the Central Committee on Drug Abuse Control, Myanmar conducted the 5th edition of the IndiaMyanmar Bilateral Meeting on Drug Control Cooperation. The Indian delegation was led by the Director-General Narcotics Control Bureau, Shri Rakesh Asthana.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the 30,000 megawatt (MW) capacity hybrid renewable energy park in Kutch district of Gujarat. It will be the largest renewable energy park of its kind in the world. It is expected to play a major role in fulfilling India's vision of generating 450 GW (4,50,000 mw) of power by 2030.
- United Kingdom Prime Minister, Boris Johnson has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to join the UK-hosted G-7 summit 2021. UK Prime Minister Johnson has also accepted the very generous invitation to attend India's Republic Day celebrations in January. PM Johnson will attend India's annual Republic Day parade in New Delhi.
- India has pledged a sum of USD 1 million to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), towards its scientific research budget, to ensure an atmosphere of Clean Sport globally. The contribution made by India is the highest among contributions made by other world governments, including China, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.
- The Minister of State for Skill Development, Raj Kumar Singh has inaugurated the first Centre of Excellence (CoE) for 'skill development in the power sector' in Gurugram. The CoE has been established in the campus of National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurugram, Haryana.
- The Union Power Ministry, R. K. Singh has framed the new 'Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020. These rules shall empower the consumers of electricity and added that these Rules emanate from the conviction that the power systems exist to serve the consumers and the consumers have rights to get the reliable services and quality electricity.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch 'SEHAT' – Health Insurance Scheme for the entire Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir on 26th December. This scheme will cover the remaining One crore population which was not covered under Ayushman Bharat Scheme. Under Ayushman Bharat PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), eligible beneficiaries were covered under Health Cover of Rs 5 Lakh.
- The Government of India and the World Bank signed a \$500 million project to build safe and green national highway corridors in the states of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. The project will also enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) in mainstreaming safety and green technologies. The \$500 million loans from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development a lending arm of World Bank Group, has a maturity of 18.5 years including a grace period of five years.

- The Union Cabinet approved revised guidelines for Direct-to-Home (DTH) broadcasting services, allowing 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) as well as increasing the licence period to 20 years.
- The Cabinet approved the merger of four government-run film and media units — the Films Division, the Directorate of Film Festivals, the National Film Archives of India and the autonomous body Children’s Film Society, with the National Film Development Corporation.
- Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri has launched E-Sampada, a new web portal and mobile app on Good Governance Day. The new application provides a single-window for all the services including an allotment for over one lakh government residential accommodations, office space allotment to government organisations in 45 office complexes in 28 cities and booking of 1,176- holiday homerooms.
- ‘New Bhaupur- New Khurja section’ of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) will be inaugurated by the PM Narendra Modi on 29th December, 2020 at 11 AM through video conferencing. During the event, Prime Minister will also inaugurate EDFC’s Operation Control Centre (OCC) at Prayagraj. New Bhaupur- New Khurja section of EDFC is 351 km and situated in Uttar Pradesh. It is built at a cost of Rs 5,750 crores.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has flagged off the country’s first-ever fully-automated driverless train service on the Magenta Line of the Delhi Metro. Apart from this, PM also launched fully operational National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) on the Airport Express Line of Delhi Metro, to connect DMRC with the NCMC service.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has flagged off the 100th ‘Kisan Rail’ on 28th December 2020. The 100th run of the Kisan Rail was flagged off from Sangola in Maharashtra to Shalimar in West Bengal virtually. Kisan Rail is a mobile cold storage to move perishable things like fruits, vegetables, milk, fish, etc., with complete security.

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