

Current Affairs May 2020

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Awards and Honours

Recipient Name	Awards	Extra Information
Ross Taylor	NZ Cricket's top award, Sir Richard Hadlee Medal, for 3rd time	The year saw Taylor surpassing Stephen Fleming as NZ's leading Test run-scorer and became the first player to play 100 international matches in all three formats.
Thangjam Dhabali Singh	Order of Rising Sun	A doctor from Manipur has been conferred the 'Order of Rising Sun' by the Japan government for promoting a better understanding of Japan in India and deepening ties between the two countries, a release said.
T. Pradeep	Nikkei Asia prize 2020	T. Pradeep, a faculty in the chemistry department of the Indian Institute of Technology Madras honoured with the Nikkei Asia Prizes 2020 in the science and technology category.
Joseph J. Landsberg, Richard H. Waring and Nicholas C. Coops	Marcus Wallenberg Prize 2020	Share the 2020 Marcus Wallenberg Prize for a model to predict forest growth in a changing climate.
Thomas Cook India	Silver at Asia Sustainability Reporting Awards 2019	Thomas Cook (India) Ltd., India's leading integrated travel services company, selected as winner of the prestigious silver award for Asia's Best Integrated Report (First Time) at the 5th Asia Sustainability Reporting Awards (ASRA).
Ralf Speth	Fellow of UK's Royal Society	Professor Sir Ralf Speth, the Chief Executive of Tata Motors owned Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), has elected a Fellow of the prestigious Royal Society in the UK.
Kim Jong Un	Commemorative WWII medal by Russia	The North Korean leader awarded the medal for preserving the memories of Soviet Union soldiers who died in North Korean territory during the war.

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Yasin Dar, Mukhtar Khan, and Channi Anand	Pulitzer Prize 2020	Three photojournalists from Jammu & Kashmir have won Pulitzer Prize 2020 in feature photography.
Leela Samson, Aruni Kashyap, Tejaswini Niranjana, Ramu Ramanathan and Deepika Sorabjee	JCB Prize for Literature 2020 jury	Noted Bharatanatyam dancer, former chairperson of Sangeet Natak Akademi and author Leela Samson will head the five-member jury for the ₹25 lakh JCB Prize for Literature 2020.
Sania Mirza	Fed Cup Heart Award 2020	Sania won the award for Asia/Oceania zone after securing a whopping 10,000 plus votes out of the total 16,985 cast for this year's three regional Group I nominees.
Bengaluru airport	Best regional airport in India & Central Asia	The Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru has won this year's SKYTRAX Award for Best Regional Airport in India and Central Asia, said Bangalore International Airport Ltd (BIAL).
Singapore Changi Airport	World's Best Airport in 2020	Tokyo Haneda Airport in 2nd place and Hamad International Airport Doha rising to No 3 in the world. Over 500 airports featured in the 2019-2020 awards customer survey.
Vinay Badhwar	2019 Alexander Dalrymple Award	Recognition of his outstanding contribution to Indian hydrography and across the wider Indian Ocean region, the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) said in a statement.
Jimmy Fallon, Tom Hanks, John Krasinski & Greta Thunberg	2020 Webby Award	Jimmy Fallon, Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai, Tom Hanks, and Game of Thrones are among the winners of The 24th annual Webby Awards.
Naomi Osaka	Become the highest-paid female athlete in sporting history.	In becoming the highest-paid female athlete of all time, Osaka leapfrogs fellow tennis stars Serena Williams and Maria Sharapova, who have dominated the best-paid athlete rankings for a decade.

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Suman Gawani	UN award for her work in South Sudan	She has mentored over 230 UN Military Observers on conflict-related sexual violence there.
Hema Divakar	Global Asian of the Year	Bengaluru-based medical doctor Hema Divakar honoured with the 'Global Asian of the Year 2018-19' award in Dubai recently for her yeomen services and contributions to the women's healthcare ecosystem, in India.
Rajiv Joshi	NYIPLA Inventor of the year Award 2020	This award given for his contribution to advancing the electronic industry and improving artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities.
TCS	Two Stevie Awards for 2019	Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), a leading global IT services, consulting and business solutions organization, has won two Stevies in the 2020 American Business Awards, the nation's premier business awards program, for the 2019 TCS New York City Marathon app.
Stefan Manegold	2020 SIGMOD Contributions Award	Manegold was one of the leading pioneers in encouraging reproducibility in data management.
SEEDS	WHO award	WHO selects organisations and individuals from its six regions every year for their exceptional contribution in the field of tobacco control. The SEEDS is among the three awardees selected from the South-East Asia Region.

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Appointments

Name	Designation	Extra Information
Tarun Bajaj	Economic Affairs Secretary	Bajaj, a 1988 batch IAS officer of Haryana Cadre, previously held charge as Additional Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and served as Joint Secretary in the DEA before that.
Shrikant Vaidya	Chairman of IOC	Vaidya is currently director finance at IOC. He would be taking over from the current Chairman Sanjiv Singh, who will retire from the position in June 2020.
Deepak Mittal	India's next Ambassador to Qatar	The new appointees are of the 1998 batch of Indian Foreign Service (IFS), and both of them expected to take up their assignments shortly.
Piyush Srivastava	India's next Ambassador to Bahrain	
Ajay Tirkey	Secretary of Ministry of Women and Child Development	Ajay Tirkey is the 1987 batch IAS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre. Prior to this, held the post of Special Secretary in the same Ministry.
Neeraj Dhawan	Yes Bank - Chief Risk Officer	He replaced Ashish Agarwal, the current CRO, who will be transitioning to a new role in the bank.
Deepak Kumar	RBL Bank - Chief Risk Officer	Kumar will replace Ramnath Krishnan as the CRO, according to the bank.
PK Das	Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)	Pradip Kumar Das is currently handling the post of Director (Finance) at India Tourism Development Corporation Ltd (ITDC). He recommended, earlier, by the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) after interviewing many candidates.
Ramesh Babu	NTPC Director operations	Babu graduated as a Mechanical Engineer from NIT Srinagar and completed his Masters in Thermal Engineering from IIT Delhi.

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Sriram Venkataraman	Chief Financial Officer for Flipkart Commerce	He will be reporting to Chris Nicholas, Executive VP and CFO, Walmart International. Venkataraman has previously worked with Hindustan Unilever for over 11 years.
Ashok Michael Pinto	US representative to IBRD (International Bank of Reconstruction and Development)	Pinto was serving the Counsellor to Under Secretary for International Affairs in the department of treasury of the US. It is to be note that Mr Pinto was a special assistant to President George W Bush.
Kusal Roy	Standard Chartered Bank - head of retail banking	Prior to joining Standard Chartered Bank, he was the managing director and chief executive at Tata Capital Financial Services Ltd. During his career, Roy has held various senior roles in ICICI Bank, Barclays Bank and Citibank India.
Sanjay Kumar Jha	Midhani - Chairman and Managing Director.	Jha has served in the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) for more than 27 years. In the field of atomic energy, he has credited with several technological innovations like processing of nuclear materials of different grades such as alloy.
Krishnan Ramachandran	MD & CEO of Max Bupa	He has over 23 years of experience in health insurance, healthcare and life sciences segments.
Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury	Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee	He has appointed as the Chairperson of the Committee for the term beginning on 1 May 2020 and ending on 30 April 2021.
Lt Gen Shukla	Command of the Army Training Command (ARTRAC).	A graduate of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, and the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, General Shukla commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery in December 1982.
Ajinkya Rahane	Brand ambassador for edtech company ELSA Corp	India has announced the appointment of Ajinkya Rahane, the Vice-Captain of

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		the Indian Cricket Test Team, as its brand ambassador for India, Middle East, ANZ, and SAARC.
Mustafa al-Kadhimi	Iraq – Prime Minister	Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, Iraq’s intelligence chief and a former journalist, will head the government but will begin his term without a full cohort of ministers after several candidates rejected.
Dia Mirza	Goodwill Ambassador	The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) extended environmentalist and actor-producer Dia Mirza’s term as its National Goodwill Ambassador for another two years until the end of 2022.
Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi	Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy	Chaturvedi succeeded Anand Kumar in the Ministry who earlier took charge as Secretary, Ministry of Culture.
Manoj Ahuja	CBSE Chairman	Senior IAS officer Manoj Ahuja has appointed as the new CBSE Chairman, replacing IAS Anita Karwal who appointed as Secretary.
V. Vidyavathi	Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) – Director General (Chief)	She will be serving in the rank of Additional Secretary to the Government of India.
Akhil Kumar	National Anti-Doping Agency’s Disciplinary Panel	Akhil, who is also serving in Haryana Police as ACP Gurugram, was formerly in the panel from 2017 to 2019.
Benjamin Netanyahu	Israel - Prime Minister	Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu finally swore in his new government on 17 May for the fifth time.
Zubair Iqbal	MD J&K Bank	The J&K Government has nominated Zubair Iqbal, Senior Vice President (SVP) of HDFC Bank to be elect as Managing Director of the J&K Bank.
Mr Paramjit Kahlon	LIBERTY Steel - CEO for Primary Steel and Integrated Mining Businesses	This newly created role will bring together all of LIBERTY’s primary steel making and integrated mining operations into one global structure to

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		drive synergies and operational efficiencies.
Dilip Oommen	Indian Steel Association – President	“Dilip Oommen, CEO, Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India has taken over as President of ISA.
Kevin Mayer	TikTok CEO	Kevin Mayer, a high-ranking Disney executive who recently passed over for the company’s CEO position, will join the social media platform TikTok as its chief executive, Disney.
Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha	Ayush Secretary	Ayurveda expert Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha has got two years extension as the secretary, Ministry of Ayush, according to an official order issued.
Dr Harsh Vardhan	WHO Executive Board chairman	Vardhan would succeed Dr Hiroki Nakatani of Japan, currently the Chairman of the 34-member WHO Executive Board.
Moeketsi Majoro	Lesotho’s prime minister	Moeketsi Majoro has sworn in as Lesotho’s prime minister following the resignation of his embattled predecessor, Thomas Thabane.
Chintala Govinda Rajulu	Nabard – Chairman	A senior agriculture scientist from the state, Chintala Govinda Rajulu has named as next chairperson of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
Abhas Jha	World Bank’s Practice Manager for Climate Change in South Asia	The announcement made by the World Bank on May 22, 2020.
Jahnabi Phookan	National President of FICCI FLO	Jahnabi Phookan, a women entrepreneur and member of the National Board of Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, has appointed as the National President of FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO).
Carmen Reinhart	Chief economist at the World Bank	Economist Carmen M. Reinhart, Minos A. Zombanakis Professor of the International Financial System at Harvard Kennedy School (HKS), will take a two-year leave to become chief economist and

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		vice president at the World Bank on June 15.
Van Boxmeer	Vodafone – Chairman	The British company said Van Boxmeer, a Belgian; join as a non-executive director on July 28.
P Kumaran	India's High Commissioner to Singapore	H.E. Periasamy Kumaran has appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to The Republic Of Singapore on May 26, 2020.
Marcos Troyjo	New Development Bank's (NDB) – President	Marcos Prado Troyjo, former deputy economy minister of Brazil will replace KV Kamath as the president of the New Development Bank's (NDB).
Leo Puri	JP Morgan banking company – Chairman	Veteran banker Kalpana Morparia, Chairman, South and South-East Asia at JP Morgan, plans to retire after nearly 12 years with the investment-banking firm. She succeeded by Leo Puri.
Vishwas Mehta	Chief secretary of Kerala	Senior IAS officer Vishwas Mehta has appointed as the new chief secretary of Kerala. Dr Mehta, who is now Additional Chief Secretary (Home).
Mahesh Palashikar	GE Power India – Chairman	GE Power India Ltd (GEPIL), formerly known as Alstom India, has designated Mahesh Shrikrishna Palashikar as its Additional Director and Non-Executive Chairman effective May 27, 2020.
Sreelekha	Kerala's First Woman DGP	Her main rival, Han Kuo-yu of the China-friendly Kuomintang (KMT) party, has conceded defeat.
Nilesh Sathe	National Highways Authority of India - financial advisor.	The government undertaking has taken on board Sathe at a time when it is looking to raise funds for road development from foreign institutional investors, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Pension Funds abroad and from Domestic Institutional Investors from India.

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Thierry Delaporte	Wipro – CEO & MD	Neemuchwala left the technology firm after four years at the helm citing ‘family commitement’.
Ramesh Kumar	Andhra Pradesh - State Election Commissioner	The state government had posted former Madras HC judge Justice V Kanagaraj in Kumar’s place.
PR Jaishankar	India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) – MD	The appointment comes after the Bank Boards Bureau (BBB), the headhunter for state-run banks and financial institutions, recommended Jaishankar on March 15. The post lied vacant for three years before the appointment.
R S Dhillon	State-run Power Finance Corporation (PFC) – CMD	The board of PFC approved the appointment of Dhillon as CMD of the company in pursuance of an order of the Power Ministry issued in this regard on April 7, 2020, the power sector financier said in a statement.
Sonajharia Minz	Vice-Chancellor of Sido Kanhu Murmu University	Draupadi Murmu is also the Chancellor of the universities in Jharkhand. Prof. Sonajharia Minz is a Professor of School of Computer and Systems Sciences in Jawaher Lal Nehru University, Delhi.

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Banking & Finance

WhatsApp Pay to Launch in India by May-End With 3 Banks on Board: Report

WhatsApp Pay is set to go live as early as by the end of the month, according to a report. The payments service by the instant messaging app, which is currently under beta testing, is said to launch initially in partnership with three private banks, namely Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, and ICICI Bank, while public sector State Bank of India (SBI) will join at a later stage. At present, WhatsApp Pay allows transactions based on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) via ICICI Bank.

Airtel Payments Bank group ties up with Mastercard for farmers, small and medium enterprises

Airtel Payments Bank (APBL) has collaborated with Mastercard to develop customized products catering to customers across the underbanked spectrum including farmers, small and medium enterprises and retail customers.

As part of the government's vision of Digital India and Banking for every Indian, both entities have been working towards driving adoption of formal banking and digital payments in the country.

Maruti Suzuki partners ICICI Bank to offer customized EMI financing schemes to customers

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) said it has joined hands with ICICI Bank to offer retail financing schemes to its customers. As part of the tie up, ICICI Bank is offering flexi EMI scheme, which enables customers to pay low EMI initially, in order to help them overcome the liquidity stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the automajor said in a statement.

FDI in India rises up by 18 per cent to reach USD 73 billion in 2019-20

Union Commerce and Industry Minister, Piyush Goyal on May 28 stated that the total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India has grown by 18% to reach 73 billion in FY 2019-20. He further asserted that this long-term investment would help in job creation.

Nabard disburses Rs 12,767cr to state coop banks, RRBs

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) said it has disbursed Rs 12,767 crore to state cooperative banks and regional rural banks (RRBs) for onlending to farmers.

The loans offered for a year at 4.8% interest, it said. The loan has disbursed under a refinance scheme by Nabard from its own resources and given this week, it said. — PTI

India, AIIB sign agreement for USD 500 million COVID-19 support

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has signed an agreement with the Indian government to provide funds worth USD 500 million to support India's "COVID-19

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Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project". The project will help India scale up its response to the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen the nation's public health preparedness.

RBI cuts repo rate to a record low by 40 bps

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cuts repo rate by 40 basis points (bps) to 4% from 4.4% on 22 May. The Central Bank also adjusted the reverse repo rate to 3.35% from 3.75%. The announcement made by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.

Yes Bank acquires 24.19% stake in Dish TV India

Private lender Yes Bank has acquired a 24.19% stake in Dish TV India, by invoking pledged shares after loan defaults by several companies. Dish TV is a direct-to-home (DTH) entertainment service provider, operated by the Zee Group and the Videocon Group. As on 31 March 2019, the company had a consolidated total income of around ₹6,218 crore.

World Bank clears \$1 billion loan for the social protection

The World Bank has cleared a \$1 billion assistance for the social protection on May 15 and has been in talks with the government for the funding the initiatives to assist micro, medium and small enterprises (MSME).

The Director of World Bank, Junaid Ahmad, did not elaborate the size of the loans for MSME but stated that it is negotiated. He appreciated the government's approach that focuses on social protection, healthcare, and economic healthcare.

Nabard sanctions Rs 1,500 cr for Punjab to ensure credit flow to farmers

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has sanctioned Rs 1,500 crore for Punjab to ensure continuous credit flow to farmers, through state cooperative banks, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is part of Nabard's Rs 25,000 crore nationwide special liquidity facility (SLF), which has made available to state cooperative banks, regional rural banks, and microfinance institutions (MFIs), to ensure flow of credit to farmers for agricultural operations during COVID-19 pandemic

India-World Bank: Social Protection Response Programme

The World Bank and Government of India have signed agreement of 750 million USD recently. The World Bank has assured 1 billion USD assistance to accelerate India's COVID-19 Social Protection Response Programme. It aims to protect vulnerable households that are impacted due to COVID-19 pandemic.

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Cooperative banks come under SARFAESI Act: SC

The Supreme Court held that cooperative banks established under a State law or multi-State level societies come within the ambit of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act of 2002.

The Act prescribes a procedure for faster recovery of dues.

GoI, AIIB signed a loan agreement for a USD 145 million project to improve irrigation services

The Government of India (GoI), West Bengal state government, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) signed a loan agreement for a \$145 million project. The main objective is to improve flood management and irrigation services in the Damodar Valley Command Area (DVCA) in West Bengal state.

World Bank approves 1 billion USD to India

The World Bank approved 1 billion USD aid to India to accelerate “India’s COVID-19 Special Protection Response Programme”. The fund will be used to provide social assistance to poor, severely impacted and vulnerable households.

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Indian Affairs

India installed 7.3 GW of solar power in CY 2019

In the calendar year 2019, India installed 7.3 GW of solar power across the country, consolidating its position as the third-largest solar market in the world.

The country also had a robust pipeline of utility-scale projects under development of 23.7 GW at the end of 2019, with another 31.5 GW of tenders pending auction, according to a study by Mercom Communications India, a subsidiary of global clean energy communications and consulting firm Mercom Capital Group.

IDEAthon launched by Jal Shakti ministry

The National Mission for Clean Ganga operating under Ministry of Jal Shakti launched “IDEAthon”. It focuses on “The Future of River Management” to explore how the COVID-19 crisis will change the river management strategies.

The IDEAthon event examined how social angle of rivers can be leveraged to address the crisis. It also discussed about the lessons taught by COVID-19 crisis.

Employees of EPFO contribute Rs 2.5 crore to PM CARES fund

The employees of Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) have also come forward to support the Government’s initiative in combating national crisis of COVID-19 pandemic and voluntarily contributed one day’s salary- amounting to around Rs. 2.5 crore to the PM CARES Fund. EPFO, as one of World’s largest Social Security Organizations, stands committed in the service of the nation in every possible way.

eCovSens developed by National Institute of Animal Biotechnology

The scientists in National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB), Hyderabad have developed a biosensor called the eCovSens. The sensor is used to detect COVID-19 virus in saliva samples. The researchers from NIAB have developed non-invasive bio-sensor testing device called eCovSens to detect COVID-19. The lens can help detect COVID-19 virus within 10 to 30 seconds of testing.

GoI: Star Rating of Garbage Free Cities Released

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs released star rating of garbage free cities for the year 2019-20. Around 5 cities were given 5-star rating. This includes Ambikapur, Surat, Rajkot, Mysuru, Indore and Navi Mumbai. The ministry had given 3-star rating to 65 cities and 1-star rating to 70 cities.

Cabinet meets to approve several initiatives under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

The union cabinet approved several initiatives under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan that was launched by PM Modi recently. The Union Cabinet has approved allocation of food grains, adoption of auction methodology for coal, issuance of second order to Reorganisation of

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Jammu and Kashmir, Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana, Scheme to formalize Micro Food Processing Enterprises and Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme

World Steel report: India's steel output declined by 65%

The World Steel Association released the World Steel Report. According to the report, the crude steel report of India declined by 65%. During April 2020, the steel output of India was 3.13 million tonnes.

In April 2019, according to the report, India produced 9.02 million tonnes. In March 2020, India faced a decline of 14% steel output as compared to March 2019.

Anil Kumble-led ICC committee recommends ban on saliva due to COVID-19 pandemic, wants non-neutral umpires

Cricket is set to do away with one of its oldest practices the use of saliva to shine the ball as an Anil Kumble-led ICC committee recommended banning it owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the ICC Cricket Committee saw no health hazard in continuing with the use of sweat.

Khadi Masks goes global, KVIC plans to hit foreign markets

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has decided to explore the possibility of exporting the khadi cotton and silk face masks to the foreign countries. This step will launch the widely popular khadi masks in the global market.

The decision came after the Ministry of Commerce and Industries had decided to lift the ban on the export of non-surgical/non-medical masks of all types. The notification of the same was issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) on May 16, 2020.

Aatmanirbhar package: DISCOMs to get ₹90,000-crore liquidity support

Power Distribution Companies (Discoms) will be offered ₹90,000 crore liquidity support under the 'Aatmanirbhar package' announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Under the package, Power Finance Corporation and Rural Electrification Corporation will infuse liquidity in the Discoms to the extent of ₹90,000 crores in two equal instalments, an official statement said.

Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal launched set of 7 titles on Psycho-Social impact of pandemic and lockdown and how to Cope With

Union Minister of Human Resource and Development Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launched a set of seven titles on "Psycho-Social impact of pandemic & lockdown and how to Cope With" by NBT, India. The titles are placed under the corona studies series of NBT. NBT brought out a remarkable and unparalleled set of books that will serve as guides to the mental well-being of people at large.

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India's ultra mega solar parks offer \$500-700 billion investment potential

The country's ultra mega solar parks have offered potential investors an opportunity to join \$500-700 billion renewable energy and grid infrastructure investment boom in the coming decade, a study noted.

The Bhadla solar park in Rajasthan is the world's largest such installation to date, covering more than 14,000 acres with total capacity of 2245 Mw.

Army Commanders' Conference held in New Delhi

Army Commanders Conference was held in New Delhi. The event was held in two phases. The Conference was chaired by the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The existing and developing security challenges were discussed in the conference.

ENAM succeeds touching milestone of 1000 Mandis

The ENAM initiative is spread across 18 states and three union territories currently. The Government of India recently added 38 Mandi to the initiative and has reached its set target of 1000 Mandis.

Recently, the Government of India linked 200 Mandis to ENAM and another 117 in a short duration after this. Adding 38 more Mandis to the network, ENAM has achieved its set target of integrating 1000 mandis. Out of these 38 mandis, 19 were from Madhya Pradesh, four from Maharashtra, 10 from Telangana and one each from Haryana, Gujarat, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir and Kerala.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana completes 4 years of success

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana was launched in May 2016. The scheme has successfully completed four years of its implementation. Under the scheme free cylinders were provided. Around 2.66 crore free cylinders were already delivered and 3.05 crore free cylinders have been booked.

Cabinet approves Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana

Union Cabinet has approved Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana. The scheme aims to bring about Blue Revolution through sustainable and responsible development of fisheries section in the country. It will be implemented at a total investment over Rs. 20 thousand crore .

Cabinet approves additional funding of up to Rs. three lakh crore through introduction of ECLGS

Union Cabinet has approved additional funding of up to Rs. three lakh crore through introduction of Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS). Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL) facility to help eligible Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) borrowers, including interested MUDRA borrowers.

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SAI announced Rs.30,000 each for 2,749 Khelo India athletes

Sports Authority of India (SAI) has deposited Rs.30,000 each to 2,749 Khelo India athletes as out of pocket allowance (OPA) amid the COVID-19 lockdown. The total sum of the amount is Rs.8.25 crore in all. The announcement regarding disbursement of the Khelo India allowances was made by Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju.

National sports awards nominations invited through e-mail

The sports ministry on May 5 invited the nominations for the national sports awards of 2020 through e-mail. The ministry adopted this procedure due to the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown.

The sports ministry has started the process of nominations for multiple honors, including Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna.

Unemployment rate in India reaches 27.11% amid COVID-19 pandemic: CMIE

Centre for Monitoring India Economy (CMIE) has shown data that reports the unemployment rate in India has reached 27.11% for the week ending on May 3 from the level of 6.74% in the week that ended on March 15, 2020.

Since the government has suspended all the economic activities to combat the spread of COVID-19, the unemployment rate in India has spiked tremendously.

Union Minister Gadkari sets road construction target for next two years at Rs.15 lakh crore

Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has announced its target to construct roads worth Rs.15 lakh crore in the next two years. The announcement was made by the Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari. The Ministry is working overtime to clear all arbitration cases with concessionaires.

Govt sets road construction worth Rs. 15 lakh crores in next two years

The Union Minister of Road Transport, Highways, and MSME, Nitin Gadkari on May 7 announced that the government has been planning to build national highways worth Rs. 15 lakh crores in the next two years.

The union minister also informed that the auto scrapping policy will also be finalised soon. He talked about being prepared for the bad times and the industry must focus on technology, innovation, and research to become competitive in the global market.

Govt starts clinical trials of Ayush medicines for COVID-19

The Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan on May 7 announced that the Health Ministry has started the clinical trials of Ayush medicines for COVID-19. The trials will be of age-old medicines such as Yashtimadhu, Ashwagandha, and Guduchi Pippali.

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ICMR partners with India Post for delivery of coronavirus COVID-19 testing kits to labs

India Post has entered into a tie-up with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for delivery of its coronavirus COVID-19 testing kits from its 16 regional depots to 200 additional labs designated for coronavirus testing across the country.

Centre launched Mission Sagar for assistance to Indian Ocean nations amid COVID-19 crisis

Government of India launched “Mission Sagar” on 10 May. The aim is to provide assistance to Indian Ocean Region Nations amid the coronavirus crisis. The operation is being progressed in coordination with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). The mission is in line with the Prime Minister’s vision of SAGAR.

FIFA U-17 Women World Cup to be held in 2021 in India

The FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association) U-17 Women’s World Cup is now scheduled for early 2021 in India, the world football governing body revealed, Hindustan Times reported.

Earlier it was supposed to be held later this year in India. However, due to the extended shutdown due to the novel coronavirus, the famous sports event has been postponed to next year. FIFA added that the age and eligibility criteria would remain the same.

Sohrai Khovar painting, Telia Rumal gets GI Tag

Sohrai Khovar painting and Telia Rumal were given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indications Registry headquartered in Chennai.

Jharkhand’s Sohrai Khovar painting is a traditional and ritualistic mural art. It is practised by local tribal women during local harvest and marriage seasons. The art is drawn using the local, naturally available soils of different colours in the area of the Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand.

Telia Rumals are offered at the Ajmer Sharif dargah in Rajasthan. The cloth is worn as a veil by princesses at the erstwhile court of the Nizam of Hyderabad and as a turban cloth by Arabs in the Middle East.

India invites bid for One Sun One World One Grid to take on China’s Belt and Road Initiative

India has moved ahead with threading-the-needle for an ambitious global electricity grid, with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government calling for bids to roll-out the “One Sun One World One Grid” (OSOWOG) plan.

The pre-bid meeting called on 5 June by ministry of new and renewable energy (MNRE), comes at a time of the coronavirus pandemic giving India the opportunity to be seen as taking a lead in evolving global strategies.

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Foodgrains production in India to touch record 295.67 MT in 2019-20 crop year

Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare stated that India's foodgrain production has been estimated to touch a record of 295.67 million tonnes (MT) in the 2019-20 crop year. The Ministry released the third advance estimate

Ministry of MSME launches CHAMPIONS Portal

Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has launched the CHAMPIONS portal, a Technology-driven Control Room-Cum-Management Information System. The CHAMPIONS stands here for the Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength.

Investment Capacity of India in renewable sector reached 500-700 billion USD

The Institute of Energy Economics and Financial Analysis published a study according to which India has increased its potential of renewable energy investments to 500-700 billion USD. This is mainly because of improvements in solar power in the country.

Govt accepts Shekatkar recommendations to boost border roads projects

In a major boost to building strategic roads along India's northern border with China, the government accepted and implemented three important recommendations relating to border infrastructure, made by the Shekatkar Committee in 2016.

The recommendations accepted were aimed at speeding up road construction in remote areas, providing easier access to the military and leading to socio economic development in the border areas.

Union Minister for Tribal Affairs launches 'Goal' programme

Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda launched the "GOAL (Going Online As Leaders)" programme of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) in partnership with Facebook at a Webinar in New Delhi.

MoS, M/o Tribal Affairs Ms Renuka Singh Saruta; Secretary, M/o Tribal Affairs, Shri Deepak Khandekar and senior officers of the M/o Tribal Affairs as well as representatives of Facebook were present at the launch through webinar.

Blue Revolution: Cabinet approves Rs 20,050 crore scheme for fisheries sector

The Cabinet approved the Rs 20,050-crore Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) to bring about Blue Revolution through sustainable development of fisheries sector over next five years. The government also aims to double the income of fishers, fish farmers and fish workers by 2024 through the scheme.

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Indian start-up makes world's first contactless visitor management software

Aa Mumbai based start-up has come up with world's first contactless Visitor Management Software with temperature scanner and mask detection.

VAMS SafeGuard as is it called scans body temperature, read faces with a mask on while monitoring social distancing on the premise. The software uses 'AI' to allow entry of visitors, only who are only complying to all COVID protection measures.

State-related Affairs

GI Tag to Manipur Black Rice, Gorakhpur Terracotta and Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai

Black rice of Manipur, also called the Chak-Hao, Gorakhpur Terracotta and Kadalai Mittai of Kovilpatti bagged Geographical Indication tag. The application to receive Geographical Status for Chak Hao initiated by North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Limited (NERAMAC).

Chhattisgarh tops among other states in providing employment to workers under MGNREGS

Chhattisgarh has topped the list of states in providing employment to over 18 lakh unskilled labourers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), according to an official statement issued.

Around 77.85 lakh people are engaged in different work under the scheme across the country, according to data released by the Union Rural Development Ministry.

Maharashtra becomes first state in India to provide free & cashless insurance cover to its people

Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope announced that all citizens will be covered under the state government's health scheme, and Maharashtra will be the first state to provide free and cashless insurance protection to its people.

GoI approves Rs 445 crores for Chhattisgarh under Jal Jeevan Mission

On May 29, 2020, the Union Government approved Rs 445 crores under Jal Jeevan Mission for Chhattisgarh for the year 2020-21. The Funds will be used to help Chhattisgarh achieve its mission of providing tap water connection to all the households in the state by 2023-24.

Goa celebrates Statehood Day

Goa celebrated its Statehood Day. Goa was the 25th state to join the union of India. As India gained independence on August 15, 1947, India requested the Portuguese to cede their territories. However, Portuguese refused. In 1961, Indian Government launched Operation Vijay and annexed Daman and Diu, islands and Goa with the Indian mainland.

Kerala to launch free internet project K-FON in December

The Kerala State government has announced the Kerala Fibre Optic Network (K-FON) project will be commissioned by December 2020. The project aims to provide free internet access to the poor in the State. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan informed the decision after a meeting with the heads of companies of the consortium.

UP CM Yogi Adityanath launches ‘Ayush Kavach’ app

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched Ayush Kavach app. “Launching of Ayush Kavach app is commendable, in the fight against the global epidemic, the whole world is looking towards India with hopeful eyes to develop immunity to fight this type of virus,” said UP CM Yogi Adityanath. expressed hope that by using the application, people will be able to beat the disease. Application will provide updates for measures to boost immunity based on natural resources.

MP Sanjeevani Clinics (Mohalla Clinic) – Free Treatment & 120 Types of Medicines

Madhya Pradesh govt is going to start MP Sanjeevani Clinics on lines of Mohalla Clinic opened by Delhi government. CM Kamal Nath has inaugurated 1st Sanjivani Clinic in Indore district. In these clinics, govt. will provide treatment and more than 120 types of medicines absolutely free of cost. The main objective is to provide comprehensive healthcare to poor people residing in rural and urban areas.

Mizoram accords industrial status to sports

Mizoram has become the first Indian state to accord sports an industry status. The move is aimed at further bolstering sports activities by attracting investment. Mizoram Sports Minister Robert Romawia Royte expressed confidence that the move will help generate employment in the state.

Rozgar Setu Scheme launched by Madhya Pradesh for skilled workers

The Madhya Pradesh Government launched Rozgar Setu Yojana to help migrant workers. The scheme provides employment to the migrant workers. The Rozgar Setu scheme will provide employment to migrant workers that have returned to their homes. The scheme is to conduct a complete survey on population of the state.

Tamil Nadu State raises retirement age of government employees to 59

The Tamil Nadu government raised the age of superannuation of its employees to 59 years, in an attempt to give itself some relief from a near ₹5,000-crore financial burden.

“This will apply to all those who are in regular service as on date and due to retire on superannuation from May 31, 2020,” a G.O. issued by Chief Secretary K. Shanmugam said.

UP becomes first state to provide facility of beds with ventilators in each district of state

Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country to provide the facility of beds with ventilators in hospitals of each and every district of state. Now, all 75 districts of state can provide higher level of care to the patients of COVID-19.

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Bengaluru launches Pranavayu programme to create awareness on need to self examine respiratory health

In Karnataka, Bengaluru Urban district in Karnataka has 175 confirmed COVID 19 positive cases and six people have died due to the pandemic. Positive side is however that 84 persons have recovered and discharged. There are 21 containment zones in the city where Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is mandated to carry out quarantine and surveillance activities along with identifying persons prone to the deadly corona virus infection.

UP govt launched 'Pravasi Rahat Mitra' app for migrant workers

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on May 8 launched the 'Pravasi Rahat Mitra' app for the migrant workers of the state who have been returning from other states amid the lockdown.

'Pravasi Rahat Mitra' app has been developed by the State Revenue Department in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme.

National infant mortality rate at 32, Madhya Pradesh worst performer

Madhya Pradesh has the worst infant mortality rate in the country while Nagaland has the best. Chhattisgarh has the highest death rate, while Delhi has the lowest. Bihar continues to remain at the top of list in birth rate while Andaman and Nicobar is at the bottom. These details were released by the Centre recently in its Sample Registration System (SRS) bulletin based on data collected for 2018.

CIPET is renamed as Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering and Technology

Centre has been renamed the Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology (CIPET), a premier national institution under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, as Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET). The announcement was made by the Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers DV Sadananda Gowda.

Chhattisgarh to launch Rajiv Gandhi Nyay Yojana for farmers on May 21, former PM's death anniversary

The Chhattisgarh government will launch a scheme to ensure "minimum income availability" to farmers of the state through direct bank transfer on the death anniversary of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi May 21.

Under the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana, based on registered area and area under cultivation during Kharif crop season 2019, Rs 10,000 per acre will be deposited in the bank accounts of farmers as agriculture assistance grant for sowing crops such as paddy, maize and sugarcane, officials said.

Madhya Pradesh to launch Everybody will get employment scheme

Madhya Pradesh State Government is to launch Everybody will get employment scheme. The scheme will be inaugurated by Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan through video

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conferencing. Under this scheme, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) job cards will be distributed to the labourers.

Telangana becomes first state to tell farmers what to grow

Telangana has become the first state to regulate the cultivation of crops by telling farmers what to grow as a part of its pilot project. Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao issued a statement on May 12, 2020 saying that the state will limit growing of paddy to 50 lakh acres.

Kerala launches portal for non-residents to book cabs for home

Kerala Tourism launched an online platform to enable non-residents Keralites to book vehicles of tour operators to travel back to the state, ending the stalemate due to a national lockdown clamped seven weeks ago to fight COVID-19.

Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal account for highest number of street vendors in India: SBI economists

Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are home to the highest number of street vendors, collectively accounting for over one-fourth of the country's tally, economists at State Bank of India said.

According to a note released a day after the government announced a Rs 5,000-crore special credit facility for street vendors, ten states accounted for 35 lakh of the 50 lakh beneficiary street vendors who will be given a loan of Rs 10,000 each to restart businesses impacted.

Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana to be launched by Chhattisgarh

The Chhattisgarh State Government is to launch the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana. The scheme is to be launched on May 21, 2020. The scheme is being launched to commemorate the death anniversary of the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Sikkim celebrates 45th State Day

Sikkim Government celebrates its 45th Statehood Day. Every year Sikkim celebrates its State Day in May 16 as the state came into existence on this day in 1975.

After India became independent in 1947, Sikkim continued to enjoy the protectorate status with the republic of India. However, in 1973, anti-royalist riots occurred in the state. The monarch was eventually deposed in 1975. A referendum led to the state joining India.

Himachal Pradesh to launch Nigah Scheme

Himachal Pradesh State Government is to launch the "Nigah" Scheme to properly sensitize and educate family members of people coming from other states so that social distancing is effectively maintained. The announcement was made by Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur.

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MP, the First State to launch innovative Scheme “FIR Aapke Dwar Yojana”

MP, the First State to launch innovative Scheme “FIR Aapke Dwar Yojana”. The scheme has been launched in 23 police stations as a pilot project. This includes both rural and urban areas.

Under the scheme, a person need not go to the police station to lodge a complaint. The scheme has deployed the head constables to register the complaints from the people. The scheme will also enable on spot FIR registrations. When the complaints are serious, they will be forwarded to senior officers.

Delhi Police launched Thermal Corona Combat Headgear to enhance social distancing

Delhi Police launched Thermal Corona Combat Gear (TCCH) through which police personnel will be able to detect the temperature of a large number of people from a distance of 10-15 metres. The initiative was launched by the police in collaboration with Indian Robotics Solution (IRS).

Gujarat launches Atmanirbhar Gujarat Sahay Yojna

The Gujarat government on May 14, 2020 launched the Atmanirbhar Gujarat Sahay Yojna (AGSY). Under the scheme, people in the lower middle income group can avail guarantee-free loan of Rs 1 lakh from banks at 2 per cent annual interest.

The Atmanirbhar Gujarat Sahay Yojna (AGSY) aims to help them get back to their normal life, which was disrupted by the COVID-19 lockdown.

CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches ‘Shram Siddhi’ to provide job to all workers

Chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the ‘Shram Siddhi’ campaign in panchayats of Madhya Pradesh through video conferencing. The campaign guarantees jobs to all workers whether they have a job card or not.

Karnataka to launch ‘State Health Register’ of all citizens

Karnataka government on May 27, 2020 announced that it will be launching a new project to maintain a ‘State Health Register’ comprising the database of all its citizens.

The health register, first-of-its-kind, will be a robust and standardized health repository of all the citizens of the state. Elaborating on the same, Karnataka’s Medical Education Minister K Sudhakar stated that the COVID-19 experience has demonstrated the need to maintain a robust, real-time repository of health data of each and every citizen.

International Affairs

Global Report on Food Crisis, 2020

The Global Report on Food Crisis, 2020 was released by the Global Network against Food Crisis. The report says that around 135 million people are living under food crisis.

According to the report, the numbers have increased. In 2019, the number of people living under food crisis were 113 million. Yemen was the at the top, with 15.9 million people under food crisis. This was 53% of population of the country.

US Senate passes bill to delist Chinese firms from stock exchanges

The US Senate passed legislation on May 20, 2020 that seeks to delist Chinese firms from US securities exchanges unless they follow US standards of audits and regulations.

The bill, jointly tabled by Republican Senator John Kennedy and Democratic Senator Chris Van Hollen, was passed in the Senate with unanimous support. The bill will now go to the House of Representatives.

US terminates relationship with World Health Organisation

The United States has officially terminated its relationship with the World Health Organisation. This was announced by US President Donald Trump on May 29, 2020.

The US President in a live speech accused China of having total control over WHO despite paying only USD40 million a year compared to what the US has been paying, which is approximately USD 450 million a year.

Meeting of the Heads of Tax Authorities of the BRICS countries was held on 29 May

Meeting of the Heads of Tax Authorities of the BRICS countries was held on 29 May 2020. The BRICS Countries that participated in the meeting are Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa. The meeting was hosted by the Federal Tax Service of Russia, which currently holds the BRICS Presidency. Dr. Ajay Bhushan Pandey, Finance Secretary, Government of India, represented India at the meeting.

EU proposes 750 billion-euro coronavirus recovery fund

The European Union (EU) Commission has proposed a 750 billion-euro (\$825 billion) recovery fund “European breakthrough” to help the bloc’s economy through the deep recession induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was announced by the commissioner Paolo Gentiloni. The aim is to tackle an unprecedented crisis.

WHO adopts “Human Challenge Trial” to develop new vaccine

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently announced eight candidates to enter human trials. Several people step forward to participate in human challenge trial as the race to develop new vaccine for the virus is increasing.

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Russia constructs its first Stealth Bomber

Under its Perspective Aviation Complex for Long Range Aviation (PAKDA) programme, Russia has constructed its first Stealth Bomber. Russia is currently modernizing its military at a very fast pace. The Stealth Bomber is one such advancement. The bomber is the second-generation combat aircraft after Sukhoi Su-57 supersonic fighter jet

Irans parliament introduces new currency, Toman, to tackle inflation

The Iranian Parliament has announced the decision to replace its currency “Rial” with another basic unit of currency called the “Toman.” Each toman will be worth 10,000 rials under the new system. The move aims to ease the psychological impact of soaring consumer prices on a population that has endured high inflation for decades and grappled the number of zeros in government figures.

IEA Report: Global Energy Review, 2020

The International Energy Agency recently released Global Energy Review in 2020. The report highlights the global energy demand in 2020 and carbon dioxide emissions. According to the report, 15% of the daily electricity demand has been reduced. The decline was mainly due to complete lock down in the countries such as India, Italy, France, UK.

International tourism to fall 60-80%: UNWTO

International tourism could shrink by a whopping 60-80 per cent in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in the revenue loss of \$910 billion to \$1.2 trillion and placing livelihoods at risk, as per the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

Israel Names Street After Rabindranath Tagore On The Poet's 159th Birthday, Tweets Photo

Israel has named a street in Tel Aviv after celebrated Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore as a tribute on his 159th birthday. On May 7, the Israeli Embassy in India tweeted a photo of a signboard where the street was named Rehov Tagore; ‘rehov’ means street.

Italy develops ‘iFeel-You’ bracelet for social distancing

The Genoa-based Italian Institute of Technology (IIT) has developed “i-Feel you”, an intelligent bracelet which will help users respect social distancing rules. The technology was launched at a video conference which involved the participation of Liguria governor Giovanni Toti and IIT President Giorgia Metta.

WTO Chief to step down on August 31 amid the global economic crisis

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) chief Roberto Azevedo resigned from his position on May 14. The unexpected resignation came amid the ongoing global economic crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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WTO released a statement mentioning that at a virtual meeting of WTO members, the Director-General announced that he would step down from his position on August 31, 2020. It will cut his second term short exactly by one year.

What is Baltic Travel Bubble recently in news?

The Baltic countries have opened their borders to one another creating “travel bubble”. This is being called the Baltic Travel Bubble. With the opening of the borders, the citizens and residents of the European Nations can move freely. However, people coming from outside the zone are being quarantined for 14 days. This is the first travel bubble since the lock down.

Japan’s Economy Officially Enters Recession for First Time Since 2015

Japan’s economy has officially entered a recession — defined as two consecutive quarters of negative economic growth — according to new economic data released. According to the Japanese Cabinet Office, seasonally adjusted real gross domestic product contracted by 3.4 percent for the period between January and March 2020. The figure was short of median expectations of a 4.6 percent contraction.

UN lists khudol of Manipur as one of top 10 global initiatives to fight COVID-19 pandemic

The United Nations (UN) has listed Manipur’s “khudol” (gift) among the top 10 global initiatives for an inclusive fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. It was listed by the United Nations Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth.

Khudol is a crowdfunded initiative of Ya_All. The initiative aims to ensure food supplies and health services for the people living with HIV, daily-wage earners, LGBTQI+ community, children, and adolescents.

WHO announced Human Challenge Trials for Vaccine Development

World Health Organization (WHO) announced that it had selected 8 people out of the several people who step forward to participate in human challenge trials to develop new vaccines for COVID-19.

Human challenge trials are trials in which participants are intentionally challenged (whether or not they have been vaccinated) with an infectious disease organism. As per the announcement, the trials will be announced in three phases.

Foreign Relation

US places India on priority watch list for intellectual property protection

The US placed India on the 'Priority Watch List' for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its intellectual property framework on the "long-standing" and "new challenges" that have negatively affected American right holders over the past year.

The US placed 10 countries, including some of its major trading partners like India and China, on the list, alleging that enforcement of the intellectual properties have deteriorated or remained at inadequate levels and the Americans who rely on their protection have difficulty with fair and equitable market access.

India attends New Development Bank Governors meet

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman attended the Special Board of Governors meet of New Development bank through video conference. The leaders that attended the meet elected the president, vice president of new development bank. The bank has so far approved 16.6 billion USD to over 55 projects in its member countries.

J.K. Rowling announces "The Ickabog"

British author J.K. Rowling released first two chapters of her new Children's book "The Ickabog". The story is to be published in installments on The Ickabog website for free before its official publication in November 2020. The Ickabog is her first children's book since Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows was published in 2007.

PM Narendra Modi to participate in NAM virtual summit on coronavirus

Prime Minister Narendra Modi would participate in the virtual summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to be held to enhance coordination of the member states in their fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

The meeting is being convened at the initiative of President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan, in his capacity as the current chair of the movement. This would be the first time that the Indian Prime Minister would be attending a NAM summit-level meeting after taking office in 2014.

India Qualifies to Become Permanent Member of UNSC, Says Syed Akbaruddin

India is qualified to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, said country's Permanent Representative at the United Nations Syed Akbaruddin, according to reports.

"One of India's aspirational goals was, is and will remain permanent membership of the Security Council, because we feel by any present-day calculus, we would qualify for the status," he told The Hindu.

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India, Israel To Conduct Joint Research For Rapid COVID-19 Testing

India and Israel will put in joint research and development efforts for rapid testing of coronavirus to enable normalisation of life amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the embassy of Israel said.

India joins 61 nations in WHO to identify Zoonotic source of COVID-19

India joined 61 other countries in the World Health Organization to identify the source of COVID-19. China and US are not a part of the resolution. Only three permanent members of the United Nations Security Council have backed the resolution namely Russia, France and UK. The other countries to support the resolution includes South Korea, Japan, Australia, South Africa, India, New Zealand, etc.

India-Bangladesh sign Inland Water Transit and Trade Protocol

India and Bangladesh signed the second Addendum of the Inland Water Transit and Trade Protocol in Bangladesh. Under the new protocol, the countries can ply on designated protocol route. Also, movement of shallow draft mechanized vessels have been allowed between Dhubri (India) and Chilmari (Bangladesh).

India participated in 73rd WHA

India participated in the 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA) on 18 May. India was represented by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare through video conference. WHA addressed Global Vaccine Plan, polio eradication, and neglected tropical diseases other than COVID-19.

Ranks & Indices

India ranks 53rd in Budget Transparency and Accountability

According to the Open Budget Survey conducted by the International Budget Partnership, India ranked 53rd among 117 countries in budget transparency and accountability. India scored 49 out of 100 in the survey. The score was above the global average of 45. New Zealand scored 87 and topped the list. South Africa, Mexico and Brazil were the other top performers with scores 87, 82 and 81 respectively.

India: The Second Largest Manufacturer of PPE in the world

India became the second largest producer of Personal Protective Equipment in the world. China is the leading producer of PPE in the world. The Ministry of Textiles has been taking several measures to maintain the quality of PPE alongside manufacturing.

Initially India faced several challenges in increasing quality PPE products. This includes importing machines from China and also increasing prices. Apart from these, there were delay in imports and non-availability of domestic manufacturers.

NSTMIS report: India placed 3rd in scientific publication

The National Science and Technology Management Information (NSTMIS) has conducted a survey on Research and Development Statistics and Indicators 2019-20. The report says that India ranks 3rd globally in the scientific publication.

The first two ranks were occupied by USA and China. The gross expenditure on Research and Development in the country has tripled between 2008 and 2018. It was Rs 39,437 crores in 2008 and increased to Rs 1,13,825 crores in 2018.

India lost top spot in the ICC Test rankings to Australia

India lost the top spot in the ICC Test rankings to Australia on 1 May. It lost the rank because of the 2016-17 record eliminated from the annual update as per rules.

India dropped in the ladder largely because the record of 12 Tests victories and just one Test defeat in 2016-17 was removed in the latest chart. Australia, the top-ranking country, now has 116 points. It followed by New Zealand with 115 points and India with 114 points. India yielded the top spot in Test rankings for the first time since October 2016. It continues to lead the ICC World Test Championship.

India ranked 74th on the global Energy Transition Index

As per the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual rankings, India has secured the 74th position on the global Energy Transition Index (ETI). In the previous year, India ranked 76th.

As per the report, India has made significant strides in energy efficiency through bulk procurement of LED bulbs, smart meters, and programs for labelling of appliances. India is also experimenting with similar measures to drive down the costs of electric vehicles (EV).

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Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan ranks among biggest in world

Government of India allocated total spending of Rs.20 lakh crore under “Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan or Self-reliant India Mission” to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. This is among the largest economic stimulus package announced by nations across the world. The allocated fund is about 10% of India’s GDP in 2019-20. With this move, India would rank behind Japan, the US, Sweden, Australia, and Germany.

Business

Volvo Cars To Use LiDAR Technology From Luminar For Safe Self-Driving

Volvo Cars, is partnering with tech firm Luminar to provide their industry-leading LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) and perception technology for Volvo's next generation cars. The partnership will deliver Volvo's first fully self-driving technology for highways and paves the way for future active safety developments.

Jeff Bezos could be world's first trillionaire by 2026, Mukesh Ambani by 2033: Report

Despite losing an estimated \$38 billion as part of his recent divorce, the Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos' colossal wealth is growing at such a rate that Bezos could become inaugural member of the 13-figure club by 2026, at an age of 62, says a new study by Comparisun.

Amazon founder Jeff Bezos is still by far the world's richest person and his net worth has grown by 34 per cent on average over the last five years, said the study by Comparisun, a company which helps organisations compare different business products.

PepsiCo India ties up with Swiggy

In a bid to strengthen availability of its snack brands at a time when the country is grappling with the Covid-19 pandemic, PepsiCo India has entered into a distribution partnership with Swiggy to launch Lay's and Kurkure e-stores on the app. Consumers can also order Quaker Oats through the app.

Currently, the partnership is in the pilot stage, and delivery of these brands is being done by Swiggy in Mumbai and Gurugram. This partnership will be expanded to enable the delivery of Lay's, Kurkure and Quaker Oats products to consumers in over 20 cities in the coming days, according to sources.

GCPL acquires balance 25% stake in Kenya-based Canon Chemicals

FMCG major Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL) announced acquisition of the balance 25 per cent stake in Kenya-based Canon Chemicals Ltd for an undisclosed sum. Through this transaction, Canon Chemicals would now be a wholly-owned subsidiary of the company. The acquisition was made through its step down firm Godrej East Africa Holdings Ltd.

Reliance Jio sells 1.34% stake to General Atlantic

Jio Platforms announced that it has sold a 1.34 percent stake to New York-based private equity firm General Atlantic for nearly Rs 6,600 crore, making it the fourth such stake sale in the last four weeks. Following is the full text of a media release issued by Reliance Industries Limited and Jio Platforms Limited in this regard.

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Facebook acquires Giphy

The social media giant Facebook just acquired Giphy— a popular website for making and sharing animated images or GIFs. Facebook and Giphy have not disclosed the cost of the acquisition, but according to news website Axios, the deal is placed at around \$400 million.

Accenture acquires Ahmedabad-based big data analytics company Byte Prophecy

Global technology firm Accenture said that it has acquired Ahmedabad-based Byte Prophecy, an automated insights and big data analytics company. Financial terms of the acquisition were not disclosed.

The acquisition will add nearly 50 data science and data engineering experts, with a particular focus on insight automation, to Accenture Applied Intelligence. The move will deepen existing consulting and technology capabilities that help clients in areas such as data foundations and advanced analytics.

Amazon starts food delivery, picks Bengaluru for launch

Amazon is all set to launch its food-delivery business in India, throwing a challenge to homegrown players Swiggy and Zomato who are already reeling from coronavirus fallout. The ecommerce major will launch Amazon Food at select pin codes of Bengaluru.

Tata Power arm TPIPL acquires 10% equity in ABV; total stake rises to 50%

Tata Power said its arm Tata Power International Pte Ltd (TPIPL) has acquired 10 per cent stake in Adjaristsqali Netherlands BV (ABV) from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) for USD 150,000 (about Rs 1.13 crore). The 10 per cent stake acquisition has increased TPIPL's shareholding in ABV to 50 per cent.

KKR-Reliance Jio Deal of Rs 11,367 crore for 2.32% stake

New York-based Private equity firm KKR has announced to invest Rs 11367 crore or USD 1.5 billion in Jio Platforms for a stake of 2.32%. The deal will be finalised after it get regulatory and customary approvals. This is fifth such investment in Reliance Jio followed by Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners and General Atlantic. More such deals can be expected in future.

ITC set to acquire Sunrise Foods

ITC Ltd said it is set to acquire Kolkata-based spice maker Sunrise Foods Pvt. Ltd (SFPL), in a move that will help the company cement its position in the country's fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) market.

ITC entered into a share purchase agreement on 23 May 2020 to acquire 100% of the equity share capital of SFPL, a company primarily engaged in the business of spices under the trademark 'Sunrise', ITC said in a press released.

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Maruti Suzuki ties up with Cholamandalam for customised auto finance

Maruti Suzuki India announced a partnership with Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Company Ltd (CIFCL) to provide customised auto retail financing solutions to retail buyers through 'Buy Now Pay Later' offer.

In a statement, the automobile major said that the scheme will allow customers to start paying the EMIs after 60 days of loan disbursement. This will make the process of car buying more convenient in these unprecedented times, it added.

Mango Board, Flipkart join hands for home delivery

The Karnataka State Mango Development and Marketing Corporation (KSMDMC) officially partnered with Flipkart to supply mangoes to consumers' doorsteps at no extra cost. They signed an MoU for a 45-day pilot, starting the services with immediate effect. Horticulture Minister Kaigonahalli Chikkegowda Narayana Gowda said the MoU was signed to ensure that farmers benefit the most.

ITC, Amway tie up to launch products in health and immunity space

Leading FMCG player ITC has tied up with direct selling company Amway India with a focus on products in the health and nutrition space.

This partnership has been kicked-off with the launch of 'B Natural+' fruit beverage range, which has been developed by ITC, and positioned in the immunity-boosting space. The range will be exclusively distributed by Amway through its direct selling network in the initial period.

Facebook Launches 'Catchup' Audio Calling App

"Catchup," built by Facebook's internal R&D group, differs from other group chat apps, in that the calls are audio-only, not video, and displays users' status to indicate they're available to talk.

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Defence News

Operation “Samudra Setu” launched by Indian Navy

The Indian Navy launched Operation “Samudra Setu” to bring back the Indians that are stranded in Maldives. They are stranded in the foreign land due to the grounding of airlines. Samudra Sethu means Sea Bridge.

Rajnath Singh commissions Indian Coast Guard Ship ‘Sachet’, two interceptor boats

The Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on May 15 commissioned Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) sachet and two interceptor boats C-451 and (IBs) C-450 in Goa. The event took place via video conferencing from Delhi.

An ICG spokesperson informed that the ship ‘Sachet’ has been first in the series of five offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) and has been designed and built indigenously by Goa Shipyard (Ltd). The ship is fitted with communication equipment, navigation, sensor, and machinery.

Nirmala Sitharaman hikes FDI limit in defence production from 49 pct to 74 pct

In a very big move announced by FM Nirmala Sitharaman announced the government’s decision to raise the foreign direct investment (FDI) limit under the automatic route from existing 49 per cent to 74 per cent in the defence production. She said that the decision was an important one as it would make an ‘Aatmnirbhar Bharat’ in the field of defense.

Indian Navy formed “NavRakshak” breathable PPE kit

Indian Navy has formed “NavRakshak” PPE kit with innovative breathable fabric material. This PPE kit provides comfort to healthcare workers working against COVID-19 pandemic wearing multi-layered coverall PPE treating patients within the hot and humid condition for quite 12 hours.

Missile Park ‘Agniprastha’ to be set up at INS Kalinga

Foundation Stone for a Missile Park ” AGNEEPRASTHA” was laid at INS Kalinga by Cmde Rajesh Debnath, Commanding Officer, in the presence of Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain, PVSM, AVSM, VSM, FOC-in-C (East) on 28 May 20.

The Missile Park “AGNEEPRASTHA” once completed will be dedicated to all the Officers, Sailors and Support Staff of INS Kalinga, who have served in this premier op-support Base of the ENC since its establishment in 1981. The Park also commemorates the award of the prestigious Unit Citation to INS Kalinga for the year 2018-19.

Indian Army to implement “ToD”

In order to help the country fight unemployment generated due to COVID-19 and also citing resurgence of nationalism and patriotism, the Indian Army has launched “ToD”. ToD is Tour of Duty. ToD is a three year internship for youths to work as officers and soldiers in the Indian Army.

Current Affairs May 2020

IAF to operationalize its No.18 Squadron at Coimbatore, TN

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is to operationalize its No.18 Squadron at Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu on 27 May. IAF chief, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria is expected to operationalize the squadron “Flying Bullets” at the Sulur Air Force Station near Coimbatore, TN.

Science & Technology

Russia to launch the first Arktika-M satellite in 2020 December

Russia announced that it is to launch the country's first Arktika-M satellite from the Baikonur space center on 9 December 2020. at the end of 2020. The announcement was made by the General Director of the Lavochkin aerospace company Vladimir Kolmykov.

Long March 5B: China's new Rocket launch successful

China had launched a new rocket and a deep-space spacecraft to operate a permanent space station and also to send astronauts to moon. China launched the Long March 5B rocket from its Wenchang launch site that is located on the island of Hainan. The rocket is a massive vehicle and is being compared with deep space Orion capsule of NASA.

Agappe Chitra Magna launched by SCTIMST to detect COVID-19

The Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Science and Technology operating under Department of Science and Technology has launched magnetic nano particle based RNA extraction kit called "Agappe Chitra Magna".

Sun Pharma to begin clinical trial of pancreatitis drug in COVID-19 patients

Sun Pharma said that it has received approval from the Drugs Controller General of India to begin clinical trials of pancreatitis drug, nafamostat mesilate, in COVID-19 patients. Sun Pharma said that it has initiated manufacturing of the active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) and the finished product of nafamostat using technology from its subsidiary, Pola Pharma Japan.

NASA's WFIRST Hubble Telescope renamed after astronomer Nancy Grace Roman

NASA has renamed its next-generation space telescope- Wide-Field Infrared Survey Telescope (WFIRST), after the space agency's first chief astronomer Nancy Grace Roman. The Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope or Roman Space Telescope is set for launch in 2025.

NASA's first Chief Astronomer Nancy Grace Roman had paved the way for space telescopes focused on the broader universe. She is considered as the mother of Hubble Space Telescope, which had launched 30 years ago.

NSAFE: First antimicrobial and washable Face Mask

The Startup of IIT Delhi has found an antimicrobial face mask that can be washed and reused for 50 times. The Nanosafe Solutions at IIT Delhi has developed the masks to fight against COVID-19.

The NSAFE face mask provides 99.2% of bacterial filtration. This is the first fabric-based face mask that is antimicrobial and washable. The mask complies ASTM standards.

Current Affairs May 2020

COBAS 6800: India's first automated COVID-19 testing machine

The Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan dedicated the COBAS 6800 RT PCR machine to the nation. The machine is completely automated and performs high end RT-PCR tests. The machine will help to increase the testing capacity of the country. It has been placed at National Centre for Disease Control, Delhi.

What is Event Bolt Malware in news recently?

The Computer Emergency Response of Team (CERT) of India has issued warning against a new malware called "EventBot". The malware according to CERT steals personal financial information from Android phone users.

The Eventbolt malware that is spreading is a Trojan. It cheats victims secretly attacking computer or phone operating system. Currently, the malware is capable of targeting more than 200 different financial applications.

Current Affairs May 2020

Sports

Name	Tournament Name	Extra Information
China	Online Nations Cup 2020	India concluded its campaign by playing to its seeding and finished fifth, ahead of sixth seed Rest of the World (RoW).

Obituary

Name	Associated Field
Chuni Goswami	Legendary footballer
Hema Bharali	Freedom fighter and Social activist
KS Nissar Ahmed	Kannada poet
Jerry Stiller	Actor And Comedian
Hari Shankar Vasudevan	Eminent historian
Manmeet Singh	Former National TT champion
Shafique Ansari	Crime Patrol' actor
Raja Rangappa Naik	Former Lok Sabha MP
Phyllis Ann George	Former Miss America and sports casting pioneer
Ratnakar Matkari	Marathi writer and playwright
Ravi Zacharias	Indian-born Canadian-American Christian apologist
Mohit Baghel	Bollywood Actor
Balbir Singh	Sr: Hockey legend
Arumugan Thondaman	Sri Lankan Minister
Ajit Jogi	Former Chhattisgarh CM
M P Veerendra Kumar	Managing Director of leading Malayalam daily Mathrubhumi and a member of PTI's Board of Directors

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Important Days

Day	Date	Theme
World Tuna Day	May 02	
International Astronomy Day	May 02	
World Press Freedom Day	May 03	Journalism Without Fear or Favour
World Asthma Day	May 05	Enough Asthma Deaths
World Athletics Day	May 07	
Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for victims of WWII	May 08 & 09	
World Thalassemia Day	May 08	
World Red Cross Day	May 08	
Birth Anniversary of Maharana Pratap Singh I	May 09	
World Migratory Bird Day	May 09	Birds Connect our World
National Technology Day	May 11	Focusing on Rebooting the economy through Science and Technology
International Nurse Day	May 12	A Voice to lead-Nursing the World to Health
International Day of Families	May 15	Families and Development
World celebrates International Day of Living Together in Peace	May 16	
International Day of Light	May 16	
World Telecommunication and Information Society Day	May 17	Connect 2030: ICTs for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
World Hypertension Day	May 17	Measure Your Blood Pressure, Control It, Live Longer
World Metrology Day	May 20	
World Bee Day	May 20	Save the Bees
International Tea Day	May 21	
National Anti-Terrorism Day	May 21	
World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	May 21	
International Day for Biological Diversity	May 22	Our solutions are in nature
International Day to End Obstetric Fistulas	May 23	
Commonwealth Day in India	May 24	
International Missing Children's Day	May 25	
International Day of Action for Women's Health	May 28	
Menstrual Hygiene Day	May 28	Periods in Pandemic

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World Hunger Day	May 28	
International Day of UN Peacekeepers	May 29	Women in Peacekeeping: A key to Peace
International Everest Day	May 29	
World No-Tobacco Day	May 31	Protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use