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NATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL

ART & CULTURE

ECONOMICS

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ENVIRONMENT

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

WEEKLY
CURRENT AFFAIRS

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International

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

This is at the top of the global list for the eighth consecutive year in the QS World University Rankings for 2020 which was released recently. QS World University Rankings is an annual publication of university rankings by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). QS evaluates universities and institutions on parameters such as academic and employer reputation, faculty-student ratio, citations per faculty and international students and faculty on campuses. IIT-Bombay has been ranked India's best university for the second year in a row. Two other Indian universities — IIT Delhi (182) and the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru (184) — have also cracked the top 200.

Hidden Hunger

This is a term used when malnutrition and obesity co-exist in the same people. Hidden hunger is a result of various factors. These include poverty, inequality, urbanisation and industrialisation of the food system. The interplay of these factors leaves low income households with very limited access to fresh, healthy foods. Instead, many South Africans — and other people living in similar conditions — subsist on diets high in sugar and processed starch. These diets contribute to increasing levels of obesity.

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Venezuela

The country which recently announced that it will issue new banknotes due to racketing hyperinflation which eroded the currency's value. The central bank of Venezuela will release new Banknotes of 10,000, 20,000 and 50,000 bolivar denominations. The decision aims to control the prevailing hyperinflationary situation that reached more than 1.3 million percent and strengthen the payment system and commercial transactions in the country. The highest bill in circulation was 500 bolivar note before the announcement. The largest denominations banknotes of 50,000 bolivars are worth about Rs.560 ($8) which is more than the minimum wage of 40,000 bolivars.
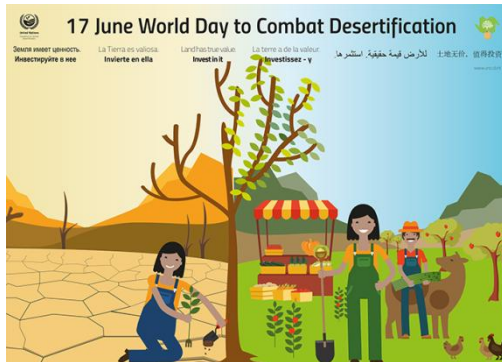
One Health

This is a concept in news given by The World Organization of Animal Health, commonly known as OIE (an abbreviation of its French title), which summarises the One Health concept as "human health and animal health are interdependent and bound to the health of the ecosystems in which they exist". The philosophy of One Health recognises inter-connectivity among human health, the health of animals, and the environment. Circa 400 BC, Hippocrates in his treatise On Airs, Waters and Places had urged physicians that all aspects of patients' lives need to be considered including their environment; disease was a result of imbalance between man and environment. So, One Health is not a new concept, though it is of late that it has been formalised in health governance systems. According to the OIE, 60% of existing human infectious diseases are zoonotic i.e. they are transmitted from animals to humans; 75% of emerging infectious human diseases have an animal origin. Developing countries like India have much greater stake in strong One Health systems on account of agricultural systems resulting in uncomfortably close proximity of animals and humans.

17th June

This day was recently celebrated as World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought. The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought 2019 theme was 'Let's Grow the Future Together' (Reflecting on 25 years of progress and envisaging to the next 25) encouraging people against depleting the land of its inbuilt resources. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development declares that "we are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations". Desertification is the degradation of land in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas. It is caused primarily by human activities and climatic variations. Desertification does not refer to the expansion of existing deserts.

Gulf of Mexico

The place where the scientists have predicted the creation of Dead Zone. Scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Louisiana State University have predicted that this spring's record rainfall would produce one of the largest-ever "dead zones" in the Gulf of Mexico. Unoxygenated "dead zones" appear in waterways wherever algae are overfed by runoff from human activities such as urbanization and agriculture – a phenomenon called eutrophication. The dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico, fuelled by the nutrient-laden water spilling from the mouth of the Mississippi River, is the second-largest in the world. It blooms every summer, when warming waters accelerate the metabolisms of microorganisms, and it is expected to get even worse as the climate continues to change.

Zuzana Caputova

The lawyer and Anti-corruption campaigner was recently sworn in as first female & the fifth President of Slovakia. She defeated Smer-SD candidate Maros Sefcovic. She was elected in March 2019 with 58% of votes over Mr Sefcovic(42%). She was honoured with the

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Goldman Environmental Award in 2016 for her strong leadership regarding the Pezinok landfill affair, Caputova. Slovakia is a landlocked country in Central Europe It is bordered by Poland to the north, Ukraine to the east, Hungary to the south, Austria to the west, and the Czech Republic to the northwest.

Hertogenbosch in Netherlands

The place where the 50th edition of World Archery Championships, 2019 also known as Hyundai World Archery Championships were held from June 10, 2019, to June 16, 2019. It was comprised of Men's Individual, Women's Individual, Men's team, Women's team, and Mixed team. South Korea topped the medal tally with 3 gold, 2 Silver, 3 Bronze. Chinese Taipei came second with 3 Gold,1 Bronze. India won three medals,1 silver, and 2 bronze.

iii. Indian men's archery team secured the Olympic quota for the 2020 Tokyo Games by entering into the quarterfinals of the World Championships with a 5-3 win over Canada. After the 2012 London Olympics, this is the first time that Indian men could secure a team quota.

Germany and Russia

These are the two countries whose joint team of scientists are set to launch a space telescope-Spectrum-Roentgen-Gamma (SRG). It will create a three-dimensional (3D) X-ray map of the universe and unveil unknown supermassive black holes, dark energy and stars. The telescope will be launched into space on a Russian-built Proton-M rocket from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on June 21, 2019. The four-year mission will survey the entire sky eight times and track the evolution of the universe and dark energy — a mysterious repulsive force — that is accelerating its expansion. It also aims to detect up to three million supermassive black holes — many of which are unknown — and X-rays from as many as 700,000 stars in the Milky Way. The telescope is the first to be sensitive to high-energy 'hard' X-rays and map the entire sky.

The Strait of Hormuz

It is the waterway separates Iran and Oman, linking the Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. The Strait is 21 miles (33 km) wide at its narrowest point, but the shipping lane is just two miles (three km) wide in either direction. Most crude exported from Saudi Arabia, Iran, the UAE, Kuwait and Iraq — all members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries — is shipped through the waterway. It is also the route used for nearly all the liquefied natural gas (LNG) produced by the world's biggest LNG exporter, Qatar.

Rice

It is the crop which is affected by Sheath Blight disease. A strain of Rhizoctonia solani is the fungal pathogen that causes the dreaded Sheath Blight disease in rice. It is a major issue in rice cultivation. It can cause up to 60 per cent reduction in rice yield. It is difficult to breed disease resistant rice varieties, as there is lack of natural source of disease resistance. The researchers have identified several genes and gene families in the strain that might account for their disease aggressiveness. This genomic insight is expected to help develop rice varieties resistant to sheath blight disease.

12th June

This day was recently celebrated as The World Day against Child Labour across the world. The theme of 2019 was 'Children should not work in fields but on dreams'. The World Day against Child Labour was established by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2002 to focus attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it. The day brings together governments, employers and workers organizations, civil society as well as millions of people to highlight the plight of child labourers and measures to help them. UN Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7 set by the international community calls for an end to child labour in all its forms by 2025. World Day against Child Labour 2019 calls for full ratification and implementation of

Convention No. 182 and of the ILO's Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). The day also aims to encourage ratification of the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, which protects both adults and children. This year marks 20 years since the adoption of the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

Kelps

These are large brown algae seaweeds that make up the order Laminariales. There are about 30 different genera. Kelps have adapted to the severe conditions. These cool water species have special strategies to survive freezing temperatures and long periods of darkness, and even grow under sea ice. In regions with cold, nutrient-rich water, they can attain some of the highest rates of primary production of any natural ecosystem on Earth. Kelps function underwater in the same way trees do on land. They create habitat and modify the physical environment by shading light and softening waves. The underwater forests that kelps create are used by many animals for shelter and food.

Global Peace Index Themes

The level of societal safety and security. The extent of ongoing domestic and international conflict. The degree of militarisation. These are the three thematic domains on which the countries are ranked to their level of peacefulness in the Global Peace Index. Global Peace Index is released by Australian think tank Institute for Economics & Peace. The GPI was founded by Steve Killelea, an Australian technology entrepreneur and philanthropist. The report covers 99.7 per cent of the world's population and uses 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources to compile the index. Global Peace Index 2019 includes new research on the possible effects of climate change on peace. India's rank has slipped five places to 141 this year. Iceland remains the most peaceful country in the world, a position it has held since 2008. It is joined at the top of the Global Peace Index (GPI) by New Zealand, Austria, Portugal, and Denmark. Afghanistan is now the least peaceful country in the world, replacing Syria, which is now the second least peaceful. South Sudan, Yemen, and Iraq comprise the remaining five least peaceful countries.

Seem Reap province in Cambodia -it is the place where the 16th Asia Media Summit 2019 was organised in to deliberate on many issues pertaining to media & broadcasting industry.

It is an annual summit of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) Kuala Lumpur. The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) was established in 1977 under the auspices of UNESCO. It is hosted by the Government of Malaysia and the secretariat is located in Kuala Lumpur. Full membership of the AIBD is confined to sovereign states and they are invited to designate the broadcasting authority of the country to be the beneficiary. The AIBD currently has 26 Full Members (countries), represented by 34 organisations, and 67 Affiliate Members (organisations) with a total membership of 101 representing 48 countries and regions and over 50 partners in Asia, Pacific, Europe, Africa, Arab States and North America.
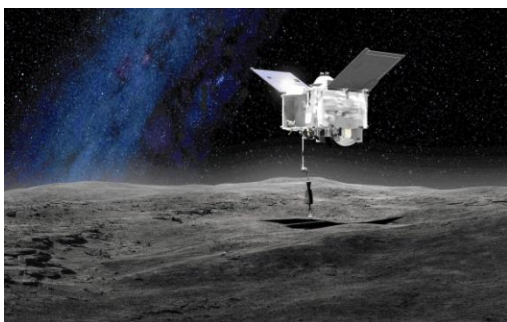
30th January, 2020

It is the date on which Spitzer space telescope of NASA will be retired. Spitzer is going to shut down permanently after about 16 years of exploring the cosmos in infrared light. By 2020, Spitzer space telescope will have operated for more than 11 years beyond its prime mission. Launched into solar orbit on August 25, 2003, Spitzer was initially scheduled for a minimum 2.5-year primary mission. But the space telescope has lasted far beyond its expected lifetime. Spitzer's discoveries extend from our own planetary backyard, to planets around other stars, to the far reaches of the universe. And by working in collaboration with NASA's other Great Observatories, Spitzer has helped scientists gain a more complete picture of many cosmic phenomena. NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope was launched in 2003 to study the universe in the infrared. It is the last mission of the NASA Great Observatories program, which saw four specialized telescopes (including the Hubble Space Telescope) launched between 1990 and 2003.

OSRIR-Rex

The asteroid probe by the US space agency NASA set a new record for the closest-ever orbit of a planetary body made by a man-made spacecraft. The recent manoeuvre has placed the spacecraft into an orbit 680 meters above the asteroid Bennu's surface for about seven weeks. OSIRIS-Rex stands for Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer. OSIRIS-REx is the third mission in NASA's New Frontiers program, which previously sent the New Horizons spacecraft zooming by Pluto and the Juno spacecraft into orbit around Jupiter.

Juneteenth

Is considered the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States. It was originally celebrated on June 19, the day that Union soldiers in 1865 told enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas, that the Civil War had ended and they were free. The celebration started with the freed slaves of Galveston, Texas. Although the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves in the South in 1863, it could not be enforced in many places until after the end of the Civil War in 1865. The term Juneteenth is a blend of the words June and nineteenth. The holiday has also been called Juneteenth Independence Day or Freedom Day.

RADARSAT Constellation Mission (RCM) of Canada

It was launched successfully into space aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California. The constellation of three satellites will provide daily images of Canada's vast territory and maritime approaches, as well as images of the Arctic, up to four times a day. It will have daily access to 90 percent of the world's surface. The RCM is also equipped with an Automatic Identification System (AIS), allowing improved detection and tracking of ships, including those conducting illegal fishing. The RADARSAT Constellation Mission will provide improved data for the critical services our government provides to Canadians, including monitoring climate change, protecting the health of our oceans, forests and crops; and supporting our first responders' disaster relief efforts.

China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan

These are the founding members of The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The cooperation was renamed to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation after Uzbekistan joined the organisation in 2001. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, also known as the Shanghai Pact, is a Eurasian political, economic, and military

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organisation which was founded in 2001 in Shanghai. SCO Summit 2019 was recently held in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan. Presently, the SCO comprises eight member states, namely the Republic of India, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan. The SCO counts four observer states, namely the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Belarus, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Mongolia.

The Windrush Scheme

It enables Commonwealth citizens, their children, and some other long-term residents of the UK to obtain documentation confirming their status free of charge. The Windrush generation refers to citizens of former British colonies who arrived before 1973, when the rights of such Commonwealth citizens to live and work in Britain were substantially curtailed. The name derives from the ship MV Empire Windrush, which on June 22, 1948, docked in Tilbury, Essex, bringing nearly 500 Jamaicans to the UK. The immigrants came at the invitation of the British government, which was facing a labour shortage due to the destruction caused by World War II.

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People in the News

Bimal Jalan

The Ex-Governor, RBI is the head of RBI constituted a panel on economic capital framework. The expert panel on RBI's economic capital framework was formed to address the issueof RBI reserves—one of the sticking points between the central bank and the government. Economic capital framework refers to the risk capital required by the central bank while taking into account different risks. The economic capital framework reflects the capital that an institution requires or needs to hold as a counter against unforeseen risks or events or losses in the future. Existing economic capital framework which governs the RBI's capital requirements and terms for the transfer of its surplus to the government is based on a conservative assessment of risk by the central bank and that a review of the framework would result in excess capital being freed, which the RBI can then share with the government.

Thawarchand Gehlot

The Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment was recently appointed as Leader of Rajya Sabha. The Leader of the Rajya Sabha is appointed by the party in power at Centre. The term Leader of the House has been defined in Rules of Procedure of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Leader of the House, according to Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha means the prime Minister, if he is a Member of the House or a Minister who is a Member of the House and is nominated by the Prime Minister to function as the Leader of the House. The Prime Minister is invariably the Leader of the Lok Sabha. The Leader of the House is an important parliamentary functionary and exercises direct influence on the course of parliamentary business.

Om Birla

He has been named as the new Lok Sabha Speaker by the NDA. He is elected Member of Parliament from Kota, Rajasthan. The chairman or the Presiding Officer of Lok Sabha is called Speaker. The speaker of the Lok Sabha is elected from all other members by simple majority. Any member of Parliament is eligible to be nominated as a speaker but most commonly the candidate of ruling party or the party with majority wins this post. However, there are certain cases when the elected Speaker does not belong to the majority ruling party of Lok Sabha (G. M. C. Balyogi, Manohar Joshi, Somnath Chatterjee).

Kirit Parikh

The economist is the head of, the Central Government constituted five-member committee to review the existing marketing structure of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in India. The other members of the panel include the former petroleum secretary GC Chaturvedi, former Indian Oil chairman MA Pathan, IIM Ahmedabad director Errol D'souza, and a joint secretary in the petroleum ministry. The newly constituted committee will look into the issues related to definition or quality standards of LPG being marketed.

President Ramnath Kovind

He recently addressed joint sitting of Parliament outlining the govt's goals for next five years. Article 87(1) says: "At the commencement of the first session after each general election to the House of the People and at the commencement of the first session of each year the President shall address both Houses of Parliament assembled together and inform Parliament of the causes of its summons." Originally, the Constitution required the President to address both Houses of Parliament at the commencement of "every session". This requirement was changed by the First Amendment to the Constitution. The President's speech essentially highlights the

government's policy priorities andplans for the upcoming year. It is drafted by the Cabinet, and provides a broad framework of the government's agenda and direction.

Suman Rao

The 20-year-old model, a resident of Rajsamand, Rajasthan was crowned Miss India 2019. The ceremony was held at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Indoor Stadium, Mumbai, Maharashtra. She was crowned by Miss India 2018 Anukreethy Vas from Tamil Nadu. Born on November 23, 1999. Suman has the title of Miss India Rajasthan 2019 and will represent India in the coveted Miss World 2019 which is going to be held in Pattaya, Bangkok in December 2019. She is pursuing a Chartered Accountancy course from New Delhi along with B.Com. Shivani Jadhav from Chhattisgarh won Femina Miss Grand India 2019 title and Shreya Shankerfrom Bihar won Miss India United Continents 2019 title. Sanjana Vij of Telangana was adjudged as Miss India Runner Up 2019.

Places

India

This is currently the Chair of Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) since 1st January 2018. It was handed Chairmanship by the European Union during KPCS Plenary 2018, which was held in Brussels, Belgium. The Intersessional meeting of Kimberley Process (KP) is being hosted by India in Mumbai. India is founding member of KPCS. The Kimberley Process is an international certification scheme that regulates trade in rough diamonds. It aims to prevent the flow of conflict diamonds, while helping to protect legitimate trade in rough diamonds. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) outlines the rules that govern the trade in rough diamonds. The Kimberley Process (KP) is open to all countries that are willing and able to implement its requirements. The KP has 55 participants, representing 82 countries, including the European Union and its Member States counting as a single participant. KP members account for approximately 99.8% of the global production of rough diamonds.

Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland and Karnataka

These are the states in which the centre has launched the pilot phase of a flagship project on enhancing capacity on forest landscape restoration (FLR) and Bonn Challenge in India. At the UNFCC Conference of the Parties (COP) 2015 in Paris, India also joined the voluntary Bonn Challenge pledge to bring into restoration 13 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by the year 2020, and additional 8 million hectares by 2030. India's pledge is one of the largest in Asia. The Bonn Challenge is a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030. The 2020 target was launched at a high-level event in Bonn in 2011 organised by the Government of Germany and IUCN, and was later endorsed and extended to 2030 by the New York Declaration on Forests of the 2014 UN Climate Summit. The Bonn Challenge is an implementation vehicle for national priorities such as water and food security and rural development while simultaneously helping countries contribute to the achievement of international climate change, biodiversity and land degradation commitments. Underlying the Bonn Challenge is the forest landscape restoration (FLR) approach, which aims to restore ecological integrity at the same time as improving human well-being through multifunctional landscapes.
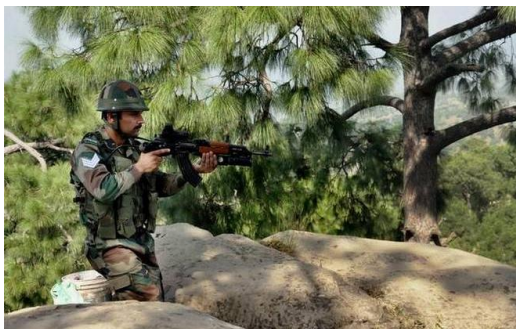
India

This country has for the first time extended $15 Million financial support to Niger as a support for organising African Union (AU) summit scheduled to be held in Niger. This will be the 1st time that Niger will be hosting an AU summit. The African Union (AU) is a continental union consisting of 55 countries of the continent of Africa, with exception of various territories of European possessions located in Africa. The bloc was founded on 26 May 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and launched on 9 July 2002 in South Africa. The intention of the AU is to replace the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), established on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa by 32 signatory governments. The most important decisions of the AU are made by the Assembly of the African Union, a semi-annual meeting of the heads of state and government of its member states. The AU's secretariat, the African Union Commission, is based in Addis Ababa.
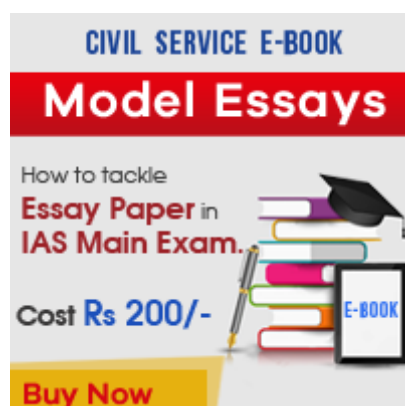
India and Myanmar

These are the two countries who have jointly launched Operation Sunrise against insurgent groups camp in North East. It was carried out by the armies of India and Myanmar. In the operation, Other than NSCN (K), the groups hit were Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO), the United Liberation Front of Assam, and the National Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB).

The Kaladan project

This project connects Sittwe Port in Myanmar to the India-Myanmar border. The project was jointly initiated by India and Myanmar to create a multi-modal platform for cargo shipments from the eastern ports to Myanmar and to the North-eastern parts of the country through Myanmar. It is expected to open up sea routes and promote economic development in the North-eastern states, and also add value to the economic, commercial and strategic ties between India and Myanmar. This project will reduce distance from Kolkata to Sittwe by approximately 1328 km and will reduce the need to transport good through the narrow Siliguri corridor, also known as Chicken's Neck. Sittwe is the capital of Rakhine State (which has been in the news for the plight of Rohingya Muslims) in south-western Myanmar. It is located at the mouth of the Kaladan river, which flows into Mizoram in north-eastern India.

Others

December 2010

Financial Stability and Development Council

The FSDC, set up in 2010, is a body consisting all regulators and the Ministry of Finance. It is the highest forum in matters relating to financial stability. The Council is chaired by the Union Finance Minister

Financial Stability

Inter-regulatory coordination

Financial Sector Development

The responsibility of FSDC includes

Financial literacy and financial inclusion

Macro prudential surveillance of the economy

It is the month in which FSDC (The Financial Stability and Development Council) was constituted. An apex-level FSDC is not a statutory body. The FSDC was set up to strengthen and institutionalise the mechanism for maintaining financial stability, enhancing inter-regulatory coordination and promoting financial sector development. The Council is chaired by the Union Finance Minister and its members are Governor, Reserve Bank of India; Finance Secretary and/or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs; Secretary, Department of Financial Services; Chief Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance; Chairman, Securities and Exchange Board of India; Chairman, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority and Chairman, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority. It also includes the chairman of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board (IBBI). Recently, the government through a gazette notification, had included ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) secretary in the FSDC in view of the increased focus of the government on digital economy.

Dispute Resolution Committee

In a major decision to facilitate the solar and wind energy projects, the government has approved a proposal to set up a Dispute Resolution Committee to consider the unforeseen disputes between solar/wind power developers and SECI/NTPC, beyond contractual agreement. The move will give further fillip to the smooth implementation of solar/wind energy projects in India. It fulfils a long pending demand of the industry to resolve expeditiously, unforeseen disputes that may arise beyond the scope of Contractual Agreements. Solar and Wind Industry have been demanding setting up of Dispute Resolution Mechanism by MNRE for quite some time, to resolve expeditiously, unforeseen disputes that may arise beyond the scope of Contractual Agreements between solar power developers / wind power developers and SECI/ NTPC. A three-member Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) will be set up with the approval of

Hon'ble Minister (NRE), consisting of eminent persons of impeccable integrity. The upper age for the DRC members shall be 70 years.
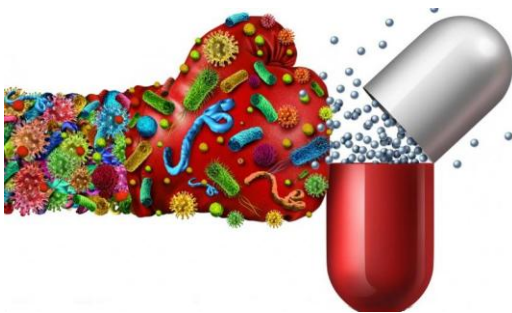
ICANN & NASSCOM

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Services Companies) have announced collaboration for working in developing standards and identifier technology that will feed into the global consultation for managing Internet-of-Things (IoT) devices and infrastructure using internet. The Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is a non-profit organization that was set up in 1998 to oversee the administration of domain names. ICANN coordinates and ensures the smooth and secure functioning of the cybernetic framework. The global nature of the Web today means that there are constantly increasing numbers of Domain Names, Host Names, IP addresses and web sites that are emerging on a daily basis. ICANN oversees this interconnected network and ensures that computers across the internet can find one another through defined unique pathways and identifiers.

AWaRe

It is an online tool aimed at guiding policy-makers and health workers to use antibiotics safely and more effectively. The tool, known as 'AWaRe', classifies antibiotics into three groups: Access — antibiotics used to treat the most common and serious infections. Watch — antibiotics available at all times in the healthcare system. Reserve — antibiotics to be used sparingly or preserved and used only as a last resort. Antibiotic resistance is already one of the biggest health risks and is estimated to kill 50 million by 2050 worldwide. The threat continues to escalate globally because more than 50 per cent of antibiotics in many countries are used inappropriately such as for treatment of viruses when they only treat bacterial infections or use of the wrong (broader spectrum) antibiotic.

Anthrax

It is a disease caused by Bacillus anthracis, a germ that lives in soil. It affects animals such as cattle, sheep, and goats more often than people. People can get anthrax from contact with infected animals, wool, meat, or hides. It can cause three forms of disease in people. Anthrax does not spread directly from one infected animal or person to another; it is spread by spores. These spores can be transported by clothing or shoes. Anthrax can be contracted in laboratory accidents or by handling infected animals or their wool or hides.

Five trillion

Dollar economy by 2024 -It is the goal set for India by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 15, 2019 during the fifth meeting of the Governing Council of The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog which was held under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at Rashtrapati Bhawan Cultural Centre, New Delhi. This was the first governing council meeting under the new Modi government. The guiding principle of Union Government is "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwaas". Focus should be given to fisheries, animal husbandry, horticulture, fruits and vegetables in order to fulfill the commitment to double incomes of farmers by 2022.

16th June 2019

This day was recently celebrated as International Day of Family Remittances all over the world. This day recognizes the contribution of migrant workers to their families and communities back home, and to the sustainable development of their native countries. The day has adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (Objective 20) for the reduction of remittance transfer costs, and greater financial inclusion through remittances. The IFAD's (International Fund for Agricultural Development) Governing Council in 2015 declared 16 June as International Day of Family Remittances. The first International Day of Family Remittances was celebrated on 16 June 2015. IFAD, as custodian of the IDFR, is supporting the #Family Remittances Campaign 2030.

Bt cotton

It remains the only GM crop allowed to be cultivated in the country. Developed by US giant Bayer-Monsanto, it involves insertion of two genes viz 'Cry1Ab' and 'Cry2Bc' from the soil bacterium Bacillus thuringiensis into cotton seeds. This modification codes the plant to produce protein toxic to Heliothis bollworm (pink bollworm) thus making it resistant to their attack. The commercial release of this hybrid was sanctioned by the government in 2002. In India, it is the responsibility of the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) under the Environment Ministry to assess the safety of a genetically modified plant, and decide whether it is fit for cultivation. The GEAC comprises experts and government representatives, and a decision it takes has to be approved by the Environment Minister before any crop is allowed for cultivation. Besides Bt cotton, the GEAC has cleared two other genetically modified crops — brinjal and mustard — but these have not received the consent of the Environment Minister.

Speaker of Lok Sabha

Is basically the head of the house and presides over the sittings of Parliament and controls it's working. The salary of the Speaker is charged on the consolidated Fund of India and the same is not subject to vote of Parliament. While debating or during general discussion on a bill, the members of the parliament have to address only to the Speaker. Whenever there is a joint sitting of both houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha) the Speaker of the Lok Sabha presides over this meeting. These are some of the Functions and Powers of Lok Sabha Speaker. The Speaker of Lok Sabha comes at sixth position in the Order of Precedence of Government of India. In the normal circumstances the Speaker does not casts his vote over any matter in Lok Sabha. But whenever there is a tie-on vote between the ruling party and opposition, the Speaker at that time can exercise his vote. The Speaker decides whether a bill brought to the house is a money bill or not. In the case Speaker decides some bill as a money bill, this decision cannot be challenged. Speaker is the final and sole authority to allow different types of motions and resolutions such as No Confidence Motion, Motion of Adjournment, Censure Motion etc.

Data localization

It is the act of storing data on any device that is physically present within the borders of a specific country where the data was generated. Data localization is necessary for India for securing citizen's data, data privacy, data sovereignty, national security, and economic development of the country. Recommendations by the RBI, the committee of experts led by Justice BN Srikrishna, the draft ecommerce policy and the draft report of the cloud policy panel show signs of data localisation. The extensive data collection by technology companies, has allowed them to process and monetize Indian users' data outside the country. Therefore, to curtail the perils of unregulated and arbitrary use of personal data, data localization is necessary. Digital technologies like machine learning (ML), artificial intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) can generate tremendous value out of various data. It can turn disastrous if not contained within certain boundaries. The Srikrishna Committee wants to localise data for law enforcement to have easy access to data, to prevent foreign surveillance, to build an artificial intelligence ecosystem in India, and because undersea cables through which data transfers take place are vulnerable to attacks.

PMBJP

It stands for Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana is a campaign launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Govt. Of India, to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses through special Kendra's known as Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra. Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra (PMBJK) have been set up to provide generic drugs, which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs. Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI) is the implementing agency of PMBJP.

Death Zone of Mount Everest

It is the place where the climate scientists have created a history by installing world's highest operating weather station, including five other automated stations on other parts of the mountain. The weather station will record data on temperature, relative humidity, barometric pressure, wind speed, and wind direction. Besides, the new weather stations will also give scientists direct observations to understand jet stream, and will also help understand how the climate change is affecting the Himalayas. The other five weather stations that are located in the Mount Everest are in Balcony area (8,430 m), South Col (7,945m) at Phortse (3,810 m), Everest Base Camp (5,315 m) and Camp 2 (6,464 m).

58.8%

It is the growth rate of total digital transactions in 2018-19 as per the The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) report "Payment and Settlement: The Plumbing in the Architecture of India's Financial System". It stated that, the digital transactions till March 2019 witnessed tremendous growth and they will rise by four times from Rs 2,069 crore in December 2018 to Rs 8,707 crore in December 2021. Digital transactions in value terms grew by 19.5% during 2018-19.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB)

It has approved a project submitted by the Urban Development Department (UDD) of Tripura amounting to Rs. 1650 crore for overall infrastructure development of seven districts headquarter towns of Tripura. The fund is meant for development of piped water supply, underground drainage, underground sewage or scientific septage management, roads with pavement. The ADB will give 80 percent of Rs 1650 crore as grant-in-aid and the State Government of Tripura will have to repay back only 20 percent loan in due course of time. The seven-district headquarters include-Khowai (Khowai), Ambassa (Dhalai district),

Dharmnagar (North Tripura), Kailashahar (Unakoti), Udaipur (Gomati), Bishramganj (Sepahijala), Belonia (South Tripura), where the plan will be implemented.

DRDO

It recently conducted maiden test of an indigenously developed Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV). HSTDV is an unmanned scramjet demonstration aircraft. HSTDV is dual-use technology and can have multiple civilian applications. It can be used for launching satellites at low cost and can also be available for long-range cruise missiles of future.

2024

It is the year by which the Central government has decided to increase coverage of piped water to households from current 18 per cent to 100 per cent. More than 163 million Indians – higher than the population of Russia – do not have access to safe drinking water. Irrespective of the source of water, in most parts of rural India, availability of water decreases dramatically in the summer months as the water levels drop and surface sources may dry up. India's estimated per capita availability of water in 2025 will be 1,341 cubic metre. This may further fall to 1,140 cubic metre in 2050, bringing it closer to becoming water-scarce.

Paddy Frog

It is the name of new frog which the researchers have discovered from Northeast India, primarily in Assam. The newly discovered species has been named Aishani, which is derived from Sanskrit word 'aishani' or aisani meaning Northeast.The frog belongs to genus Micryletta, (a small genus of microhylid frogs). The microhylid genus is a group of narrow-mouthed frogs that are more commonly known as paddy frogs and are primarily and widely distributed in Southeast Asia (SEA). As of now, there are only 4 recognised species in this group and newly discovered Micryletta aishani becomes the 5th. It is likely to be more widely distributed in Northeast India, particularly Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot region.

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Akshaya Patra

A Bengaluru-based non-profit organisation (NGO) running one of the world's largest school meals project in India was recently awarded BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) World Service Global Champion Award for the programme. Funded by International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), Akshaya Patra is a Bengaluru-based not-for-profit organisation that works with the government on mid-day meal schemes. It has a state-of-the-art kitchen in Vrindavan. Today, Akshaya Patra is the world's largest (not-for-profit run) Mid-Day Meal Programme serving wholesome food every school day to over 1.76 million children from 14,702 schools across 12 states in India. BBC World Service Global Champion Award is awarded to recognise a person or project who is changing the way world produces, processes, consumes or thinks about food for the better.