India and UAE:

The 13th Session of the India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation held virtually on 17 August 2020 to further strengthen the bilateral ties between the two strategic partners. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs of India and H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates.

The five sub-committees from India and UAE participated in the meeting where both the respective members of the countries discussed the ways to boost trading and economic activities and the situation in the neighborhood of both countries.

The next Session of the India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting will be held in Abu Dhabi in 2021.

Earlier, a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was held virtually between India and UAE.

In preparation for JCM & SOM 5 sub-committees on Economic, Trade and Investment Cooperation, Consular & Community Affairs cooperation, Defence and security cooperation and Education, Culture and Youth cooperation were held on 10th and 11th August, 2020.

India-UAE Relations: The India-UAE trade relations is around USD 60 Billion. UAE is the 10th biggest FDI investor in India. UAE is one of India’s top sources of energy. UAE is also a home to millions of expatriate Indians who send home valuable foreign remittance.
Dominican Republic:

It is a country located on the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles archipelago of the Caribbean region. It occupies the eastern five-eighths of the island, which it shares with Haiti making Hispaniola one of only two Caribbean islands, along with Saint Martin, that are shared by two sovereign states. Its capital city is Santo Domingo and the currency used here is Dominican Peso.

Recently, 53-year old Luis Rodolfo Abinader Corona has been sworn in as the 54th President of Dominican Republic. He will be succeeding Danilo Medina of Liberation Party. His Modern Revolutionary Party (PRM) won the elections with 53% vote, while Gonzalo Castillo who was the candidate of the ruling PLD got 37.7%.

Abinader was elected to the four-year term on July 5, ending the 16-year run in power by the Center-Left Dominican Liberation Party (PLD). He had finished second in the 2016 presidential election.

AIM:

It refers to the Atal Innovation Mission. AIM, NITI Aayog and Business Sweden on behalf of India Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre recently signed a virtual Statement of Intent (SoI). SoI was signed with an aim to promote the disruptive potential of Indian entrepreneurs, and, boost the vibrant start-up ecosystem across the country. Through this partnership, various programmes or initiatives of AIM like Atal Community Innovation Centers (ACIC), Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL), Atal New India Challenge (ANIC), Atal Incubation Centre (AIC), and Atal Research & Innovation for Small Enterprises (ARISE), are set to receive support with the help of programs, awareness campaigns, various activities and events which will improve the overall innovation grid of both the countries.

India-Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre is an association between AIIMS Delhi, AIIMS Jodhpur and Business Sweden. It seeks to create an ecosystem of open innovation in both the countries.
5WCSP:

It refers to the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla recently attended the inaugural ceremony of 5WCSP. The conference was held with a main aim of strengthening multilateralism and international cooperation in order to rebuild a better world.

It was a two day Conference and is being organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Geneva and the Parliament of Austria with the support of the United Nations (UN).

It is for the first time that an international Parliamentary Conference of such a magnitude was being organised in Virtual mode. It was organized virtually due to COVID-19. The theme of the conference was “Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and planet”.

The Second part will be held in physical mode at Vienna, Austria in 2021.

India and Israel:

India and Israel have recently signed a cultural agreement that outlines a three-year programme of cooperation to further strengthen their strategic bilateral relations. The agreement was signed at the foreign Ministry in Israel by the Foreign Minister of Israel Gabi Ashkenazi, and Sanjeev Singla, India’s Ambassador to Israel.

This agreement is based on the cultural agreement signed between India and Israel on 18th May, 1993.

Cultural ties will be promoted through exchange of heritage and archeology with the support of Israel Antiquities Authority (IIA) and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

It includes encouraging cooperation in the protection of cultural heritage and archaeology and organizing literary fests and book fairs.

It also includes student exchanges through scholarships, encouraging the participation of films and film-makers in each other's international film
festivals, devising youth exchange programmes and encouraging sports-related interaction among youth.

Israel: Israel formally known as the State of Israel is a country in Western Asia. It is located on the southeastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and the northern shore of the Red Sea. It is regarded as the biblical Holy Land by Jews, Muslims and Christians. Its most sacred sites are in Jerusalem which is also the capital of Israel. The currency used here is Israeli Shekel. The current President and Prime Minister of Israel are Reuven Rivlin and Benjamin Netanyahu respectively.

Equatorial Guinea:

Equatorial Guinea officially the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is a country located on the west coast of Central Africa. Formerly the colony of Spanish Guinea, its post-independence name evokes its location near both the Equator and the Gulf of Guinea. Equatorial Guinea is the only sovereign African state in which Spanish is an official language. It comprises of the Rio Muni mainland and 5 volcanic offshore islands. Its capital is Malabo and the currency used here is Central African CFA franc. The current Republic of Equatorial Guinea President is Teodoro Obiang.

Recently, Francisco Pascual Eyegue Obama Asue was reappointed as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea for 3rd consecutive term.

The Asue government tendered the resignation to President Teodoro Obiang, following the criticism of the president. The government was dissolved to resolve the economic situation. Francisco Asue was first appointed as the Prime Minister of Equatorial Guinea on 23rd June 2016.

Francisco Pascual Eyegue Obama Asue is an Equatoguinean politician who is Prime Minister of Equatorial Guinea since 23 June 2016. Prior to holding this position, he was the Equatoguinean Minister of Health and Social Welfare and Minister of Sports.
Trinidad and Tobago:

Trinidad and Tobago officially the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, is the southernmost island country in the Caribbean and is known for its fossil-fuel wealth. It comprises of the main islands Trinidad and Tobago, and numerous much smaller islands, it is situated 130 kilometres (81 miles) south of Grenada and 11 kilometres (6.8 miles) off the coast of northeastern Venezuela. It shares maritime boundaries with Barbados to the northeast, Grenada to the northwest, Guyana to the southeast, and Venezuela to the south and west. It's Capital is Port of Spain and the currency used here is Trinidad and Tobago dollar. The present President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is Paula-Mae Weekes.

Recently, Keith Christopher Rowley was sworn in as Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for a 2nd consecutive 5-year term. He is from the ruling People’s National Movement (PNM).

As per the preliminary result PNM won 22 of the 41 electoral seats, while the opposition United National Congress (UNC) led by former prime minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar won 19 seats.

Keith Rowley has also served as the Member of the House of Representatives for Diego Martin West since 1991. He is also a volcanologist who obtained his doctorate in geology, specializing in geochemistry.
PPP Airports:

It means Government-owned operators or airports that are exclusively managed by public authorities that continue to make up the lion’s share of airports across the globe, irrespective of the growing interest in private sector financing and management of the airports. Under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) contract a single private body is responsible to engage not in one type but in complex activity (i.e. to carry out infrastructure objects designing, construction, renovation, repair and maintenance of the assets).

Recently, the Union Cabinet under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently, approved the proposal for leasing out 3 airports namely Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram airports of Airports Authority of India (AAI) through Public Private Partnership (PPP).

These three AAI airports for Operation, Management and Development have been leased to M/s Adani Enterprises Ltd for a period of fifty years. Adani Enterprises Ltd. is declared as the successful bidder in a Global Competitive Bidding conducted by AAI, for a period of fifty years.

These projects seek to bring efficiency in service delivery, expertise, enterprise and professionalism apart from harnessing the needed investments in the public sector.

Background: The Government Of India (GoI) had leased out the Airports Authority of India's airports at Delhi and Mumbai on Public Private Partnership for Operation, Management and Development about a decade ago.

These PPP experiments have helped create world class airports and helped in delivery of efficient and quality services to the airport passengers, it has also helped AAI in enhancing its revenues and focusing on developing airports and Air Navigation infrastructure in the rest of the country. Revenue received by AAI from PPP partners enabled AAI to create infrastructure facilities in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and also to upgrade their airports to international standards.
The PPP airports in India are consistently ranked among the top 5 in their respective categories by the Airports Council International (ACI) in terms of Airport Service Quality (ASQ).

Therefore, GoI decided to lease out more airports of AAI for Operation, Management and Development under PPP through Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC).

The Government also constituted an Empowered Group of Secretaries (EGoS) to decide on any issue falling beyond the scope of PPPAC.

**Indian Akshay Urja Day:**

Indian Akshay Urja Day is also called the Renewable Energy Day. The day is observed on 20th August annually. It is observed to mark the importance of renewable energy resources in India. The main motive of Akshya urja Diwas is to support renewable energy development programs and promote its use instead of traditional sources of energy.

The Indian Ministry for New & Renewable Energy Sources initiated Akshay Urja Day (Diwas) in 2004. It was observed for the first time in 2004 in New Delhi where the former Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh released a commemorative stamp, and 12,000 schoolchildren formed a human chain to promote renewable energy. The 20th of August wasn’t chosen at random to be the date of the observance. This day marks the birthday anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India.

As the government of India is aware of the importance of development or renewable energy sources so it was important to make the people aware that the energy which we are getting naturally doesn't have any side effect on environment, and by using this energy we can use the traditional energy for more long time. The energy such as Biogas, Solar Energy, Wind energy, hydroelectrical power are few example of Akshay Urja. It is essential to develop way to use akshay urja or renewable energy more efficiently.
Sadbhavana Diwas:

Sadbhavana Diwas or Harmony Day is observed every year on the 20th August, is the birth anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi. The main theme of Sadbhavana Diwas is to promote national integration and communal harmony among people of all religions and languages.

Every year this day is celebrated in the memory of the late Rajiv Gandhi who was the youngest Prime Minister of India at the age of 40 years. In lieu of paying tribute to his vision for India, on this occasion contribution to society betterments are made. This year marked the 76th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Rajiv Gandhi: He was the youngest Prime Minister of India. He was India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru grandson and the son of former and the first woman Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi. He, at the age of 40 became the Prime Minister after the assassination of his mother Indira Gandhi. He served from 1984-89.

He contributed greatly to the development of the country. He had the vision of a developed nation so to modernize the education system, he came up with a National Education Policy in 1986. He founded Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya System where free residential education to rural sections from classes 6 to 12 was provided.

He reduced Licence Raj and introduced the age of voting rights as 18 and also included Panchayati Raj. He strongly He started Jawahar Rozgar Yojana to give jobs to the youth as he strongly encouraged youth power and said that the development of the country depends only on the awareness of the youth of the country..

Sadbhavana Diwas came into existence for remembering his dreams, his social and economic work for taking the nation towards development.

Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana award: In 1992, Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana award was instituted by All India Congress Committee of the Indian National Congress in memory of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Every year this award is given to those who have devoted their lives to
understanding and promoting social harmony. This award constitutes a citation and cash Prize of Rs 10 Lakh.

**SS2020:**

It refers to the Swachh Survekshan 2020. The fifth edition of the annual cleanliness urban survey conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India were announced.

SS2020 surveyed a total of 4242 cities, 62 Cantonment Boards and 97 Ganga Towns. The SS2020 was focused on 9 key areas including 3R Principles of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

SS2020 awards was given away by Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State (MoS)-Independent Charge (I/C) MoHUA during a virtual event organized by MoHUA, Government of India at a virtual event titled Swachh Mahotsav organized by MoHUA. The event also saw the felicitation of MoHUA’s partner organisations in the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) viz. United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and Google.

According to the results:

In the > 1 lakh population category, Indore won the title for the fourth time in a row of the Cleanest City of India, Surat won the second and Navi Mumbai won the third position.

In the > 100 ULB category Chhattisgarh won the title of the Cleanest State of India while Jharkhand was adjudged the Cleanest State of India.

Ahmedabad in Gujarat was awarded for being the cleanest city with over 40 lakh population.

Among the Cantonment Boards- Tamil Nadu’s St.Thomas Mount Cantt was ranked 1 in Q1 followed by Jhansi Cantt and Delhi Cantt. at the second and third spot respectively.

Jalandhar Cantonment Board was conferred the cleanest cantonment board in the country.

New Delhi has been awarded as the cleanest capital city in the country.
As per MoHUA’s Star Rating Protocol for Garbage Free Cities, a total of 6 cities, which are Indore, Ambikapur, Navi Mumbai, Surat, Rajkot and Mysuru have been rated as 5-star cities, 86 cities as 3-Star and 64 cities as 1-Star.

Swachh Survekshan: It was launched in 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with an objective to monitor the performance of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which was launched on October 2, 2014, the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. It is one of the world’s largest sanitation surveys. Swachh Survekshan aims at generating large scale citizen participation in the Mission, along with inculcating a spirit of healthy competition among cities towards becoming India's cleanest cities.

The extensive sanitation survey is commissioned by the MoHUA and carried out annually by Quality Council of India (QCI).

AIIA:

It refers to the India Institute of Ayurveda. AIIA is an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of AYUSH. It was established on 10 October 2015. It is a public Ayurveda medicine and research institution located in New Delhi, India. The institute offers postgraduate and doctoral courses in various disciplines of Ayurveda and also focuses on fundamental research of Ayurveda, drug development, standardization, quality control, safety evaluation and scientific validation of Ayurvedic medicine. It aims at bringing a synergy between Traditional Wisdom of Ayurveda and Modern tools and technology.

Recently, a MoU was signed between AIIA and Delhi Police for extending the Ayurveda Preventive and Promotive health services in the residential colonies of Delhi Police.

As per the MoU, these services are to be provided through a mobile unit named ‘Dhanwantari Rath’ and Police Wellness Centres and are to be catered by AIIA, supported by Ministry of AYUSH.

Dhanwantari Rath and Police Wellness Centres would be outreach OPD (OutPatient Department) services of AIIA. It aims to benefit the Families of Delhi Police through Ayurveda preventive health care services.
Dhanwantari Rath: It is the name of the Mobile unit of Ayurveda health care services. It would consist of a team of Doctors who would be visiting Delhi Police colonies regularly.

These Ayurveda Health care services are expected to reduce the incidence/prevalence of various diseases and also reduce the number of referrals to hospitals thereby reducing cost to healthcare system as well as patient.

Earlier, AYURAKSHA, a joint venture of AIIA, an autonomous Institute under Ministry of AYUSH and Delhi Police was launched which aimed for maintaining the health of frontline Covid warriors like Delhi police personnel through Ayurveda immunity boosting measures.

In continuation of the project, Ayurveda Preventive and Promotive health care has been planned to be extended to the families of Delhi Police personnel.

It refers to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. MoTA is a branch of Government of India (GoI). It was set up on October 1999 after the bifurcation of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (India) to have a more focused approach on the integrated socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes (STs), the most underprivileged of the Indian Society. The MOTA is the Nodal Ministry for overall policy planning and coordination of programmes for development of STs. To this end, the Ministry has undertaken activities that follow under the subjects allocated in the Government of India (Assignment of Business) Rules, 1961 and amendment(s) thereafter. The current Union Minister of MoTA is Arjun Munda and Minister of State of MoTA is Renuka Singh Saruta.

Recently, Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda inaugurated a first of its kind e-portal on tribal health and nutrition named 'Swasthya'. A quarterly e-newsletter named Alekh on health and nutrition of Tribals in India was also released. The
ministry also announced the opening of National Overseas Portal and National Tribal Fellowship Portal.

Swasthya: This portal offers all health and nutrition related information of the tribal population of India on a single platform. It will also curate innovative practices, case studies, and best practices collected from different parts of India to facilitate the exchange of evidence, expertise and experiences.

“Piramal Swasthya” has been recognized by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs as the Centre of Excellence for Knowledge Management (CoE for KM) for Health and Nutrition.

**Trifood Project:**

It is an initiative of TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs in association with Ministry of Food Processing. The tertiary processing centres of ‘Trifood Project’ was recently e-launched by Union Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda in Raigad, Maharashtra and Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh.

It is being implemented in association with Ministry of Food Processing (MoFPI) with an aim to enhance the income of tribals through better utilization of and value addition to the Minor Forest Produce (MFPs) collected by the tribal forest gatherers.

Two Minor Forest Produce (MFP) processing units will be set up in order to achieve the targets of the “Trifood Project”.

The unit in Raigad, Maharashtra will be used for value addition to mahua, amla, custard apple and jamun and will produce candy, mahua drink, amla juice, jamun juice and custard apple pulp.

Similarly Jagdalpur unit in Chhattisgarh will be used for the processing of commodities mahua, amla, honey, cashew, tamarind, ginger, garlic and other fruits and vegetables.

TRIFED: It refers to Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India. TRIFED is a national-level apex organization. It functions under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. It was founded in 1987. It works towards marketing development of tribal products and provides marketing support to the products
made by tribals through a network of retail outlets. The current Managing Director of TRIFED is Pravir Kumar and the Chairman for the same is Ramesh Chand Meena.

MoU:

It refers to the Memorandum of Understanding. A MoU was recently signed by Jute Corporation of India (JCI) and National Jute Board (NJB) to provide certified good quality seeds to jute farmers in the year 2021-22.

The main objective of the MoU is to ensure that the farmers get best quality seeds to meet the demands of varying agro-climate conditions and intensive cropping systems.

As an outcome of the MoU, around 10,000 quintals of certified jute seeds of JRO-204 variety to be distributed to the farmers through JCI in the 2021-22 crop year.

Certified seeds from NSC will be purchased by JCI for this first ever commercial distribution operation.

The MoU seeks to benefit around 5-6 Lakh farmer families and the spurious seed market will be reduced drastically.

The increase in productivity of Jute, will not only enhance the income of farmers but will also help in achieving the government’s target of doubling the farmer’s income by 2022.

JCI: It refers to the Jute Corporation of India Ltd. JCI which is based in Kolkata is an agency of the government of India that assists jute cultivators in states where this crop is grown, providing minimum price support. It was founded in 1971. The current Chairman & MD of JCI is Shri Ajay Kumar Jolly.

MSDE:

It is an acronym for Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. MSDE is a Ministry of Government of India (GoI). It was set up on 9 November 2014 to coordinate all skill development efforts across the country. Industrial training, apprenticeship and
other skill development responsibilities were transferred from the Ministry of Labour and Employment to this newly-made Ministry on 16 April 2015. The Ministry is responsible for co-ordination of all skill development efforts across the country, removal of disconnect between demand and supply of skilled manpower, building the vocational and technical training framework, skill upgradation, building of new skills, and innovative thinking not only for existing jobs but also jobs that are to be created. The current Union Minister of MSDE is Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Cabinet Minister and Minister of State of MSDE is Raj Kumar Singh.

Recently, the MSDE signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ministry of Shipping to promote skill development in port and maritime sector to skill, re-skill and up-skill the manpower for the growing maritime industry as well as development of coastal community.

The MoU seeks to reinforce the commitment of Coastal Community Development under Sagar Mala programme of Ministry of Shipping and nurture the skilled manpower for the development of ports and maritime sector of India and globally. It will also offer extensive employment opportunities to the youth of coastal areas.

Ministry of Shipping: The Ministry of Shipping is a branch of the Government of India (GoI). It is the apex body for formulation and administration of the rules and regulations and laws relating to shipping. It was founded in 2018. The ministry has been entrusted with the responsibility to formulate policies and programmes on these subjects and their implementation. The current Minister responsible for the Ministry of Shipping is Mansukh L. Mandaviya, Minister of State (Independent Charge).

Science and Technology

UAPTF:

It refers to the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force. The Pentagon has recently announced that it was setting up a new UAPTF under the U.S. Navy to investigate UFO sightings.
With the creation UAPTF, the Defence Department hopes “to improve its understanding of, and gain insight into, the nature and origins of Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAPs).”

The mission of the task force will be to detect, analyse and catalogue UAPs that could potentially pose a threat to U.S. national security.

**Ceres:**

Ceres is a dwarf planet and the largest object known in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. This dwarf planet was first spotted by Giuseppe Piazzi in 1801. He assumed that between Jupiter and Mars, Ceres was the missing planet. It was classified as a dwarf planet in 2006 and is the first dwarf planet to be orbited by a spacecraft. It has a diameter of about 950 km, which is more than one-fourth of Earth’s moon. It takes 1,682 Earth days, or 4.6 Earth years, to make one trip around the sun. It completes one rotation around its axis every 9 hours. It does not have any moon or rings. It has a 92 km wide crater named Occator located in its northern hemisphere.

Recently, the NASA researchers have now discovered that the Ceres has an ocean world. The scientists have given Ceres the status of an “ocean world” after scientists analysed data collected by NASA’s Dawn spacecraft. According to the research, Ceres has a brine reservoir that is located 40 km deep and is 100s of miles wide. This makes the dwarf planet water rich. Their findings have been published as a series of papers in the journals Nature Astronomy, Nature Communications and Nature Geoscience.

The Dawn Mission of NASA: The mission was launched in 2007. It orbited two Ceres and Vesta. In 2011 it became the first spacecraft to orbit Vesta. In 2015, it became the first spacecraft to orbit Ceres. The data from the Dawn mission helped scientist to learn how planets grow and differentiate and where and when life could have formed in solar system.

Dwarf planet: There are five official dwarf planets in the solar system. They are Pluto, Eris, Makemake, Haumea and Ceres (in order of size). The most famous dwarf planet being Pluto, which was downgraded from classification of Planet in 2006. The criterias are set by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) which are:-
1. The body should orbit around the Sun.

2. It should not be a moon.

3. It should not have cleared the neighbourhood around its orbit (i.e it should not be the dominant body in its orbit around the Sun, which clearly differentiates a planet from a dwarf planet).

4. Should have enough mass for its gravity to pull it into a roughly spherical shape.

Note: The sixth claimant for a dwarf planet is Hygiea, which so far has been taken to be an asteroid.

**South Atlantic Anomaly:**

NASA recently confirmed dent in the Earth’s Magnetic field. The NASA Scientists discovered a small but an evolving dent in the earth’s magnetic field. The dent has been found over South America and South Atlantic Ocean. It is an unusually weak spot and is called South Atlantic Anomaly.

**Drone Based Surveillance System:**

The Indian Railways have recently introduced the Drone Based Surveillance System for Railway security. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has decided to employ large number of drones for the purpose of Railway security.

The RPF has procured 9 drones at a cost of around Rs 32 lakh at the South Eastern Railway, Central Railway, Modern Coaching Factory, Raebareli and South Western Railway. The main aim of the deployment of drones is to provide a force multiplier and increases the effectiveness of the security personnel deployed.

Drones procured are empowered with the ability of Real Time Tracking as well as Video Streaming and can be operated on Automatic Fail Safe Mode. Two Ninja UAVs have been procured by the Mumbai Division of Central Railway for better security and surveillance in Railway areas such as station premises, Railway track sections, yards as well as workshops.
National Sports Awards 2020:

National Sports Awards are conferred every year to recognize and reward excellence in sports. The National Sports Award was recently announced by the Government of India (GoI). The awards will be conferred to the awardees at a specially organized function through virtual mode from Rashtrapati Bhawan on 29th August, 2020 by the honorable President of India Ram Nath Kovind.

List of the winners in different categories:

1. RAJIV GANDHI KHEL RATNA AWARD: This award is being conferred for the spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports by a sportsperson over a period of four years.

The awardees are Shri Rohit Sharma (Cricket), Shri Mariyappan T. (Para Athletics), Ms. Manika Batra (Table Tennis), Ms. Vinesh (Wrestling) and Ms. Rani (Hockey).

2. ARJUNA AWARD: It was instituted in 1961. To be eligible for the Award, a sportsperson should have had not only good performance over the previous four years at the International level but also should have shown qualities of leadership, sportsmanship and a sense of discipline.

The awardees are Shri Atanu Das (Archery), Ms. Dutee Chand (Athletics), Shri Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy and Shri Chirag Chandrasekhar Shetty (Badminton), Shri Vishesh Bhriguuvanshi (Basketball), Subedar Manish Kaushik and Ms. Lovlina Borgohain (Boxing), Shri Ishant Sharma and Ms. Deepti Sharma (Cricket), Shri Sawant Ajay Anant (Equestrian), Shri Sandesh Jhingan (Football), Ms. Aditi Ashok (Golf), Shri Akashdeep Singh and Ms. Deepika (Hockey), Shri Deepak (Kabaddi), Shri Kale Sarika Sudhakar (Kho Kho), Shri Dattu Baban Bhokanal (Rowing), Ms. Manu Bhaker and Shri Saurabh Chaudhary (Shooting), Ms. Madhurika Suhas Patkar (Table Tennis), Shri Divij Sharan (Tennis), Shri Shiva Keshavan (Winter Sports), Ms. Divya Kakran and Shri Rahul Aware (Wrestling), Shri Suyash Narayan Jadhav (Para Swimming), Shri Sandeep (Para Athletics), and Shri Manish Narwal (Para Shooting)
3. DRONACHARYA AWARD: It was instituted in 1985 to honour eminent Coaches for producing medal winners at prestigious International sports events. 

The awardees are Shri Dharmendra Tiwary (Archery), Shri Purushotham Rai (Athletics), Shri Shiv Singh (Boxing), Shri Romesh Pathania (Hockey), Shri Krishan Kumar Hooda (Kabaddi), Shri Vijay Bhalchandra Munishwar (Para Powerlifting), Shri Naresh Kumar (Tennis), and Shri Om Parkash Dahiya (Wrestling).

4. Under Regular Category the awardees are Shri Jude Felix Sebastian (Hockey), Shri Yogesh Malviya (Mallakhamb), Shri Jaspal Rana (Shooting), Shri Kuldeep Kumar Handoo (Wushu), and Shri Gaurav Khanna (Para Badminton).

5. DHYAN CHAND AWARD: It was instituted in 2002. It is an award for lifetime achievements in sports.

The awardees are Shri Kul dip Singh Bhullar and Ms. Jincy Philips (Athletics), Shri Pradeep Shrikrishna Gandhe and Ms. Trupti Murgunde (Badminton), Ms. N. Usha and Shri Lakha Singh (Boxing), Shri Sukhvinder Singh Sandhu (Football), Shri Ajit Singh (Hockey), Shri Manpreet Singh (Kabaddi), Shri J. Ranjith Kumar and Shri Satyaprakash Tiwari (Para Athletics), Shri Manjeet Singh (Rowing), Late Shri Sachin Nag (Swimming), Shri Nandan P Bal (Tennis) and Shri Netarpal Hooda (Wrestling).

6. MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD (MAKA) TROPHY: It was instituted in 1956-57 to honour the top overall performing university in the Inter-University Tournaments.

The awardee is Panjab University, Chandigarh.

7. TENZING NORGAY NATIONAL ADVENTURE AWARDS 2019: It is the highest national recognition for outstanding achievements in the field of adventure on land, sea and air.

The awardees are Ms. Anita Devi, Col. Sarfraz Singh, Shri Taka Tamut, Shri Narender Singh and Shri Keval Hiren Kakka (Land Adventure), Shri Satendra Singh (Water Adventure), Shri Gajanand Yadava (Air Adventure), and Late Shri Magan Bissa (Life Time Achievement).
6. RASHTRIYA KHEL PROTSAHAN PURUSKAR: This award is being conferred to the corporate entities (both in private and public sector) as well as individuals who have played a visible role in the area of sports promotion and its development. Lakshya Institute and Army Sports Institute will be honoured with Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar for identification and nurturing of budding and young Talent. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, ONGC Limited will get the award for encouragement to sports through Corporate Social Responsibility. Air Force Sports Control Board will be honoured with the award for employment of sportspersons and sports welfare measures. International Institute of Sports Management, IISM, will get the award for Sports for Development.

Snooker Championship 2020:

Ronnie O’Sullivan has won the World Snooker Championship 2020. He has claimed his sixth World Championship title at Sheffield’s Crucible Theatre. He defeated Kyren Wilson with a score of 18-8. With his victory, Ronnie O’Sullivan has also become the oldest winner of World Snooker Championship since Reardon, who was 45 in 1978. He has also advanced to the second spot in the world rankings behind last year’s champion Judd Trump.

Economic News

RBI:

It refers to the Reserve Bank of India. The RBI is India's central bank, which controls the issue and supply of the Indian rupee. It carries out India's monetary policy and exercises supervision and control over banks and non-banking finance companies in India. RBI was set up in 1935 under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. It is headquartered in Mumbai. RBI plays an important part in the Development Strategy of the Government of India. The current Governor of RBI is Shaktikanta Das.
Recently, the RBI introduced a new ‘Positive Pay’ mechanism to make cheque payments safer and reduce instances of frauds for all the cheques valued above Rs. 50,000.

All cheques will be processed as per the information sent by the account holder at the time of issuance of cheques. This will cover approximately 20 per cent of transactions by volume and 80 per cent by value. The RBI will outline operational guidance in this regard soon.

Positive Pay Mechanism: It is a fraud detection tool which is used by the commercial banks to companies as a fraud-prevention system against forged, altered and counterfeit cheques.

It cross verifies all details of the cheque issued before funds are encashed by the beneficiary.

In case of a mismatch, the cheque is sent back to the issuer for examination.

By following such a system, a bank knows of a cheque being drawn by the customer even before it is deposited by the beneficiary into his/her account.

**Reserve Bank of India (RBI):**

The RBI recently unveiled the framework for setting up of pan-India Umbrella Entity for Retail Payments.

As per the framework, those companies with a net worth of over 500 crore rupees are eligible to set up an umbrella entity which will be permitted to set up, manage and operate new payment systems in the retail space comprising ATMs, White Label PoS, Aadhaar-based payments and remittance services.

The entity is expected to monitor national as well as international developments so as to avoid shocks and frauds that may adversely affect the system and the economy in general.

The RBI, inviting applications by February 2021, said that the promoter/promoter group of the umbrella entity shall be owned and controlled by resident Indian citizens.
NPCI:

It refers to the National Payments Corporation of India. The NPCI recently launched its wholly-owned subsidiary firm named NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL). NPCI has appointed Ritesh Shukla as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NIPL.

NIPL seeks to venture into newer international markets and co-create payment systems with participating nations. The primary focus of NIPL would be the internationalization of RuPay and UPI, along with a few more offerings of NPCI.

Porbandar:

Porbandar is a city in the Indian state of Gujarat. It is best known for being the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi and Sudama. It is the administrative center of the Porbandar District and it was the former capital of the Porbandar princely state.

Recently, Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) set up a Quality Control Laboratory in the coastal city of Porbandar in Gujarat. It has been set up for facilitating tests for seafood processors and exporters. The state of art laboratory aims to help to confirm product safety as per international regulatory requirements.

Gujarat has relatively low instances of antibiotic residue in seafood exports, yet a number of cephalopod consignments are rejected overseas due to the presence of heavy metals, mainly cadmium. Quality Control Lab is empowered with advanced testing instruments to evaluate antibiotic residues, heavy-metals, namely cadmium, lead, mercury and arsenic in seafood samples and histamine in fish such as tuna and mackerel.

MPEDA: It is an acronym for Marine Products Export Development Authority. MPEDA is a coordinating agency under the Union Ministry of Commerce for
central and state-level establishments engaged in fishery production and allied activities. The current Chairman of MPEDA is K S Srinivas.

**Manipur:**

Manipur is a state in northeastern India. It is bounded by the Indian states of Nagaland to the north, Mizoram to the south, and Assam to the west; Myanmar lies to its east. Manipur literally means,”the jeweled land”. It was formed on 21 January 1972. Its Capital is Imphal. The current Governor and the Chief minister of Manipur are Najma Heptulla and Biren Singh respectively.

Recently, Indian Railways (IR) in its effort to provide connectivity to various parts specially in the remote areas in India is constructing the world’s tallest pier bridge in Manipur. The bridge which is being constructed across river Ijai near Noney is an engineering marvel because the tallest pier height will be 141 meter. It will surpass the existing record of 139 meter of Mala - Rijeka viaduct, Montenegro in Europe.

The bridge is a part of Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal new BG line project. The total length of the bridge will be 703 meter. The piers of the bridge are constructed using hydraulic augers, the tall piers needed specially designed “slip-form technique” to ensure efficient and continual construction. The Manipur bridge located at the hilly terrain of Marangching village in Noney district, about 65 km west of Imphal and is scheduled to be completed by March 2022.

As per the reports, there are a total of 45 tunnels in the project. The longest is Tunnel No. 12 with a length of 10.280 km. This will be the longest railway tunnel in the North East.

The project picked momentum in the last three years due to its importance as a National Project.

Definition of Pier: A pier, in architecture means an upright support for a structure or superstructure such as an arch or bridge. Sections of structural walls between openings (bays) can function as piers.
Uttar Pradesh:

Uttar Pradesh is a state in northern India. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Its Capital city is Lucknow. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Uttar Pradesh are Yogi Adityanath and Anandiben Patel respectively.

Recently, NTPC Ltd., a central PSU under Ministry of Power and country’s largest power generation company, has developed an infrastructure at its Rihand Super Thermal Power station in Uttar Pradesh. It has been developed to transport fly ash in bulk to cement plants at a cheaper cost.

The efforts for transportation of fly ash from a remote location to a consumption centre, enabling power plants for upgrading the utilization of fly ash marks the beginning of a new era.

As per a statement issued by the PSU under Ministry of Power, the first rake of 59 BOXN type of railway wagons carrying 3450 Metric Tonne (MT) of fly ash was flagged off from NTPC.

The development is in line with NTPC's commitment towards 100 percent utilization of fly ash from power plants. During the financial year 2019-20, almost 44.33 million tonnes of fly ash was utilized for various productive purposes.

Rihand Super Thermal Power Project: Rihand Super Thermal Power Project is located in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh. The power plant is one of the coal based power plants of NTPC Limited. It has an installed capacity of 3000 MW. The First unit was commissioned in March 1988. The coal for the plant is derived from Amlori and Dudhichua mines. The water source is from Rihand Reservoir which is constructed on Son river.
**Jharkhand:**

Jharkhand is a state in eastern India. It is the "Bushland" or "The land of forest" of India. It is bordered by the states of Bihar to the north, West Bengal to the east, Odisha to the south, Chhattisgarh to the west, and Uttar Pradesh to the northwest. It was carved out of the southern portion of Bihar as a new state of India on 15 November 2000. The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub capital. The current Governor and Chief Minister of Jharkhand are Draupadi Murmu and Hemant Soren respectively.

Recently, Jharkhand Government launched a new state emblem. The new logo was unveiled by the Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren at a ceremony at the Aryabhatt Hall in Ranchi.

The new state emblem seeks to represent the state in from all aspects.

The new logo is circular in size with the Emblem of India representing cooperative federalism placed at the centre. Logo is encircled with green colour, which depicts the greenery of the state and symbolizes happiness and prosperity.

**Nagaland:**

Nagaland is a mountainous state in northeast India, bordering Myanmar. It was formally inaugurated on December 1st, 1963, as the 16th State of the Indian Union. It is bounded by Assam in the West, Myanmar (Burma) on the east, Arunachal Pradesh and part of Assam on the North and Manipur in the South. Kohima is the capital of Nagaland. Unlike most states in India, Nagaland has been granted a great degree of state autonomy, as well as special powers and autonomy for Naga tribes to conduct their own affairs. Each tribe has a hierarchy of councils at the village, range, and tribal levels dealing with local disputes. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Nagaland are Neiphiu Rio and R.N. Ravi respectively.

Recently, the Chief Minister of Nagaland, Neiphiu Rio launched “Yellow Chain”- a centralized e-commerce platform, to promote local business and
entrepreneurship in the State. It was launched on the occasion of Independence Day.

Yellow Chain aims to provide the people of Nagaland, the integrated platform to build sustainable businesses either in products or services from their own locations for sustainable economic activity.

Yellow Chain will act as an integrated platform for the people of the state, where any Seller, Service Provider, Individual or Group can register themselves and upload their products, trades, skills, services etc. to enable the citizens/buyers to have access to their Service or Product.

It may include Home service (Barber, Electrician, Plumber, Painter, Carpenter, Water Service etc.), Delivery service, IT Products & Services, Cab & Taxi Service, Health Care & Education, Fast food & Catering, Bakeries & Confectioneries, Grocery Stores, Local Product/Produce, Trainings, Pre-owned Products, Real Estate, Rentals etc.

The site can be accessed at www.yellowchain.in

**Satya Pal Malik:**

The Governor of Goa, Satya Pal Malik has recently been appointed as the Governor of Meghalaya by the President Ram Nath Kovind. He will be replacing Tathagata Roy who completed his five-year tenure on the gubernatorial post.

Meanwhile, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari has been given the additional charge as Governor of Goa. The appointments will be effective from the dates they assume charge of their respective offices.

Satya Pal Malik served as the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir from August 2018 till October 2019. It was during his tenure that the state was bifurcated into two Union Territories. The centre revoked Article 370 that gave special status of J&K.

Earlier, he served as the Governor of Bihar from October 2017 to August 2018. In March 2018, he was given the additional charge to serve as Governor of
Odisha till May 2018. He was appointed as the 18th Governor of Goa on 25 October 2019.

He was elected as Member of Legislative Assembly of Uttar Pradesh in 1974-77. He was elected as Rajya Sabha representative in 1980-86 and 1986–89. He had also been elected to the Lok Sabha previously. He was the member of the 9th Lok Sabha from Aligarh parliamentary constituency between 1989.

**Bhagat Singh Koshyari:**

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari was recently sworn in as Governor of Goa at a ceremony held at the Raj Bhavan in Panaji. He was administered the oath by Chief Justice of Bombay High Court Justice Dipankar Datta. He will continue as Maharashtra Governor with additional charge of Goa. He will be succeeding Satya Pal Malik who was transferred from Goa and appointed Governor of Meghalaya.

Koshyari assumed the office of the Governor of Maharashtra in September 2019 brings with him a vast and varied experience of public service. He was a successful teacher and journalist. In 2000, he was appointed minister of Energy, Irrigation, Law, and Legislative Affairs of the newly created state of Uttaranchal. In 2001-02, he replaced Nityanand Swami as the chief minister of Uttarakhand. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Uttarakhand in November 2008 and held the position till 2014.

**Ashok Lavasa:**

He is a retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer who was next in line to take charge as the chief of Indian poll body. He recently resigned from his post to join the Asian Development Bank as vice-president next month. He will take over from vice-president Diwakar Gupta who's tenure ends on August 31.

He recently submitted his resignation to President Ram Nath Kovind and requested to be relieved by the end of this month. His appointment to the post was announced by ADB last month.
He still has over 2 years left in his tenure at the Election Commission of India. He would have retired as the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) in October 2022. After his early departure, Sushil Chandra is next in the line of succession.

Ganesh Vilas Lengare:

He is a social activist based in Solapur, Maharashtra. He has recently been awarded the Star 2020 Certificate by the World Book of Records, London. He has been recognized for his efforts to help the needy during the coronavirus induced lockdown, Ganesh Lengare has been awarded the Star 2020 e-citation certificate. He launched 21 schemes to assist the people, out of which, the most important was the COVID patient contact tracing, that was implemented with the help of Solapur district authorities.

The organization, World Book of Records, London, was founded in 2017. It honours personalities for their outstanding contribution towards humanity and universal peace.

Indian Polity

Ministry of Education:

President Ram Nath Kovind recently gave his assent to rename the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) as Ministry of Education as part of the New Education Policy 2020.

To formalize the renaming of the ministry, gazette notification was published from the President's office. The gazette notification also allows changes in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961, regarding the change in the name of the ministry.

The renaming was proposed as part of the New Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) which was approved by the Union Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi 29th July along with granting its approval for the New NEP 2020.

Earlier, in 1985, when Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Education was renamed as the HRD ministry and P V Narasimha Rao was
appointed the first HRD minister. The NEP was introduced the next year and it was later amended in 1992.

In 2018, Ram Bahadur Rai who was the chairman of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and chairman of the joint organizing committee of the Conference on Academic Leadership on Education for Resurgence proposed the idea of changing the name of HRD Ministry.

**NRA:**

It refers to the National Recruitment Agency. The Union Cabinet recently gave its approval for creation of NRA for conducting a Common Eligibility Test (CET) for various government jobs. The Government of India (GoI) has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 1517.57 crore for the NRA. This agency seeks to pave the way for a reform in the recruitment process for central government jobs.

NRA is envisioned that the NRA would be a specialist body bringing the state-of-the-art technology and best practices to the field of Central Government recruitment.

It will be a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act, headed by a Chairman of the rank of the Secretary to the Government of India. It will comprise of representatives of Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance/Department of Financial Services, the SSC, RRB and IBPS.

The NRA will be a multi-agency body which will conduct the Common Eligibility Test (CET) for recruitment to non-gazetted posts in government and public sector banks.

This test aims to replace multiple examinations conducted by different recruiting agencies for selection to government jobs advertised each year, with a single online test.

Salient features of NRA are as follows:

The CET will be held twice a year. It will be conducted in 12 major Indian languages.

This is a major change, as hitherto examinations for recruitment to Central Government jobs were held only in Hindi and English.

www.civilserviceindia.com
There will be different CETs for graduate level, 12th Pass level and 10th pass level candidates for those non-technical posts to which recruitment is presently carried out by the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), the Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) and by the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS).

The exam would be held online and centres would be set up in every district to increase access for candidates.

**Supreme Court:**

The Supreme Court of India is the highest judicial forum and final court of appeal under the Constitution of India, the highest constitutional court, with the power of constitutional review. It consists of the Chief Justice of India and a maximum of 34 judges, it has extensive powers in the form of original, appellate and advisory jurisdictions. It is regarded as the most powerful public institution in India. It was established on 26 January 1950. Its headquartered in New Delhi. The current CJI of the Supreme Court is Sharad Arvind Bobde.

Recently, the Supreme Court held that funds received into the PM-CARES Fund need not be credited to the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. A three-judge Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan said that the PM-CARES is entirely different from NDRF. The Apex court endorsed the PM CARES Fund as a “public charitable trust” to which donors contribute voluntarily.

The judgment was based on a public interest litigation petition filed by the Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL), represented by senior advocates Dushyant Dave and Prashant Bhushan.

The petition had argued that the PM-CARES Fund was not subject to CAG audit. It was not under “public scrutiny”. Contributions to it were “100% tax-free”.

It was accused that there was statutory fund already in existence under the Disaster Management Act of 2005 to receive contributions to finance the fight against a calamity.
The court ruled that there is “no occasion” for the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) to audit a public charitable trust independent of budgetary support or government money.

The Apex court said that PM-CARES is “not open” for a PIL petitioner to question the “wisdom” that created the fund in an hour of need.

The court dismissed the idea that the PM CARES was constituted to “circumvent” the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

The Court also refused to direct the transfer of funds from the PM CARES Fund to the NDRF. It said they were two separate entities.

The nature of NDRF and PM CARES Fund are entirely different.

PM CARES FUND: It refers to the Prime Minister’s Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund. PM CARES is a charitable trust created on 28 March 2020, following the COVID-19 pandemic in India. This trust accepts donations with which help in providing relief for emergencies, at present being the COVID-19 pandemic. Prime Minister is the ex-officio Chairman of the PM CARES Fund and Minister of Defence, Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Finance, Government of India (GoI) are ex-officio Trustees of the Fund. Any donations made to PM CARES Fund would qualify for 80G benefits for 100% exemption under the Income Tax Act, 1961 and will also qualify to be counted as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expenditure under the Companies Act, 2013.

NDRF: It refers to the National Disaster Response Fund. NDRF is defined in Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005. It is a statutory fund created under the Disaster Management Act (DM Act). National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) with the enactment of the Disaster Management Act in 2005. It is placed in the “Public Account” of Government of India under “reserve funds not bearing interest”. It supplements the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in the SDRF. It is managed by the Central Government for meeting the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation due to any threatening disaster situation or disaster.
MoEF&CC:

It refers to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. MoEFCC, an Indian government ministry was formed in 1985. It is headquartered in New Delhi. The ministry is responsible for planning, promoting, coordinating, conservation and survey of forest, flora and fauna of India, prevention and control of pollution, afforestation, land degradation mitigation and overseeing the implementation of environmental and forestry programmes in the country. The current Minister of MoEFCC is Prakash Javedkar.

Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) approved of the establishment of 19 Integrated Regional Offices (IROs). This has been done to achieve improved outcomes with respect to the Ministry’s mandates in an improved, timely and effective manner. It also aims at enhancing its outreach to stakeholders, undertaking coordinated action and optimizing the utilization of available resources. The head of each of the IRO will be called “Regional Officer” of MoEF&CC.

Each IRO shall have representation from existing Regional Office/Regional Centre of MoEF&CC, Forest Survey of India (FSI), Central Zoo Authority (CZA), National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) as available to them from time to time.

These IROs of the MoEF&CC will start functioning from October 1st, 2020.

MoD:

It refers to the Ministry of Defence. It was created in 1776 which is 244 years ago as Military Department by the British East India Company at Kolkata but in 15 August 1947, the Department of Defence became the Ministry of Defence under a cabinet minister. It is charged
with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces. The President of India is the ceremonial commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country. The responsibility for national defence rests with the Cabinet. The function of MoD is to provide policy framework and resources to the armed forces to discharge their responsibility in the context of the defence of the country. The Indian Armed Forces (including Indian Army, Indian Air Force, Indian Navy) and Indian Coast Guard under the Ministry of Defences are primarily responsible for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. The current Defence Minister is Rajnath Singh.

Recently, the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved a proposal of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) for a major expansion scheme to meet the aspirations of youth in all the border and coastal districts.

The expansion of the NCC was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech on 15 August 2020.

A total of one lakh cadets from 173 border and coastal districts are to be inducted in the NCC. One-third of which would be girl Cadets. More than 1000 schools and colleges have been identified in border and coastal districts where NCC will be introduced.

The expansion plan would be implemented in partnership with the States. As part of the expansion plan, a total of 83 NCC units will be upgraded (Army 53, Navy 20, Air Force 10), to impart NCC training to the cadets in the border and coastal areas.

Army, Navy and Air Force will provide training and administrative support to the NCC units located in the border areas, located in the coastal areas and located close to the Air Force stations respectively.

NCC: It is an acronym for National Cadet Corps. The NCC is the youth wing of Armed Forces of India. It is a Tri-Services Organization, comprising the Army, Navy and Air Wing, engaged in grooming the youth of the country into disciplined and patriotic citizens. It operates under the Ministry of Defence. It is also the largest uniformed youth organization of the country. It was formed on 16 April 1948. Since its inception the NCC cadets have been contributing to the national cause during natural calamities like cyclone, floods etc. It is
headquartered in New Delhi. The motto of NCC is "Unity and discipline". The current Director-General of NCC is Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra.

The NCC currently has 17 regional directorates which govern the NCC in units in various states or groups of states and union territories. At present, it has strength of around 14 lakh cadets from Army, Navy and Air Force wings. It enrolls cadets at high school and college level and also awards certificates on completion of various phases.

**BSF:**

It refers to the Border Security Force. BSF is the primary Border guarding force of India and has been termed as the First Line of Defence of Indian Territories. It was raised in the wake of the 1965 War on 1 December 1965. It is a Union Government Agency under the administrative control of Ministry of Home Affairs. The BSF has its own cadre of officers but its head, designated as a Director-General (DG), since its raising has been an officer from the Indian Police Service. It is one of the 7 recognized Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), the other 6 being Assam Rifles (AR), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), National Security Guard (NSG) and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).

Recently, Rakesh Asthana, a 1984 batch Gujarat cadre IPS officer has been appointed as the Director General of Border Security Force, BSF. As per the orders issued to a Personnel Ministry, he will be in the post up to 31st July, 2021, the date of his superannuation.

Mr Asthana currently is heading the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) with additional charge of Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)

**Other Appointments:**

V S K Kaumudi, a 1986 batch IPS officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre, has been appointed Special Secretary (Internal Security), Ministry of Home Affairs up to November 30, 2022 i.e. date of his superannuation. He is currently working as DG, Bureau of Police research and Development (BPR&D).

Md Jawed Akhtar, an Uttar Pradesh cadre IPS officer has been appointed the DG, Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guard. He will hold the charge of
the post for a period upto 31st July 31 next year, the date of his superannuation. He is currently working as Special DG, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

**ICG:**

It refers to Indian Coast Guard. ICG is an armed force that protects India's maritime interests and enforces maritime law, with jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India, including its contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone. IGC was founded in 18 August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of Parliament of India an independent Armed force of India. It is headquartered in New Delhi. The moto of IGC is Vayam “Vayam Rakshamah” meaning “We Protect”. The Coast Guard works in close cooperation with the Indian Navy, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Revenue (Customs) and the Central and State police forces. The Director General of IGC is Krishnaswamy Natrajan, PTM, TM, and Additional Director General is Krupa Ram Nautiyal, PTM, TM.

Recently, ICG launched a newly-built 'Interceptor' boat in Surat, Gujarat. The "Interceptor Boat 'ICGS C-454', is built by Larsen and Toubro. It was launched into the service of the Coast Guard by Surat district Collector Dhaval Patel's wife, Dr Hiral Patel."

It is a 27-meter-long boat and has a maximum speed of 45 nautical miles or 83 kilometers per hour. It also has an excellent seakeeping, maneuverability and endurance range of 500 nautical miles.