German Chancellor Angela Merkel arrived in New Delhi on a three-day visit to India to co-chair the fifth Biennial Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 1 November 2019. The Chancellor was accompanied by several Ministers and State Secretaries of Federal Government, as well as a high-powered business delegation. India and Germany have signed 17 MoUs in the fields of agriculture, maritime technology, ayurveda and yoga among others. Five joint declarations of intent which included cooperation on strategic projects, partnership for green urban mobility, development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cooperation to prevent marine litter were also exchanged between both the countries.

List of

1. Implementing Arrangement for Exchange of Personnel between ISRO and German Aerospace Centre
2. Joint Declaration of Intent on Cooperation in the Field of Civil Aviation
3. Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) on Cooperation within the International Smart Cities Network
4. Joint Declaration of Intent between on Cooperation in the Field of Skills Development and Vocational Education and Training
5. Declaration of Intent on Strengthening Economic Cooperation in the field of Start-ups
6. Joint Declaration of Intent on the Establishment of Bilateral Cooperation Project regarding Agricultural Market Development
7. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the field of Occupational Diseases, Re-habilitation and vocational training of Insured Persons & workers with disabilities
8. Memorandum of Understanding For Cooperation in Inland, Coastal and Maritime Technology
9. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote, establish and expand scientific and technological research cooperation
10. MoU on Establishment of an Academic Collaboration in Ayurveda, Yoga and Meditation
11. Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Germany on Cooperation in the Field of Higher Education for Extension of the period of Indo-German Partnership in Higher Education
12. MoU between National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management MANAGE and the German Agricultural Academy DEULA in the city of Nienburg on collaboration in agricultural technical and professional training

13. Joint Declaration of Intent between Siemens Limited, India and MSDE and German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development on Skills for Sustainable Growth

14. MoU on the Extension of Indo-German Partnership in Higher Education

15. Memorandum of Understanding regarding cooperation between the National Museum, the National Gallery of Modern Art, the Indian Museum Kolkata, the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation and the Stiftung Humboldt Forum in Berliner Schloss

16. Memorandum of Understanding between All India Football Federation (AIFF) and DeutscherFußball-Bund e.V (DFB)

17. Statement of Intent on the key elements of the Indo-German Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement.

**India and Saudi Arabia**

India and Saudi Arabia have signed MoU to launch RuPay card in the country. It was signed during Prime Minisiter Modi recent visit to the kingdom. The signing of the MoU will benefit not only 2.6 million Indians in Gulf Kingdom but also pilgrims visiting Haj and Umrah.

The launch of the Rupay card has made Suadi Arabia the third nation in West Asia to initiate India’s digital payment system. India has already launched RuPay card in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Bhutan and Singapore.

**Rupay Card** : It is a card scheme, conceived and launched by the National Payments Corporation of India on 26 March 2012. It was created to fulfil the Reserve Bank of India's vision to have a domestic, open and multilateral system of payments. RuPay facilitates electronic payment at all Indian banks and financial institutions. RuPay is India’s version of Master Card and Visa and is also a highly secure network that protects against cyberhacks. So as to internationally accepted, the RuPay has tied-up with international players such as China Union Pay,Discover and Japan Credit Bureau.

**India and Germany**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on his three-day visit to Tashkent, Uzbekistan attended the meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of Shanghai Cooperation
Organisation (SCO). He was received by the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Abdulla Aripov at the SCO meeting.

He also paid floral tributes at the statue of former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on Shastri Street who had passed away in Tashkent on January 11, 1966.

The leaders participating in the meeting focussed their discussions on multilateral economic cooperation in the SCO region. This was the third Council of Heads of Government meeting after India became a member of the SCO.

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas

It is also known as National Unity Day. It was introduced by the Government of India in 2014. The official statement for Rashtriya Ekta Diwas was provided by the Home Ministry of India. It cites that the National Unity Day “will provide an opportunity to re-affirm the inherent strength and resilience of our nation to withstand the actual and potential threats to the unity, integrity and security of our country.” The day is celebrated to mark the 144th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel. He was honoured with the Statue of Unity, the world’s tallest statue approximately 182 metres (597 ft) in height dedicated to him.
Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel: The Iron Man of India, also known as the Loh Purush, Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel was born on October 31, 1875. He is also popularly known as Sardar Patel and was one of the most known Indian politicians after Independence. Sardar Patel served as the first Deputy Prime Minister of India under Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. He is most popularly known as a founding father of the Republic of India because he played a significant role in integrating the independent provinces into a unified India just after the partition. He also acted as Home Minister during the political integration of India and the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral tribute to Sardar Patel at the 'Statue of Unity' at Kevadiya in Gujarat. Several places in India held Run for Unity event in order to celebrate the National Unity Day on October 31, 2019.

**Border Personnel Meeting**

It is a meeting conducted every year on the 30th of October since the Border Peace and Tranquility agreement was signed between India and China on 7 September 1993.

**Border Peace and Tranquility agreement**: It is an agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas. This agreement provides the framework for border security between the parties until final determination is made regarding border demarcation.

Border Personnel Meeting (BPM) between the Indian Army and People's Liberation Army was conducted by the People 's Liberation Army on 30 October 2019 on the Chinese side at Bum La. The meeting was organized by People 's Liberation Army (PLA).

It was marked by unfurling of both the National Flags followed by a formal address by the delegation leaders and discussion on various issues to enhance the existing mutual trust and bonhomie between World's two largest armies. The desire to enhance mutual cooperation and cordial relations between the two countries was very evident from the prevailing conducive environment during the proceedings of BPM 2019.

In the last 26 years, the BPM mechanism has evolved into a vital platform for resolving local issues and fostering mutual confidence amongst the Border Guarding Troops of both the countries.
ROADTECH:

It refers to Sustainable Roads and Highways-Smart Use of Available Resources for Green and Sustainable Roads. The 5th International Conference on ROADTEC was held in New Delhi. Union Minister of State for Road Transport V.K. Singh addressed the meeting. The discussions at the meeting included the growth of the economy by propelling the infrastructure, find the unique way to monetize the road projects in an environment-friendly manner, improve the field of infrastructure in the future than the work done in the last five years and ways to achieve this growth as India needs sustainable and environment-friendly roads and highways and finally the decision to focus on the infrastructure sector to fight the economic slow down.

Indian polity

Parliament of India

The Parliament of India is the supreme legislative body of the Republic of India. It is a bicameral legislature composed of the President of India and the two houses that is, the Rajya Sabha (upper house) and the Lok Sabha(lower house). It was founded in 26 January 1950.

Vice President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha Shri M Venkaiah Naidu unveiled the 15-point reform charter for a new political concept to ensure effective functioning of the Legislatures in the Parliament and in the State, so that the peoples respect for the democratic institution can be sustained. The 15-point charter was unveiled during the delivery of first Arun Jaitley Memorial Lecture on Strengthening of Parliamentary Institutions in the Country at Delhi University. The charter was created keeping in view the poor attendance in legislatures and the quality of debate in the Parliament.
Features of the Charter are: * Pre and post-legislative impact assessment of the parties should be done.

* It includes a ship system which is an official of a political party whose work is to ensure party discipline in a legislature.

* Establishment of special courts for time-bound adjudication of criminal cases against legislators.

* Addressing problem of rising number of legislators with criminal backgound.

* Reviewing of anti-defection law.

* Representation of women in legislatures should be increased.

* The government in power to be responsive to the opposition and opposition to be responsible and constructive while working in parliament.

* A consensus should be built on holding simultaneous elections

* Rules should be framed against the interruptions and disruptions by misbehaving members.

* The legislatures should abide by the rules of the house.

* Concrete steps to be taken for the effective functioning of the Parliamentary Committees.

* All parties should adopt a roster system to ensure that atleast 50 per cent of their members are present.

* The secretariats of legislatures should publish a regular attendance report of members during the proceedings of the house.

Sharad Arvind Bobde: Bobde comes from a Nagpur-based lawyers’ family. His father Arvind Bobde was advocate-general of Maharashtra and his elder brother late Vinod Arvind Bobde a renowned senior advocate of Supreme Court and a constitutional expert. He completed his graduation at SFS College Nagpur and studied Law at Nagpur University in 1978. He is a former Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court. He is also serving as the Chancellor of University of Delhi and Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur. He was enrolled as an advocate of the Bar Council of Maharashtra in 1978. He had practised law at Nagpur Bench of the Bombay High Court with appearances at Bombay before Principal Seat and before Supreme Court for over 21 years. He became a Senior Advocate in 1998. He was appointed as an additional judge of Bombay High Court in March 2000 and sworn in as Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court in October 2012. Sharad Arvind Bobde, born 24 April 1956, was elevated is a Judge of the Supreme Court of India in April 2013.
**Article 124(2)**: Article 124(2) of the Indian Constitution provides that the Chief Justice of India and the Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose.

**Postal Ballot**

It is a voting system in an election whereby ballot papers are distributed to electors or returned by post, in contrast to electors voting in person at a polling station or electronically via an electronic voting system.

The Government has provided the facility to the elderly and disabled voters above 80 years to vote with the postal ballot. On the recommendation of the Election Commission, the Law and Justice Ministry amended the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, to give voting and ballot voting to voters with disabilities and those above 80 years of age allowing the senior citizens and person with disabilities in the absentee voter list.

The current system entitled military, paramilitary personnel and government employees working abroad, as well as employees posted in election duty only to vote with the postal ballot.
Central Government

The Central government has formed a panel to suggest measures to mitigate financial stress in the sector. It was formed after Supreme Court ordered telecom companies to pay as much as Rs 1.42 trillion in past statutory dues. The panel will consist of The Committee of Secretaries (CoS) which is comprised of the ministries of finance, telecommunication and law among others.

The CoS will give suggestions for the ways of tackling the financial stress in the telecom sector and for deferring of payments for spectrum as well as re-look at the obligation to fund a universal service fund for operators. The panel has to submit recommendations in a time-bound manner and it has to also re-look at the obligation to fund a universal service fund for operators.

National Pension System

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has permitted Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) to enrol in NPS. They will now be eligible to apply for the National Pension System at par with Non Resident Indians (NRIs).

According to a notification by the Department of Economic Affairs on Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) Rules, 2019, the OCIs may subscribe to the National Pension System (NPS) which is being governed and administered by PFRDA. Overseas citizens of India who are willing to subscribe NPS is eligible to invest as per the provisions of the PFRDA Act and the accumulated saving will be repatriable, subject to Foreign Exchange Management Act guidelines.

PFRDA in its endeavor to promote and develop the NPS has taken several initiatives towards increasing the pension coverage in the country. Now, any Indian citizen, resident or non-resident and OCIs are eligible to join NPS till the age of 65 years.

PFRDA runs two pension schemes -- NPS and Atal Pension Yojana -- whereas the former caters to the government and organised sector employees, the latter is mainly for the workers in the unorganised sector.
Self-assembling Robots

Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) engineers have developed M-blocks, a set of robotic cubes that can roll, jump, spin, and self-assemble into different shapes. The robots, called M-blocks 2.0, have a barcode-like system on each face that helps them recognize and communicate with other blocks. The cube robots were developed by MIT’s computer science and artificial intelligence laboratory (CSAIL). They are the second iteration of an original design that MIT showed off back in 2013. The latest version features algorithms designed to help the robots work together more effectively.

The origami robots are made from composite sheets of paper and polystyrene (Shrinky Dinks). The engineers print some conductive channels onto these sheets, and then use a laser machining system to create the necessary origami fold pattern. Each hinge contains an embedded circuit that, when instructed by a microcontroller, produces heat, which causes the hinge to fold. Then, by adding a couple of motors, and a microcontroller that knows the necessary fold pattern, the robot comes to life — first by folding into its predestined shape, and then by walking away.

MIT

It refers to Researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. MIT in the US have developed a new technology to capture carbon dioxide from a stream of air, virtually at any concentration level, an advance that may pave the way for new strategies to reduce atmospheric greenhouse gas levels.
Earlier, most methods of removing carbon dioxide from a stream of gas required higher concentrations such as those found in the flue emissions from fossil fuel-based power plants but now the new method could take out the gas even when it was present in very low concentrations.

**Indian Brain Atlas**

The India-specific brain atlas is known as IBA 100. According to the new findings the average size of an Indian brain is smaller in height, width and volume than Western and Eastern population.

First-ever digital human brain atlas was created by The MNI and International Consortium for Brain Mapping (ICBM) in 1993.

Until now, Montreal Neurological Institute (MNI)'s Caucasian brains were used as standard to study brain as the MNI was not ideal for Indian population due to difference in ethnicity. MNI template ran the risk of misdiagnosis due to the difference in size of the brains.

Jayanti Sivaswamy, who works at Centre for Visual Information Technology saod that the creation of IBA 100 would help in better diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and other brain ailments. Her research students are now collecting MRI scans to create brain atlases for different age groups, like 20-30, 30-40, 40-50 and 50-60 and to track the brain and see how it ages.

Korea and China have also constructed their own brain templates. Overall, IBA 100 is more similar to Chinese and Korean atlases than the distant Caucasian one.

**Environment & Climate News**

**Nelloptodes gretae**

It is a tiny species of beetle from Coleoptera family Ptiliidae. The beetle is pale yellow and gold in colour. It measures 0.79 millimetres long. It has no eyes or wings, and is distinguishable by a small pit found between where the eyes should go. Usually found in the leaf litter and soil, they feed on fungal hyphae and spores. It is an anthropod.
British entomologist William Block discovered this beetle for the first time in Nairobi, Kenya and donated the samples to the British Natural History Museum in 1978. The tiny beetle was named Nelloptodes gretae recently to honour 16-year-old Swedish climate activist’s ‘outstanding contribution’ in raising global awareness of climate change.

**COP 25**

The 2019 United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP25, is to be the 25th United Nations Climate Change conference. The annual Conference of the Parties (COP) summit is a key event which allows representatives from around 200 nations to monitor and discuss the current situation of the world’s warming climate.

The Spanish capital city of Madrid will host the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 25) from 2 to 13 December. It was first supposed to be hosted by Chile but due to the ongoing street protests in the South American country it was decided to he hosted in Madrid.

**World's most polluted city**

According to the Guinness World Records 2020 Analysis of a World Health Organization report, the city Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh is the most polluted city in the world. A report by World Health Organization (WHO) analyzed that with an average PM2.5 level of 173 micrograms per m3 for 2016, pollution in the city is over 17 times higher than the WHO recommended maximum of 10 micrograms per m3.

PM2.5s are very small particles such as dust, soot and ash, prolonged exposure to which can cause cancer, lung and heart conditions. Of the world’s 20 most PM2.5-polluted cities, 14 are in India. The PM2.5 particles are emitted directly from a source, like unpaved roads, construction sites, fields, fires or smokestacks while most particles in the atmosphere form due to complex chemical reactions like SO2 and NO2, which are pollutants emitted from power plants, industries and automobiles.

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**Sports News**

**Hockey**

Eight-time winners India qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics after thrashing Russia 7-1 (11-3 on aggregate) in the second game of the two-legged FIH Qualifiers for men, in Bhubaneswar. The Indian men, ranked fifth in the world, had earlier defeated world number 22 Russia 4-2 in the first-leg on Friday.

Indian women's hockey team too has qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Skipper Rani Rampal's 48th minute strike sealed Tokyo Olympics berth for the Indian women's hockey team as they pipped USA 6-5 on aggregate despite losing 1-4 in the second leg of the FIH Qualifier, in Bhubaneswar. Indian women have now qualified for back-to-back Olympics having sealed it in Rio de Janeiro after a gap of 36 years. The women's team first participated in the Quadrennial extravaganza in 1980 where the men's team last won their gold medal.

**Boxing**

India pugilists Shiva Thapa (63kg) and Pooja Rani (75kg) bagged gold at the Olympic Test Event for Boxing while Ashish (69kg) settled for silver as India ended with a decent haul of seven medals at the Olympic Test Event for Boxing. Thapa is also the reigning national champion and a bronze-medallist from the 2015 world championships.
Ironman World Championships

The Ironman World Championship has been held annually in Hawaii since 1978, with an additional race in 1982. It is owned and organized by the World Triathlon Corporation. It is the annual culmination of a series of Ironman triathlon qualification races held throughout the world.

Lieutenant Colonel Swaroop Singh Kuntal of the Indian Army and posted in Jhansi, has made the name of the country proud by making a new record in Malaysia. He became the fastest Indian to complete Ironman Malaysia triathlon in a record time of 12 hours and 14 minutes. The triathlon consists of 3.8 km sea swimming, followed by 180 km cycling and finally 42.2 km of running.

Football League Cup

In association football, a League Cup or Secondary Cup generally signifies a cup competition for which entry is restricted only to teams in a particular league. The first national association football tournament to be called "League Cup" was held in Scotland in 1946–47 and was entitled the Scottish League Cup. Liverpool reached the League Cup quarter-finals in thrilling style as their incredible 5-5 draw against Arsenal was followed by a 5-4 penalty shoot-out triumph, while Manchester United won 2-1 at Chelsea.
National Corporate Social Responsibility Awards

It is an award instituted in 2017 by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India to recognize companies that have made a positive impact on the society through their innovative & sustainable Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. The awards were instituted subsequent to the recommendations of High Level Committee on CSR.

President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the first National Corporate Social Responsibility Awards (NCSRA) to companies for their outstanding contribution in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

President Kovind Presented the first National Corporate Social Responsibility (CSI) Awards to selected companies at an award ceremony in New Delhi.

The main objectives of the awards are to encourage best practices in CSR and to recognise the efforts of companies that have utilised funds marked for CSR innovatively and effectively. Recognise impact, usage of technology, innovation, gender and environment issues, scalability, replicability and sustainability of CSR activities. Channelise CSR initiatives of corporate so that the benefits of these activities reach in remote areas of country and to marginalised sections of society.

The awards to winning companies are in two categories namely, "Corporate Award for Excellence in CSR" and "Contribution of CSR in Challenging Circumstances".

Reliance Industries Ltd

It is an Indian multinational conglomerate company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Reliance owns businesses across India engaged in energy, petrochemicals, textiles, natural resources, retail, and telecommunications.
Mukesh Ambani led Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), overtook British oil major BP Plc in terms of market capitalisation to become the sixth-largest energy entity in the world. RIL is a partner of British major BP in its exploration and production ventures in India. The two companies operate an equal joint venture (JV) called India Gas Solutions. Both the companies are planning to partner to set up fuel retail outlets. The companies also plan to invest Rs.40,000 crore in the Krishna Godavari block. The project is expected to begin its production 2022.

At present, Saudi Aramco is the world’s largest energy entity, that pumps about 10% of the world's crude. It has emerged as the most profitable company in 2018.

**DPIIT**

It refers to The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). It has launched a new exercise to relax India's foreign direct investment (FDI) norms. The decision was made in an inter-ministerial meeting held at DPIIT to discuss further opening up in sectors, especially where 100% FDI is not allowed on the automatic route. Earlier, the government had opened FDI in contract manufacturing and eased norms for overseas investors in single-brand retail and coal mining.

Foreign direct investment is prohibited in nine sectors namely betting and gambling including casinos, chit funds, lottery business, trading in transferable development rights, construction of farmhouses or real estate business, Nidhi companies, manufacturing of cheroots, cigars, cigarillos and cigarettes, of tobacco or of tobacco substitutes, atomic energy, and certain railway operations. India also prohibits foreign technology collaboration in any form including licensing for franchise, trademark, management contract or brand name for lottery, gambling and betting activities.

**People in News**

**Leeladhar Jagoori**

He is an Indian teacher, journalist and poet of Hindi literature. He is the author of several poetry anthologies including Natak Jari Hai and Shankha Mukhi Shikharon Par and is a recipient of the Sahitya Akademi
Award, for his 1997 anthology, Anubhav Ke Aakash Mein Chand. His poems often celebrate love and hope.

The prestigious 28th Vyas Samman award for the year 2018 was conferred to him for his poetry collection ‘Jitne Log Utne Prem’, at a function held in New Delhi by renowned author and scholar Govind Mishra.

Vyas Samman Award : It is a literary award in India, first awarded in 1991. It is awarded annually by the K.K. Birla Foundation and it carries a prize money of Rs. 4 lakh along with a citation and plaque. To be eligible for the award, the literary work must be in the Hindi language and have been published in the past 10 years.

The KK Birla Foundation also confers Bihari Puraskar and Saraswati Samman for literature in Indian languages.

Ilham Tohti

He was a Professor of economics at Beijing university. He is from the Uighur minority. He has been a fierce critic of China’s treatment of the Uighur people. He was jailed for life in 2014 in China for separatism. He was also a leading Uighur intellectual best known for founding the website Uighur Online.

European Parliament awarded the Sakharov Prize for human rights to Uighur intellectual Ilham Tohti. recognised for drawing attention to ethnic tensions in Xinjiang. The award was announced by European Parliament head David Sassoli. A ceremony awarding him the Sakharov Prize in his absence will be held in Strasbourg in December.

He also won another of Europe’s top human rights awards called ‘Vaclav Havel prize’, in September 2019, for “giving the entire Uighur people a voice”. He was also nominated by US lawmakers for ‘Nobel Peace Prize’, amid growing scrutiny of China’s treatment of Uighurs.

Sakharov Prize : Officially the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is the prestigious human rights award which was founded in 1988 in honor of the Soviet dissident and scientist Andrei Sakharov. It is awarded by the European Parliament, the European Union’s legislative body. It usually goes to political dissidents and intellectuals, with a wide geographic sweep.
Girish Chandra Murmu

He is a 1985 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Gujarat cadre and was principal secretary to Narendra Modi during his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat. He was working for the Union Ministry of Finance as the Expenditure Secretary before taking charge as the Lieutenant Governor. He became Jammu and Kashmir's first lieutenant Governor after the formation of the new Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019. He has become the youngest governor the country has ever had. He was administered the Oath of Office and Secrecy by Jammu and Kashmir High Court Chief Justice Gita Mittal at a function held at Raj Bhawan at the foothills of the Zaberwan range.

RK Mathur

Radha Krishna Mathur is a retired 1977 batch IAS officer of Tripura cadre. He was the Defence Production Secretary of India, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Secretary of India and the Chief Secretary of Tripura. He will become the first lieutenant governor of Ladakh. He was administered Oath of Office and Secrecy by Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court Gita Mittal.

Satya Pal Malik

He was the last governor of Jammu and Kashmir. He will now move to Goa for the remainder of his tenure as governor. He is scheduled to take the position on 3 November. Mr Malik was first appointed governor of Bihar in September 2017 and moved to Jammu and Kashmir in August last year.
Umang Narula: Centre has also appointed Umang Narula, a 1989-batch IAS officer, as the advisor to newly-appointed Lt Governor of Ladakh. At present, Umang is posted as principal secretary to Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik.

SS Khandare: SSKhandare, a 1995-batch IPS officer, has been appointed Head of Police of Union Territory of Ladakh.

The reorganization of erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir into Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh came into existence on the birth anniversary of Iron man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who is credited with merger of over 560 states into Union of India. This event marked the official reorganisation of the restive state of Jammu and Kashmir, which was split into two union territories after Article 370 and 35A of the Constitution was abrogated by the union government on August 5.

Lieutenant Governors are appointed by President of India for a term of 5years.

Rafael Mariano Grossi

He is a 58 year old nuclear and diplomatic veteran from Buenos Aires in Argentina. He also served as the Argentine Ambassador to Austria, Slovenia, Slovakia and International Organisations based in Vienna. He was formerly the Argentine Ambassador to Belgium.

He is set to take office as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a United Nations’ nuclear watchdog. He is appointed for a term of 4 years and will assume office no later than January 1, 2020. He will be the sixth head of the IAEA since it was founded more than six decades ago and will succeed the late Yukiya Amano as the new chief of IAEA. He will preside over the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at the UN headquarter in New York from April to May 2020.

IAEA: It refers to The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is an international organization that seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and to inhibit its use for any military purpose, including nuclear weapons. It is headquartered in Vienna, Austria. It was formed on the 26th of July 1957.
IFFI

It refers to International Film Festival of India. It was founded in 1952 and is one of the most significant film festivals in Asia. The first ever IFFI was organized by the Films Division, Government of India, with the patronage of the first Prime Minister of India – Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. The International Film Festival of India (IFFI) aims at providing a common platform to the cinemas across the world to project the excellence of the art of film making. This India’s most prestigious festival is also the first International Film Festival held anywhere in Asia.

Indian film superstar Rajinikanth who has been awarded the Padma Bhushan(2000) and the Padma Vibhushan (2016) by the Government of India will be honoured with a special Icon of Golden Jubilee award at the 50th International Film Festival of India (IFFI). It will be held in Goa.

French actor Isabelle Huppert too will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award at the event.

Greta Thunberg

She is a 16 year old Swedish climate activist. The Scientists at the British Natural History Museum in London, UK have named a tiny beetle of the Coleoptera family Ptiliidae that was discovered more than 50 years ago as ‘Nelloptodes gretae’. She has been honoured for her outstanding contribution’ in raising global awareness of climate change.

P S Sreedharan Pillai

The 65 year old BJP leader P.S. Sreedharan who headed the Kerala unit of BJP has been appointed as the new Governor of Mizoram. The appointment was made by President Ram Nath Kovind. His meeting will take effect from the date he assumes charge of his office.
Syria

Syria, officially the Syrian Arab Republic, is a country in Western Asia, bordering Lebanon to the southwest, the Mediterranean Sea to the west, Turkey to the north, Iraq to the east, Jordan to the south, and Israel to the southwest. Syria's eight-year civil war has claimed more than 370,000 lives and created 5.6 million refugees.

The Syrian government and Opposition delegates met for the first time in the United Nations office in Geneva, Switzerland to draft a new constitution and to chart a political settlement to end nearly nine years of civil war. A total of 150 delegates representing the government, opposition and civil society yesterday met at the United Nations office. The drafting of the new Constitution for the war-torn country would be the first step towards the beginning for a political process that will lead to UN-supervised elections under UN resolution 2254. The meeting of the Syria's arch-enemies after nearly 9 years of war is a historic moment. The meeting in Geneva which is being overseen by UN special envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen. The meeting was a key proposal by Russia. Opposition co-chair Hadi Albahra said Syrians seek a nation that respects all people, without discrimination. However, at present no deadline has been set for the end of talks, but all sides have promised to work with speed and efficiency.

Nagaland

Nagaland Minister for Higher and Technical Education and Tribal affairs Temjen Inma Along launched Nagaland Ex-gratia Scheme for Students Studying outside Nagaland (NGESSO), an initiative of Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio. It was launched at the directorate of Higher Education in Kohima. The scheme is targeted for students who die outside the state while pursuing secular, technical, professional, diploma and theology courses. The scheme would also benefit the students of Nagaland belonging to any recognized scheduled tribes and indigenous inhabitants of the state. The nominee can claim
ex-gratia amount within a period of 2 (two) months after the death of the students by furnishing the required documents. The payment would be made through Direct Benefit Transfer by the finance department to the bank account of the nominee within a period of one month.

**Himachal Pradesh**

Himachal Pradesh Government launched a scheme to promote natural farming and to increase the income of the farmers. A total of 2,209 panchayats out of the total 3,226 panchayats were brought under natural farming in the State. It is promoting Organic and Zero Budget Natural Farming under Prakritik Kheti Khushhal Kissan Yojana. A target of training 50,000 farmers under the scheme has been fixed for this 2019-2020. As many as 20,579 farmers were trained out of which 15,391 have started practicing natural farming in their fields. As per the plans of the State Government minimum of 5 training sessions per month till March 2020 are to be held.

Block technology manager and Assistance Technology manager have been recruited under Agricultural Technology management Agency to fulfill the needs of the training. The scheme aims to reduce costs required for farmers, increase farmers income and reduce use of chemicals and fertilizers in the farm.

**Odisha**

Odisha has inked a Letter of Understanding (LoU) on “drink from tap mission” with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The main objective of the mission is to provide piped quality drinking water supply to every urban household in the state on a 24-hour basis. Technical cooperation will be provided by UNICEF to the Government of Odisha. The community-based water management system will be adopted at ward-level and in the first phase. The availability of safe water in every urban area will involve Women Self help Groups that will ensure the household connection for every household, collection of water tariff, meter reading, billing, complaint management, filed quality testing by using standard tools etc.
Investment in water in Odisha is very important as, around 10 lakh people in Odisha are facing water contamination related problems. Similarly, 68 lakh people are not getting minimum 40 litres of water for their daily needs. Out of those highest 11 lakh are in Ganjam district alone.

**Lebanon**

Prime Minister of Lebanon, Saad Hariri resigned from the post of Prime Minister amid a wave of protests against his government in nearly two weeks. Lebanon has been facing a deep-running fiscal crisis as it staggers under one of the highest debt ratios in the world $86 billion, or more than 150% of the country’s gross domestic product. The country has been paralyzed due to the unrest caused by the anti-government protesters.