

Eazyprep

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

COMPILATION

AUGUST 2020

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1st August

1) Miscellaneous

Guwahati gets manhole cleaning robot 'BANDICOOT'

The manhole cleaning robot Bandicoot would help minimise human intervention in cleaning of manholes

It is the first city in the entire Northeast region to get a manhole cleaning robot.

It is also the third city after Gurugram and Coimbatore to adopt this technology in India

2) Person in News

Paytm Money appoints Varun Sridhar as CEO

Paytm Money is the investment & wealth management subsidiary of Paytm

It has appointed Varun Sridhar as its new Chief Executive Officer

He will be succeeding Pravin Jadhav in this position at Paytm Money.

Quick Fact: Vijay Shekhar Sharma is the founder of Paytm

3) Person in News

Sunil ydv SS honoured with Karamveer Chakra Award from UN and ICONGO

Sunil ydv SS is the founder of SS Motivation

He has been honoured with the Karamveer Chakra Award by Global Fellowship Award instituted by United Nations and International Confederation of NGO (iCONGO)

The award honours his relentless contribution to society through his Telegram channel "SS Motivation through which he addresses social issues and motivates people every day.

4) Person in News

Archana Soreng selected by UN chief for Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change

UN Secretary-General has selected Indian climate activist Archana Soreng for a new advisory group of young leaders to advice on climate protection measures in the post-COVID world

She will be joining six other young climate leaders from around the world in this group.

Quick Fact: Antonio Guterres is the current UN Secretary-General.

5) National News

MoES announces National Awards for Excellence in Earth Sciences

Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) has announced National Awards for excellence in Earth Science in various categories. The awardees are:

- a) Lifetime Excellence Award: Ashok Sahni
- b) Ocean S&T: V. V. S. S. Sarma and M. Ravichandran
- c) Atmospheric S&T: S. Suresh Babu
- d) Geoscience & Technology: N. V. Chalapathi Rao
- e) Ocean Tech: M. A. Atmanand
- f) Anna Mani award for woman scientist: Lidita D. S. Khandeparker
- g) Young Researcher Awards: Indra Sekhar Sen

6) Science and Technology

Final mission of Mars Perseverance Rover launched

Mars 2020 Perseverance Rover lifted off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida on 30th July 2020

It aims to search for signs of ancient life and collect rock and soil samples for study

It is carrying a helicopter called Ingenuity, which if flown successfully on Mars, would perform the first powered flight on another planet.

3rd August

1) Person in News

Hardik Satishchandra Shah becomes new Private Secretary to the Prime Minister

Hardik Satishchandra Shah is a 2010 batch IAS officer

He has been appointed as Private Secretary to the Prime Minister on a co-terminus basis

He is currently serving in the PMO as Deputy Secretary

2) Person in News

ICRA appoints N. Sivaraman as its MD and Group CEO

ICRA is one of India's domestic rating agencies

N Sivaraman is now its new managing director and group chief executive officer for three years

CARE, ICRA and CRISIL are India's top domestic rating agencies

Quick Fact: ICRA is headquartered in Gurugram, Haryana

3) Economy

Bijapur, Chhattisgarh tops Niti Aayog's aspirational districts ranking

Since May 2018, districts have been ranked by NITI Aayog based on progress made ('delta ranking') on a real-time basis.

Bijapur district in Chhattisgarh has topped the list

Ri-Bhoi (Meghalaya) and Bahraich (Uttar Pradesh) have ranked at the second and third positions, respectively.

4) Sports

Harikrishna wins second place at Biel Chess Festival

P Harikrishna is an Indian grandmaster

He finished second in the rapid section of the 53rd Biel International Chess Festival in Switzerland.

Radoslaw Wojtaszek of Poland won against him to come first

5) Person in News

Padma Shri awardee Sonam Tshering Lepcha passes away

Sonam Tshering Lepcha won the Padmashri for his contribution in the field of folk music.

He belonged to Kalimpong, West Bengal.

Although he was a soldier, he later travelled within Sikkim to compile a wide range of Indian folk and traditional Lepcha songs and played folk music on All India Radio in 1960

Quick Fact: Lepcha is one among the main tribe and indigenous people of Sikkim

6) Economy

Walmart-owned Flipkart's Samarth Programme to support 6 Lakh artisans

Samarth Programme was launched by Flipkart in 2019.

As part of the programme, Flipkart has collaborated with five NGOs in helping six lakh artisans in selling their handicrafts online

Walmart-owned Flipkart also supports MSMEs through a special initiative called Walmart Vriddhi.

7) Economy

Apple becomes world's most valuable company

Apple Inc's stock has increased by 10% to a record high.

This development has made Apple the world's most valuable publicly listed company.

This was Apple's largest one-day percentage gain since March 13

4th August

1) International Affairs

Arab World's first ever nuclear reactor starts its operation

The nuclear reactor Barakah has been started by the UAE at Abu Dhabi

It has been developed jointly by Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC) and Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO)

In its full capacity, the reactor will be able to meet a quarter of the country's energy demands

Quick Fact: Abu Dhabi is the capital of UAE

2) Science and Technology

NASA's Demo-2 mission completed successfully

The Demo-2 mission was conducted in partnership with Space-X. This mission was the final major test before NASA's Commercial Crew Program approves and certifies Crew Dragon for operational, long-duration missions to the space station.

As part of the mission, American astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley successfully went to the international space station (ISS) and returned to Earth.

Quick Fact: The ISS program is a multi-national collaborative project between five participating space agencies: NASA, Roscosmos, JAXA, ESA, and CSA.

3) National Affairs

Vidyarthi Vigyaan Manthan 2020-21

Vidyarthi Vigyaan Mathan (VMM) program aims to create science an interesting study among students from class 6 to 11.

VMM is an autonomous organization and an initiative of Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA), the largest scientific movement of India.

It identifies students with scientific aptitude and provides them a mentor to support their entry into a scientific career.

Quick Fact: Vijnana Bharati was founded in 1991 by Prof. K.I. Vasu.

4) Art and Culture

International webinar on Lokmanya Tilak conducted on his 100th death anniversary

A two-day international webinar on Lokmanya Tilak was conducted by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

The theme of the webinar was Swaraj to Self-reliant India.

The webinar centered around the contribution of Lokmanya Tilak in India's freedom struggle, social reform, and global vision.

5) Person in News

Amar Singh, Rajya Sabha MP, passes away

Amar Singh was elected to Rajya Sabha from Uttar Pradesh as an independent member by the support of Samajwadi Party

He passed away due to a chronic kidney ailment at the age of 64.

He was once a part of Samajwadi Party.

6) Miscellaneous

Ministry of Tribal Affairs receives SKOCH Gold Award

Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has received the SKOCH Gold Award for its program: 'Empowerment of Tribals through IT-enabled Scholarship Schemes'

The project was a step towards fulfilling the vision of Digital India and using technology to bring transparency and ease in service delivery

The theme of the 66th SKOCH 2020 Competition was India responds to COVID through digital governance'

Quick Fact: Arjun Munda is the Minister for Tribal Affairs, India.

5th August

1) Sports

Lewis Hamilton wins British Grand Prix 2020

Mercedes racer Lewis Hamilton has won the Formula one race in spite of having a tire puncture in the last lap.

Red Bull's racer Max Verstappen and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc won the second and third positions, respectively.

This is the third time Lewis Hamilton has won a Formula One trophy in 2020.

2) India and the World

BRICS holds its sixth Environment Ministers' Meeting

The sixth BRICS Environmental Ministers' Meeting was held online under the presidency of Russia.

The major feature of the meeting was the adoption of BRICS Environment Ministers' Statement by the BRICS nations

Indian Environmental Minister Prakash Javadekar represented India in the meeting.

Quick Fact: The headquarters of BRICS is in Shanghai, China

3) Economy

Kotak Mahindra Bank rolls out 'Kona Kona Umeed' Campaign

Kotak Mahindra Bank has launched 'Kona Kona Umeed' campaign to boost hope and optimism of its customers during the pandemic

It is a two month campaign where the bank will collaborate with more than hundred brands in order to provide offers and deals on products like loans, savings accounts, current accounts, corporate salary accounts, Kotak debit cards, credit cards and digital payments.

Quick Fact: The headquarters of Kotak Mahindra Bank is located in Mumbai.

4) India and the World

UK to mint coin to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi

The death of a George Floyd from the Black community has made the entire world look at their history related to treatment of minorities.

In UK also, there is a growing interest in recognizing the contributions of people from the BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) community.

Rishi Sunak, Britain's Finance Minister, has also issued an order to the Royal Mint Advisory Committee (RMAC) to do the same in UK coins

The RMAC is thus planning to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi in one of its coins.

Quick Fact: RMAC is a group of experts in UK who recommend themes and designs for minting coins to Britain's finance minister.

5) National Affairs

E-Raksha Bandhan programme launched in Andhra Pradesh

E-Raksha Bandhan programme is an online training programme on cybersecurity

Around one lakh women, girls and general public would be trained through this.

The programme will involve an hour of online events everyday during the month of August for generating awareness about cybersecurity.

6th August

1) Sports

IPL 2020 may take place in UAE

The government of India has granted permission to hold Indian Premier League 2020 in UAE due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This will be the 13th edition of the IPL.

Women's T20 Challenge will also be hosted in UAE this year.

2) Miscellaneous

New Book Release: Siyasat Mein Sadasyata: Vijay Kumar Choudhary

Vijay Kumar Choudhary is the Speaker of Bihar Assembly

The book is a collection of his articles and views on important issues and his life journey

It has been released by the Bihar Assembly Secretariat

3) Economy

SEBI to set up virtual museum of securities market

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is the regulator of the securities and commodity market in India

It is planning to set up a virtual museum of the securities market to highlight achievements and milestones in the Indian capital market.

The museum will be a visual online organised collection of history of evolution, achievements and milestones in the Indian securities market over the decades in terms of market infrastructure, regulation and enforcement, among others.

Quick Fact: SEBI was established in 1988.

4) Person in News

Sashidhar Jagdishan appointed CEO of HDFC Bank

Sashidhar Jagdishan will be the chief executive and managing director of HDFC Bank

He will be succeeding Aditya Puri as the CMD, who had been associated with the bank for more than two decades.

Banks Board Bureau makes the recommendation to RBI for the appointment of CEO in the Public Sector Banks.

5) Sports

Fit India Talks

Fit India Talks will consist of six interactive sessions with top sportspersons

The sportspersons will inspire school children by sharing their childhood memories, stories, failures and successes.

The show will be hosted by Badminton star PV Sindhu and Indian football team skipper Sunil Chhetri.

This is a joint initiative of the Ministries of Sports and HRD.

Quick Fact: Kiren Rijiju is the current Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports

6) International Affairs

Huge blast in Lebanon

A huge blast took place in a port warehouse in Lebanon, killing of 78 people and injury to nearly 4,000.

The cause of the blast is suspected to be improperly stored Ammonium Nitrate.

Ammonium nitrate is an odourless crystalline substance commonly which commonly used as a fertiliser

7) Economy

Bharat Air Fibre Services launched for Wireless Internet Connections

The Bharat Air Fibre Services will offer local Wireless fast internet connectivity from BSNL locations via local business partners at Akola & Washim district

The services has been introduced by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)

The initiative is part of Digital India campaign

Quick Fact: BSNL was established in 2000

7th August

1) National Affairs

Foundation stone laying ceremony of IIM-Dhaulta Kuan, Himachal Pradesh

The foundation stone was laid by Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank.

The establishment of the institution will help in nurturing management leaders who can further boost the tourism, power and environment potential of the state.

Boosting the skill and management level of future youth leaders also aligns with India's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

2) Economy

Infosys Finacle to enable digital transformation of National Bank of Bahrain

National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has selected Infosys Finacle to digitally transform its transaction banking business.

It will be using the Finacle Liquidity Management Platform to offer a range of services to its corporate clients.

The platform will enable NBB to deliver a fully contextual and tailored digital banking experience to all its customers.

Quick Fact: Salil Parekh is the CMD of Infosys

3) Economy

Axis Bank launches Automated Voice Assistant 'AXAA'

Private sector bank, Axis Bank, has launched an Automated Voice Assistant 'AXAA'.

'AXAA' is an artificial intelligence-powered conversational voice BOT which can converse in English, Hindi and Hinglish

It will function like a humanoid and take customer experience a level over the conventional Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system.

Quick Fact: Amitabh Chaudhry is the CMD of Axis Bank

4) Miscellaneous

New Book Release: Vishesh: Code To Win: Authored by Nirupama Yadav

The book has been written by sportswoman-turned-author Nirupama Yadav.

It is the story of Vishesh Bhargavanshi, India's youngest Basketball team captain who represented India at Asian Games, Asian Championships, Indoor Asian Games, South Asian games, etc.

It narrates their struggle to champion a sport in a country where cricket overshadows the entire sport sector.

5) Person in News

Nobel Peace Prize winner John Hume passes away

John Hume was a prominent Northern Ireland politician

He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998 for his role in ending the conflict in Northern Ireland.

He is considered the most important figures in the recent political history of Ireland and is known as one of the architects of the Northern Ireland peace process.

Quick Fact: The capital of Northern Ireland is Belfast.

6) Person in News

William English, the co-inventor of the computer mouse, passes away

William Kirk English, an American computer engineer, co-invented the world's first computer mouse

He co-developed the mouse along with Douglas Engelbart at the Stanford Research Institute

He also worked in Xerox PARC, Palo Alto, California and Sun Microsystems, California.

Quick Fact: The first mouse prototype was a pinewood block, a crude button, and a connector!

7) Person in News

Ebrahim Alkazi, father of Indian Modern Theatre, passes away

Ebraham Alkazi was a famous Indian theatre director and drama teacher

He won the Padma Shri (1966), Padma Bhushan (1991), Padma Vibhushan (2010) and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and Fellowship for lifetime contribution to theatre.

His mentees include notable actors like Naseeruddin Shah, Om Puri, Pankaj Kapoor, etc.

Quick Fact: He was the first and longest serving Director of National School of Drama (1962-77)

8) International Affairs

Japan marks the 75th anniversary of the world's first atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima, on August 6th

United States warplane Enola Gay dropped an atom bomb named 'Little Boy' on Hiroshimain on 6th August 1945.

On 9th August 1954, it dropped another atom bomb 'Fat Man' on Nagasaki

Nearly 2 lakh people died due to these bombings, while countless others, known as Hibakushas, suffered from the long-term carcinogenic effect of the bombs.

Quick Fact: The military RnD project which led to development of nuclear weapons to be used in WWII is called the Manhattan Project

8th August

1) National Affairs

Manoj Sinha appointed as new LG of Jammu and Kashmir

Girish Chandra Murmu has resigned from his position of Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.

He will be succeeded by Manoj Sinha

Manoj Sinha has represented the parliamentary constituency of Ghazipur, eastern Uttar Pradesh, thrice in the Lok Sabha and has also served as a junior railways minister.

2) Miscellaneous

New Book Release: RAW: A History of India's Covert Operations: Authored by Yatish Yadav

Yatish Yadav is an investigative journalist and author

He has authored the book RAW: A History of India's Covert Operations

The book is about the covert operations carried by Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), India's external spy agency

Quick Fact: Samant Goel is the Chief of RAW

3) Economy

RBI announces Monthly Monetary Policy Rates for 2020-21

As per the second meeting of 2020, the current rates have been decided as:

- a) repo rate under liquidity adjustment facility (LAF): 4%
- b) reverse repo at LAF: 3.35%
- c) Marginal standing facility(MSF) rate: 4.25%
- d) Bank Rate: 4.25%
- e) CRR: 3%
- f) SLR: 18%

Quick Fact: Policy rates are decided to achieve medium-term target for consumer price index inflation of 4% within a band of +/- 2%

4) Economy

India slips to 4th position in Hurun Global Unicorns 2020 list

Hurun Global Unicorn List, of Hurun Research Institute, is a global ranking of world's billion-dollar technology startups which have been established in 2000s and not yet listed on public exchange

The top 3 countries on the list are US, China and UK

India, with 21 unicorns, has slipped to 4th rank in 2020 from 3rd in the previous year

Quick Fact: A Unicorn is a privately held startup company valued at over \$1 billion

5) India and the World

India grants \$15.46 million to India-UN Development Partnership Fund

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund supports sustainable development projects across the developing world, with a focus on least developed countries and small island developing states.

India-UN Development Partnership Fund is managed by United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)

India has contributed under its commitment to support developing nations across all the Sustainable Development Goals

6) Environment

First Snow Leopard Conservation Centre of India to be developed in Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand State Government will develop India's first Snow Leopard Conservation Centre in its state

It will be developed by the Uttarakhand forest department and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The main of the centre would be to conserve and restore Himalayan ecosystems along with conserving the snow leopards

Quick Fact: Snow Leopard is classified as Vulnerable in IUCN list

10th August

1) Economy

India's first 'Kisan Rail' begins services

India's first 'Kisan Rail' will run between Devlali, Maharashtra to Danapur, Bihar.

It will cover 1,519 kilometres in over 31 hours

It will be used to transport perishable goods.

2) Person in News

Pradeep Kumar Joshi becomes new chairman of UPSC

Pradeep Kumar Joshi has served as the chairman of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commissions, as well as a member of the UPSC

He will succeed Arvind Saxena as the Chairman of UPSC

His tenure will be till May 12, 2021

Quick Fact: The headquarters of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is in New Delhi

3) Person in News

G.C. Murmu becomes new Comptroller and Auditor General of India

Girish Chandra Murmu has been appointed as the 14th Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India

He was previously serving as the Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor

He will be replacing Rajiv Mehrishi as the CAG

Quick Fact: The Comptroller and Auditor General of India is an authority established by Article 148 of the Constitution of India

4) Miscellaneous

Karnataka launches India's First Mobile COVID-19 testing lab

Karnataka has launched India's first Mobile COVID-19 testing lab of India in Bengaluru

It has been developed by Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and approved by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)

The Mobile Infection Testing and Reporting (MITR) lab can conduct 9,000 RT-PCR tests per month with 100% accuracy within 4 hours

5) Environment

Mauritius declares emergency over oil spill

Mauritius has declared an environmental emergency due to an oil spill caused by a stranded Japanese owned ship

The oil spill has put around 1 to 3 million lives at risk

The nation has asked France for help, since the French Island of Reunion, the largest military base of France, is the closest to Mauritius

Quick Fact: Port Louis is the capital of Mauritius

11th August

1) Person in News

Hardayal Prasad becomes new MD & CEO of PNB Housing Finance

Hardayal Prasad has been appointed the new managing director and chief executive officer of PNB Housing Finance

He was the CMD of SBI Cards prior to this

He shall be succeeding interim CMD Neeraj Vyas

Quick Fact: The tagline of PNB Housing Finance is Ghar ki Baat

2) Person in News

PS Ranipse becomes new IG of CRPF

PS Ranipse has been appointed as Inspector General in Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)

He is an IPS officer from the Odisha cadre

His term will last for a duration of five years from the date of joining.

Quick Fact: Service and Loyalty is the motto of CRPF

3) Economy

KV Kamath committee: Suggestions related to COVID-19 related stressed assets

An expert committee under veteran banker KV Kamath has been set up by Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

The committee will suggest financial parameters for resolution of Covid-19 related stressed assets.

The other members of the committee are Diwakar Gupta, T N Manoharan and Ashvin Parekh and the Indian Banks' Association CEO.

Quick Fact: Shaktikant Das is the 25th Governor of RBI

4) Defence and Security

Kavkaz 2020: Indo-Russia Military Exercise

Russian Kavkaz 2020 is a multilateral military strategic command-post exercise

It will be held in Astrakhan, Russia

The exercise has been extended to at least 18 countries

Quick Fact: The Kavkaz 2020 exercise is also known as Caucasus-2020

5) Miscellaneous

New Book Release: Amazing Ayodhya: Authored by Neena Rai

A book titled 'Amazing Ayodhya' has been authored by Neena Rai

It deals with authentic information about the city of Ayodhya, giving an insight into the life and times of ancient Hindus

The book is publishing by house Bloomsbury.

6) Economy

Reliance Industries ranks 2nd in FutureBrand Index 2020

The FutureBrand Index 2020 analyses and ranks PwC's Global Top 100 Companies in terms of financial strength

Reliance Industries and Samsung have ranked 2nd and 3rd rank globally in FutureBrand Index 2020.

Apple Inc. has topped the FutureBrand Index 2020.

Quick Fact: Index is released by London based FutureBrand

12th August

1) Defence and Security

Submarine Cable connectivity to Andaman & Nicobar Islands launched

Andaman & Nicobar Islands will be connected to mainland India through a submarine Optical Fibre Cable (OFC)

The OFC is 2300 km long

The OFC will help Andaman and Nicobar get cheaper and better connectivity, and also play an instrumental role under India's new trade strategy for Indo-Pacific region.

Quick Fact: Admiral D K Joshi is the Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Island.

2) India and the World

War Memorial for Indian soldiers to be constructed in Bangladesh

The memorial will be a monument dedicated to the Indian soldiers who died in 1971 during Bangladesh's struggle for independence from Pakistan.

It will be located in Ashuganj of Brahmanbaria district, bordering Tripura

3) Economy

Atmanirbhar Bharat Saptah launched

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has launched the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Saptah'

It will give emphasis to India's aim of shifting to local manufacturing, Make in India and also Atmanirbhar Bharat

The main idea behind this event is to emphasize the importance of domestic defence production in the country.

4) Environment

77 new butterfly species found in Maharashtra

77 new species of butterflies were discovered in the ecologically sensitive forest of Matheran hill station

The discovery was made by Bombay Natural History Society

This brings the total number of butterfly species in the forest up to 140.

Quick Fact: Bombay Natural History Society was founded in 1883

5) Environment

Pathogens listed Critical by World Health Organization found in River Yamuna

WHO had published a list of antibiotic resistant priority pathogens that pose the greatest threat to human lives in 2017

As per studies, some of these have been found in Yamuna river

Sewage is the main source of their entry into the river

Quick Fact: WHO list of 'Priority Pathogens' contains a list of antibiotic resistant pathogens for which drugs are urgently needed.

6) Geography

Mount Sinabung Volcano of Indonesia erupts

Mount Sinabung of Indonesia was dormant for 400 years.

It then erupted in 2010, 2014 and now, in 2020.

It is the most active volcano in Mount Sinaburg and is located in the Pacific Ring of Fire.

Quick Fact: Mount Sinabung is located in the North Sumatra Island of Indonesia

7) Environment

Study Results: Huge amount of Carbon Dioxide released by Himalayan Geothermal Springs

Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, under the Department of Science and Technology, has been investigating gas emissions in the springs of Himalayas

The carbon dioxide is produced due to metamorphic decarbonation of carbonate rocks, magmatism and oxidation of graphite

Quick Fact: There are more than 600 Geothermal springs in the Himalayan region

13th August

1) Sports

Max Verstappen wins 70th Anniversary Grand Prix

Max Verstappen, the Belgian-Dutch Grand Prix driver from Red Bull, got the first position in Emirates Formula 1 70th Anniversary Grand Prix

The Grand Prix was held in Silverstone, United Kingdom

Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas of Mercedes came in the second and third place, respectively.

2) Defence and Security

Indian Armed Forces revive Project Cheetah

The project is related to the upgradation of around 90 Heron drones.

This upgradation would help the Indian Army operate the drones from a distance and control them through satellite communication system

This move is significant in the light of border tensions with China.

Quick Fact: The Heron Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, is a medium-altitude UAV, was made in Israel

3) Defence and Security

India test fires first Private Upper Stage Rocket Engine

The Rocket has been developed by the aerospace startup Skyroot

After the successful test firing, it has become the first Indian private company to demonstrate the capability of homegrown rocket engine

The 3D printed rocket engine was named after Nobel Laureate Sir C V Raman

4) Person in News

Indian-origin Kamala Harris nominated for US vice-presidency

Presidential Candidate Joe Biden has chosen Kamala Harris to run for Vice President.

This makes Kamala Harris the first black woman and the first person of Indian origin to be nominated for the national office of a majority party in the US

Kamala Harris is the district attorney from San Francisco and former attorney general of California.

5) Art and Culture

Nine Tribal Freedom fighters Museums to be developed by Govt

Nine tribal freedom fighters museums are to be built by Ministry of Tribal Affairs

The museums will be in:

- 1) Rajpipla (Gujarat): dedicated to tribal freedom fighters across India
- 2) Ranchi (Jharkhand): dedicated to Birsa Munda
- 3) Raipur (Chhattisgarh): dedicated to Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh
- 4) Lambasingi (Andhra Pradesh): dedicated to Shri Alluri Seetha Ram Raju
- 5) Kozhikode (Kerala): dedicated to Thalakkal Chandu
- 6) Hyderabad (Telangana): Dedicated to Ramji Gond

- 7) Chhindwara (Madhya Pradesh): dedicated to Tantya Bheel, Bheema Nayak and Khajaya Nayak
- 8) Senapati (Manipur): dedicated to Rani Gaidinilu
- 9) Kelsi (Mizoram)

14th August

1) Economy

Paytm launches India's first pocket android POS device

Paytm has launched India's first Pocket Android POS Device named 'Paytm All-in-One Portable Android Smart POS'.

POS devices are Point of Sale devices for contactless ordering and payments in India.

This is the first Android-based device of its kind to be introduced in India.

Quick Fact: Vijay Shekhar Sharma is the founder of Paytm

2) Person in News

Harsh Kumar Bhanwala appointed executive chairman of Capital India Finance

Capital India Finance Limited (CIFL) is an integrated financial services platform which provides customised financial solutions to Indian Corporates for their growth.

Harsh Kumar Bhanwala has been appointed as executive chairman of the Capital India Finance Limited.

He has served as the chairman of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for over six years.

3) Miscellaneous

Journalism Awards: ACJ Journalism Awards 2019

Nitin Sethi is a journalist in the Huffington Post. He won the Asian College of Journalism's (ACJ) Award 2019 for Investigative Journalism award for his six-part series titled "Paisa Politics" published by The Huffington Post India.

Shiv Sahay Singh is a journalist in The Hindu. He received the K. P. Narayana Kumar Memorial Award for Social Impact Journalism award for his story titled "Death by digital exclusion: On faculty public distribution system in Jharkhand" published in The Hindu.

Quick Fact: The awards were presented by Soumya Swaminathan, chief scientist of World Health Organisation (WHO)

4) Person in News

Noted Urdu Poet and Lyricist Rahat Indori passes away

Rahat Indori, a very celebrated Urdu poet, passed away

Rahat Indori was also a lyricist for Bollywood songs

He was battling COVID-19 and died after a cardiac arrest

5) Government Schemes

AMRUT Scheme Ranking: Odisha continues to be the Top Performer

Ranking of states under AMRUT scheme has been released by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Odisha has secured first position by scoring 85.67%

The scheme focuses on water supply storm water drainage to reduce flooding, sewerage and septage management, green spaces in the cities and non-motorised urban transport

Quick Fact: AMRUT, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation Scheme, was launched in 2015

15th August

1) Environment

Elephants. Not Commodities: Report from International Animal Welfare Organization

The report is on Elephant Tourism research based in India, Thailand, Laos, Nepal, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

As per the report:

- a) India is home to second-highest number of elephants (509) used in tourism in Asia
- b) Of these 509 elephants, 45% are in inadequate conditions.

The report was launched on 12th August World Elephant Day

Quick Fact: International Animal Protection Organization, World Animal Protection is headquartered in London

2) Science and Technology

NASA Planet Hunter TESS finds 66 new Exoplanets

TESS (Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite) is the planet hunter of NASA

It has found 66 new Exoplanets as it scanned 75% of the starry sky during its one month mission

TESS is a space telescope for NASA explorer programme, whose main aim is to study the brightest celestial bodies and search for Exoplanets.

Quick Fact: India's Exoplanet search mission is ground based in Mt. Abu. It is called PARAS (PRL Advanced Radial-velocity Abu-sky Search)

3) Geography

Lakshadweep Corals hold clues to the Indian Monsoon puzzle

As per Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), corals in the North Indian Ocean can help study the onset and withdrawal of Indian Monsoons

Coral surface bands reveal paleoclimatic conditions, ambient water temperature, rainfall etc. of the past

4) National Affairs

Jal Shakti Minister launches Swachh Bharat Mission Academy

Union Ministry for Jal Shakti has launched the Swachh Bharat Mission Academy

It was launched during the week-long behaviour change campaign 'Gandagi Mukh Bharat'

The establishment of the Academy is a crucial part of the phase 2 of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)

Quick Fact: Gajendra Singh Shekhawat is the Union Jal Shakti Minister

5) Economy

RBI announces 'positive pay' feature to help avert cheque frauds

A mechanism of 'Positive Pay' for all cheques of value Rs 50,000 and above has been announced by RBI to protect companies against cheque frauds

Positive pay is a fraud-prevention system offered by most commercial banks to companies to protect them against forged, altered and counterfeit checks.

The limit of Rs 50,000 will cover approximately 20 percent of transactions by volume and 80 percent by value.

6) Person in News

Soma Mondal appointed chairperson of SAIL

Soma Mondal has been appointed the chairperson of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) by the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB)

She will be succeeding Anil Chaudhary in this role

Currently, she is Director (Commercial) of SAIL

Quick Fact: Soma Mondal also holds the record of being NALCO's first-ever female director

7) Person in News

Pramod Bhasin appointed Chairman of ICRIER

Pramod Bhasin has been appointed as the new Chairman of Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)

He will be succeeding Isher Judge Ahluwalia in this role.

He is currently the vice-chair of the board of governors at ICRIER

17th August

1) Economy

Price Monitoring and Resource Unit set up in Karnataka

The Price Monitoring and Resource Unit (PMRU) has been established by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers in association with Karnataka State Drug Control Department.

It will:

- a) will assist NPPA in monitoring the prices of drugs
- b) ensure availability of drugs
- c) raise consumer awareness
- d) act as collaborating partner of NPPA with information collecting mechanism at the grass-root level

2) International Affairs

Historic peace agreement between UAE and Israel

As per the agreement, UAE will establish diplomatic relations with Israel in return for Israel committing to give up a stated plan to annex the West Bank.

This makes UAE the third Arab nation to recognise Israel after Egypt (in 1979) and Jordan (1994)

This deal between the two most prosperous countries of the region will have a big effect on global geopolitics.

3) Person in News

Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi assumes charge as DGNO

Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, AVSM, NM has been appointed as the Director General Naval Operations (DGNO).

He is a specialist in Communication and Electronic Warfare

As part of his Naval career, he has commanded INS Vinash, INS Kirch and INS Trishul

4) Person in News

Sudha Murthy and ITC's Sivakumar awarded Gramodaya awards

Gramodaya awards recognise service rendered for population dependent on agriculture and allied activities for livelihood

Sudha Murthy, Chairperson of Infosys Foundation and Sivakumar, Group Head of Agri and IT Businesses of ITC Ltd has been awarded this year

Quick Fact: Gramodaya Bandhu Mitra Puraskaras have been instituted by Gramodaya Chamber of Commerce and Technology (GCOT)

5) Government Schemes

National Digital Health Mission launched

Launched on Independence Day by the PM, the mission includes:

- a) improving the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of health care in India
- b) Launch of health ID cards containing all relevant information about the person's past medical condition, treatment and diagnosis
- c) Remote access to health services via Tele-consultation and E-Pharmacies

Quick Fact: The mission will operate under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana or Ayushman Bharat

6) National Affairs

Central Water Commission and Google launch Flood forecasting Initiative

As part of this initiative:

- a) The local public will receive numerous alerts regarding the flood situation in the region
- b) people can learn about current water level in the region
- c) People can access colour-coded maps indicating flooded areas

Quick Fact: Sundar Pichai is the CEO of Google Inc.

18th August

1) Indian flag hoisted for the first time in New York's Times Square

Indian Tricolour flag was hoisted for the first time at the iconic Times Square in New York on the occasion of India's 74th anniversary

The ceremony was organised by Federation of Indian Associations (FIA)
FIA, established in 1970, is the largest umbrella diaspora organisation that organises India Day Parade to mark India's Independence Day.

2) Economy

NTPC develops infrastructure for increased use of Fly Ash

Fly ash is a coal combustion product used in cement, concrete and clay brick replacement

The infrastructure is being developed at Rihand, Uttar Pradesh to help NTPC achieve its goal of 100% utilisation of fly ash from power plants.

This will help in transporting fly ash to cement plants at cheaper cost.

3) India and the World

India sends specialist team for Mauritius Oil Spill under Mission SAGAR

Mauritius is fighting to contain an oil spill on its pristine south-east coast

India has sent 30 tonnes of technical equipment and material as well as a 10-member Indian Coast Guard team to its aid as part of Mission SAGAR

SAGAR aims to deepen economic and security cooperation with maritime neighbours

Quick Fact: Mission SAGAR, Security Growth for All in the Region, was launched in 2015

4) National Affairs

Atal Tunnel to be inaugurated in Himachal Pradesh

Prime Minister will be inaugurating Atal Tunnel by the end of September 2020

The tunnel is being built under Rohtang Pass in the Pir Panjal range on the Leh-Manali highway.

The presence of 48 avalanche sites and extreme weather conditions made construction a challenge for BRO.

The 8.8 km long tunnel has strategic importance as it will transport military supply in Siachen Glacier and Aksai Chin

Quick Fact: The tunnel was initially proposed in 1860 by the Moravian Mission

5) Economy

India ranks first in organic farming

As per Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare,

- a) India ranks first in Organic Farming
- b) India ranks ninth in terms of areas under Organic Farming

Major initiatives for organic farming taken by GoI were Mission Organic Value Chain Development for the North East Region and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana

Quick Fact: Sikkim is the first state in the world to become completely organic.

6) Environment

Project Lion, Project Dolphin launched on 74th Independence Day

Project Lion will involve conservation of Asiatic Lions by:

- a) habitat development leveraging modern technologies
- b) addressing human-wildlife conflict
- c) involving local communities
- d) focusing on health management of lions

Project Dolphin, focussed primarily on Gangetic Dolphins, will involve conservation of Dolphins by:

- a) habitat conservation using modern technology especially in anti-poaching activities
- b) Involving fishermen and other local population

Quick Fact: Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary is the only sanctuary for the Gangetic Dolphins in India

19th August

1) Person in News

Kaushik Khona becomes new CEO of GoAir

Kaushik Khona has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of GoAir Airline

He will be replacing Vinay Dube in this role

He has more than 32 years of corporate experience, especially at the CXO level.

Quick Fact: GoAir is owned by the Indian business conglomerate Wadia Group

2) Person in News

Harbhajan Singh becomes Brand Ambassador of eBikeGO

eBikeGO is an Amritsar based e-mobility start-up

The company aims to capture 10% of electric two-wheeler market share by 2022

It has appointed Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh as its brand ambassador

3) Government Schemes

Ministry of Youth and Sports launches Fit India Youth Club

Fit India Youth Club initiative will be a nation-wide initiative to promote fitness among every citizen.

To unite fitness and voluntarism, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and National Service Scheme, Scouts and Guides, NCC and other youth organisations will register as Fit India Youth Clubs.

Each member of the Club will encourage others to perform 30-60 minutes long fitness activities daily.

4) Miscellaneous

Atal Rankings of Institutions on Innovative Achievements, 2020 (ARIIA 2020)

AIIRA aims to systematically rank all major higher educational institutions and universities in India on indicators related to “Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development”

It was launched by Ministry of Education and will be implemented by All India council for Technical Education (AICTE)

IIT Madras ranked first in the institute of national importance category. Other categories include Centrally funded institutions, State Funded Universities, State Funded Autonomous Universities, Private Institutions (self finance) and Private or Deemed Universities.

Quick Fact: This year introduced a special prize for women higher educational institutions

5) Science and Technology

Dwarf Planet Ceres of Solar System has an Ocean World

Ceres is a dwarf planet located between Mars and Jupiter

Latest studies have revealed that it is a remnant ocean world and still has a 40 km deep brine reservoir

The Ceres was first spotted in 1801 by Giuseppe Piazzi. NASA's Dawn Mission also orbited it.

Quick Fact: Pluto, Eris, Haumea, Makemake and Ceres are the five dwarf planets of the solar system.

6) National Affairs

World Tallest Pier Bridge to be constructed in Manipur

Indian Railways is constructing the world's tallest pier bridge in the state of Manipur

It is 141 metres high and is a part of the 111 km long Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal railway line project

This project will boost trade and connectivity between Manipur and the South East Asian countries, boosting India's Act East Policy

20th August

1) Person in News

Rakesh Asthana appointed DG of BSF

Rakesh Asthana has been appointed the new director-general of the Border Security Force (BSF).

He will be succeeding DG of Indo-Tibet Border Police (ITBP) S S Deswal in this role

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

Quick Fact: BSF's motto is Duty Unto Death

2) Person in News

GP Garg appointed SEBI's new executive director

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has appointed GP Garg as its executive director (ED)

He had joined SEBI in 1994 and has worked on SEBI's initiatives on financial literacy and investor education

Before this, he was also SEBI's Chief General Manager

Quick Fact: Ajay Tyagi is the Chairman of SEBI

3) Economy

Bulldex: India's first bullion index

India's first bullion index named Bulldex has been launched by Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX)

Bullions, viz. gold and silver are already being traded as individual commodities on MCX

MCX is India's largest commodity derivatives exchange

Quick Fact: Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd is an independent commodity exchange

4) Miscellaneous

New Book Release: Full Spectrum: India's Wars, 1972-2020: Authored by Arjun Subramaniam

Arjun Subramaniam is a retired Air Vice Marshal

It is a comprehensive account contemporary of Indian wars and conflicts since 1972

The book is a sequel of his previous book titled: India's Wars: A Military History, 1947-1971

5) Person in News

Renowned classical vocalist Pandit Jasraj passes away

Pandit Jasraj was a renowned Indian classical vocalist whose career spanned for more than 80 years

Apart from international awards, his awards in India included:

- a) Padma Shri, 1975
- b) Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, 1987
- c) Padma Bhushan, 1999
- d) Padma Vibhushan, 2000

Quick Fact: Civilian awards in India, in decreasing order of importance, are Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri

6) Science and Technology

NASA confirms South Atlantic Anomaly: Dent in the Earth's Magnetic field

An unusually weak spot has been found in Earth's magnetic field over South America and South Atlantic Ocean.

This dent is called the South Atlantic Anomaly.

The anomaly is due to tilt of Earth's magnetic axis and the flow of molten metals within Earth's outer core

This phenomenon allows charged particles from sun to dip abnormally close to the earth's surface, affecting data collection from satellites.

21st August

1) National Affairs

National Recruitment Agency to be established

The Cabinet has approved setting up of National Recruitment Agency (NRA)

It will be a specialist body which will offer the state-of-the-art technology and best practices to the field of Central Government recruitment

Representatives from Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance/Department of Financial Services, the SSC, RRB and IBPS will be its members

2) Economy

YES Bank launches unique facility 'Loan against Securities'

YES Bank has launched a unique digital solution under its loan in seconds platform

Loan against Securities will enable customers to avail loan facility against the securities they hold

In order to avail the loan, customers need to only pledge the securities and not sell them

Quick Fact: Prashant Kumar is the CEO and MD of Yes Bank

3) Art and Culture

India Post issued stamps on UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India

A set of five commemorative postage stamps and a miniature sheet on UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India has been released by India Post

The five sites are:

- The Historic City of Ahmedabad,
- Churches and Convents of Goa,
- Group of Monuments at Pattadakal

- Khajuraho Group of Monuments
- Qutub Minar

4) National Affairs

Swachh Survekshan 2020 results declared

The survey ranks different places of India on the basis of cleanliness.

This year,

- a) Indore, Madhya Pradesh bagged the cleanest city in the country for the fourth consecutive time
- b) Varanasi bagged the best Ganga Town

This year, the Swachh Survekshan League was integrated in the survey which assessed waste water treatment and reuse and faecal sludge management in cities throughout the year.

Quick Fact: Initiated in 2016, the survey is conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

5) National Affairs

India's Population Projections till 2036: National Commission on Population

As per population projections for the period of 2011-36,

- a) Sex ratio of India will increase from 943 (2011) to 957 (2036)
- b) Population of India will be 1.52 billion in 2036
- c) By 2031, India will be the most populous country in the world.

The commission has been created by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

22nd August

1) National Affairs

Madhya Pradesh becomes first state to recruit on basis of CET

CET, or Common Eligibility Test, will replace the individual tests conducted for jobs through RRB, SSC and IBPS

It will be conducted by a newly approved organisation called National Recruitment Agency

The exam will be conducted at the three levels of Graduate, 12th pass and 10th pass candidates.

2) Economy

Ramesh Chand Task Force Recommendations

The Task Force has recommended to:

- a) link sugarcane prices to sugar rates
- b) make a one-time increase in the minimum sugar price at Rs 33 per kg
- c) review the minimum support price (MSP) of sugarcane every six months
- d) incentivise farmers to grow less water-intensive crops in sugarcane fields
- e) use Revenue Sharing Formula (RSF) and Price Stabilization Fund to ensure farmers get fair price for produce

Quick Fact: The task force has been created by NITI Aayog

3) Economy

Second National Strategy for Financial Education (NSFE) launched by RBI

NSFE 2020-25 aims to achieve a financially aware and empowered India with a with 5-Core Actions approach.

The approach contains five Cs— Capacity, Content, Communication, Community, and Collaboration, where:

- a) Capacity: developing capacity of intermediaries involved in financial education
- b) Content: School curriculum for financial education
- c) Communication: Communication strategy for community-led model
- d) Community: Following a community-led model
- e) Collaboration: Enhancing collaboration among various stakeholders

Quick Fact: The first NSFE was launched by National Centre for Financial Education, an NPO promoted by RBI, in 2013

4) India and the World

Supply Chain Resilience Initiative to be launched to counter China

The initiative to will be launched by Japan, India and Australia

The initiative aims to:

- a) reduce economic dependence on China and alleviate company concerns about China's political behaviour
- b) attract foreign direct investment in the Indo-Pacific region
- c) make the Indo-Pacific region an economic powerhouse
- d) build partner relationship between the countries in the region

Quick Fact: The initiative was first proposed by Japan

5) Economy

RBI releases Framework for Authorisation of Pan-India Umbrella Entity for retail payments

RBI will set up a new pan-India umbrella entity which will have a minimum paid-up capital of Rs 500 crores.

The entity will set up, operate, manage new payment systems including ATMs, Aadhaar based payments, label Point of Sales, remittance services. It will also develop standards, payment methods and technologies related issues pertaining to retail payment.

This will help split the accumulated powers and responsibilities of National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI).

24th August

1) Sports

INOX Group to be official sponsor of Indian team during Tokyo Olympics

INOX Group has signed a sponsorship agreement with Indian Olympic Association to support Team India for Tokyo Olympics

Indian Olympic Association is the governing body for the Olympic Movement in India

Tokyo Olympics will be held from July 23 to August 8, 2021

2) Person in News

G P Garg appointed as Executive Director of SEBI

G P Garg has been appointed as the Executive Director of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

Before this appointment, he was the Chief General Manager-Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) in SEBI.

He joined SEBI in 1994 and has headed various departments of the organisation

Quick Fact: Ajay Tyagi is the chairperson of SEBI

3) Sports

Dream11 wins IPL 2020 title sponsorship rights

Dream 11 has replaced Chinese mobile phone company Vivo by winning IPL 2020 title sponsorship rights

Dream 11 is a fantasy sports platform

It is an Indian company founded by Harsh Jain and Bhavit Sheth

Quick Fact: Sourav Ganguly is the President of BCCI

4) Person in News

Ashok Lavasa to join ADB as Vice President

Ashok Lavasa is the election commissioner of India

He will be resigning from his post to become the Vice President of Asian Development Bank

He has submitted his resignation to President Ram Nath Kovind

Quick Fact: Masatsugu Asakawa is the president of ADB

5) Person in News

Russell Kirsch, the inventor of Pixel, passes away

Computer scientist Russell Kirsch was the inventor of Pixel

He scanned the world's first digital photograph by creating 2-by-2-inch black-and-white digital image of his son

He is also the developer of the world's first programmable computer, SEAC (Standards Eastern Automatic Computer)

6) Economy

New logo of Labour Bureau launched

The new logo comprises a Blue wheel (representing work), a tricolored Graph (signifying data), and wheat ears (signifying rural labour).

It represents Labour Bureau as a data based organization dealing in data related to workers and work

It depicts Accuracy, Validity and Reliability- the three goals that Labour Bureau strives to achieve in generating quality data

Quick Fact: Santosh Gangwar is the Minister of State (I/C) for Labour and Employment

7) Economy

Google launches 'Kormo' app for finding entry-level jobs

Kormo is an employment application launched by Google

It aims to help young professionals in India who lost their jobs due to the ongoing Corona pandemic.

Google launched a similar employment app for the first time in 2018 for Bangladesh

8) Economy

Apple becomes First U.S. company to reach \$2 trillion stock market value

Apple Inc. is now the first publicly traded U.S. company to reach over \$2 trillion market stock value

It has also become the world's second company to hit \$2 trillion market capitalisation

Oil Major Saudi Aramco was the first company to reach \$2 trillion market value

9) Person in News

IISc professor Biman Bagchi selected for 2021 Joel Henry Hildebrand Award

IISc Professor Biman Bagchi is the 2021 recipient of the Joel Henry Hildebrand Award in the Theoretical and Experimental Chemistry of Liquids

The awards are conferred by the American Chemical Society (ACS) and is sponsored by ExxonMobil Research and Engineering Co.

The award consists of \$5,000 and a certificate

25th August

1) India and the World

Uttar Pradesh partners with Israel to resolve Bundelkhand Water Crisis

The two governments have signed an agreement for addressing the water crisis in drought hit regions of Bundelkhand

The joint project will support regional farmers with latest farming technologies such as drip irrigation

The project has the potential to become a national role model for groundwater management, irrigation and potable water management

2) Economy

CCI approves proposed acquisition of C&S Electric by Siemens

Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the proposed acquisition of C&S Electric Limited by Siemens Limited

Siemens India supplies smart mobility solutions for rail, roadways and smart city infrastructure

C&S Electric Limited manufactures a range of electrical switchgear, power protection and electrical distribution products

Quick Fact: CCI is a statutory body founded in 2003

3) Person in News

Rajiv Kumar appointed as new Election Commissioner

Rajiv Kumar has been appointed as the new Election Commissioner of India

He is a 1984-batch IAS officer from Jharkhand cadre who has worked as the finance secretary. He played in a major role in merging of the ten public sector banks.

He will be succeeding Ashok Lavasa as ECI

Quick Fact: Sukumar Sen was the first Chief Election Commissioner of India, serving from 1950 to 1958

4) Sports

National Sports Awards 2020 announced

Selection of the winners was done by a Selection Committee headed by a former judge of the Supreme Court, Justice (Retd.) Mukundakam Sharma

The awards are conferred by the President of India on National Sports Day

The awards include:

- Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award
- Arjuna Award
- Dronacharya Award
- Dhyan Chand Award
- Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar
- Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (Maka) Trophy
- Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Awards

Quick Fact: National Sports Day is observed on 29th August, which is the birthday of legendary Olympian and Hockey player Dhyan Chand.

5) Person in News

Ashwani Bhatia appointed Managing Director of State Bank of India

Ashwani Bhatia has been appointed as the Managing Director (MD) of the State Bank of India (SBI)

The appointment has been made on the recommendation of the Banks Board Bureau

He is currently the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of SBI Mutual Fund

Quick Fact: Rajnish Kumar is the chairperson of SBI

6) Environment

Turkey discovers Natural Gas reserves in Black Sea

Large natural gas reserves have been discovered in the Black Sea coast

This discovery is significant among the growing tensions between Turkey and Greece over Turkish-occupied regions of Cyprus.

The occupation is not recognised by the international community. Also, the aforementioned region comes under Greece's exclusive economic zone as per UNCLOS agreement, of which Turkey is not a signatory.

Quick Fact: As per UNCLOS, exclusive economic zone extends to 200-miles

7) National Affairs

Gol constitutes National Council for Transgender Persons

The Council will be headed by the Union Social Justice Minister and consists of members at joint secretary level from ministries of health, minority affairs, education, labour, rural development and members from Human Rights Commissions, NITI Aayog and National Commission for women.

It will be a statutory body formed under Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

Its functions will include advising Gol on policies and programmes related to transgender empowerment, protection and grievance redressal, along with monitoring and reviewing of the same.

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawar Chand Gehlot will be the ex-officio Chairperson of the council which will also have 5 nominated members from transgender community

8) Environment

Dragonfly Festival 2020

National Dragonfly Festival will be organised in Kerala as Thumbi Mahotsavam 2020

It is celebrate to boost and create awareness about dragonflies and and their conservation

Dragonflies are important indicators of aquatic ecosystem quality and biodiversity, and can help determine environmental changes in an ecosystem

The organisers of the festival include BHNS, WWF and National Biodiversity board, IUCN-Centre for Environment Conservation, United Nations Development Programme

Quick Fact: The main threat to dragonflies is loss of clean water-bodies and deforestation.

26th August

1) National Affairs

India's longest river ropeway inaugurated in Assam

India's ropeway is 1.8 km long and connects Guwahati and North Guwahati over Brahmaputra river

It will:

- a) Shorten the travel time between Guwahati and North Guwahati.
- b) Increase tourism in Guwahati, including the Umananda Temple on Peacock island

2) Economy

ICICI Lombard and Bharti AXA to merge their general insurance businesses

ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company and Bharti AXA General Insurance Company will be merging their businesses

Post merger, they will have an expected market share of 8.7% in the non-life insurance business.

This will make them the third largest non-life insurer in India.

Quick Fact: MD and CEO of Bharti AXA General Insurance is Sanjeev Srinivasan, and that of ICICI Lombard General Insurance is Bhargav Dasgupta.

3) Miscellaneous

New Book Release: One Arranged Murder: Authored by Chetan Bhagat

Chetan Bhagat will be publishing his new book, One Arranged Murder, by end of September 2020

The book narrates the story of a murder mystery in the backdrop of an arranged marriage

This is Chetan Bhagat's ninth novel and eleventh book.

4) Miscellaneous

New Book Release: Gastric Cancer: Authored by Jitendra Singh

Jitendra Singh is the Minister of State for the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region

He has released a book called Gastric Cancer edited by Dr Ashok K. Vaid

Dr. Ashok K. Vaid is a noted oncologist who received the Padma Shri in 2009

5) Economy

Anand Mahindra and Shantanu Narayen selected for 2020 Leadership Awards by USISPF

Anand Mahindra is the chairperson on Mahindra Group

Shantanu Narayen is Adobe's Chairman and CEO

Both of the above have been selected for the 2020 Leadership Awards by the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF)

Quick Fact: This is the third Annual Leadership Summit of USISPF, and has the theme 'US-India Week: Navigating New Challenges'

6) Environment

One Sun, One World, One Grid Project

The project is a trans-national electricity grid supplying solar power project which receives technical assistance from World Bank

The project involves building interconnected solar resources in:

- a) Phase I: cross border energy trade in India's neighbourhood
- b) Phase II: Middle East, South Asia and South East Asia that are inter connected with African power pools
- c) Phase III: Global interconnectedness

The project was ideated by PM of India in 2018 during the International Solar Alliance

7) Economy

First Time in India: Farm Sector grows as GDP contracts

As per National Statistics Office, India's GDP is contracting in spite of agricultural production going up for the first time in India.

The crop sub-sector would grow by at least 4-5% due to an extended winter and good monsoon

The agriculture sector is expected to grow by a minimum of 3-4% in real terms during the first quarter of 2020-21, even as overall GDP may contract by double digits due to the pandemic

27th August

1) National Affairs

NLCIL wins 'Swachhta Hi Seva award' for transforming Neyveli Township

NLC India Limited (NLCIL) is a Navratna company

It has won the Swachhta Hi Seva award for transforming the entire Neyveli into a plastic-free, clean and green campus

'Swachhta Hi Seva', is an initiative of the Swachh Bharat Mission, which aims to generate greater public participation and reinforce the concept of 'sanitation as everyone's business'

Quick Fact: Rakesh Kumar is the CMD of NLCIL

2) Art and Culture

Nuakhai Juhar Festival

The Nuakhai Juhar Festival was celebrated in Chhattisgarh and Odisha on 23rd August

The festival worships food crops and celebrates new crops of the season

The festival is also known as Nuakhai Parab or Nuakahi Bhetghat

3) Science and Technology

Astronomers at ARIES find clues behind accelerated star formation in dwarf galaxies

Astronomers at ARIES have discovered dwarf galaxies that are forming new stars 10-100 times faster than Milky Way Galaxy.

However, this phenomenon stops quicker in Dwarf Galaxies as compared to developed ones like the Milky Way.

Formation of stars requires a high concentration of hydrogen. Studies revealed that the fast formation may be due to disturbed distribution of hydrogen atoms in dwarf galaxies caused due to recent collisions with another galaxy. These collisions lead to formation of nuclei and centres with high hydrogen atom concentration.

Quick Fact: Aryabhata Research Institute of Observation Science (ARIES) is located in Uttarakhand

4) Science and Technology

India's ASTROSAT makes rare discovery

ASTROSAT is India's first multi-wavelength space telescope

ASTROSAT has detected extreme UV light from a galaxy located 9.3 billion light years away from the Earth

This discovery will help understand the mysteries of the universe

5) Environment

Mahseer: Rare fish sighted in Sileru river

The rare fish Mahseer was sighted by a team of researchers from Andhra University in the Sileru river

The fish is listed as Endangered in IUCN list

Mahseer is a sensitive freshwater species, which can barely tolerate modified water environment

Quick Fact: Sileru River is a tributary of Sabari river

28th August

1) International Affairs

Testing video of the largest ever Hydrogen bomb blast released by Russia

Russia released a 40-minute video of detonation of the world's most powerful hydrogen bomb, called Tsar, on August 27th

The Tsar bomb is supposedly 3,333 times more destructive than the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

So far, Britain, US, Russia, France and China have conducted hydrogen bomb tests

Quick Fact: Hydrogen bombs function on the phenomenon of Hydrogen fusion

2) Economy

NITI Aayog releases Export Preparedness Index, 2020

NITI Aayog, in partnership with Institute of Competitiveness, has released the Export Preparedness Index, 2020

Policy, Export Ecosystem, Business Ecosystem and Export Performance are the four parameters used in framing the index

Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have topped the index.

3) Science and Technology

WHO declares Africa free of Wild Polio

World Health Organisation has declared Africa polio-free. Nigeria was the last African country to be declared free from wild polio.

Now, only the vaccine derived polio virus, which mutates from the Oral Polio Vaccine, remains in Africa

Wild polio is now found only in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Quick Fact: Polio virus spreads through contaminated water

4) International Affairs

Rohingyas to be relocated to Bashan Char Island by Govt. of Bangladesh

In 2017, nearly 1 million Rohingyas fled from Rakhine State of Myanmar after a military crackdown.

Most of these Rohingyas are cramped at Cox's Bazar, a port town in the south east coast of Bangladesh.

To give them a better life, they will be relocated to a newly built facility at the Bashan Char Island

Quick Fact: Bashan Char Island, located in the Bay of Bengal, was formed very recently by Himalayan silt in 2006

5) Economy

RBI Annual Report 2019-20

The report is published annually by the Reserve Bank of India.

It analyses the operations of RBI and suggests measures to improve economic performance

The report has established it as a bank with the highest levels of financial resilience globally, with strong indicators like a decrease in expenditure of 39.72%, increase of 28.97% in total income, etc.

29th August

1) Art and Culture

Seven new circles for ASI announced by Ministry of Culture

Seven new circles of Archaeological Survey of India have been announced.

The circles are:

- Trichy in Tamil Nadu
- Raiganj in West Bengal
- Rajkot in Gujarat
- Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh
- Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh
- Meerut in Uttar Pradesh
- Hampi in Karnataka

Organizationally, ASI is divided into circles, each being headed by a Superintending Archaeologist. Addition of new circles would give a boost to registration and preservation of local monuments.

Quick Fact: Prahlad Singh Patel is the Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism

2) Person in News

Vinay Tonse becomes new MD and CEO of SBI Mutual Fund

Vinay Tonse has been appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of SBI Mutual Fund (MF).

He started his career with SBI in 1988 as Probationary Officer.

He will be succeeding Ashwani Bhatia in this role.

3) Sports

James Anderson becomes first fast bowler to take 600 Test wickets

After his dismissal of Pakistan team's Azhar Ali, James Anderson has become the first fast bowler to take 600 Test wickets.

Overall he is the 4th bowler to take 600 test wickets after 3 spinners.

The three spinners to take 600 test wickets are:

- a) Muttiah Muralitharan: Sri Lanka
- b) Shane Warne: Australia
- c) Anil Kumble: India

4) Miscellaneous

New Book Release: Cricket Drona: Authored by Jatin Paranjpe and Anand Vasu

The book Cricket Drona' is about renowned coach Vasudev Jagannath Paranjpe or Vasoo Paranjape

It is written by his son and National Selector Jatin Paranjpe and Cricket Journalist Anad Vasu

It highlights Paranjpe's impact on shaping the careers of India's greatest cricketers like Gavaskar, Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and Rohit Sharma.

5) Person in News

Marieke Lucas Rijneveld becomes the youngest author to win International Booker Prize

Marieke Lucas Rijneveld, aged 29 years, is a Dutch author who has won the prize for his debut novel The Discomfort of Evening.

He will share the prize with his translator Michele Hutchison.

The book is about how the death of her brother affects a girl and her family.

Quick Fact: International Booker Prize was instituted in 2005.

6) Government Schemes

Prateeksha: First Marine Ambulance launched by Kerala Government

Government of Kerala has launched Marine Ambulance services called Pratheeksha to provide efficient rescue.

This is in the backdrop of high number of fatalities and injuries to fisherpeople.

The ambulance can provide critical care, first aid and rescue services.

7) Defence and Security

Gol sets up Expert Panel to redefine DRDO

To reduce India's military dependence on foreign imports, Gol has set up an Expert Panel to redefine the roles and responsibilities of DRDO.

The panel is functioning under the chairmanship of Indian Institute of Delhi director V Ramgopal Rao.

The panel will study, review and redefine the duties of the DRDO labs based on the current and futuristic battlefield needs.

Quick Fact: Currently India is the second largest arms importer in the world after Saudi Arabia

31th August

1) Person in News

Ms. Sudha Painuli wins National Award to Teachers 2020

Ms. Sudha Painuli has been selected for National Award to Teachers 2020.

Winners are selected by an Independent Jury constituted by the Union Ministry of Education, Department of School Education & Literacy.

She is the first NAT Awardee from the Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) established under Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

2) Person in News

Kevin Mayer resigns as CEO of TikTok

The CEO has stepped down amid pressure from the US government for TikTok's parents Chinese company to sell it.

ByteDance is the parent company of TikTok.

Vanessa Pappas, General Manager of TikTok, will replace Mayer on an interim basis.

Quick Fact: Zhang Yiming is the founder of TikTok

3) Person in News

Neelakanta Bhanu Prakash wins Mental Calculation World Championship

Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash has become the first Indian to win gold medal at the Mental Calculation World Championship 2020 at Mind Sports Olympiad (MSO)

The championship is held in London and is the most prestigious international competition for mental skill and mind sports

Neelakantha holds the four records, including a Limca record, of 'fastest human calculator' in the world

Quick Fact: Shakuntala Devi was an Indian writer and mental calculator, popularly known as the 'Human Computer'

4) Economy

India's first International Women Trade Centre for female entrepreneurship to be set up in Kerala

The International Women Trade Centre will accelerate women entrepreneurship

It will also provide space to women to promote arts and cultural forms such as music, dance and theatre

The Centre has been established under the Green Park initiative of Kerala which focuses on gender equality and women empowerment

5) Environment

India recycles only 1% of its demolition and construction waste: CSE

As per a report published by Centre for Science and Environment:

- a) India recycles only 1% of its demolition and construction waste.
- b) Only 13 cities out of 53 have established recycling facilities in order to recover material from Construction and Demolition waste

This is a huge environmental problem as waste from the sites is choking water bodies, public places and green areas and contributing to air pollution.