



Current Affairs - May 2020

Month Type



- 114 Current Affairs were found in Period - **May 11 - 20, 2020** for Type - **All**

Appointments

1. ▶ **Benjamin Netanyahu** secured his 5th term as Israeli Prime Minister.
2. ▶ Govt. appointed V. Vidyavathi as Director General of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
3. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir Govt appointed **Zubair Iqbal** as new managing director of Jammu and Kashmir Bank (earlier HDFC Bank Senior VP).
4. ▶ Manoj Ahuja has been appointed as New chairperson of CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education).

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Awards

1. ▶ 17 journalists from 14 countries named for Deutsche Welle Freedom of Speech Award 2020 for showing “outstanding commitment to human rights and freedom of expression in the media”. Indian journalist Siddharth Varadarajan is among the 17 recipients. Awards were announced on World Press Freedom Day on May 03, 2020.

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Books

1. ▶ Book **Wuhan Diary: Dispatches from a Quarantined City** authored by Chinese Author Fang Fang has been released.
2. ▶ First biopic on Prince Harry and Meghan Markle’s life, titled ‘Finding Freedom: Harry and Meghan and the Making of A Modern Royal Family’, will be published soon. It has written by royal reporters *Omid Scobie* and *Carolyn Durand*.

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Committees

1. ▶ Andhra Pradesh (AP) government formed a 5-member committee led by Neerabh Kumar Prasad, to probe into the causes behind leakage of styrene gas from the LG Polymers in Visakhapatnam, which claimed several lives.
2. ▶ Government implemented 3 important recommendations of Committee of Experts (CoE) under Chairmanship of D B Shekatkar, relating to border Infrastructure.
 1. On matter related to **creating border infrastructure**, Government accepted to outsource road construction work beyond optimal capacity of Border Roads Organisation (BRO). It has been made mandatory to adopt Engineering Procurement Contract (EPC) mode for execution of all works costing more than Rs 100 crore.
 2. Other recommendation relating to **introduction of modern construction plants, equipment and machinery** has been implemented by delegating enhanced procurement powers from Rs 7.5 crore to Rs 100 crore to BRO.
 3. Land acquisition and statutory clearances like forest and environmental clearance are also made part of approval of Detailed Project Report (DPR). Also, with adoption of EPC mode of execution, it is mandatory to award work only when 90 % of statutory clearances are obtained, implementing recommendation regarding **obtaining prior clearances** before commencement of project.
3. ▶ Sports Authority of India (SAI) formed six-member committee to prepare a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for a phased resumption of training across sporting disciplines at all centres once the coronavirus-forced national lockdown is lifted. It will be

headed by Rohit Bharadwaj.

4. ▶ Supreme Court ordered setting up a high-powered committee to look into the demands by petitioners who seek restoration of 4G internet services in UT of Jammu and Kashmir(J&K). It is headed by Home Secretary (Ajay Kumar Bhalla Currently).
5. ▶ Tamil Nadu Govt. constituted 24 member high-level committee headed by ex-RBI Governor C Rangarajan, to assess the immediate and medium-term impact of COVID-19 pandemic on various sectors of State's economy, and suggest ways to improve it.

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Days

1. ▶ May 11 - National Technology Day in India.
 1. It marks anniversary of Pokhran Nuclear Tests (Operation Shakti) of 1998. It was coined by late PM Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, as a reminder of India's technological advancements.
 2. A digital conference on *Rebooting the Economy through Science, Technology and Research Translations (RESTART)*, has been organised by Technology Development Board (TDB) on this occasion.
 3. May 11 also marks flight of Hansa-3, India's first indigenous aircraft which was developed by National Aerospace Laboratories.
2. ▶ May 12 - International Nurses Day, Being observed since 1965. It is observed on Birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, noted British social reformer, statistician, and the founder of modern nursing. She was born on May 12, 1820.
 1. 2020 is celebrated as *Year of Nurse and Midwife* as it is the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale.
 2. 2020 Theme is *Nurses : A Voice to lead-Nursing the World to Health*.
 3. World Health Organization, Nursing Now Campaign and International Council of Nurses released the State of World's Nursing report.
 1. There are 36.9 nurses per 10,000 people with variations in different parts of world.
 2. In America, there are 83.4 nurse per 10,000 people and in Africa there are 8.7 nurses per 10,000 people.
 3. There are 1.56 million nurses in India. Nurses comprise of 47% of medical staff in India. The doctors constitute 23.3%, dentists constitute 5.5% and pharmacists constitute 24.1% of medical staff in India.
3. ▶ May 15 is observed as International Day of Families, proclaimed by United Nations General Assembly in 1993.
 1. May 15, 2020 is also observed as National Endangered Species day in India, observed on *3rd Friday of May*.
4. ▶ May 16 Statehood Day of Sikkim. Sikkim Joined Indian Union as 22nd state on May 16, 1975.
 1. May 16 is also observed as UN International Day of Living Together in Peace.
 2. May 16 is also observed as International Day of Light. It marks anniversary of first successful operation of laser in 1960 by physicist Theodore Maiman. It is being held since 2018.
 3. May 16 is also observed as National Dengue Day in India.
5. ▶ May 17 - **World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD)**, first observed on 17 May, 1969. It marks establishment of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and also signing of first International Telegraph Convention in 1865 in Paris. 2020 Theme is *Connect 2030: ICTs for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.
 1. May 17 is also observed as **World Hypertension Day**, Observed Since 2006. 2020 Theme is *Measure Your Blood Pressure, Control It, Live Longer*.
6. ▶ May 18 is Observed as **International Museum Day**, held since 1977. 2020 Theme is *Museum for Equality: Diversity and Inclusion*.
 1. May 18 is also observed as World AIDS Vaccine Day.
7. ▶ May 19 is Birth Anniversary of Former President of India, Neelam Sanjiva Reddy. He served from 1977 to 1982, as 6th President of India.
8. ▶ May 20 is observed as UN **World Bee Day**, being observed since 2018. 2020 Theme is *Bee Engaged*.
 1. May 20 is also observed as **World Metrology Day**. 2020 theme is *Measurements for global trade*. The date is the anniversary of the signing of the Metre Convention in 1875.

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Defence

1. ▶ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh commissioned Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) *Sachet* and two interceptor boats C-451 and (IBs) C-450. *Sachet* is first in the series of five offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) and has been designed and built indigenously by Goa Shipyard (Ltd).
2. ▶ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS) with outlay of 400 crores, for creating state-of-the-art testing infrastructure for domestic defence and aerospace manufacturing sector.
 1. It would run for the duration of five years and envisages to 6 - 8 new test facilities in partnership with private industry.
 2. Projects under the scheme will be provided with up to 75% government funding and remaining will be borne by Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV), whose constituents will be private entities and State Governments.
3. ▶ INLCU L57 has been commissioned into Indian Navy, as seventh Landing Craft Utility (LCU) MK-IV class to be inducted into Indian Navy. It has been built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE).
4. ▶ In order to help fight unemployment generated due to COVID-19, and amid rising patriotism, Indian Army is considering ToD (Tour of Duty). ToD is a 3 year internship for youths to work as officers and soldiers.
 1. ToD is for persons who do not wish to take defence services as a career, but still want to experience adventure and thrills in armed forces.
 2. Earnings made by the individual under the scheme has been made tax free. Also, these candidates are to be given preferences in public sector jobs and also in post-graduate courses.
 3. ToD model is similar to short-service commission that allows to serve for 10 to 14 years.
5. ▶ Indian Air Force shelved 3 projects worth INR 8000 crores, amid Central Government pushing for Make in India.
 1. Projects include buying 20 additional Hawk Planes from UK, 30 Jaguar fighter planes from US and 38 trainer aircrafts.
6. ▶ Indian Army will convert 61st cavalry, the only horse serving cavalry in the world, into a regular armoured regiment with tanks.
 1. The Jaipur based largely ceremonial unit, will now be formed into a combat force. There are oppositions to the steps claiming that the step will destroy glorious tradition of the regiment.
 2. 61st cavalry was raised in 1953, by amalgamating horse mounted cavalry units in princely states of India.
 3. Soldiers in cavalry are armed with Lancers. Teen Murti Memorial was erected in New Delhi to honour the lancers. The memorial was erected during British Raj, to commemorate heroic role played by Jodhpur, Hyderabad and Mysore during Battle of Hafia.
 4. Lancers represented British during world war I. *Hafia Day* is celebrated by Indian Army on September 23, to honour the regiment.

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Economy

1. ▶ According to ADB report *Updated Assessment of the Potential Economic Impact of COVID-19* -
 1. Global economy is expected to lose between \$ 5.8 trillion to \$ 8.8 trillion (6.4 % to 9.7 %) of global GDP, due to COVID-19 outbreak.
 2. GDP in South Asia is expected to decrease from USD 142 billion to 218 billion (3.9 to 6 %). In China, this loss can range from 1.1 trillion to 1.6 trillion dollars.
 3. Worldwide, workers' revenues will fall from \$ 1.2 trillion to \$ 1.8 trillion.
 4. COVID-19 will likely cut global trade by \$1.7 trillion to \$2.6 trillion.
 5. Global employment decline will be between 15.8 to 24.2 crores, with Asia and Pacific comprising 70% of total employment.
2. ▶ As per federation of Indian Export Organization, Indian Exports are to fall by 20% in FY 2020-21 (FY 21) due to COVID-19 Outbreak, amounting approx 50-60 billion USD.
 1. FIEO requested to provide additional 2% support under the MEIS (Merchandise Exported from India) scheme and additional 4% support to labour intensive sectors.
3. ▶ Automaker Mahindra & Mahindra rolled out an end to end, online vehicle ownership solution titled '*Own-Online*', to offer its customers a transparent, seamless and contactless experience during vehicle delivery.
4. ▶ Beijing Based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank approved loan of 145 million USD to improve irrigation facilities and flood management West Bengal.
5. ▶ British pharm Firm GlaxoSmithKline plc (GSK) sold its 5.7 % stake in Indian FMCG company Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) for \$3.35 billion, in largest secondary trade on Indian stock exchanges.
6. ▶ Competition Commission of India Approvals (May 2020) -

1. Approved acquisition of 100% stake in Emami Cement Limited, by Nirma promoter group company Nuvoco Vistas Corporation Limited.

7. ▶ Finance Minister Announced a Stimulus Package to aid economic activities hampered Amid COVID-19 Pandemic,

1. **Facts -**

1. Termed as *Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan*. It values at approx 20 Lakh crores, approx 10 % of Indian GDP.
2. Five pillars of Atmanirbhar Bharat – Economy, Infrastructure, System, Vibrant Demography and Demand.

2. **Earlier Measures -**

1. Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package - 1.7 Lakh Crores.

1. Insurance cover of 50 Lakh per health worker.
2. 80 crore poor people given benefit of 5 kg wheat or rice per person for 3 months
3. 1 kg pulses for each household for free every month for 3 months
4. 20 crore women Jan Dhan account holders get Rs 500 per month for 3 months
5. Gas cylinders, free of cost, provided to 8 crore poor families for 3 months
6. Increase in MNREGA wage to Rs 202 a day from Rs 182, to benefit 13.62 crore families
7. Ex-gratia of Rs 1,000 to 3 crore poor senior citizen, poor widows and poor Divyang
8. Transferred 2000 to farmers under existing PM-KISAN to benefit 8.7 crore farmers
9. Building and Construction Workers Welfare Fund allowed to be used to provide relief to workers
10. 24% of monthly wages to be credited into PF accounts for three months for wage-earners below Rs 15,000 p.m. in businesses having less than 100 workers
11. 5 crore workers under Employee Provident Fund EPF to get non-refundable advance of 75% of amount or three months of the wages, whichever is lower, from their accounts
12. Limit of collateral free lending to be increased from Rs 10 to Rs 20 lakhs for Women Self Help Groups supporting 6.85 crore households
13. District Mineral Fund (DMF) to be used for supplementing and augmenting facilities of medical testing, screening etc.

2. Other Measures -

1. RBI raised Ways and Means advance limits of States by 60% and enhanced the Overdraft duration limits
2. Issued all the pending income-tax refunds up to 5 lakh, immediately benefiting around 14 lakh taxpayers
3. Sanctioned Rs 15,000 crores for Emergency Health Response Package

3. RBI Measures -

1. Reduction of Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) has resulted in liquidity enhancement of ₹1,37,000 crores
2. Targeted Long Term Repo Operations (TLTROs) of 1,00,050 crores for fresh deployment in investment grade corporate bonds, commercial paper, and non-convertible debentures
3. TLTRO of Rs.50,000 crore for investing them in investment grade bonds, commercial paper, and non-convertible debentures of NBFCs, and MFIs.
4. Increased banks' limit for borrowing overnight under the marginal standing facility (MSF), allowing banking system to avail additional 1,37,000 crore of liquidity at the reduced MSF rate
5. Announced special refinance facilities to NABARD, SIDBI and the NHB for a total amount of ₹50,000 crore at the policy repo rate
6. Announced opening of a special liquidity facility (SLF) of 50,000 crore for mutual funds to alleviate intensified liquidity pressures.
7. Moratorium of 3 months on payment of dues in respect of all Term Loans
8. For loans by NBFCs to commercial real estate sector, additional 1 year for commencement for commercial operations

3. **Tranche 1 (Businesses including MSMEs) -**

1. Rs 3 lakh crores Collateral-free Automatic Loans for Businesses, including MSMEs
 1. Borrowers with up to 25 crores outstanding and 100 crores turnover eligible.
 2. Loans to have 4 year tenor with moratorium of 12 months on Principal repayment
 3. 100% credit guarantee cover to Banks and NBFCs on principal and interest
 4. Scheme can be availed till 31st Oct 2020
 5. No guarantee fee, no fresh collateral

2. 20000 crores Subordinate Debt for Stressed MSMEs

1. Govt. will provide support of 4,000 Cr. to CGTMSE (Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises)
2. CGTMSE will provide partial Credit Guarantee support to Banks

3. 50000 crores Equity infusion for MSMEs through Fund of Funds

1. Fund of Funds with Corpus of Rs 10,000 crores will be set up
2. FoF will be operated through a Mother Fund and few daughter funds. Fund structure will help leverage Rs 50,000 cr of funds at daughter funds level

4. New Definition of MSMEs

1. Approved amendment to change criteria to classify MSMEs from “investment” to “Annual Turnover AND investment”, adding the annual turnover clause.
2. Earlier definition only classified on the basis of Investment made in setting up the unit. The new definition, on adding up annual turnover criteria, will encourage MSMEs to grow faster, to be able to notch up higher benefits.

Existing MSME Classification Criteria - Investment Made			
Classification	Micro	Small	Medium
Manufacturing	Inv < 25 Lac	Inv < 5 crore	Inv < 10 crore
Services	Inv < 10 Lac	Inv < 2 crore	Inv < 5 crore
Existing MSME Classification Criteria - Investment Made AND Annual Turnover			
Classification	Micro	Small	Medium
Manufacturing / Services	Inv < 1 crore	Inv < 10 crore	Inv < 20 crore
	AND Turnover < 5 crore	AND Turnover < 50 crore	AND Turnover < 100 crore

5. Global tenders to be disallowed upto Rs 200 crores

6. Rs. 2500 crore EPF Support for Business & Workers for 3 more months

1. Under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP), payment of 12% of employer and 12% employee contributions was made into EPF accounts of eligible establishments.
2. This support will be extended by another 3 months to salary months of June, July and August 2020.

7. EPF contribution reduced for Business & Workers for 3 months - Rs 6750 crores Liquidity Support

1. Statutory PF contribution of both employer and employee will be reduced to 10% each from existing 12% each for all establishments covered by EPFO for 3 months
2. Applicable for workers who are not eligible for 24% EPF support under PM Garib Kalyan Package and its extension.

8. Rs 30,000 crore Special Liquidity Scheme for NBFCs/HFCs/MFIs

1. Investment will be made in both primary and secondary market transactions in investment grade debt paper of NBFCs/HFCs/MFIs

9. Rs 45,000 crore Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme 2.0 for NBFCs

1. Existing PCGS scheme to be extended to cover borrowings such as primary issuance of Bonds/ CPs (liability side of balance sheets) of such entities
2. First 20% of loss will be borne by the Guarantor (Government)

10. Rs. 90,000 Cr. Liquidity Injection for DISCOMs

1. Loans to be given against State guarantees for exclusive purpose of discharging liabilities of Discoms to Gencos.

11. Relief to Contractors

1. Extension of up to 6 months for completion of contractual obligations, including in respect of EPC and concession agreements

12. Relief to Real Estate Projects registration and completion date for all registered projects will be extended up to six months

13. To provide more funds at disposal of taxpayers for dealing with economic situation arising out of COVID-19 pandemic, rates of Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) for 23 non-salaried specified payments has been reduced by 25% for period 14th May, 2020 to 31st March, 2021.

1. Tax Collection at Source (TCS) has also been reduced by 25 % for mentioned 4 receipt types.

2. This measure will release Liquidity of Rs. 50,000 crore
14. Due Dates for various tax related compliances extended
 1. Income-tax return for FY 2019-20 will be extended from 31st July & 31st October, 2020 to 30th November and Tax audit from 30th September to 31st October, 2020
 2. Period of Vivad se Vishwas Scheme for making payment without additional amount will be extended to 31st December, 2020
4. **Tranche 2 (Poor, including migrants and farmers) -**
 1. Free food grains supply to migrants for 2 months (3500 Crores) -
 1. For migrant labour, additional food grain to all States/UTs at the rate of 5 kg per migrant labourer and 1 kg Chana per family per month for two months (May and June 2020), free of cost.
 2. Migrant labourers not covered under National Food Security Act or without a ration card, will be eligible.
 3. 8 Lakh MT of food-grain and 50,000 MT of Chana shall be allocated.
 2. Technology to be used, to enable Migrants to access PDS (Ration) from any Fair Price Shops by March 2021, Under *One Nation one Ration Card* Scheme -
 1. 100% National portability will be achieved by March, 2021.
 3. Scheme for Affordable Rental Housing Complexes for Migrant Workers and Urban Poor to be launched -
 1. Affordable Rental Housing Complexes will provide social security and quality life to migrant labour, urban poor, and students etc.
 4. 2% Interest Subvention for 12 months for Shishu MUDRA loanes (1500 Crores) -
 1. Govt will provide Interest subvention of 2% for prompt payees for a period of 12 months to MUDRA Shishu loanes, who have loans below Rs 50,000.
 5. Rs 5,000 crore Credit facility for Street Vendors -
 1. Under this, bank credit facility for initial working capital up to Rs. 10,000 for each enterprise will be extended.
 6. Rs 70,000 crore boost to housing sector and middle income group through extension of Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme for MIG under PMAY(Urban) -
 1. Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme for Middle Income Group (annual Income between Rs 6 and 18 lakhs) will be extended up to March 2021.
 7. Rs 6,000 crore for Creating employment using Compensatory Afforestation Management & Planning Authority (CAMPA) funds
 8. Rs 30,000 crore Additional Emergency Working Capital for farmers through NABARD
 1. NABARD will extend additional refinance support of Rs. 30,000 crore for crop loan requirement of Rural Co-op Banks & RRBs. This is above 90,000 crores that will be provided by NABARD to this sector in normal course.
 2. This will benefit around 3 crore farmers.
 9. 2 lakh crore credit boost to 2.5 crore farmers under Kisan Credit Card Scheme -
 1. Special drive to provide concessional credit to PM-KISAN beneficiaries through Kisan Credit Cards.
 2. Fisherman and Animal Husbandry Farmers will also be included in this drive.
5. **Tranche 3 (Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Processing Sectors) -**
 1. Rs 1 lakh crore Agri Infrastructure Fund for farm-gate infrastructure for farmers.
 2. Rs 10,000 crore scheme for Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (MFE) -
 1. Scheme promoting *Vocal for Local with Global outreach* will be launched to help 2 lakh MFEs who need technical upgradation to attain FSSAI food standards, build brands and marketing.
 3. Rs 20,000 crore for fisherman through Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) -
 1. Government will launch the PMMSY for integrated, sustainable, inclusive development of marine and inland fisheries.
 2. Rs 11,000 crore for activities in Marine, Inland fisheries and Aquaculture and Rs. 9000 crore for Infrastructure - Fishing Harbours, Cold chain, Markets etc shall be provided.
 4. National Animal Disease Control Programme -
 1. NADC Programme for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis launched with outlay of 13,343 crore to ensure 100% vaccination of cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat and pig population (total 53 crore animals).
 5. Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (15,000 crores)
 6. Promotion of Herbal Cultivation (4,000 crores) -

1. 10,00,000 hectare will be covered under Herbal cultivation in next two years with outlay of Rs. 4,000 crore.
7. Beekeeping initiatives (500 crores)
8. From 'TOP' to TOTAL (500 crores) -
 1. *Operation Greens* run by Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MOFPI) will be extended from tomatoes, onion and potatoes to ALL fruit and vegetables.
 2. Scheme would provide 50% subsidy on transportation from surplus to deficient markets, 50% subsidy on storage, including cold storages and will be launched as pilot for the 6 months.
9. Measures for Governance and Administrative Reforms for Agriculture Sector -
 1. Amendments to Essential Commodities Act to enable better price realisation for farmers.
 2. Agriculture Marketing Reforms to provide marketing choices to farmers -
 1. A Central law will be formulated to provide adequate choices to the farmer to sell their produce at remunerative price, barrier free Inter-State Trade, a framework for e-trading of agriculture produce.
 3. Agriculture Produce Pricing and Quality Assurance -
 1. Government will finalise a facilitative legal framework to enable farmers to engage with processors, aggregators, large retailers, exporters etc. in a fair and transparent manner.
6. **Tranche 4 (New Horizons of Growth) -**
 1. Finance Minister announced policy reforms to fast track investment -
 1. Fast tracking of investment clearance through Empowered Group of Secretaries.
 2. Project Development Cell will be constituted in each Ministry to prepare investible projects, coordinate with investors and Central/State Governments.
 3. Ranking of States on investment attractiveness to compete for new investment.
 4. Incentive schemes for promotion of new champion sectors will be launched in sectors such as solar PV manufacturing; advanced cell battery storage etc.
 5. A scheme will be implemented in States through challenge mode for Industrial Cluster Upgradation of common infrastructure facilities and connectivity.
 2. **Coal -**
 1. Introduction of Commercial Mining in Coal Sector -
 1. Government will introduce competition, transparency and private sector participation in the Coal Sector through A revenue sharing mechanism instead of regime of fixed Rupee/tonne.
 2. Any party can bid for a coal block and sell in open market. Nearly 50 Blocks will be offered immediately.
 2. Diversified Opportunities in Coal Sector -
 1. Coal Gasification / Liquefaction will be incentivised through rebate in revenue share. This will result in significantly lower environment impact and also assist India in switching to a gas-based economy.
 2. Infrastructure development of 50,000 crore will be done for evacuation of enhanced Coal India Limited's (CIL) target of 1 billion tons coal production by 2023-24.
 3. Liberalised Regime in Coal Sector -
 1. Coal Bed Methane (CBM) extraction rights will be auctioned from Coal India Limited's (CIL) coal mines.
 2. Several ease of Doing Business measures will allow for automatic 40% increase in annual production.
 3. Concessions in commercial terms given to CIL's consumers (relief worth Rs 5,000 crore offered).
 3. **Mineral -**
 1. Enhancing Private Investment -
 1. 500 mining blocks would be offered through an open and transparent auction process.
 2. Joint Auction of Bauxite and Coal mineral blocks to enhance Aluminum Industry's competitiveness will be introduced to help Aluminum industry reduce electricity costs.
 2. Policy reforms -
 1. Distinction between captive and non-captive mines to allow transfer of mining leases and sale of surplus unused minerals, leading to better efficiency in mining and production shall be removed.
 2. Mineral Index for different minerals will be developed.
 4. **Defence -**
 1. Enhancing Self Reliance in Defence Production.
 1. 'Make in India' for Self-Reliance in Defence Production will be promoted.

2. Improve autonomy, accountability and efficiency in Ordnance Supplies by Corporatisation of Ordnance Factory Board.

2. Policy Reforms in Defence Production -

1. FDI limit in Defence manufacturing under automatic route will be raised from **49% to 74%**.
2. Time-bound defence procurement process by setting up of a Project Management Unit (PMU).

5. Civil Aviation -

1. Efficient Airspace Management for Civil Aviation -

1. Restrictions on utilisation of Air Space will be eased, bringing benefit of approx 1000 crore per year for aviation sector.

2. More World-Class Airports through PPP -

1. 6 more airports have been identified for 2nd round bidding for Operation and Maintenance on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) basis.
2. Additional Private Investment in 12 airports in 2 rounds will bring 13,000 crores in sector.
3. Other 6 airports will be put out for 3rd round of bidding.

3. India to become a global hub for Aircraft Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) -

1. Aircraft component repairs and airframe maintenance to increase from 800 crore to 2,000 crore in 3 years.

6. Power -

1. Tariff Policy Reform -

1. Consumer Rights -

1. DISCOM inefficiencies not to burden consumers
2. DISCOMs to ensure adequate power
3. Load-shedding to be penalized

2. Promote Industry -

1. Progressive reduction in cross subsidies
2. Time bound grant of open access
3. Generation / transmission project developers to be selected competitively

3. Sustainability of Sector -

1. No Regulatory Assets
2. Timely payment of Gencos
3. DBT for subsidy
4. Smart prepaid meters

7. Social Infrastructure -

1. Government will enhance the quantum of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) upto 30% each of Total Project Cost as VGF by Govt.

2. For other sectors, VGF existing support of 20 % each from Government shall continue. Outlay is Rs. 8,100 crore.

8. Space -

1. Level playing field for private companies in satellites, launches and space-based services.
2. Private sector will be allowed to use ISRO facilities and other relevant assets to improve their capacities.

9. Atomic Energy -

1. Research reactor in PPP mode for production of medical isotopes shall be established to promote welfare of humanity through affordable treatment for cancer and other diseases.
2. Facilities in PPP mode to use irradiation technology for food preservation – to compliment agricultural reforms and assist farmers shall also be established.
3. India's robust start-up ecosystem will be linked to nuclear sector.

7. Tranche 5 (Government Reforms and Enablers) -

1. 40,000 crore increase in allocation for MGNREGS to provide employment boost.

1. It will help generate nearly 300 crore person days.

2. Health Reforms & Initiatives -

1. Public Expenditure on Health will be increased by investing in grass root health institutions.
2. Setting up of Infectious Diseases Hospital Blocks in all districts, to better manage pandemics.
3. National Institutional Platform for One health by ICMR will encourage research.

4. Implementation of National Digital Health Blueprint under National Digital Health Mission.
3. Technology Driven Education with Equity post-COVID -
 1. PM eVIDYA, a programme for multi-mode access to digital education to be launched.
 2. Manodarpan, an initiative for psycho-social support for students, teachers and families for mental health and emotional well-being to be launched.
 3. New National Curriculum and Pedagogical framework for school, early childhood and teachers will be launched. National
 4. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission for ensuring that every child attains Learning levels and outcomes in grade 5 by 2025, will be launched by December 2020.
4. Further enhancement of Ease of Doing Business through IBC related measures -
 1. Minimum threshold to initiate insolvency proceedings has been raised to Rs. 1 crore (from Rs. 1 lakh, which largely insulates MSMEs).
 2. Special insolvency resolution framework for MSMEs under Section 240A of the Code will be notified.
 3. Suspension of fresh initiation of insolvency proceedings up to one year, depending upon pandemic.
 4. Empowering Government to exclude COVID 19 related debt from definition of “default”, under Code for purpose of triggering insolvency proceedings.
5. Decriminalisation of Companies Act defaults -
 1. Decriminalisation of Companies Act violations involving mentioned minor technical and procedural defaults.
 2. It will de-clog criminal courts and NCLT.
 3. 7 compoundable offences altogether dropped and 5 to be dealt with under alternative framework.
6. Ease of Doing Business for Corporates -
 1. Direct listing of securities by Indian public companies in permissible foreign jurisdictions.
 2. Private companies which list NCDs on stock exchanges not to be regarded as listed companies.
 3. Including provisions of Part IXA (Producer Companies) of Companies Act, 1956 in Companies Act, 2013.
 4. Power to create additional benches for NCLAT
 5. Lower penalties for all defaults for Small Companies, One-person Companies, Producer Companies & Start Ups.
7. Public Sector Enterprise Policy for a New, Self-reliant India -
 1. Government will announce a new policy whereby -
 1. List of strategic sectors requiring presence of PSEs in public interest will be notified
 2. In strategic sectors, at least one enterprise will remain in public sector but private sector will also be allowed
 3. In other sectors, PSEs will be privatized.
 4. To minimise wasteful administrative costs, number of enterprises in strategic sectors will ordinarily be only one to four; others will be privatised/ merged/ brought under holding companies
 2. Support to State Governments -
 1. Centre has decided to increase borrowing limits of States from **3% to 5%** for 2020-21 only. This will give States extra resources of Rs. 4.28 lakh crores.
 2. Part of the borrowing will be linked to specific reforms (including recommendations of the Finance Commission).
 3. Reform linkage will be in four areas - universalisation of ‘One Nation One Ration card’, Ease of Doing Business, Power distribution and Urban Local Body revenues.
 4. A specific scheme will be notified by Department of Expenditure on the following pattern -
 1. Unconditional increase of 0.50%
 2. 1% in 4 tranches of 0.25%, with each tranche linked to clearly specified, measurable and feasible reform actions
 3. Further 0.50% if milestones are achieved in at least three out of four reform areas.

8. Stimulus Breakup (In Crores) -

1.	Stimulus from earlier measures	
	Revenue lost due to tax concessions since Mar 22nd 2020	7800
	Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP)	170000
	PM's announcement for Health sector	15000
	Total	192800
	Tranche 1 (Businesses including MSMEs)	

Emergency W/C Facility for Businesses, incl MSMEs	300000
Subordinate Debt for Stressed MSMEs	20000
Fund of Funds for MSME	50000
EPF Support for Business & Workers	2800
Reduction in EPF rates	6750
Special liquidity Scheme for NBFC/HFC/MFIs	30000
Partial credit guarantee Scheme 2.0 for Liabilities of NBFCs/MFIs	45000
Liquidity Injection for DISCOMs	90000
Reduction in TDS/TCS rates	50000
Total	594550
Tranche 2 (Poor, including migrants and farmers)	
Interest Subvention for MUDRA Shishu Loans	1500
Free Food grain Supply to Migrant Workers for 2 months	3500
Special Credit Facility to Street Vendors	5000
Housing CLSS-MIG	70000
Additional Emergency WorkingCapital through NABARD	30000
Additional credit through KCC	200000
Total	310000
Tranche 3 (Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Processing Sectors)	
Food Micro enterprises	10000
Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana	20000
TOP to TOTAL: Operation Greens	500
Agri Infrastructure Fund	100000
Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund	15000
Promotion of Herbal Cultivation	4500
Beekeeping Initiative	500
Total	150000
Tranche 4 + 5 (New Horizons of Growth AND Government Reforms and Enablers)	
Viability Gap Funding	8100
Additional MGNREGS allocation	40000
Total	48100
Grand Total	
Tranche 1 (Businesses including MSMEs)	594550
Tranche 2 (Poor, including migrants and farmers)	310000
Tranche 3 (Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Processing Sectors)	150000
Tranche 4 + 5 (New Horizons of Growth AND Government Reforms and Enablers)	48100
Sub-Total of 5 Tranches	1102650
Earlier Measuresincl PMGKP	192800
RBI Measures (Actual)	801603
Sub-Total of Earlier Measuresincl PMGKP AND RBI Measures	994403
Grand Total	1102650 + 994403 = 20,97,053 Crores

8. ▶ Godrej Consumer Products subsidiary *Godrej East Africa Holdings Ltd* acquired 25% stake in Kenya-based Canon Chemicals Ltd.
 1. Canon Chemicals would now be a wholly-owned subsidiary of *Godrej East Africa Holdings Ltd*. Earlier in February 2016, Godrej group had acquired 75 % stake in Canon.
9. ▶ Government amended income tax rules as per which Indian authorities would endeavour to resolve mutual agreement procedure (MAP) disputes within 24 months, aimed at speedy settlement of cases of multinational corporations that have opted alternative dispute resolution process.
 1. Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) amended Rule 44G of Income tax act 1962, dealing with application and procedure for giving effect to MAP agreement, and also revised Form 34F with respect to making application to competent authority for invoking MAP.
 2. MAP is an alternative dispute resolution process under tax treaties, under which competent authorities of two countries enter into discussions to resolve tax-related disputes.
10. ▶ Government announced 100 crores interest subvention scheme on working capital, To help milk co-operatives and farmer-owned milk producer companies (FPCs) struggling with excess milk supply following restricted procurement by private dairies.
 1. It will help dairies convert surplus quantity of milk into high shelf-value products such as milk powder, white butter, ghee and UHT milk.

2. Scheme provides for interest subvention of 2 % per annum, with an additional incentive of 2 % per annum interest subvention to be given in case of prompt and timely repayment or interest servicing.
11. ▶ Government increased its market borrowing estimate to 12 lakh crores for current fiscal (FY 2020-21), to deal with expected shortfall in revenue due to impact of COVID-19 crisis. Earlier the borrowing estimate was 7.80 lakh crores.
 1. Government also increased weekly borrowing target to 30000 crores from 21000 crores earlier.
12. ▶ National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) sanctioned 1500 crores for Punjab to ensure continuous credit flow to farmers.
 1. 1000 crores are sanctioned to Punjab State Cooperative Bank and 500 crores to Punjab Gramin Bank.
 2. It is part of NABARD's Rs 25,000 crores nationwide special liquidity facility(SLF), made available to state cooperative banks, regional rural banks, and microfinance institutions (MFIs).
 3. NABARD also released 20500 crores, to act as front-loading resources to cooperative banks (15200 crores) and Regional Rural Banks (5300 Crores) ahead of the monsoon season.
13. ▶ Pension Fund and Regulatory Authority (PFRDA) suggested Ministry of Finance to form a comprehensive scheme, for exploring social security measures for people with low income.
 1. Under PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Rs 330 is being charged on yearly basis and Rs 12 per year is being charged under Suraksha Bima Yojana. Charges on Atal Pension Yojana are also quite low. Plan is to club all these schemes together.
 2. Integration will enhance stability of pension system. This will increase number of participating entities and will also improve social security of beneficiaries.
14. ▶ Shanghai-Based BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) has approved 1 Billion USD for India, Under its Emergency Assistance Program, amid COVID-19 Pandemic.
15. ▶ To provide relief to exporters, RBI extended interest subsidy period by one year to 31 March 2021, on export credit received before and after shipment of goods to exporters.
 1. Exporters get subsidy under *Interest Equalisation Scheme for pre and post shipment Rupee Export Credit*, which ended on March 31, 2020.
 2. Government announced new scheme in November 2018, which applies to all exporters in MSME sector. It aims at encouraging enterprises to increase productivity and provides incentives to MSMEs for onboarding on GST platform.
16. ▶ US Based Carlyle Group acquired 74% stake in Indian animal healthcare company SeQuent Scientific Limited, for 1587 crores (\$210 million).
17. ▶ US Investor **General Atlantic** invested Approx 6600 crores in Reliance Jio Platforms, for a 1.34% stake. It values Jio Platforms at an equity value of 4.91 lakh crore and an enterprise value of 5.16 lakh crores. Recent Jio Stake Buy-outs -
 1. US Based Vista Equity Partners invested 11367 crores into Reliance Jio Platforms for a 2.32 % stake.
 2. US Based Silver Lake partners bought 1.15% stake in Reliance Industries subsidiary Jio Platforms, for Rs 5,656 crores (\$750 million).
 3. Social Network Facebook invested INR 43574 crores in Jio Platforms, for 9.99% stake. It was Largest FDI in India's Tech Industry.
 4. Under concerned 4 deals, Jio has divested total 14.8 % Stake to 4 US Firms, since April 2020.
18. ▶ World Bank approved 1 billion USD additional aid to India to accelerate *COVID-19 Special Protection Response Programme*.
 1. Around 550 million USD is to be credited by the IDA (International Development Association) and 220 million USD by the IBRD (International Bank of Reconstruction and Development).
 2. In April 2020, World Bank had announced 1 billion USD support to aid health sector of India.
 3. Recently, Shanghai-Based BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) also approved 1 Billion USD for India, Under its Emergency Assistance Program, amid COVID-19 Pandemic.

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International

1. ▶ Baltic countries opened their borders to one another creating "travel bubble", enabling their citizens to move freely. This is the first travel bubble since the lock down. Baltic states are not as badly affected as the other European states.
 1. Australia and New Zealand have also agreed to form a travel bubble, amid controlled spread of COVID-19.
 2. Baltic Nations is a geopolitical term, typically used to group three sovereign states in Northern Europe on eastern coast of Baltic Sea - Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
2. ▶ 2nd Addendum on Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade between India and Bangladesh has been signed.

1. Bangladesh and India signed a Protocol in 1972 , for Transit and Trade through inland waterways. It was last renewed in 2015 for five years.
2. In Dec 2019, it was decided to include new routes and declaration of new Ports of Call to facilitate trade. These have now been made effective with signing of 2nd Addendum to Protocol .
3. Number of Indo Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) routes are being increased from 8 to 10 and new locations are also added to existing routes.
4. Presently, There are six Ports of Call each in India and Bangladesh under the Protocol. Five more Ports of Call and two more extended Ports of Call have been added.
3. ▶ Amid Covid-19 Pandemic, Hanko personal stamps of Japan are being criticized. They are equivalent to signature in other countries.
 1. Japan is adopting work from home culture aggressively in response to COVID-19 pandemic. However, the age old Hanko tradition of Japan is forcing the employees to go to the office premises for security reasons.
 2. Hanko stamping is essential in Japan for several transactions.
4. ▶ As per Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 (FRA 2020). -
 1. Rate of forest loss has declined during 2015-2020, due to the growth of sustainable management. It was 10 million hectares during 2015-2020, compared to 12 million hectares in 2010-2015,
 2. World lost 178 mha of forest since 1990.
 3. Rate of net forest loss declined from 7.8 mha per year in 1990–2000 to 5.2 mha per year in 2000–2010 and 4.7 mha per year in 2010–2020.
 4. Africa had largest annual rate of net forest loss in 2010–2020, at 3.9 mha, followed by South America, at 2.6 mha. Asia had the highest net gain of forest area in 2010–2020, followed by Oceania and Europe.
 5. World's total forest area was 4.06 billion hectares (bha), 31 % of total land area.
 6. Largest proportion of the world's forests are tropical (45 %), followed by boreal, temperate and subtropical.
 7. More than 54 % of world's forests are in 4 countries — Russia, Brazil, Canada, US and China.
5. ▶ As per World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), International tourism could shrink by 60-80 % in 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in revenue loss of \$910 billion to \$1.2 trillion and placing millions of livelihoods at risk.
 1. Pandemic has already caused a 22 per cent fall in international tourist arrivals during first quarter of 2020.
6. ▶ As per a study by Comparisun -
 1. Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos could become world's first trillionaire by 2026.
 2. Chinese real estate tycoon Xu Jiayin will follow Bezos to become the second trillionaire in the world in 2027.
 3. India's Mukesh Ambani could become a trillionaire in 2033.
 4. Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg comes next, expetedly gaining trillionaire status in 2036.
7. ▶ India joined 61 other countries in World Health Organization to identify source of COVID-19, with China and US staying out.
 1. Countries together moved a proposal at the WHO to identify zoonotic source. Only three permanent members of the United Nations Security Council have backed the resolution namely Russia, France and UK.
 2. From SAARC countries, only India, Bhutan and Bangladesh have signed the resolution.
 3. World Organization for Animal Health will conduct field missions to identify the zoonotic source of the virus. Zoonotic sources are animals from which diseases can transmit to humans.
8. ▶ India provided 2 million USD relief aid to UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) to help in welfare of Palestine refugees.
 1. India recently increased its annual contribution to UNRWA from 1.25 million to 5 million USD.
9. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) gave security clearance to Swiss firm Zurich Airport International AG for construction of Jewar airport in Uttar Pradesh.
 1. Jewar Airport Project is to cost approx 29560 crores, spread over 5000 hectares. Once fully operational, it is expected to handle over 160 million passengers per year, having 6 - 6 runways (highest in India).
10. ▶ Nepal approved a new map that includes territories of Kalapani, Lipuleh and Limpiyadhura; which are claimed by India as well.
 1. In October 2019, India issued a new political map that included Lipulekh and Kalapani on its side of border.
 2. In 1816, kingdom of Nepal and British India signed the Treaty of Sugauli under which Kali River was fixed as Western Border of Nepal. Issue has arisen in locating source of the river that led to boundary disputes between India and Nepal.
 3. According to India, under treaty of Sugauli, Limpiyadhura is point of origin of Kali river. It is point where Nepal border begins.

11. ▶ Skytrax World Airport Awards 2020 -
 1. Top 5 Airports -
 1. Singapore Changi Airport
 2. Tokyo Haneda Airport
 3. Hamad International Airport
 4. Incheon International Airport
 5. Munich Airport
 2. Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport won Award for Best Regional Airport in India and Central Asia.
12. ▶ UN Food and Agriculture Organization released Global Forest Resources Assessment Report 2020.
 1. Around 178 million hectares of forests is lost in last 30 years. However, rate of deforestation is being reduced.
 2. Between 2015 and 2020, rate of forest loss has declined to 10 million hectares. Between 2010 and 2015, it was 12 million hectares.
 3. Africa had largest decline of forest of all the continents (3.9 million hectares per year), followed by South America (2.6 million hectares per year), between 2000 - 2010.
 4. Largest proportion of forests is held by tropical forest (45%), followed by boreal forest, temperate forests and subtropical forests.
 5. 5 major countries with most forest resources - Brazil, USA, Canada, China and Russia.
13. ▶ US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provided \$3.6 million to assist India in its response to COVID-19 pandemic.
14. ▶ US Senate passed legislation *Holding Foreign Companies Accountable Act*, that seeks to delist Chinese firms from US securities exchanges, if they fail to comply with US Public Company Accounting Oversight Board's audits for 3 years in a row.
 1. Legislation now needs to be passed by the House of Representatives and then be signed by US President Donald Trump to become a law.
15. ▶ United Kingdom unveiled a new post-Brexit tariff regime to replace European Union's external tariff, called UK Global Tariff (UKGT).
 1. New tax regime will continue 10% tariff on cars but will cut levies on many supply chain imports.
 2. The new tax regime aims to have deals covering 80 percent of British trade within a period of three years.
 3. UKGT will apply to countries with which UK has no agreements and will remove all tariffs below 2 %.
 4. Around 60 % of trade will come into the UK tariff free on WTO terms or through existing preferential access. It will remove tariffs on \$37 billion worth of imports entering UK supply chains.
 5. It will also introduce a temporary zero tariff rate on products being used to fight the COVID-19 outbreak such as personal protective equipment.
 6. New UK trade regime will be set in pounds. UK formally ended its 47 years of membership with the European Union on January 31, 2020.
16. ▶ United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) mid-2020 report -
 1. Global Economy -
 1. Global economy is expected to lose nearly \$8.5 trillion in output over the next two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 2. World economy is to shrink by 3.2% in 2020.
 3. GDP growth in developed countries will decline to - 5.0 % in 2020. It will be -7 % in developing nations.
 4. World trade is forecast to contract by 15 % in 2020.
 5. Pandemic will likely cause an estimated 34.3 million people to fall below the extreme poverty line in 2020.
 2. India -
 1. GDP growth rate of India in FY 21 (2020-21) will be 1.2%, down from 4.1% in FY 20 (2019-20). Growth of India will raise to 5.5% in FY 22 (2021-22).
17. ▶ World Economic Forum Global Energy Transition Index 2020 -
 1. India ranked **74th**, improving from 76th rank last year.
 2. Top 5 - Sweden (1), Switzerland (2), Finland (3), Denmark (4), Norway (5)
 3. Neighbors - China (78), Nepal (95), Pakistan (94), Sri Lanka (55), Bangladesh (87)
18. ▶ World Health Organization released Global Nutrition Report 2020.
 1. As per report, India is among 88 countries that are to miss global nutrition targets set for 2025.

2. Major 4 nutritional indicators are anemia among women in reproductive age, stunting among children under-5, exclusive breast feeding and childhood overweight. The report says that India is to miss the target on all four nutritional indicators.
3. Global Nutrition Report was conceived during first Nutrition for Growth Initiative Summit that was held in 2013.
4. World Health Assembly in 2012 fixed nutrition targets. They are -
 1. To reduce anaemic conditions among women by 50%
 2. To reduce stunting in under-5 children by 40%
 3. To reduce underweight births by 30%
 4. To reduce childhood wasting to less than 5%.

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Meetings

1. ▶ External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar represented India at SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) foreign minister meet, held through video conferencing.
 1. EAM S Jaishankar also attended 7 nation meeting initiated by US. Nations included Australia, India, Brazil, Japan, Israel and South of Korea.
2. ▶ Health & Family Welfare Minister Harsh Vardhan participated in 32nd Commonwealth Health Ministers' Meeting through Video Conference, with theme *Delivering a co-ordinated Commonwealth COVID-19 response*.
3. ▶ Minister of Health & Family Welfare Harsh Vardhan participated in 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA) through Video Conference, as first ever virtual world health assembly.
 1. Harsh Vardhan is appointed as chairman of 34-Member World Health Organization (WHO) Executive Board. He replaced Hiroki Nakatani of Japan. WHO is governed by two decision-making bodies, World Health Assembly and Executive Board.
 2. He also attended Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Health Ministers Meet through video conference.
 3. China announced to provide \$2 billion over two years to fight coronavirus pandemic and economic fallout from it.
 4. Keva Bain from Bahamas has been elected to serve as president of 73rd World Health Assembly.

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National

1. ▶ Group of Ministers under Social Justice and Empowerment Minister (Thawar Chand Gehlot) submitted its draft proposals on employment and skill development. Draft proposed -
 1. *The Land Pooling Model*, which is being used in greenfield airports. It is suggested for Use in agriculture to enable corporatization. This will increase the demand for skilled labours.
 2. Merge MNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) along with the skill development programmes, to create a wage subsidy programme.
 3. Reserve Bank of India should cut reverse repo rate to 0%. for a few months, to incentivize banks, to enable them to lend more to SMEs.
 4. A National Electronic Employment Exchange has been proposed, to help migrated workers at larger extent.
 5. Establish a Migrant Worker Welfare Fund.
 6. Cottage industry status to the food processing industries.
 7. Opening up EPF and ESIC for the unorganised sector.
 8. Enroll every migrant worker under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.
 9. Create a new Department of Hygiene to ensure hygienic practices.
2. ▶ West Bengal Government launched two schemes to help migrant workers and workers in unorganised sector.
 1. *Sneher Porosh* is for migrant labourers.
 2. *Prochesta Prokolpo* is for workers in the unorganised sector. It will give 1000 INR to beneficiaries.
3. ▶ 3rd Advance Estimates of production of major crops for 2019-20 released by Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare -
 1. Total Foodgrains Productionj estimated at 295.67 million tonnes (*record*)
 1. Rice – 117.94 million tonnes. (*record*)
 2. Wheat – 107.18 million tonnes. (*record*)
 3. Nutri / Coarse Cereals – 47.54 million tonnes. (*record*)

4. Maize – 28.98 million tonnes. (record)
5. Pulses – 23.01 million tonnes.
6. Tur – 3.75 million tonnes.
7. Gram – 10.90 million tonnes.
8. Oilseeds – 33.50 million tonnes. (record)
 1. Soyabean – 12.24 million tonnes
 2. Rapeseed and Mustard – 8.70 million tonnes
 3. Groundnut – 9.35 million tonnes
2. Cotton – 36.05 million bales (170 kg per bale) (record)
3. Jute & Mesta - 9.92 million bales (180 kg per bale)
4. Sugarcane – 358.14 million tonnes.
4. ▶ 4 new products from 3 states received Geographical Indication (GI) tag from Geographical Indications Registry -
 1. *Sohrai Khovar* painting (Jharkhand) - Local tribal women of Jharkhand practices the Sohrai Khovar painting which is a traditional and ritualistic mural art. It is primarily practised only in the district of Hazaribagh during local harvest and marriage seasons.
 2. *Telia Rumal* (Telangana) cloth involves complex handmade work with cotton loom which can be only created by using the traditional handloom process and not by any other mechanical means.
 3. *Thanjavur Netti Works* (Tamil Nadu) - Also called Pith Wor, it is Done by using pith obtained from netti, a hydrophyte plant called as *Aeschynomene aspera* that adorned palace of Rajaraja Chola. The Rraw material is from stem of the Netti plant in Pudukottai lake (Pudukullam & Kallaperumbur lake).
 4. *Arambavur Wood Carvings* (Tamil Nadu - Wooden sculpture made in the village of Veppanthattai in Perambalur district.
5. ▶ *Atmanirbhar Gujarat Sahay Yojana* has been launched by Gujarat Government, to boost economy amid pandemic.
 1. It aims to provide an interest subsidy, a moratorium as well as a collateral free loan of up to Rs 1 lakh, for over a million small traders, street-vendors and small professionals in state.
 2. Gujarat government aims to lend 5000 crores as loans, with tenure of 3 years.
 3. Loans under this scheme would be available at 2% annual interest, while remaining 6% interest would be borne by state government.
 4. Moratorium period of 6 months would also be provided to beneficiary in which he would not be required to pay.
6. ▶ *Mee Annapurna* inclusive programe has been launched for welfare of farmers in Maharashtra, announced by IRDA Licensed insurance intermediary *Integrated Risk Insurance*.
 1. Through this, Integrated Risk Insurance aims to re-invest in building long-term sustainable program for continuity of income for farmers and other individuals associated with agriculture and allied activities.
7. ▶ PM CARES (Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations) Fund Trust allocated 3100 Crores for fight against COVID-19.
 1. Approx 2000 crores ar earmarked for purchase of 50000 ventilators, 1000 crores for care of migrant labourers and 100 crores for supporting vaccine development.
8. ▶ Gujarat will implement sensor-based service delivery monitoring system in rural drinking water sector under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).
 1. Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation has plans for providing household tap connections to rural households by end of FY 2020-21.
 2. JJM announced by Central govt in 2019, aims to provide tap water connections to 18 Crore rural households of country by 2024.
 3. Haryana and UT of Jammu and Kashmir also laid out plans to provide tap connections to all rural households by December 2022.
9. ▶ A rare palm from South Andaman Island has been re-planted in Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), to prevent its extinction.
 1. Rare palm is called *Pinanga andamanensis* and is a critically endangered species, with only 600 specimens of the species at present.
 2. It resembles areca palm and is used in preparing palm oil.
10. ▶ Agricultural and Processed Foods Export Promotion Development Authority (APEDA) has set up Rice Export Promotion Forum (REPF), to provide stimulus to global rice exports.

11. ▶ As per Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) Emissions of toxic CO₂ declined in India, For the first time in four decades. It has happened due to economic slowdown and lockdown due to COVID-19 Pandemic.
 1. CO₂ emissions in India fell by around 15% in March, and are likely to have fallen by 30% last month, year-on-year.
 2. Power and transportation sectors are the major contributors of CO₂ pollution in the country. Thermal sector spewed out nearly 929 million tones of CO₂ in a year.
 3. Earlier, International Energy Agency estimated that Global carbon emissions from fossil fuel industry could fall by a record 2.5bn tonnes this year, a reduction of 5%, as coronavirus pandemic triggers the biggest drop in demand for fossil fuels on record.
12. ▶ As per study by Institute of Energy Economics and Financial Analysis -
 1. India has increased its potential of renewable energy investments to 500-700 billion USD, mainly because of improvements in solar power.
 2. Bhadla Solar Park in Rajasthan is the largest solar park in the world, spread over 14,000 acres, with capacity 2245 MW.
 3. In 2016, India had set target of setting up of 40 industrial solar parks with a capacity of 20GW. The target was doubled to 40 GW in 2022.
 4. India has target of installing 175 GW of renewable energy by 2021-22 and 275 GW by 2026-27.
 5. State of Renewable Energy in India -
 1. Under Paris Agreement, India had committed to achieve 40% of its total electricity generation from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
 2. Although India ambitiously targets 57% of electricity capacity from renewable sources by 2027. By 2027, India aims to have 275 GW from renewable energy, 72 GW of hydroelectricity, 15 GW of nuclear energy and nearly 100 GW from “other zero emission” sources.
 3. Currently, India's renewable electricity capacity is approx 130.68 GW, which is 35.7% of total electricity generation capacity in India (366 GW).
 4. Out of 2021-22 Target of 175 GW Renewable Electricity, 83 GW is operational as of now. 175 GW interim target Includes 100 GW of solar, 60 GW of wind, 10 GW of bio mass and 5 GW of small hydro.
13. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (May 20, 2020) -
 1. General -
 1. Approved Sovereign portfolio guarantee of up to 20% of first loss for purchase of Bonds or Commercial Papers (CPs) with a rating of AA and below issued by NBFCs/ MFCs/Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) by Public Sector Banks (PSBs), through an extension of Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme (PCGS).
 1. Cabinet also approved modifications in existing PCGS on purchase of pooled assets, increasing its coverage.
 2. Existing PCGS was issued on 11.12.2019 offering sovereign guarantee of up to 10% of first loss to PSBs for purchasing pooled assets worth rated BBB+ or above worth up to Rs. 1,00,000 crore, from financially sound NBFCs/ MFCs.
 3. COVID-19 outbreak has now necessitated adoption of additional measures to support NBFCs and HFCs - On the liabilities side by providing a sovereign guarantee to cover purchase of Bonds/CPs issued by NBFCs/HFCs as well as MFIs.
 4. Window one-time partial credit guarantee will remain open till 31st March, 2021.
 2. Approved a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme ***Scheme for Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (FME)*** for Unorganized Sector, with outlay of 10000 crores (shared by Centre and States in ratio of 60:40).
 1. Features Include -
 1. 2,00,000 micro-enterprises are to be assisted with credit linked subsidy.
 2. Scheme will be implemented over a 5 year period from 2020-21 to 2024-25.
 3. Cluster approach.
 4. Focus on perishables.
 2. Support to Individual micro units -
 1. Micro enterprises will get credit linked subsidy @ 35% of the eligible project cost with ceiling of Rs.10 lakh.
 2. Beneficiary contribution will be minimum 10% and balance from loan.
 3. On-site skill training & Handholding for DPR and technical upgradation
 3. Support to FPOs/SHGs/Cooperatives: -

1. Grant for backward/ forward linkages, common infrastructure, packaging, marketing & branding.
2. Skill training & Handholding support.
3. Credit linked capital subsidy.
4. Seed capital will be given to SHGs (@Rs. 4 lakh per SHG) for loan to members for working capital and small tools.
4. Impact -
 1. 8 lakh micro- enterprises will benefit through access to information, better exposure and formalization.
 2. The project is likely to generate nine lakh skilled and semi-skilled jobs.
 3. Scheme envisages increased access to credit by existing micro food processing entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs in the Aspirational Districts.
3. Approval Extension of **Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY)** by 3 years, up to 31st March 2023.
 1. Assured rate of return of 7.40 % per annum for 2020-21 per annum, to be reset every year.
 2. Annual reset of assured rate of interest with effect from April 1st of financial year in line with revised rate of returns of Senior Citizens Saving Scheme (SCSS), upto 7.75%, with fresh appraisal of scheme on breach of this threshold at any point.
 3. Expenditure to be incurred on account of the difference between the market rate of return generated by LIC and guaranteed rate of return under scheme.
 4. Capping Management expenses at 0.5% p.a. of funds of the scheme for first year of scheme in respect of new policies issued and thereafter 0.3% p.a. for second year onwards for next 9 years.
 5. Delegating authority to Finance Minister to approve annual reset rate of return at the beginning of every financial year.
 6. Minimum investment revised to Rs.1,56,658 for pension of 12000 per annum and 162162 for minimum pension of 1000 per month.
 7. About -
 1. PMVVY was announced by Government in May 2017, for senior citizens aged above 60 years.
 2. It provides pension upto 10 years, implemented by LIC.
4. Approved implementation of **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)**, aimed at bringing about Blue Revolution through sustainable and responsible development of fisheries sector
 1. Components Central Sector Scheme (CS) and Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) have estimated investment of 20050 crores, with Central share of 9407 crores. It will be implemented for 5 years (FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25).
 2. Central Sector Scheme -
 1. Entire cost will be borne by Central government.
 2. Wherever direct beneficiary oriented activities are undertaken by entities of central government, central assistance will be up to 40% of project cost for General and 60% for SC/ST/Women category.
 3. For Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), Project/unit cost will be shared between Centre and State as -
 1. North Eastern & Himalayan States - 90% Central share and 10% State share.
 2. Other States - 60% Central share and 40% State share.
 3. Union Territories - 100% Central share.
 4. Benefits Include -
 1. Address critical gaps in the fisheries sector and realize its potential.
 2. Augmenting fish production and productivity at a sustained average annual growth rate of about 9% to achieve a target of 22 million metric tons by 2024-25.
 3. Creation of critical infrastructure including modernisation and strengthening of value chain.
 4. Doubling of fishers, fish farmers and fish workers incomes by 2024
5. Approved allocation of foodgrains from Central Pool to approximately 8 crore migrants @ 5 kg per person per month (May and June, 2020) for two months free of cost. It would entail an estimated food subsidy of about 2,982 crores. Expenditure towards migrants' intra-state transportation will be approx 127 crores.
6. Approved proposal of Ministry of Finance to launch a new **Special Liquidity Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)** and Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) to improve liquidity position of the NBFCs/HFCs.

1. There is no financial implication for Government until Guarantee involved is invoked. On invocation, ceiling of aggregate guarantee has been set at 30000 crores, to be extended by amount required.
2. An SPV would be set up to manage a Stressed Asset Fund (SAF) whose special securities would be guaranteed by Government and purchased by RBI only. Proceeds of sale of such securities would be used by SPV to acquire short-term debt of NBFCs/HFCs.
3. Unlike Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme which requires NBFCs to liquidate their current asset portfolio, the proposed scheme would be a one-stop arrangement between SPV and NBFCs without having to liquidate their current asset portfolio.
4. It was announced in Budget Speech of 2020-21 that a mechanism would be devised to provide additional liquidity facility to NBFCs/HFCs over that provided through the PCGS.

7. Approved enabling additional funding of up to 3 lakh crores to eligible MSMEs and interested MUDRA borrowers by way of **Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS)**.

1. 100% guarantee coverage to be provided by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) for additional funding of up to 3 lakh crore to eligible MSMEs and interested MUDRA borrowers, in form of a Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL).
2. Corpus of 41600 crores shall be provided by Government, spread over 4 financial years.
3. Features -
 1. MSME borrowers with outstanding credit of up to 25 crore as on 29.2.2020, and with an annual turnover of up to 100 crores, are eligible for GECL funding under Scheme.
 2. Tenor of loan under Scheme shall be four years with moratorium period of one year on the principal amount.
 3. No Guarantee Fee shall be charged by NCGTC from Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) under the Scheme.
 4. Interest rates under the Scheme shall be capped at 9.25% for banks and FIs, and at 14% for NBFCs.
4. Scheme would be applicable to all loans sanctioned under GECL during the period from the date of announcement of the Scheme to 31.10.2020, or till an amount of Rs 3 lakh crores is sanctioned under GECL, whichever is earlier.
8. Approved Jammu & Kashmir (Adaptation of State Laws) Second Order 2020 issued under section 96 of Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019. It modified applicability of Domicile conditions to all level of jobs in UT of Jammu & Kashmir.

2. Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Approvals -

1. Approved waiver of interest of 7.59 crores on Government loans of Hindustan Organic Chemicals Limited (HOCL), in addition to Waiver of penal interest and interest on interest up to 31st March 2005, that was earlier approved by CCEA in March 2006.
2. Approved methodology for auction of coal and lignite mines/blocks for sale of coal / lignite on revenue sharing basis and increasing tenure of coking coal linkage. This provides that bid parameter will be revenue share.
 1. The bidders would be required to bid for a percentage share of revenue payable to the Government. The floor price shall be 4% of the revenue share.
 2. Bids would be accepted in multiples of 0.5% of revenue share till percentage of revenue share is up to 10%, and thereafter in multiples of 0.25% of revenue share.
 3. It aims to make maximum coal available in the market at the earliest and it also enables adequate competition which will allow discovery of market prices for the blocks and faster development of coal blocks.

Geological Reserves in mine (MT)	Upper ceiling of Upfront Amount (Rs. cr)
Upto 200	100
Above 200	500

14. ► Central Govt (On May 17) extended lockdown for two more weeks till May 31, giving gave some major relaxations, permitting almost all economic activities and significant public movement.

1. States will be issuing separate guidelines for most activities, as per their infection status.
2. Curbs will continue in containment zones.
3. COVID-19 Lockdowns so far In India - Mar 23 - Apr 14 (Phase 1), Apr 15 - May 4 (Phase 2), May 5 - May 17 (Phase 3), May 18 - May 31 (Phase 4).
4. Movement of people will be prohibited between 7 pm and 7 am, except for essential activities.

15. ▶ Coir Geo textiles has been accepted as a good material for rural road construction, under PMGSY-III.
 1. It is a permeable fabric, natural, strong, highly durable, resistant to rots, moulds and moisture, free from any microbial attack.
 2. As per PMGSY new technology guidelines for road construction, 15% length in each batch of proposals, is to be constructed using new technologies. Out of this, 5% roads are to be constructed using IRC accredited technology. IRC has now accredited coir Geo textiles for construction of rural roads.
 3. 1674 km road will be constructed using Coir Geo textiles in 07 states.
16. ▶ Finance Minister announces several initiatives to boost Education Sector -
 1. Initiative called PM e-VIDYA will be launched which unifies efforts related to digital education. It includes DIKSHA (one nation-one digital platform) which will become nation's digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content in school education.
 2. TV (one class-one channel) where one dedicated channel per grade for each of the classes 1 to 12 will provide access to quality educational material.
 3. Study material for differently abled developed on Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language on NIOS website.
 4. Manodarpan initiative launched to provide psychosocial support to students, teachers and families.
 5. Government is expanding e-learning in higher education , by liberalizing open, distance and online education regulatory framework.
 1. Top 100 universities will start online courses. Also, online component in conventional Universities and ODL programmes will also be raised from present 20% to 40%.
 6. It has been decided to prepare a new National Curriculum and Pedagogical Framework for school education, teacher education and early childhood stage to prepare students and future teachers as per global benchmarks.
 7. A National Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission will be launched, for ensuring that every child in the country necessarily attains foundational literacy and numeracy in Grade 3.
 8. HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriya Nishank stated that remaining exams of CBSE X and XII will be conducted between July 1-15, 2020.
17. ▶ First 12000 HP made in India Locomotive, manufactured by Madhepura Electric Loco Factory situated in Bihar, has been operationalized by Indian Railways. It has been developed Under Make in India Initiative, Assisted by French Firm *Alstom*.
 1. Loco is named WAG12 with Number 60027. Train departed from Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Station.
 2. India became 6th country in to join elite club of producing high horse power locomotive indigenously. It is the first time, high horse power locomotive has been operationalised on broad gauge track in the world.
 3. These locomotives are IGBT based, 3 phase drive, 9000 KW (12000 horse power) electric locomotive. The locomotive is capable of maximum tractive effort of 706 kN, capable of running a 6000 T train in gradient of 1 in 150.
 4. Madhepura Electric Locomotive Pvt. Ltd. (MELPL) will manufacture 800 State of the Art 12000 HP Electric Freight Locomotives in 11 years.
18. ▶ Five more states (Bihar, UP, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Daman and Diu) integrated with 'one nation, one ration card' scheme.
 1. On 1st January 2020, 12 States were integrated amongst each other and now 17 States are on Integrated Management of PDS.
 2. Under 'one nation, one ration card' initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled food grains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) from any fair-price shop in the country.
 3. Ration card will be issued by states with 10-digit standard ration card number, with First two digits depicting state.
19. ▶ General Conferences (May 11-20, 2020) -
 1. Ministry of Human Resources Development launched a new mobile application called "National Test Abhyas", developed by National Testing Agency. It aims to help candidates to take mock tests for exams such as JEE Mains, NEET, etc.
 2. Ministry of Defence approved procurement of 26 defence items to boost "Make in India" initiative, done through amendment of Public Procurement Order 2017.
 3. Number of beneficiaries under Ayushman Bharat Yojana crossed 1 crore.
 1. Ayushman Bharat (PMJAY) was launched in 2018. It provides an insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh per annum per family.
 4. Lieutenant Commander Akshay Kumar of Southern Naval Command has been awarded Vice Admiral G.M. Hiranandani Memorial Rolling Trophy for 2020.

5. HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' announced that MHRD regularized retrospectively certain Teacher Education Programmes being conducted by some Central and State Govt Institutions. These programmes were being conducted without any formal recognition from National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE).
6. Computer Emergency Response of Team (CERT) issued warning against a new malware called "EventBot", which steals personal financial information from Android phone users.
7. NIT Kurukshetra implemented SAMARTH scheme of Ministry of Human Resources and Development, developed under National Mission in Education through ICT. Platform will provide information to strengthen the productivity through better information management.
20. ▶ Government launched *National Migration Information System* to facilitate the smooth movement of migrant workers traveling across country, developed by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on existing NDMA-GIS portal.
 1. States will upload Migrants data on the dashboard, enabling tracking of Migrant movements during COVID-19.
21. ▶ Govt approved updated Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Ujh multipurpose Project (MPP) on river Ujh, main tributary of river Ravi in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir, at estimated cost of 9167 crores.
 1. Proposal is modified, with inclusion of additional culturable command area (CCA) of 23973 hectares beyond scope of already approved project. Earlier, CCA to be irrigated was proposed as 16743 Ha, with proposed irrigation intensity of 187 %.
 2. DPR of Ujh project was declared as a national project in 2008 and was prepared by Indus Basin Organisation of Central Water Commission in 2013.
 3. 116 metre high dam is proposed at river with full reservoir level (FRL) at 608 metre. Proposed dam site is Barbari village about 1.6 km downstream of Panchtirthi.
22. ▶ Health & Family Welfare Minister Harsh Vardhan dedicated COBAS 6800 testing machine to nation, at National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).
 1. It is first such testing machine that has been procured by Government for testing of COVID-19 cases.
 2. NCDC has been equipped with COBAS 6800, a fully automated, high end machine for performing real time PCR testing COVID-19.
 3. COBAS 6800 can test around 1200 samples in 24 hours.
23. ▶ Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry informed that for Assessment year 2019-20, 6 cities are certified as 5-Star (Ambikapur, Rajkot, Surat, Mysuru, Indore and Navi Mumbai), 65 cities as 3-Star and 70 cities as 1-Star, under results of Star Rating of Garbage Free Cities.
 1. Star Rating Protocol was launched by Ministry in January 2018 to institutionalize a mechanism for cities to achieve Garbage Free status, and to motivate cities to achieve higher degrees of cleanliness.
24. ▶ J&K administration notified J&K grant of domicile certificate procedure rules 2020 and set a fast track process in motion to issue certificates within 15 days.
 1. Eligible non-locals can also apply for the certificate.
 2. Domicile certificates have now been made basic eligibility condition, for appointment to any post under UT of J&K.
 3. Any officer not able to issue the certificate would be penalised INR 50,000.
 4. Kashmiri migrants living outside J&K can get domicile certificates by producing their Permanent Residence Certificate (PRC), ration card copy, voter card or any other valid document.
 5. New process will allow West Pakistan refugees, safai karamcharis and children of women who married non-locals to apply for jobs. Government Employees who served in UT of Jammu and Kashmir for 10 years, are eligible for the certificate.
25. ▶ Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan re-launched Sambal Yojana to strengthen lives of the poor and SC / ST communities by providing them social security cover. 42 Crores were transferred to beneficiaries.
 1. Sambal Yojana was started in April 2018.
 2. Cover is 2 lakh to beneficiaries mainly on general and untimely death, 4 lakh on accidental death, 2 lakh on permanent disability and 1 lakh on partial permanent disability.
 3. After death, 50000 will be provided for last rites and also assistance to upgrade small businesses to the family.
26. ▶ Maharashtra CM **Uddhav Thackeray** has been inducted as a member of Legislative Council, Along with eight others.
 1. This marks debut of Uddhav Thackeray in Maharashtra State Legislature. He never personally contested in elections. He became state's Chief Minister after he was unanimously chosen as head of Maha Vikas Aghadi comprising Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress.
 2. Maharashtra has bicameral legislature, which consists of Vidhan Sabha (legislative assembly) and Vidhan Parishad (legislative council). Legislative assembly members are elected by Citizens and Legislative council members are elected by

members of legislative assembly.

3. Six Indian states - Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh, have bicameral Legislatures.

27. ▶ Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has taken up Complete Solarisation of Konark sun temple and Konark town in Odisha.
 1. Scheme envisages setting up of 10 MW grid connected solar project and various solar off-grid applications, with Central Assistance of approx 25 Crores.
28. ▶ Ministry of environment, forest and climate change accorded environment clearance for Oil India Limited's extension of drilling for hydrocarbon exploration inside Dibru Saikhowa National Park in eastern Assam.
 1. Concerns were that this project would affect flora and fauna in the region. The park is the only region in India that supports feral horses and several other species.
29. ▶ Super Cyclonic Storm *Amphan* struck India's Andaman Islands, Odisha, West Bengal. It also affected Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Bhutan.
 1. It was strongest tropical cyclone to strike Ganges Delta since Sidr of 2007 season and the first super cyclonic storm to occur in the Bay of Bengal since the 1999 Odisha cyclone.
 2. Causing over US\$13 billion of damage, Amphan is also the costliest cyclone ever recorded in the North Indian Ocean, surpassing record held by Cyclone Nargis of 2008.
 3. It has wind speed upto 260 KM/H.
30. ▶ TVS group, Sundaram Medical Foundation and IIT-Madras jointly developed a low-cost, automated respiratory assist device called *Sundaram Ventago*.
 1. It provides respiratory support to patients via controlled squeezing of a self-inflating or AMBU bag and includes functionalities to control respiratory rate (breaths per minute), tidal volume, pressure parameters and I:E ratios.
31. ▶ Telangana became first state to regulate cultivation of crops by telling farmers what to grow, as a part of its pilot project.
 1. State will limit growing of paddy to 50 lakh acres, red gram to 10 lakh acres. Several other crops have also been limited.
 2. State will soon announce what crop will be cultivated in which areas.
 3. State will not extend benefitS of Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Rythu Bandhu scheme to the farmers who violate directives.
 4. Telangana government will also be setting up a seed regulatory authority to check spurious seeds in the state.
32. ▶ Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda launched GOAL Programme (Going Online As Leaders), in partnership with Facebook. It will provide mentorship to tribal youth digitally.
 1. It will focus on three areas such as Life skills, digital literacy and Leadership and Entrepreneurship.
33. ▶ Uttarakhand CM Trivendra Singh Rawat launched "HOPE" (Helping Out People Everywhere) portal to help unemployed youth to get jobs opportunities.
34. ▶ West Bengal Government launched *Matir Smristi* scheme to utilise 50000 acres of barren land in 6 districts, and will benefit approx 25 lakh people. It will help generate income activities in horticulture and pisciculture involving locals.
 1. Districts are Birbhum, Purulia, Bankura, Jhargram, West Burdwan and West Midnapore.

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Science

1. ▶ A new parasitic fungus has been discovered by a University of Copenhagen (Denmark) biologist, termed as *Troglomyces twitteri*.
 1. It is named after Twitter as it was discovered in Twitter. The image was posted in Twitter by an entomologist in 2018.
 2. The Fungi belongs to the order called Laboulbeniales. These are fungi that attack millipedes and insects. They look like larvae.
2. ▶ Astronomers at the University of Canterbury (New Zealand) found a rare new Super-Earth planet towards the centre of the galaxy.
 1. Its host star is about 10% mass of our Sun. Planet would have a 'year' of approximately 617 days.
 2. Discovery was made using a technique called gravitational microlensing. Microlensing is a rare effect, with one in a million stars in the galaxy are affected at a given time.
 3. Planet named OGLE-2018-BLG-0677 was discovered in 2018 observation during the microlensing event by the Optical Gravitational Lensing Experiment(OGLE).

3. ▶ Astronomers from Cornell University (US) developed a practical model- an environmental colour 'decoder'- to get the climate clues of potentially habitable exoplanets in faraway galaxies.
 1. As per research, Light reflected on the surface of planets plays a crucial role not only on overall planet but also on detectable spectra of Earth-like planets. For example, a rocky, black, basalt planet will absorb light well and will be very hot but if there is an addition of sand and clouds, the planet will cool.
4. ▶ CSIR-Advanced Materials and Processes Research Institute (Bhopal) Researchers developed porous carbon materials which can replace lead grid in lead-acid batteries. It can also be useful for heat sinks in power electronics, electromagnetic interference shielding in aerospace, hydrogen storage and electrode for lead-acid batteries and water purification systems.
 1. Present grid-scale energy-storage sector is dominated by lithium-ion batteries. However, there are some serious concerns regarding Li-ion batteries, such as safety risk, limited resource supply, high cost, and lack of recycling infrastructure.
 2. Therefore, lead-acid batteries are among best options. However, electrodes in lead-acid batteries suffer from problem of heavyweight, corrosion, poor thermal stability, and diffusion of electrolytes in one dimension.
 3. AMPRI Researchers have developed lightweight carbon foam with a density of less than 0.3g/cc, high porosity of over 85%, good mechanical strength.
5. ▶ In India, Approx 23 million tonnes of leftover rice residues are annually burnt by farmers to get rid of straw and prepare their fields for sowing wheat, which is next crop, resulting in air pollution.
 1. To overcome this, Scientists at Pune based Agharkar Research Institute (ARI) mapped 2 alternative dwarfing genes *Rht14* and *Rht18* on chromosome 6A in durum wheat, and DNA-based markers were developed for better selection of these genes in wheat breeding lines.
 2. Wheat lines with these alternative dwarfing genes, apart from reducing crop residue burning, can allow deeper sowing of wheat seeds to avail advantage of residual moisture in the soil under dry environments.
 3. Presently available semi-dwarf wheat varieties, carry conventional *Rht1* dwarfing alleles and produce optimum yields under high-fertility irrigated conditions. However, they are not well adapted for deeper sowing conditions in dry environments.
6. ▶ Indian Space Research Organization identified 17 technologies at lower costs from Indian start ups to use in Gaganyaan mission.
 1. Technologies identified includes food and medicine for astronauts, life support systems, inflatable habitats, thermal protection technologies and anti-radiation technologies.
 2. Under Gaganyaan, 3 air force pilots will be carried to space, to be launched in December 2021. A female looking robot Vyommitra is to accompany the astronauts. Flight will be for 7 days.
 3. Cost of mission is 12400 Crores. Russia is Training 4 Indian pilots for the same.
7. ▶ JNCASR (Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research) developed injectable silk-fibroin based injectable SF hydrogel (iSFH) to deliver sustained insulin to diabetic patients, developed using biocompatible additives.
 1. It will ease insulin delivery in diabetic patients. The gel was first tested in rats and was successful.
 2. Researchers found that subcutaneous injection of insulin with fibroid based hydrogel formed an active depot under skin. This helped to leach out insulin, restore physiological glucose for a longer period of time.
 3. Microstructures provide mechanical strength (to support injectability), and porous morphology of iSFH allowed the encapsulation of human recombinant insulin in its active form in diabetic rats.
 4. Diabetes results from inadequate production of insulin due to loss of beta cells or insulin resistance within the body, which imbalances the glucose homeostasis is leading to an abrupt increase of blood glucose level. Last resort of treatment involves repeated subcutaneous insulin injections to maintain the physiological glucose homeostasis.
8. ▶ Many galaxies far more active than Milky Way have enormous twin jets of radio waves extending far into space. Normally these go in opposite directions, coming from a massive black hole at centre of galaxy. However, a few are more complicated and appear to have four jets forming an 'X' on sky.
 1. Several possible explanations have been proposed to understand this phenomenon. New MeerKAT Telescope (South African Radio Astronomy Observatory) observations of one such galaxy, PKS 2014-55, favors the phenomenon -
 1. *Material falling back into the galaxy being deflected into different directions forming the other two arms of the 'X.'*
 2. Radio band images described as a 'double boomerang', sent by telescope, showed 2 powerful jets of radio waves of blue colour, that can be seen extending up to 2.5 million light-years into space (the distance between the Milky Way and the Andromeda galaxy). Significantly, due to the pressure of tenuous intergalactic gas, both of them are 'turned back'.
9. ▶ Parkinson's disease is a common neurodegenerative disease with no cure so far. It is believed that an aggregation of a protein called alpha synuclein (ASyn) plays a crucial role in its pathology.

1. Researchers are studying mechanism of how protein forms the aggregates, and how the aggregation results in the death of neuronal cells observed in Parkinson's disease. It could help find a cure for the same.
 2. Aggregation of A β is not easy to understand. End point of the aggregation is the formation of small slender fibres or 'fibrils', in which the protein has a structure type, what is called a cross beta fold. Scientists have solved 3D structures of fibrils and have learnt how to develop drugs to target them. However, these drugs do not work.
 3. These failures have made the scientists to think that perhaps they need to understand not only the fibrils but also the variety of intermediates that form early in the aggregation process.
 4. Scientists from IIT (ISM) Dhanbad and CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology Kolkata teamed up to find a solution to this issue, finding Z-scan method useful. It could help in monitoring both the early and late stages of aggregation of A β nicely. Thus, this method can be really useful for both pharmaceutical and clinical research.
10. ▶ Researchers at IIT Guwahati explored new ways to prevent accumulation of neurotoxic molecules in brain, that are associated with short-term memory loss associated with Alzheimer's disease.
1. Team has reported interesting methods such as application of low-voltage electric field, and the use of 'trojan peptides' to arrest aggregation of neurotoxic molecules in brain.
 2. India has 3rd highest number of Alzheimer's patients in world, after China and US. There is no therapeutic approach yet that can treat the underlying causes of Alzheimer's.
11. ▶ Scientists at International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) and Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences Thiruvananthapuram developed new generation Iron-Manganese based alloys for biodegradable metal implants for use in humans.
1. Biodegradable materials (Fe, Mg, Zn, and polymer), which can participate in healing and then degrade gradually by maintaining mechanical integrity without leaving any implant residues in human body, are better alternatives to currently used metallic implants which remain permanently in human body and can cause long-term side effects.
 2. Iron-Manganese based alloy Fe-Mn (having Mn composition of more than 29% by weight) is a promising biodegradable metallic implant which exhibits single austenitic phase (non-magnetic form of iron) with MRI compatibility.
 3. Fe-Mn alloy produced at ARCI exhibited 99% density with impressive mechanical properties, comparable to presently used permanent Titanium (Ti) and stainless-steel metallic implants.
12. ▶ Scientists from Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) and Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Pune (IISER), jointly discovered three new fish species under genus 'Dawkinsia' namely *Dawkinsia apsara*, *Dawkinsia austellus*, *Dawkinsia crassa*
1. 1st species *Dawkinsia apsara*, found in Karnataka's Sita and Sowparnika rivers, has been christened after the beautiful celestial nymphs in Hindu mythology.
 2. 2nd species *Dawkinsia austellus*, found from Muvattupuzha river in Kerala, has been named referring to Latin word for 'South' and refers to distribution range of species in Southern Kerala.
 3. 3rd species *Dawkinsia crassa*, found in Netravati river of Coastal Karnataka, has been named after the Latin word for 'round/thick' referring to the rounded appearance of the fish.
13. ▶ Scientists from S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences Kolkata (SNBNCBS) developed a novel protocol to find out whether a pair of electrons is in an entangled state so that they can be safely used as resources for facilitating quantum information processing tasks.
1. Quantum entanglement makes phenomena such as quantum teleportation and super-dense coding possible. It occurs when particles interact in a way such that quantum state particles cannot be described independently of state of others.
 2. However, entanglement is fragile and is easily lost during transit of photons. Hence, it is extremely important to know whether a pair of photons is entangled, in order to use them as resource.
 3. Devices measuring entanglement may be hacked by eavesdroppers. Device-independent self-testing (DIST) is a method that can be used in order to overcome such a possibility.
 4. This enables verification of entanglement in an unknown quantum state of two photons without having direct access to state, based on quantum uncertainty principle. Idea has been implemented experimentally in collaboration with Beijing Computational Science Research Centre.
 5. In Experimental optical set-up, entangled pairs of photons are created by laser light on Beta barium borate (*BBO*) crystals, used as laser crystal. Bob is used as trusted party and Alice as untrusted, to verify that pair of photons they share is entangled.

14. ▶ Space authorities reported that sun has gone into 'Solar Minimum' state and is about to enter the deepest period of sunshine recession.

1. It has almost been 100 days of 2020 when sun has shown zero sunspots.
2. Sun goes through regular cycles of high & low activity. This affects frequency of space weather events, but it doesn't have a major effect on Earth's climate. It causes Earth's atmosphere to shrink slightly which reduces drag on satellites.
3. During Solar Minimum, sun's magnetic field weakens and it provides less shielding from cosmic rays. This cycle usually lasts on average of 11 years.

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Sports

1. ▶ FIFA Under 17 women's world cup has been rescheduled from February 17 to March 7, 2021. It will be hosted by India.

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