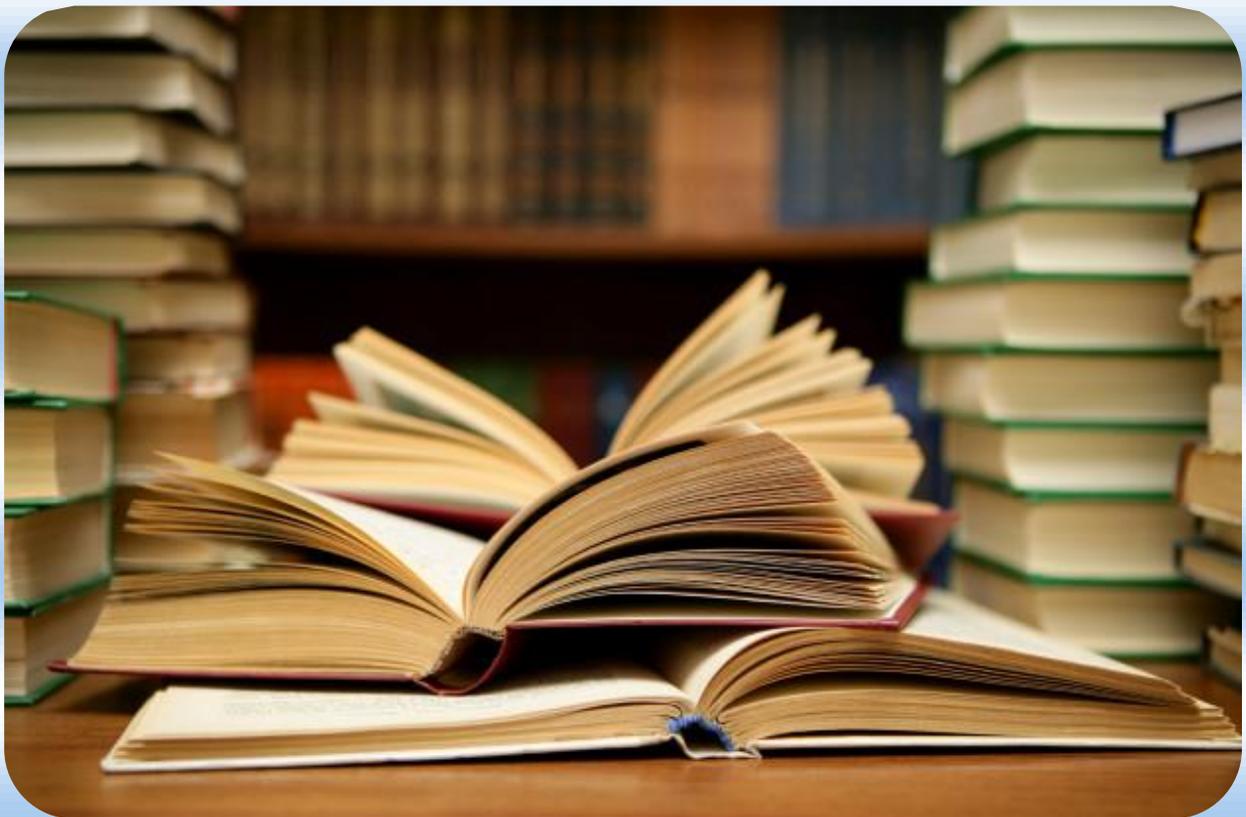


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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



OCTOBER-2020

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Atal Tunnel: 9,000 tonnes of steel supplied by SAIL

State-owned SAIL on Friday said it has supplied over 9,000 tonnes of steel for the all-weather Atal Tunnel which reduces the distance between Manali and Leh by 46 kms and travel time by four to five hours.



Indian Army builds memorial for personnel killed in Galwan Clash

The Indian Army has built a memorial in Eastern Ladakh for the 20 personnel killed in the violent clash at Galwan Valley on June 15, a defence source said on Saturday. The memorial which has the names of all 20 "Gallants of Galwan" inscribed on it is located at Post 120 in Eastern Ladakh and was inaugurated earlier this week. It details the actions of 16 Bihar and attached troops led by Col. B Santhosh Babu to evict the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Observation Post (OP) from the Y nala (junction) area under Operation Snow Leopard.

Rajeshwar Rao appointed the new Deputy Governor of RBI

The Centre late Wednesday appointed M Rajeshwar Rao as the new deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India. He is currently an executive director at the banking regulator. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment as the search for the incumbent was on since August. The Financial Sector Regulatory Appointment Search Committee (FSRASC), which had included the cabinet secretary.

Why were six PSBs excluded from Schedule II of RBI act recently?

Mumbai: The RBI has excluded six public sector banks, including OBC and Allahabad Bank, from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act following their merger with other banks. The six banks are Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank. "We advise that Syndicate Bank has been excluded from the Second Schedule to the RBI Act, 1934 with effect from April 01, 2020 since it has ceased to carry on banking business.

Tribes India E-Market Place: Govt to launch the largest market of Tribal products

Keeping in line with the vision of the Prime Minister of making India Aatmanirbhar and self-reliant, this pathbreaking initiative of TRIFED under Ministry of Tribal Affairs will showcase the produce and handicrafts of tribal enterprises from across the country and help them market their produce/ products directly, is also a major leap towards the digitisation of tribal commerce. On this occasion, Shri Munda will also flag off several other TRIFED initiatives that are aimed to support the tribal brethren.

India Post Payment Bank achieves 3.6 crore customers

Even as mode of transaction turning cashless the government-backed India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) is gaining ground amid a COVID-19 caseload. The bank attained a total customer base 3.6 crore and completed over Rs 38,500 crore financial transactions cumulatively until September 15, the bank said in a release. IPPB launched its operations just two years ago. In August last year, it had crossed the milestone of one crore customers.

Govt approves 10 PLI projects of Rs 10.5 trillion in electronics manufacturing sector

The Centre on Tuesday approved 16 proposals from marquee brands, including makers of Apple devices, under two new flagship schemes, in a move expected to fetch Rs 11,000-crore additional investments in local electronics manufacturing. In turn, this would imply production worth Rs 10.5 trillion over the next five years, giving a fillip to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Make in India and Atma Nirbhar Bharat schemes.

Natural Gas Marketing Reforms approved by the Union Cabinet

New Delhi: Bringing in reforms in natural gas marketing, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a standardised bidding process for gas prices. Briefing the media after the meeting, Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said that the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) will suggest an e-bidding platform for users. He noted that producers will have a choice to opt for a platform and transparent and open bidding process to be conducted for price discovery.

Finance Minister announces Festival Advance scheme, LTC Cash Voucher Scheme

To stimulate consumer demand, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday announced an LTC cash voucher scheme and a special festival advance of Rs 10,000 to all government employees, saying the Covid-19 pandemic had adversely affected the economy. Addressing a press conference, Sitharaman said the new proposals have been designed to stimulate demand in a fiscally prudent way by front-loading some expenditure. "Indications are that the savings of government and organised sector employees have increased.

Heeng Cultivation introduced in Indian Himalayas

Asafoetida, or heeng, is a common ingredient in most Indian kitchens — so much so that the country imports Rs 600 crore worth of this pungent flavoured herb every year. Now, scientists at CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource, Palampur (IHBT), are on a mission to grow heeng in the Indian Himalayas. The first sapling has been planted in Himachal Pradesh's Kwaring village in Lahaul valley last week. What is asafoetida and where is it commonly cultivated? *Ferula asafoetida* is a herbaceous plant of the umbelliferae family.

Indian Tourism Statistics: UP attracted highest number of domestic tourists

Uttar Pradesh attracted the highest number of domestic tourists in the country in 2019 with a share of 23.1 per cent travellers visiting the state, an official statement said Monday. According to the Indian Tourist Statistics 2020, 53,58,55,162 domestic tourists visited the state in 2019. The state bagged the third spot in terms of the arrival of foreign tourists. As many as 47,45,181 foreign tourists visited UP in the same year, it said.

GST Compensation: Rs 6,000 crores tranfered to 16 states

The Centre had in August proposed two options to states: borrow Rs 97,000 crore (on account of GST implementation) from a special window facilitated by the RBI or the complete shortfall of Rs 2.35 lakh crore (including Rs 1.38 lakh crore due to COVID) from the market. The Centre has borrowed and transferred Rs 6,000 crore as the first tranche of GST compensation shortfall to 16 states and two union territories, including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Bihar, Assam, Delhi and J&K, the finance ministry said on Friday.

RBI to set new QR code rules to change payment picture of India

The Reserve Bank on October 22 barred Payment System Operators (PSOs) from launching any new proprietary QR code for payment transactions and asked them to switch to at least one interoperable QR code, so that the same QR code can across multiple payment applications. RBI's latest directive is to improve the digital payment infrastructure in the country.

Kerala: First State to fix MSP for vegetables

Thiruvananthapuram: Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said on Tuesday that Kerala has become the first state in the country to fix the minimum support price (MSP) for vegetables. He also announced the floor price for 16 varieties of vegetables. The scheme would come into effect from November 1. In his address through video-conferencing, the Chief Minister said, "This is the first time that the floor price is being fixed for vegetables produced in the state and Kerala is the first state to do so.

Union Cabinet approves norms for Mandatory Packaging in Jute Materials

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved that 100% of the foodgrains and 20% of the sugar shall be mandatorily packed in diversified jute bags. The decision to pack sugar in diversified jute bags will give an impetus to the diversification of the jute industry. Further, the decision also mandates that initially 10% of the indents of jute bags for packing foodgrains would be placed through reverse auction on the Gem portal. This will gradually usher in a regime of price discovery.

COVID-19: ICMR develops "Purified Antisera" as treatment

NEW DELHI : The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on Thursday said it has developed highly purified 'antisera' for prevention and treatment of the novel coronavirus pandemic. "ICMR and Biological E. Limited, Hyderabad have developed highly purified antisera (raised in animals) for prophylaxis and treatment of COVID-19," read a statement from the ICMR. Biological E. Limited is one among the listed entities.

What are R-Green Kits of COVID-19?

Reliance Life Sciences has developed an RT-PCR kit that promises diagnosis of Covid-19 infection in about 2 hours, company sources said. At present, Covid-19 RT-PCR test, which is a real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) test for the qualitative detection of nucleic acid from SARS-CoV-2, takes up to 24 hours to give a diagnosis. The sources said computational biologists at Reliance Life Sciences, a subsidiary of billionaire Mukesh Ambani-run Reliance Industries Ltd.

PARAM Sidhi-AI: India's fastest AI Super Computer

PUNE: NVIDIA said on Monday that the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) will commission India's largest HPC-AI supercomputer, 'PARAM Siddhi – AI'. This initiative will put India among the top countries in global AI supercomputing research and innovation, it said. The initiative has been spearheaded by Abhishek Das, Scientist and Program Director (HPC-AI Infrastructure Development) at C-DAC, who conceived the idea and designed the architecture.

5,000 remote villages to receive Internet using ISRO satellites

Hughes India, a subsidiary of Hughes Network Systems, will provide internet services to 5,000 remote villages in 15 states and UTs including Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep using ISRO's communications satellites, GSAT-19 and GSAT-11, it said Tuesday. Hughes India was awarded the contract by Bharat Broadband Nigam Ltd (BBNL).

New organ in throat discovered

Scientists in the Netherlands have discovered a potential new organ in the human throat that they stumbled upon while carrying out research on prostate cancer, Livescience reported. Researchers at the Netherlands Cancer Institute have identified a set of salivary glands deep in the upper part of the throat and have named them “tubarial salivary glands”.



ICMR approves “COVIRAP” test developed by IIT Kharagpur

A new coronavirus diagnostic method, using a low-cost portable unit developed by researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur, has been approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) after testing with patient samples showed an accuracy level slightly lower than the gold standard RT-PCR method at a fraction of the cost. The machine cost less than ₹5,000 to make and the test kits would each cost about ₹500, IIT-Kharagpur researchers told journalists on Wednesday.

Low Cost Technology anti-ageing Compound developed by IIT-Guwahati

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology-Guwahati (IIT-G) have developed a low-cost membrane technology to produce psychoactive drugs and anti-ageing compounds from agricultural resources. The technology, eliminating the use of any organic solvents, has been patented and developed by Mihir Kumar Purkait, professor of the Department of Chemical Engineering and head of the Centre of Environment and his M Tech student V.L. Dhadge.

NASA-ISRO to launch NISAR satellite in 2022

The measurements of the Earth's surface caused by natural or human processes that NISAR will gather will be crucial in assessing and mitigating damage caused by catastrophic natural disasters. The NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite is on course to be launched by 2022 with India and the United States agreeing to share Space Situational Awareness Information expected to accelerate efforts to create a safe and sustainable space environment. The latest announcement was part of a joint statement.

ISRO to launch Earth Observation Satellite EOS-1 and 9 Customer Satellites

India would launch its latest earth observation satellite EOS-01 and nine international customer spacecraft onboard its PSLV-C49 rocket from the spaceport of Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh on November 7, ISRO said on October 28. This is the first launch by the Indian Space Research Organisation since the COVID-19-induced lockdown came into force in March. ISRO chairman K. Sivan said in June that 10 space missions being prepared for launch in 2020 have been “disturbed” due to the lockdown.

24 Universities declared fake by UGC

The University Grants Commission (UGC) on Wednesday announced a list of 24 self-styled, unrecognised institutions in the country, terming them as fake with maximum of them operating from Uttar Pradesh followed by Delhi. “Students and public are informed that currently 24 self-styled, unrecognised institutions are functioning in contravention of the UGC Act, which have been declared as fake universities and these are not empowered to confer any degree,” UGC Secretary Rajnish Jain said.

National Dairy Development Board and Ladakh sign MoU

Gandhinagar: With a view to promote dairying and rural livelihoods in the Union Territory of Ladakh, National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and Union Territory Administration of Ladakh signed an Memorandum of Understanding for conducting a benchmark survey in the newly formed UT. NDDB’s dairy potential survey will help prepare a road map to boost dairying in the UT and will help in enhancing income of the rural population in the mountainous border areas.

President promulgates Ordinance to constitute Air Quality Management Commission in NCR

The President Wednesday signed an ordinance brought in by the Centre for a Commission to manage air quality in the National Capital Region. As per the ‘Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Ordinance 2020’, the body will be chaired by a government official of the rank of Secretary or Chief Secretary, and will include the Secretary Ministry of Environment.

India’s night trial of Nuclear Capable PRITHVI II missile successful

India on Friday successfully conducted a night trial of the indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-2 missile as part of a user trial by the Army from a test range in Odisha India on Friday. successfully conducted a night trial of the indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-2 missile as part of a user trial by the Army from a test range in Odisha, defence sources said. The state-of-the-art surface-to-surface missile blasted off around 7.30 pm from launch.

Indian Air Force Test Fired Brahmos Supersonic Cruise Missile

New Delhi: In a display of its growing combat prowess, the Indian Air Force on Friday successfully test-fired an air launched version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from a Sukhoi fighter aircraft in the Bay of Bengal, official sources said. The missile hit a sinking ship with deadly accuracy and the test-firing produced desired results, they said.



Delhi Government launches "Green Delhi" mobile application

Amid rising air pollution in the national capital, Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday launched the "Green Delhi" app, which will enable people to register complaints about violation of anti-pollution norms. "Today we are launching the Green Delhi app. Our aim is to involve each and every citizen in this initiative. This app can be installed from the Play Store. You can file any kind of complaint regarding pollution via this app. If you witness industrial pollution or industrial dust, you can upload its video, picture, or audio. Automatically the location will be sent to us," said Kejriwal.

Indian Railways launches "Meri Saheli" Initiative

Indian Railways started another great initiative named "Meri Saheli" to provide more safety and security to women passengers during their entire journey. The "Meri Saheli" initiative is to provide more safety and security of lady passengers travelling by trains in their entire journey from originating station till destination station.



INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Referendum in New Caledonia rejects independence from France

Noumea: The South Pacific territory of New Caledonia chose to remain French on Sunday, narrowly rejecting independence in a tightly-fought referendum marked by a high turnout. The vote rejecting a breakaway from France after almost 170 years came in at 53.26 percent, down from 56.7 percent in a referendum two years ago. French President Emmanuel Macron -- who had said previously that "France would be less beautiful without New Caledonia" -- on Sunday said he was grateful.

RBI bans FDI establishments from Mauritius-Reasons, Causes, Impacts

The Reserve Bank of India's recent stand that financial firms can-not be set up with foreign direct investment (FDI) from Mauritius or other jurisdictions that do not meet benchmarks laid down by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is expected to slow private equity (PE) investments in non-banking financial companies (NBFCs). "PE Investments in the financial sector will see a slowdown until funds adopt new jurisdictions that offer similar tax benefits as Mauritius or until Mauritius meets the FATF standards," said Aarthi Sivanandh, partner at J Sagar Associates.

World Trade Organization to be led by a woman for first time

GENEVA (AP) — The World Trade Organization announced Thursday that South Korea's trade minister and a Harvard-trained former Nigerian finance minister have qualified as the two finalists to become the next director-general, ensuring a woman in the top job for the first time.



What are the benefits for India in signing Defence Logistics Pact with UK?

NEW DELHI: India and the UK are in the final stages of signing a defence logistics sharing pact, according to people aware of the development, adding to a host of similar agreements with other Indo-Pacific nations that can expand the reach of Indian warships and aircraft in the region. The logistics pact, which will enable reciprocal use of bases and airfields for fuel, supplies and spares, has been under discussion with the UK, besides an agreement on joint training.

India receives second set of Swiss Bank Account Details

The Switzerland authorities have shared details of bank accounts of Indians nationals and entities allegedly holding black money as part of a confidential agreement between the two countries, people familiar with the development said. The data will be examined by agencies dealing with black money investigations to see if there are any irregularities in these bank accounts belonging to Indians, people cited above added.



EpicVacCorona: Second COVID-19 Vaccine approved by Russia

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Friday said that it had had very good dialogue with developers of a second Russian vaccine candidate against COVID-19. "We will only be able to have a position on a vaccine when we see results of the phase III clinical trials," WHO Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan told a news conference in Geneva. Russia registered its second coronavirus vaccine on 14 October.

WHO backs India's proposal against "COVID-19 Vaccine Nationalism"

The World Health Organisation has backed a proposal by India and South Africa to waive international property rights on health advances against Covid-19, amid fears that countries' competing efforts on this front could give rise to "vaccine nationalism". The proposal, first tabled by the two nations at the World Trade Organisation, has met with resistance from a number of developed countries.

Sputnik V Vaccine of Russia gets renewed approval for Clinical Trials in India

The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) and Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd have received renewed approval to conduct late-stage clinical trials in India of the Russian Covid-19 vaccine, the sovereign wealth fund said on Saturday. Large-scale trials of the Sputnik V vaccine in India were first announced and then knocked back by Indian regulators, who said the scale of Phase I and II trials conducted in Russia earlier this year was too small.

Philippines resumes Oil and Gas Exploration in South China Sea

The Philippines will resume oil and gas exploration in the South China Sea, in a move that will test how far the country and Beijing are willing to compromise over rival maritime claims and the US's resolve to back Manila. "We trust China will respect our sovereign decision," Alfonso Cusi, energy secretary, said on Friday about the move to end a six-year moratorium on resource exploration in the disputed waters.

Singapore: First Country to attach Facial Verification in National Identification Database

The biometric check will give Singaporeans secure access to both private and government services. The government's technology agency says it will be "fundamental" to the country's digital economy. It has been trialed with a bank and is now being rolled out nationwide. It not only identifies a person but ensures they are genuinely present. "You have to make sure that the person is genuinely present when they authenticate, that you're not looking at a photograph or a video or a replayed recording or a deepfake,".

NATO to set up new Space Centre in Ramstein, Germany

This week, the Kester Satellite Ground Station in Belgium is set to fall under a new orbit, when NATO announces that it is creating a space centre to help manage satellite communications and key parts of its military operations around the world. In December, NATO leaders declared space to be the alliance's "fifth domain" of operations, after land, sea, air and cyberspace. Over two days of talks starting on Thursday.

FATF: Pakistan to remain on "Grey List"

Global terror financing watchdog FATF on Friday decided to keep Pakistan on its "grey list" till February next year, despite progress by Islamabad on meeting international anti-terrorism financing norms. India's nuclear-armed neighbour failed to meet the conditions needed for unfettered access to international funds, according to reports. In a statement, the Financial Action Task Force urged Pakistan to complete an internationally agreed action plan by February 2021.

Sudan joins UAE, Bahrain in recognizing Israel

President Donald Trump announced Friday that Sudan will start to normalize ties with Israel, making it the third Arab state to do so as part of U.S.-brokered deals in the run-up to Election Day. The deal, which would deepen Sudan's engagement with the West, follows Trump's conditional agreement this week to remove the North African nation from the list of state sponsors of terrorism if it pays compensation to American victims of terror attacks. It also delivers a foreign policy achievement for Trump just days before the U.S. election and boosts his embattled ally, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

US-Taiwan 1.8 billion USD arms sale

WASHINGTON: In a move that will irk China, the United States on Tuesday approved the potential sale of three weapon systems to Taiwan, including missiles and artillery, that could have a total value of USD 1.8 billion. The formal notification to Congress by the State Department was for 11 truck-based rocket launchers made by Lockheed Martin Corp called a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), for an estimated cost of \$436.1m, Al Jazeera reported.

No Mask No Service Policy launched in Bangladesh

The cabinet meeting Chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina decided that no one will be allowed to enter offices without the mask. It decided that all offices must install notice boards saying 'no mask, no service' in order to control the spread of COVID 19 virus in the country.



UN Treaty of banning Nuclear Weapons enters into force

Fifty countries have ratified an international treaty to ban nuclear weapons, the United Nations has announced, allowing the "historic" text to enter into force in 90 days. Honduras became the 50th country to ratify the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), the UN said on Saturday, in a move hailed by anti-nuclear activists but strongly opposed by the United States and the other major nuclear powers.

Indian-origin Wavel Ramkalawan becomes the President of Seychelles

NEW DELHI: A victory for the Seychelles opposition for the first time since 1977 has brought the Indian origin Wavel Ramkalawan to the office of president. But the development could put a question mark over the future of India developing a naval facility on Assumption Island, one of the many that make up the Indian Ocean archipelago nation of Seychelles.



Agreement signed between India Post and US Postal Service for Electronic Exchange of Data

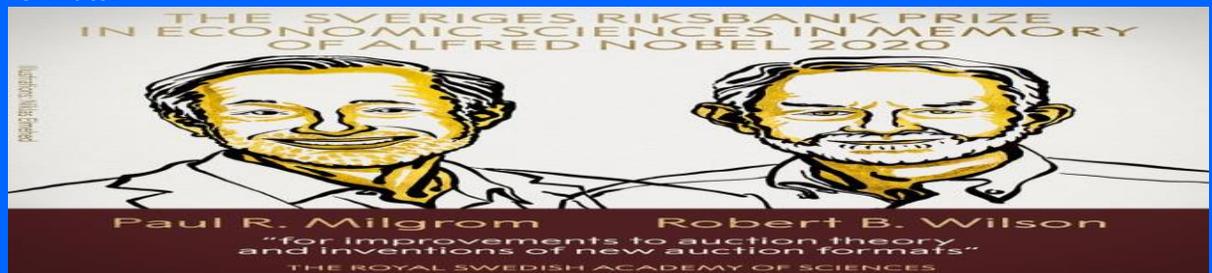
The Department of Posts and United States Postal Service on Tuesday signed an agreement for electronic exchange of customs data related to postal shipments between the two countries, an official statement said. The agreement was signed by Department of Posts Deputy Director General (international relations and global business) Prannoy Sharma and United States Postal Service's Global Business Managing Director Robert H Raines Jr.

Feni Bridge to be completed by December 2020

This was announced on Tuesday by the Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Minister Nitin Gadkari while laying the foundation stone of nine National Highway projects in Tripura through video conferencing. According to a press release issued by the Ministry, Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari said that the Feni bridge being built at the cost of Rs. 129 crore will ease the transportation of goods from Chattogram and Kolkata ports.

Nobel Prize for Economics, 2020

The Nobel Prize 2020 in Economic Sciences on Monday was awarded to Paul R. Milgrom and Robert B. Wilson "for improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats."



Nobel Peace Prize, 2020

The Nobel Peace Prize was Friday awarded to the World Food Programme for feeding millions of people from Yemen to North Korea, with the coronavirus pandemic seen pushing millions more into hunger.



Nobel Prize in Literature, 2020

American poet Louise Gluck won the 2020 Nobel Literature Prize on October 8, an unexpected choice known for themes of childhood and family life that draw inspiration from myths and classical motifs.



Nobel Prize for Physics, 2020

The story so far: The Nobel Prize for Physics, announced on October 6, was shared by three laureates. One half went to Roger Penrose, now at the University of Oxford, for 'the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity'.



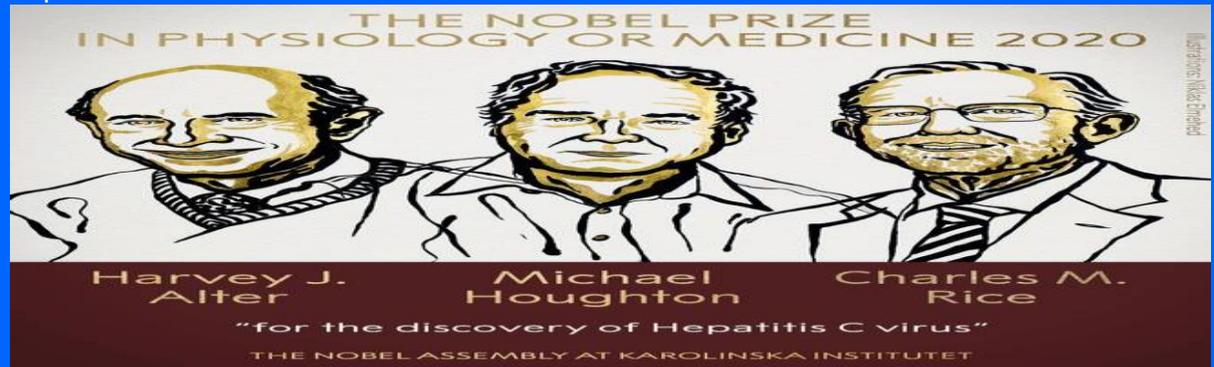
Nobel Prize for Chemistry, 2020

Emmanuelle Charpentier of France and Jennifer Doudna of the U.S. on October 7 won the Nobel Chemistry Prize for the gene-editing technique known as the CRISPR-Cas9 DNA snipping "scissors", the first time a Nobel science prize has gone to a women-only team.



Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, 2020

Americans Harvey J Alter and Charles M Rice, and British scientist Michael Houghton were awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine or Physiology on Monday for the discovery of the hepatitis C virus.



Global Himalayan Expedition won the UN Global Climate Action Award

An Indian organisation that leverages tourism and technology to help remote communities access solar energy has won a prestigious UN award for its efforts to combat climate change amid the Covid-19 pandemic.



NASA launches SS Kalpana Chawla Cargo Spacecraft

WALLOPS ISLAND [US]: A commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station (ISS) launched on Friday night carrying the name of deceased NASA astronaut Kalpana "K.C." Chawla, the first Indian-born woman to enter space, for her key contributions to human spaceflight. The S.S. Kalpana Chawla launched from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS) at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia at 09:38 p.m. EDT. The spacecraft, a Northrop Grumman Cygnus, will arrive at and be attached to the space station two days later.

Rafael Nadal wins French Open, 2020

Rafael Nadal destroyed Novak Djokovic 6-0, 6-2, 7-5 to win his 13th French Open on Sunday. With this victory, he also equalled Roger Federer with 20 Grand Slam titles. World No.1 Djokovic remained behind with 17 Grand Slam titles. In what was their 56th meeting, Djokovic was completely outplayed by the Spaniard and when the 'King of Clay' ended it with an ace, it meant that astoundingly, he did not cede a set in French Open 2020.

World Bank's Ease of Doing Business

India climbed 14 rungs in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business 2020 survey to stand at 63, among 190 countries, making it the one of world's top 10 most improved countries for the third consecutive time. The sharp rise in the ranking underscores the reformist credentials of the Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government and may help the country lure multinational companies, looking at alternatives to China for investment amid Beijing's trade war with the US.

2019 Booker Prize: Margaret Atwood and Bernardine Evaristo jointly win

Judges tore up the rule book on Monday, awarding the prestigious Booker Prize for Fiction jointly to Canadian author Margaret Atwood for *The Testaments* and Anglo-Nigerian author Bernardine Evaristo for *Girl, Woman, Other*. Atwood becomes only the second female author to win the award twice, sharing the £50,000 prize at the 50th anniversary ceremony at London's Guildhall. The award has been shared twice before, in 1974 and 1997, when the rules were changed to supposedly prevent it from happening again.

