State Career Guidance Centre
Current Affairs – 2019
(Nov’16 – Nov’30)
• Sisseri River bridge
  • The bridge was recently inaugurated at Lower Dibang Valley in Arunachal Pradesh. It will provide connectivity between Dibang Valley and Siang. It also provides connectivity to Tinsukia via Dhola-Sadia bridge. It was constructed by Project Brahmanik of Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

• Household Consumer Expenditure Survey
  • The National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation carried out an all-India survey on household consumption expenditure. The survey is usually conducted in quinquennial intervals and the last survey was conducted in 2011-2012.
  • It generates estimates of household Monthly Per Capita Consumer Expenditure (MPCE) and the distribution of households and persons over the MPCE classes.

• Ministry of Women and Child Development is going to launch Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh.
  • It is a repository of diverse crops across 128 agro-climatic zones in India. Its aim is to provide better nutritional outcomes and to fight malnutrition.
  • Harvard Chan School of Public Health and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will be a part of this initiative. They will document and evaluate promising regional dietary practices and the messaging around them and develop a food atlas on regional agro-food systems.

• The government has recently issued framework for bringing ‘systemically important financial service providers’ under the purview of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).
  • Accordingly, the ministry of Corporate Affairs has notified the IBC rules, 2019 to provide a generic framework for insolvency and liquidation proceedings of systemically important FSPs other than banks.

• The 8th International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (ICAS) will be held in New Delhi.
  • It will be organized by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.
• Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, FAO, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are partners of this conference. The theme of the conference is “Statistics for Transformation of Agriculture to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”.

• The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has set up an Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE) Prevention/Investigation Unit at its headquarter in New Delhi.
  • The unit will function under the CBI’s Special Crime Zone. The unit's territorial jurisdiction would be throughout the country.

• Motorists in high-altitude sectors like Ladakh, Kargil, Kaza and Keylong face the problem of freezing of diesel in their vehicles when winter temperatures drop to as low as -30o Celsius.
  • Indian Oil has come up with an innovative solution to this problem by introducing a special winter-grade diesel with a low pour-point of -33 degree Celsius, which does not lose its fluidity function even in extreme winter conditions.
  • Winter diesel fuel is also known as winter diesel, alpine diesel, or winterized diesel (AE). It refers to diesel fuel enhanced to prevent it from gelling in cold weather conditions.

• Ain-i-Akbari is a 16th century document written by Akbar’s court historian Abu'l Fazl in Persian language.
  • It deals with the administration of Mughal Emperor Akbar. The Akbar Nama is divided into three books:
    • The first book dealt with Akbar’s ancestors.
    • The second recorded the events of Akbar’s reign.
    • The third is the Ain-i Akbari.deals with Akbar’s administration, household, army, the revenues and geography of his empire.
    • It provides rich details about the traditions and culture of the people living in India.
• ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting, ADMM-Plus comprises total 18 nations, it comprises of 10 countries of ASEAN, and eight other countries such as Japan, the US, China, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia, and India.

  • ADMM-Plus is the only official framework of Defense Minister's meetings in the Asia-Pacific Region. The ADMM-Plus has become an effective platform for practical cooperation among the participating countries’ defence establishments.

• BADP was started in the year 1986-87 for balanced development of border areas of states bordering Pakistan, namely, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Gujarat, and Rajasthan.

  • It was subsequently extended to all the land borders. The programme is administered by the Department of Border Management of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

  • States are provided a 100% non-lapsable Special Central Assistance fund under BADP to meet the special developmental needs and well being of the people living in remote and inaccessible areas situated near the international border.

  • The programme was amended in 2015 to provide the provision for third party inspection and quality control mechanism under MHA for random inspections of the BADP schemes.

• Indian researchers have developed a small device named SeeTB, to detect Tuberculosis.

  • The device can be attached to a simple optical microscope to convert it into a fluorescence microscope, thus enabling better TB diagnosis at the point-of-care. It is a battery-operated device and allows quick identification of the bacteria.

  • When the performance was compared against GeneXpert, another diagnosis tool that looks for DNA markers of TB bacteria, SeeTB showed improved sensitivity. Also, while GeneXpert method takes about two hours, SeeTB can help find the bacteria in about 30 minutes.

• Industrial Security Annex

  • The 2+2 dialogue between India and the U.S. is going to be held in Washington, D.C.

  • During the dialogue, both countries are expected to sign the Industrial Security Annex (ISA) and review the steps to operationalise the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA). The ISA is part of the
General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), which India had signed with the U.S. many years ago.

• Plastic Parks
  • A plastic park is an industrial zone devoted to plastic enterprises and its allies’ industries.
  • It includes a whole range of companies required by the plastics processing community such as
    • Material and machinery suppliers,
    • Plastics processing companies,
    • Plastic recycling companies including waste management system.
  • These plastic parks are being developed by State Governments with the support of Department of Chemicals & Petrochemical of Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers. The government has approved setting up of 6 plastic parks in Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu.

• Golden Rice
  • In the late 1990s, German scientists developed a genetically modified variety of rice called Golden Rice.
  • It was claimed to be able to fight Vitamin A deficiency, which is the leading cause of blindness among children and can also lead to death due to infectious diseases such as measles. Rice is naturally low in the pigment beta-carotene, which the body uses to make Vitamin A.
  • Golden rice contains this, which is the reason for its golden colour.

• Cane Turtle
  • While turtles are more or less dependent on water, tortoises are completely terrestrial.
  • Cane Turtle is an anomaly. It scuttles through the forest and adopts a land-based lifestyle among leaves. Although the shape of its legs and webbed feet are
reminiscent of its aquatic relatives, it doesn’t like water and stays clear of streams.

- When scared, it dives under dry leaves as if it were plunging into a pond or brook. They are endemic to the evergreen and semi-evergreen forests of the Western Ghats of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

- Measles

  - Measles is a highly infectious acute viral illness that can lead to severe complications, such as pneumonia, encephalitis and death. Children younger than five years who get infected with measles have higher rates of complications, hospitalisation and even death.

  - The disease is preventable through two doses of a safe and effective vaccine. Babies are protected against measles through maternal antibodies for the first six months based on studies carried out in measles-endemic settings.

- Good Governance Index

  - The index was launched to assess the state of governance in the country.

  - The rankings were launched by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, and the Centre for Good Governance. The objectives of GGI are to provide quantifiable data to compare the state of governance in all States and UTs.

  - It enables them to formulate and implement suitable strategies for improving governance and shift to result oriented approaches and administration.

- Atal Bhujal Yojana

  - Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL) is a Central Sector Scheme under the Ministry of Jal Shakt recently approved by the Cabinet.

  - It will be implemented over a period of 5 years (2020-21 to 2024-25).

  - It aims to improve ground water management through community participation in identified priority areas in seven States. The states are Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

- Rohtang Tunnel
• The Rohtang tunnel connect Manali in Himachal Pradesh with Leh, Ladakh, and Jammu Kashmir, will be known as Atal Tunnel.

• It is the 8.8 km-long tunnel and it will be the world’s longest highway tunnel at an altitude of above 10,000 feet (3,000 metres).

• This strategic tunnel below the Rohtang pass is now nearing completion. It cuts across the Pir Panjal range and provide all-weather connectivity to remote border areas of Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

• Jal Jeevan Mission
  
  • The mission is set to be operationalised with new guidelines released recently.
  
  • It aims to provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to every rural household by 2024. Jal Shakti Ministry is the nodal ministry for this mission.
  
  • The new guidelines will emphasise the critical role of the gram panchayat level to run and maintain the water supply system in their community and also bring in systems for water use charges.

• Ecoclub Programme
  
  • Environment Education Awareness and Training (EEAT) is an established central sector scheme of the Environment Ministry since 1983-84.
  
  • It aims to promote environmental awareness and mobilize student’s participation for environment conservation.

• NuGen Mobility Summit-2019
  
  • NuGen Mobility Summit-2019 is the first in a series of the conference organized by International Center of Automotive Technology (ICAT), Manesar in Haryana.
  
  • It is the largest automotive technology event covering relevant topics of alternate fuel systems and E-Mobility.
  
  • In the three-day conference, Automotive technology experts from 15 countries including India will be presenting more than 120 technical research papers.

• 15th Finance Commission
• Article 280 of the Constitution states that the President shall constitute a Finance Commission at the expiration of every fifth year or at such earlier time as the President considers necessary.

• Union Cabinet has extended the term of 15th Finance Commission (15th FC) headed by N.K. Singh by one-year to October 30, 2020. The term was originally set to end in October 2019.

• It means the Commission will recommend its award to six fiscal years, instead of the usual five. The 15th FC can give recommendations for six years through two reports (2020-21 to 2025-26) and 16th FC will consider devolution for 2025-26 to 2029-30.

• New Snake Species

• Researchers have discovered a new species of non-venomous burrowing snake named ‘Trachischium apteii’ in Arunachal Pradesh.

• It was found under fallen logs inside a thickly forested area of the Tally Valley Wildlife Sanctuary near the town of Ziro in Arunachal Pradesh. Trachischium species are commonly called slender snakes.

• Madden-Julian Oscillation

• The Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO), is a moving band of rain clouds that travels around the globe spanning 12,000–20,000 km across the tropical oceans.

• Global warming has been expanding the size of the warm pool which affects its normal interaction period. In its journey, it interacts with surface waters of the Indo-Pacific Ocean, the largest pool of warm water in the globe and the lifecycle of the MJO gets affected.

• The MJO clouds on average are spending only 15 days, instead of 19, over the Indian Ocean and increased by 5 days over the west Pacific.

• It is this change in the residence time of MJO clouds that has altered the weather patterns across the globe.

• Exercise HIM VIJAY

• Exercise HIM VIJAY is a routine military exercise conducted to validate operational capabilities of our combat formations.
• It is to test mobility, communication and coordination of such huge body of fast-moving troops in difficult terrain. Three Battle Groups, each comprising around 4000 soldiers, are participating which will include troop mobilisation, mountain assault and air assault.

• Nationwide Artificial Insemination Programme
  • The NAIP is a campaign mode genetic upgradation program covering all breeds of bovines to enhance the milk production using low cost breeding technology for improving genetic merit of milch animals with high quality seed.
  • The Programme will be implemented in 600 identified districts having less than 50% A.I coverage from 15th September 2019 to 15th March 2020 over a period of 6 months covering around 120 lakh breedable female bovine population, covering 100 villages and 200 animals per village.
  • Monitoring of the project and follow-up of all the animals covered under the programme shall be continued until calves are born.

• National Startup Awards
  • The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has announced institution of the first National Startup Awards.
  • The National Startup Awards seek to recognize and reward outstanding startups and ecosystem enablers that are building innovative products or solutions, with high potential of employment generation or wealth creation, demonstrating measurable social impact.
  • The National Startup Awards will also reward exceptional Incubators and Accelerators as key building blocks of a robust startup ecosystem.

• Child Protection Services
  • Orphan children in the country fall within the category of “Children in need of care and protection” (CNCP) as described in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act).
  • The primary responsibility of execution of the Act lies with the States/UTs. However, the Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing a centrally sponsored Child Protection Services (CPS) Scheme (erstwhile Integrated
Child Protection Scheme) for supporting the children in difficult circumstances.

- The primary responsibility of implementation of the scheme lies with the State Governments/UT Administrations.

- **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)**
  - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi first proposed CDRI during the 2016 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.
  - The CDRI was later conceptualized in the International Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (IWDRI) in 2018-19.
  - The coalition envisages 3 tiered structures viz Governing Council (GC), Executive Committee (EC) and a Secretariat of the Society. The objectives of CDRI are as follows:
  - The CDRI aims to serve as a platform where knowledge is generated and exchanged on different aspects of disaster and climate resilience of infrastructure.

- **Ex-SURYA KIRAN**
  - 14th edition of SURYA KIRAN - Joint military exercise between India and Nepal will be conducted in Nepal.
  - It is an annual event which is conducted alternatively in Nepal and India.
  - The aim of this exercise is to conduct a Battalion level combined training between Indian Army and Nepal Army to increase interoperability in jungle warfare and counter terrorist operations in mountainous terrain, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, medical and environmental conservation including aviation aspects.

- Sharad Kumar won a silver medal in the World Para-Athletics Championships in Dubai. Mariyappan Thangavelu also won a bronze medal in the championship. This win has to lead both of them to qualify into the Tokyo Paralympics 2020.
  - Two-time Asian Para Games champion Sharad Kumar cleared the bar with season's best effort of 1.83 metres.
  - Mariyappan cleared with a season's best performance of 1.80 metres.

- The World Para-Athletics Championships 2019 is organized by the World Para Athletics subcommittee of the International Paralympic Committee. 1403 athletes from 118 nations
participated in the event.

Top 5 countries:
♦ China ranked first with a medal tally of 59
♦ Brazil ranked second with a medal tally of 39
♦ Great Britain ranked third with a medal tally of 28
♦ The United States ranked fourth with a medal tally of 34
♦ Ukraine ranked fifth with a medal tally of 27
♦ India ranked 24th with a medal tally nine, of which two gold, two silver, and five bronze.

- Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal announced Mukhyamantri Septic Tank Safai Yojana on 15 November.
  - The scheme aimed to help the people living in unauthorized colonies where sewer lines are yet to be laid. People in such areas depend on manual scavengers for cleaning the tanks, which is an illegal act. Under the scheme, the Delhi government will clean the septic tanks for free.

- Mukhyamantri Septic Tank Safai Yojana:
  - Nearly 45 lakh citizens in the authorized and unauthorized colonies of Delhi do not have sewer pipelines and depend on septic tanks. The process of installing sewage pipelines across all the unauthorized colonies is going on. Also, it is important to ensure the cleanliness of the septic tanks through safe means.
  - The scheme will help to collect waste from the septic tanks of the illegal colonies. It will ensure the safe disposal of waste in sewage treatment plants and the safety of people.
  - Under the scheme, trained staff with all the safety equipment will be used for the work of septic tank cleaning.

- J&K Grameen Bank secured the top position in terms of achievement of Rupay Card transaction targets (POS and eCOM). It has been ranked first among the 56 RRBs across the country.

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) survey reported that Bank had achieved a 94.95% target for POS/ eCOM transactions for the last financial year 2018-19.

- JKGB offers digital products to its customers as RuPay Debit Cards, PMJDY Debit Cards, Kisan Cards, NEFT/ RTGS, POS, IMPS, eCOM, SMS Alerts, BHIM UPI, ABPS, and DBT. The Bank has been providing digital services to its customers.

- The Driving Cities Index released by European car parts retailer Mister Auto, a part of the PSA Group, reported that Mumbai and Kolkata had been rated as the world's worst cities to drive in 2019. The retailer released a detailed study on the best and worst places in the world to drive in.
The three main parameters that were considered by the study that impacts the driving condition are Infrastructure, Safety, and Costs. These three main categories were then broken down into 15 sub-categories.

Report Highlights:

♦ As per the report, Calgary in Canada has been named as the best city for driving, considering low congestion, fatalities, and affordability.
♦ The other best places among the 100 for driving conditions are Dubai and Ottawa.
♦ Bern in Switzerland and El Paso in Texas, USA, respectively hold the third and fourth position on the list.
The worst cities to drive in and the last ranked cities are:
♦ Karachi in Pakistan ranked 96th, Nigeria ranked 97th, Kolkata ranked 98th, Mongolia ranked 99th, and Mumbai ranked 100th in the list.

Shafqat Mehmood, the Minister for Education and Professional Training, has been unanimously elected as President of UNESCO's Education Commission in Paris, France.

Shafqat Mehmood would work closely with all delegations in a constructive manner in pursuance of the main objectives of UNESCO. He held bilateral meetings with Ministers of Education of Bangladesh, Norway, and Tunisia. He also met Assistant Director Generals of UNESCO for Education and Culture.

The commission will work to move towards a global classification framework for teacher policy dialogue. It will finalize the draft text of the global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications.

National Press Day is celebrated on 16th November 2019. It is celebrated every year. The day marks the presence of free and responsible press. On this day, the Press Council of India started functioning as a moral watchdog. It ensures that the press maintains high standards and is not fettered by any influence or threats. Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu conferred excellence in journalism awards.

Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, has been elected as Chairperson of the Annual Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).
• The Convention on CCW represents an important arms control framework that will prohibit and restrict certain conventional weapons that can cause unnecessary suffering to combatants or affect civilians indiscriminately.

• The appointment at the annual meeting of the Convention reflected the recognition by the international community of Pakistan's longstanding contribution to promote international security through arms control instruments.

**Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW):**

Convention on CCW was signed on 10 April 1981 and came into effect on 2 December 1983. The convention seeks to restrict/prohibit the use of certain conventional weapons which are considered excessively injurious or whose effects are indiscriminate.

• Lieutenant Colonel Jyoti Sharma has been appointed as the Indian Army's first female Judge Advocate General officer to be deployed on a foreign mission. She will be appointed as the military legal expert with the government of Seychelles.

• The main role of Jyoti would be to update the government of Seychelles officials on the defence and military act.

**Women in Indian Army:**

The Indian Army is also preparing to induct women in the Military Police Corps. In April 2019, the Indian Army started the process of inducting women as jawans by starting their online registration for recruitment in the Corps Of Military Police. India Army will induct women in a graded manner to eventually compromise 20% of the total Corps of Military Police.

• India is to partner with China, Russia, and Japan to oppose the use of a 26 GHz spectrum band for 5G operations.

• The Countries announced their decision at the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) 2019.

• China, Russia, and Japan supported the use of alternative bands for 5G services with around 3000 Mhz of frequencies, whereas India is yet to decide on alternative bands.

• ISRO uses 26 GHz, spectrum band:

• Earlier, China and Russia have opposed 5G operations in the 26 GHz band in order to defend their military operations.

• India has aligned with the countries as the 26 GHz spectrum has been used by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for satellite services.
• Signal transmitted over low-frequency bands will provide higher coverage than the transmission in a higher frequency band. This will also lead to a proportionate reduction in the cost of the telecom network.

• World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) 2019:

• World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) 2019 is being held from 28 October to 22 November 2019 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.
  - The conference is held every 3 to 4 years. WRC reviews the international treaty that governs the use of the radio-frequency spectrum and the geostationary-satellite and non-geostationary-satellite orbits.

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is to lend a $500-million loan to develop a suburban rail network in Mumbai.
• It will also fund $75 million to help finance renewable energy projects in India.

India AIIB’s largest borrower:
• AIIB plans to scale up lending operations to $10 billion every year. Until now, it was lending $4.2 billion.

• India's share in the total borrowing is about 30%. India is the largest borrower from AIIB. The total funding India received from AIIB, so far, is $2.9 billion.

• Mumbai Urban Transport Project:

• The fund will be used for the Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP) for the quadrupling of the Virar-Dahanu Road corridor of 64 kilometers. It will provide an extension of the suburban railway service to connect peripheral areas with Mumbai.
  - Under the project, a new suburban railway corridor between Panvel and Karjat will be constructed. The funding will also help develop other safety measures around the rail infrastructure to reduce fatalities.

• The Government of India appointed Justice Ravi Ranjan as the Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court. His approval comes after the recommendation made by the Collegium on 15 October 2019.

• Justice Ranjan will take over the position from the Jharkhand High Court from Acting Chief Justice, Harish Chandra Mishra.

• Mr. Mishra was appointed after the sudden demise of Acting Chief Justice Prashant Kumar.
• Justice Ravi Ranjan:

  • In July 2008, Justice Ranjan was elevated as an Additional Judge of Patna High Court. On 16 January 2010, he was appointed as a permanent Judge.

    • In 2018, he served as the Acting Chief Justice of Patna High Court for a brief period. In 2019, Justice Ranjan was transferred from Patna High Court to the Punjab and Haryana High Court pursuant to the recommendation of the Supreme Court Collegium.

• India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) appointed G.Kamala Vardhana Rao as the new Chairman and Managing Director of the department.

G.Kamala Vardhana Rao:

  • G.Kamala Vardhana Rao is an IAS officer of the 1990 batch from Kerala Cadre. He served as the Principal Secretary, Kerala government.

  • In 2014-15 has served as the Secretary of Kerala Tourism. He has experience of close to 30 years. He has served multiple positions, including Chairman of Indian Tobacco Board, Director of Fisheries Department, Director of Department of Tourism and Culture, Andhra Pradesh government.

• India Tourism Development Corporation:

  • ITDC was established in 1966 by the Government of India. It functions under the Ministry of Tourism.

  • It is headquartered in New Delhi, India. ITDC is a retail, education, and hospitality company.

  • Ministry of Women and Child Development is to announce the Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh (BPKK) on 18 November 2019 in New Delhi.

  • The announcement will be made by the Union Minister of Women and Child Development (WCD) and Textiles, Smriti Zubin Irani, in a function.

  • It will be Co-chaired by Mr. Bill Gates.

• Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh:

  ♦ It aims to reduce malnutrition through a multi-sectoral results-based framework.

  ♦ It aims to address malnutrition and reinforce healthy dietary behaviours both at
the individual and community level, including the variation in such practices across India.

♦ It will create the first-ever database that links relevant agro-food system data at the district to map the diversity of native crop varieties that will be more cost-effective and sustainable over the long run.

• Food Atlas:

• Ministry of WCD has requested Harvard Chan School of Public Health through India Research Center and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to document and develop a food atlas on regional agro-food systems. It will mobilize the diverse sectors of society.

• The project team will select 12 high focus states which are representative of the economic, cultural, geographical, social, and structural diversities of India. It will identify a local partner organization that has relevant work experience in Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) and nutrition for developing the food atlas.

• Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated Aadi Mahotsav 2019, the National Tribal Festival, at Dilli Haat, New Delhi. Aadi Mahotsav will be celebrated from 16-30 November 2019. The Aadi Mahotsav is the government's effort to take tribal commerce to the next level of digital and electronic transactions.

• The theme of the Aadi Mahotsav 2019 is A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Crafts, Culture, and Commerce. The theme is to represent the basic ethos of tribal life.

• International Day for Tolerance is observed on 16 November every year.

• The day aims to strengthen tolerance by fostering mutual understanding among cultures and peoples.

• The International Day for Tolerance aims to educate people about the need for tolerance in society and to help them understand the negative effects of intolerance.

• It also creates awareness in people to learn about respecting and recognizing the rights and beliefs of others.

• The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, has established a Development Council for Bicycle.

• The council was set up with a vision planning in design, engineering, and manufacturing of smarter, lighter, value-added, safe and faster premium bicycles which are comparable with global standards for exports and domestic market.

• Development Council for Bicycle:

• The Development Council for Bicycle comprises of 23 members.
• The constitution of the Council is for a tenure of two years. The Council is headed by Secretary DPIIT, and the Joint Secretary, Light Engineering Industry Division in DPIIT, will be the Member Secretary.

• The Council has 9 ex-officio members from DPIIT and Department of Commerce, Ministries of Housing and Urban Affairs, Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Health and Family Welfare, Road Transport and Highways, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Bureau of Indian Standards.

• 7 expert domain members and 4 nominated members will also be a part of the council.

• Roles of the Council:
  ♦ The Council will work to improve competitiveness and level of services and transform Indian bicycle technology.
  ♦ It should enhance the export competitiveness of bicycles through the support of schemes and favorable trade policies.
  ♦ The Council should identify and study the best international practices and success stories to adopt for bicycle manufacturing, recycling, and infrastructure development in India.
  ♦ It should ensure the development of the eco-system.
  ♦ The Council should work for the development of skilled human resources development for bicycle manufacturing and repair shops.

• Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, and Health & Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan announced the eight finalists of the Global Cooling Prize at an Award ceremony on 15 November 2019 held in New Delhi.

• The award recognizes the power of innovation to catalyze climate-friendly development and growth.

• The award encourages to develop innovative cooling solutions that are energy efficient.
  • The move is in line with the Government’s priority to energy-efficient and climate-friendly cooling solutions.

• Global Cooling Prize:
  • The global coalition is jointly led by the Government of India along with Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI).
  • Global Cooling Prize received international participation, and over 2,100 participant
registrations were received from innovators, start-ups, universities, research institutes, and key Air Conditioning industry manufacturers in over 95 countries.

- The selected team will be awarded US$200,000 each to develop their prototypes.
- It will then be tested in India in the summer of 2020. The winner of the Global Cooling Prize will be announced in November of 2020.
  - The winner will be awarded more than US$1 million in prize money.

- Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), is participating in the three day China International Travel Mart (CITM) from 15-17 November 2019 at Kunming, China.
  - The aim is to increase Tourism & Trade between India and China.

- India Pavilion at CITM:
  - The aim of India Pavilion set up at CITM is to promote India's varied tourism products and services, including the Buddhist Circuit.
  - The move by the government of India is to attract Chinese travellers to visit India. The event is expected to strengthen tourism and trade between both countries and facilitate Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Government (B2G) meetings.
  - The India Pavilion at CITM was inaugurated by Ms. Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, and Mr. Dipak Haksar, Chief Executive, ITC Hotels on 15 November 2019.

- India-China in Tourism:
  - One of the emerging vital links between India and China is Tourism.
  - It is fuelled by an increasing level of bilateral trade, business, and governmental cooperation between the two sides.
  - Indian Government is taking efforts to attract more travellers from China as part of its Act East and China Ready strategies.

- CITM:
  - CITM is one of the largest Travel shows in Asia. The event offers innovative
ideas and concepts for travel in Asia.
♦ CITM aims to bring together various tour operators from India and other service providers like travel agents and hotel operators and provide a platform to interact with their counterparts in China.
♦ It aims to develop help build stronger tourist circuits between India and China.
♦ Indian heritage is showcased at the India Pavilion during CITM 2019 through classical dance performances and Yoga.

♦ The Sixth National Summit on Good, Replicable Practices and Innovations was held in New Delhi on 16 November 2019. It was inaugurated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare.

National Summit on Good, Replicable Practices, and Innovations:
♦ The summit creates a platform to share the knowledge within the districts. It aims to transmit the knowledge and ideas to the district's level health workers, functionaries.
♦ It highlighted the achievements in the health sector during the past few years, such as Ayushman Bharat, Telemedicine, NHP 2017, Medical Education, and Health Systems Strengthening.
♦ It provided a valuable platform for sharing knowledge and experiences, which will immensely contribute to meeting the health outcomes.

♦ SAANS campaign was launched in the summit. Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully (SAANS) has been launched to control Pneumonia. This campaign will mobilize people for protecting and preventing children from pneumonia and health personnel, governments, and other stakeholders to prioritize treatment towards the control of Pneumonia. It is one of the fatal childhood illnesses.
♦ The initiative aims to create mass awareness about the most effective solutions for pneumonia prevention like breastfeeding, age-appropriate complementary feeding, immunization, good quality air, etc.
♦ Under the SAANS campaign, new interventions have been included like a child suffering from Pneumonia will be treated with pre-referral dose of Amoxicillin by ASHA, Pulse Oximeter will be used at the Health and Wellness Centre for identification of low oxygen levels in the blood and if required treated by use of Oxygen.

♦ National Initiative for School Heads’ and Teachers’ Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) was launched in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. It was inaugurated by Commissioner Secretary, School Education Department, Sarita Chauhan.

♦ NISHTHA is a National Mission that aims to improve learning outcomes at
Elementary level through integrated Teacher Training.
♦ It is a pioneering scheme being launched across the country, with a total of 86000 Elementary teachers of Government Schools being trained in J&K under the programme.
♦ It aims to build the capacities of 42 lakh participants covering all teachers and Heads of Schools at the elementary level in all Government Schools across the country, faculty members of SIEs/SCERTs, DIETs, etc.

• National Epilepsy Day is observed on 17 November every year.

• The day aims to create awareness about epilepsy, its causes, and treatment.

• Seminars, debates, and other events are organized to educate people about epilepsy disease and its treatment methods.

Epilepsy:
• Epilepsy is a chronic disorder of the brain. It is characterized by recurrent seizures or fits. The seizures are caused as a result of sudden, excessive electrical discharges in the neurons, the brain cells. It affects people of any age, and each age group has unique concerns and problems.

• Symptoms: The symptoms of epilepsy are as tingling sensation more like feeling of pricking pins or needles in arms or legs, sudden twitching or uncontrollable jerking motions of the arms and legs, loss of consciousness, stiffness in muscles of arms or legs or face.

• Epilepsy can be treated with medications. Treatment should not be delayed, as it will lead to critical situations. It will prevent further deterioration of the condition.

WHO report:
World Health Organization (WHO) reported that about 50 million people have epilepsy across the world. Epilepsy is treatable. But three-fourth of affected people in developing countries do not receive the required treatment. In India, about 10 million people suffer from seizures associated with epilepsy.

• The fifth edition of the Dhaka International Folk Festival was held at Bangladesh Army Stadium, Bangladesh. It was inaugurated by the Information Minister of Bangladesh, Dr. Hasan Mahmud. More than 200 artistes from 6 countries performed in the largest folk festival in Asia. The event was held from 14-16 November 2019.

Dhaka International Folk Festival:
♦ The event included performances of artistes of Bhabna Nrityadal, a prominent dance troupe from Bangladesh.
♦ Daler Mehendi from India, Shah Alam Sarkar from Bangladesh, and Georgian folk band Chveneburebi performed on the programme.
♦ The three-day festival witnessed the participation of a large number of popular and renowned artistes from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Russia, and other
Among the notable ones Junoon and Hina Nasrullah from Pakistan and Sattuma from Russia performed in the three-day-long event.

.Syska Group launched an anti-bacterial LED bulb Bactiglow SSK-BAB-9W Bulb. The bulb is made with microbial disinfection properties that electrocute harmful bacteria present in a room.

  - Syska aims to offer products that are convenient, affordable, and reflect their evolving needs and preferences. The Syska Bactiglow LED bulb offers consumers innovative features that are over and provide more benefits of a regular LED bulb.

**Anti-bacterial bulb:**
- The bulb emits light in the wavelength of 400 nm to 420 nm, which is safe for human exposure.
- The cost of the anti-bacterial bulb is Rs.250.
- The bulb is available at leading retail stores across India and has a manufacturer warranty of one year.
- The bulb has been designed for indoor use. It can be easily installed in schools, colleges, commercial spaces, at home.
- The bulb does not emit harmful ultraviolet or infrared radiation. The bulb comes with 2-in-1 modes. One can choose from either a lighting plus anti-bacterial mode or just the anti-bacterial mode.

- The first-ever National Agrochemicals Congress was held in Pusa, New Delhi. The meeting was inaugurated by Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar. The meeting was held from 13-16 November.

**Theme:**
The four-day-long meeting had the theme Country's Status on Various Fronts of Agrochemicals.

**Events:**
- The National Agrochemicals Congress focused on sustainable production to sustainable agri-food systems along with the climatic conditions.
- The plenary sessions included discussion on issues and concerns of Agrochemicals for sustainable farming.
- Ideas were discussed to transform farming from low key activity to a fully structured, profitable livelihood profession. A Farmer FIRST approach was suggested to be adopted by all the stakeholders involved at various levels, including Government, industry, scientists, and extension machinery.
- Indian Agricultural Research Institute's (IARI), effort towards farmers' and the
country's prosperity through generation and dissemination of cutting-edge technologies for various agro-ecological situations were mentioned.♦ It also reviewed the relevant chemical pesticides that are playing in pest management.
♦ New concepts in human health, crops, nanotechnology, resource management, smart formulations, and related sciences to boost agricultural productivity were discussed.

• Renowned sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik received the Italian Golden Sand Art Award 2019 at a ceremony in Rome.

• The Scorrano Sand Nativity event was held under the patronage of the Puglia Region in south Italy around the theme of Men of Goodwill.

Sand Art:
• Pattnaik represented India at the International Scorrano Sand Nativity event held in Lecce, Italy.

• He was joined by Pavel Minilkov from Russia created an eight-foot-high sand sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary in the event.

• There were eight sculptors from different countries who participated in the Sand Art Festival.

Sudarsan Pattnaik:
• Sudarsan has previously participated in more than 60 international sand art festivals and championships around the world.

• He has won many prizes for India.

• His sculptures are made in a way that it always displays a social message.

• The Ministry of Home Affairs, in association with the UN Women, flagged off an awareness campaign to end violence against women from Sultanpur metro station in Delhi.

• The initiative is a part of the #OrangeTheWorld global campaign.

• The 112 India App and the emergency response support system has been developed in-house by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC).

• World Bank announced that it is to fund $300 million to the West Bengal State government. The announcement was made by the West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra. The fund will be used for the development of logistics infrastructure within the city metropolitan area.
• World Bank submitted a master plan to the state on logistics infrastructure in and around the Kolkata metropolitan area.

• It has also expressed its interest in a review of industrial parks, logistics hubs, and SEZs.

• It aims to improve logistics competitiveness, employment generation, and ease of doing business.

• Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde was sworn in as the 47th Chief Justice of India on 18 November 2019. The oath of office was administered by President Ram Nath Kovind at the Durbar Hall of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

• He has also decided various key cases and was part of the recent historic Ayodhya verdict. Bobde, 63, succeeded Justice Ranjan Gogoi.

• Justice Bobde will serve for a period of over 17 months as the CJI. He will retire on 23 April 2021.

• Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde:
  • Justice Bobde was born on 24 April 1956 in Nagpur, Maharashtra.
  • Bobde completed a Bachelor of Arts and an LLB degree from Nagpur University.
  • In 1978, he was enrolled as an advocate of the Bar Council of Maharashtra in 1978.
  • He practiced law at the Nagpur Bench of the Bombay High Court for over 21 years.
  • Former Pepsico head Indra Nooyi was inducted into the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery along with Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos. They were recognized for their accomplishments that impacted America's shared history, development, and culture.

Indra Nooyi:
• In 2006, Indra Nooyi became the first woman to helm the global food and beverage giant PepsiCo.

• On 2 October 2018, she stepped down as PepsiCo's CEO after 24 years with the company.

• She has frequently appeared on the Forbes and Fortune rankings of the world's most powerful women.

• She is one of the 25 women to have led Fortune 500 companies in India and across the world.
Telangana Finance Minister T Harish Rao and Agriculture Minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy launched Rythu Mitra, an exclusive mobile application on 17 November 2019. The app aimed to serve the needs of farmers of Siddipet. The Ministers also reviewed the progress of the 30-day action plan in the district. They distributed tractors to 117 Gram Panchayats under the Palle Pragathi programme.

**Rythu Mitra:**

- Using Rythu Mitra, the farmers can get advices and guidance from experts and agriculture extension officers (AEOs). They can also access information regarding government schemes, subsidies, and other kinds of government assistance being extended to the farm sector.
- The farmers can check updates on Rythu Bandhu release, the progress of Rythu Bima claims, and other issues.
- Also, 109 AEOs, who will visit every part of the district, will update their observations on the mobile app. The farmers can access the information on pest prevalence and its management.
- The District Collector’s office will have a dashboard where the schedule of each and every AEO visit would be notified.
- The farmers could also utilize the services of Rythu Samanvya Samithi members to enhance the functioning of the mobile app.
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