



October - 20

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor authored a book titled 'The Battle of Belonging'.

NATIONAL

Longest bi-directional tunnel in Asia

- ❖ 14.15 Km long Zojila Tunnel in Jammu & Kashmir will be the longest bi-directional tunnel in Asia.
- ❖ It will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar valley and Leh (Ladakh plateau) on National Highway (NH)-1.
- ❖ The project will be implemented by National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL).

STARS project

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved implementation of the World Bank-aided STARS project.
- ❖ The project seeks to support the states in implementing, developing, evaluating and improving interventions with direct linkages to improve quality of education.
- ❖ STARS stands for Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States.
- ❖ The project will cover six states- Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Kerala.

INTERNATIONAL

World War II bomb 'Tallboy'

- ❖ A massive World War II bomb exploded underwater in Poland during a delicate operation by the Polish Navy.
- ❖ It is the five-tonne bomb nicknamed "Tallboy", also known as an "earthquake bomb".
- ❖ It was dropped by the British Royal Air Force in an attack on a Nazi warship in 1945.

- ❖ This bomb was discovered in 2019 close to the port city of Swinoujscie, former part of Nazi Germany in the northwest of Poland.



Second COVID-19 Vaccine by Russia

- ❖ The Russian Authorities have approved a new COVID-19 vaccine called “EpicVacCorona”.
- ❖ It is a peptide-based vaccine.
- ❖ Sputnik V was the first vaccine developed by Russia.
- ❖ Currently three COVID-19 vaccines are under trial in India.
- ❖ They are COVAXIN, ZyCoV D and the Oxford University Vaccines.

Ordinance on capital punishment for rape cases

- ❖ Bangladesh proclaimed an ordinance approving the death penalty for rapists, amid nationwide protests after a series of recent sexual assaults in the country.
- ❖ This is an ordinance on Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.
- ❖ From now on the “death penalty” instead of “lifetime rigorous imprisonment” would be the maximum punishment for rape.

Seats on the UN Human Rights Council

- ❖ Recently election held for 15 members seat of the 47-member UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).
- ❖ Pakistan along with China, Russia and Cuba won seats on the UNHRC.
- ❖ Pakistan is currently serving on the UNHRC since January 1, 2018.
- ❖ With its re-election, the country will continue as a member for another three-year term commencing on January 1, 2021.



- ❖ Since the HRC's establishment in 2006, this is the fifth time that Pakistan has been elected to the agency.

ECONOMY

Special Festival Loan

- ❖ The union government announced a one-time Rs 10,000 interest-free festival advance to all its officers and employees.
- ❖ It is the part of plans to increase consumer spending to spur demand in the economy.
- ❖ This Rs 10,000 advance will come as a pre-paid Rupay card, which can be availed and spent by March 31, 2021.
- ❖ This would be used at point of sale machine and money cannot be withdrawn from ATMs.

World Economic Outlook 2020

- ❖ The International Monetary Fund has recently launched the World Economic Outlook 2020.
- ❖ The report has been titled "A Long and Difficult Ascent".
- ❖ It is launched twice a year, once in June and then in October.

Highlights

- ❖ The report has projected that India's economy will contract by 10.3 percentage in 2020.
- ❖ This growth will be the slowest among the BRICS countries.
- ❖ India is set to slip below Bangladesh in terms of per capita GDP in 2020.
- ❖ Bangladesh is going to overtake India as its per capita GDP in dollar terms is likely to expand 4 percent in 2020 to \$1,888.
- ❖ Where India's per capita GDP is expected to slump 10.5 percent to \$1,877 in 2020.
- ❖ India would be the third poorest nation in South Asia, with only Pakistan and Nepal reporting lower per capita GDP.
- ❖ All other South Asian nations including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka would outpace India.



STATES

My Town My Pride initiative

- ❖ Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha announced the 'My Town My Pride' programme.
- ❖ Its main objectives are public outreach in towns, strengthening grassroots democracy, and service delivery at doorsteps

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Lifetime achievement award in US

- ❖ Indian-origin philanthropist Harish Kotecha has been awarded the prestigious Sandra Neese Lifetime Achievement Award.
- ❖ It is the recognition of his work in the U.S. for meeting the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- ❖ Sandra Neese Lifetime Achievement Award is presented annually.
- ❖ It aims to honour people who have tirelessly worked to ensure that all children may have what most take for granted: safety, shelter, and a future.



MISCELLANEOUS

Transparency International's report on Corruption

- ❖ Transparency International released its recent study entitled 'Exporting Corruption 2020: Assessing Enforcement of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention'.
- ❖ All six Asian economies surveyed - China, Japan, India, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore - were classified in the bottom of four categories.



- ❖ All 6 countries are with "little or no" enforcement against bribery of foreign public officials.
- ❖ It also revealed that India lacks a mechanism to crack down on bribery of foreign officials by its exporters.
- ❖ Only four countries worldwide made it into the top category of "active enforcement": the U.S., U.K., Switzerland and Israel.

| Enforcement against foreign bribery | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Level | Selected countries/territories |
| Active | U.S., U.K., Switzerland, Israel |
| Moderate | Germany, France, Australia, Brazil, Sweden |
| Limited | Netherlands, Canada, South Africa, Chile, New Zealand |
| Little or no | China, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, India, Singapore, Belgium, Finland |

47 economies scored based on number of investigations launched, other enforcement performance from 2016 to 2019
Source: Transparency International

