Himachal Pradesh signs a loan agreement of USD 80 million with World Bank

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

WEF sets up the first Global COVID Action Platform.

- The **World Economic Forum**(WEF) with the assistance from the **World Health Organisation** (WHO) and the **Wellcome Trust** has launched the formation of the world's first **COVID Action Platform**.
- The platform is for the business groups and the stakeholders for the collective business across the world in order to ease the risk and impact of COVID-19.
- FACT: WEF established in – **1971**
- Founder & CEO of WEF **- Klaus Schwab**
- Headquarters of WEF – **Cologny, Switzerland**

Himachal Pradesh signs a loan agreement of USD 80 million with World Bank

- World Bank has accepted to provide a loan agreement of about **USD 80 million** for an integrated project in Himachal Pradesh.
- The Government of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh and the World Bank came forward to sign in the loan agreement to improve water management system and to increase agricultural productivity in selected Gram Panchayats in Himachal Pradesh.
- FACT: Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh – **Jai Ram Thakur**
- Headquarters of World Bank - **Washington, D.C., United States**.
- President of World Bank - **David R. Malpass**

World Animal Protection released the 2nd edition of Global API Index 2020

- World Animal Protection has released the 2nd edition of its global Animal Protection Index (API) 2020, in which India is placed in the **Grade C** category indicating the **Better performing countries**.
- The World Animal Protection is an **international non-profit animal welfare organization** which released its **1st edition on API index in 2014.**
- No country has got into the Grade A; the grade list as follows:
- **Grade G** – Azerbaijan, Iran
- **Grade C** - India, Mexico, Malaysia, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, New Zealand
- **Grade B** – Austria, Denmark, Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, United Kingdom
- FACT: Headquarters of World Animal Protection - **London, United Kingdom**

Greece's First Women President sworn in

- **Ekaterini Sakellaropoulou** was formally sworned in as the first female President of Greece.
- She was a former high court judge and she takes over the five-year presidency from veteran conservative politician **Prokopis Pavlopoulos.**
- FACT: Capital of Greece **– Athens**
- Currency of Greece **– Euro**

NATIONAL NEWS

HIL India Limited has Launched a New Web Portal

- HIL (India) Limited, a central public sector enterprise has launched **Customer Payment Portal** in association with the **Union Bank of India** in **New Delhi.**
- The portal is launched for its customers to make online payment easier and for a feasible collection of dues.
- The portal was launched by the CMD of HIL (India) Limited, **Dr. S.P. Mohanty** and **G. K. Sudhakar Rao** Regional Head Delhi South of Union Bank of India.
- FACT: Union Minister of Chemical & Fertilizers – **D V Sadananda Gowda**

Wings India 2020 launched in Hyderabad

- The Aerospace workshop event "Wings India 2020" was launched at **Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad.**
- The 3-day event is being organised by Ministry of Civil Aviation along with Airports Authority of India(AAI) and FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry).
- Chairman of FICCI, **Anand Stanley** has inaugurated the event with the theme of **'Flying For All'**.
- FICCI along with the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Deloitte, **UDAN 4.0+** knowledge paper on the changing landscape of Indian aviation sector was also released during the event.
- FACT: Union Minister for Civil Aviation - **Suresh Prabhu**
- Chairman of Airports Authority of India **- Arvind Singh**
- President of FICCI - **Dr Sangita Reddy**

Crime Multi Agency Centre launched by the Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai

- For sharing the information on horrific crime and inter-state coordination related issues the Minister of state for Home Affairs has launched the **Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC).**
- The centre was launched at the event organised during the **35th Inception Day of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).**
- The **National Cyber-Crime Training Centre (NCTC)** for professional quality e-Learning services was also launched during the event.
- FACT: Minister of State for Home Affairs - **Mr Nityanand Rai**

Government of India declared masks and hand sanitizers as essential commodities

- On the outbreak of COVID-19 the government has declared face masks and hand sanitizers as essential commodities for the next 100 days.
- Under the **Essential Commodities Act** both the masks and hand sanitizers are made as an Essential Commodities up to 30th June, 2020 by amending the Schedule of the **Essential Commodities Act, 1955.**
- The Centre has also cited the **Disaster Management Act** to ensure price regulation and availability of surgical and protective masks, hand sanitizer and gloves.

OBITUARY

"The Exorcist" actor Max von Sydow dies at the age of 90

- **Actor Max von Sydow,** who appeared in films and TV series including The Exorcist, Flash Gordon and Game of Thrones, has died at the age of 90.
- He was nominated for two Oscars during his career - including best actor in 1988 for Pelle the Conqueror.

Veteran Bengali actor Santu Mukhopadhyay passes away at 69

- Veteran Bengali actor **Santu Mukhopadhyay** has passed away at the age 69 at Kolkata, West Bengal.
- He is known for his films 'Sansar Simante' & 'Bhalobasa Bhalobasa'.

Former Czechoslovak Olympic javelin champion Dana Zatopkova dies at 97

- Former Czechoslovak javelin-thrower, **Dana Zatopkova** has passed away at 97.
- She was an Olympic javelin champion won gold in the **Helsinki Olympics in 1952** and won the **silver medal** at **Rome Olumpics** in **1960.**

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Kidney Day was observed on March 12th

- To create awareness among the society about the kidney health, World Kidney Day is being observed on **2nd Thursday of every year.**
- This year is the **15th Observance of World Kidney Day** which is observed globally every year since 2006.
- The Theme of this year 2020 is: **"Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere- from Prevention to Detection and Equitable access to care".**

World Sleep Day was observed on March 13, 2020

- The day was observed as World Sleep Day to create awareness among the society on the importance of heathy sleep and for the better prevention and management of sleep disorders.
- The Theme for the year 2020: **"Better Sleep, Better Life, Better Planet".**
- This day is celebrated **annually since 2008** and the event is organized by the World Sleep Day Committee of the **World Sleep Society.**
- World Sleep Day will be held on Friday annually before Spring Vernal Equinox of each year.

MISCELLANEOUS

IDFC FIRST Bank appointed Amitabh Bachchan as its first-ever brand ambassador

- Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan was appointed as the first-ever ambassador of the IDFC FIRST Bank.
- IDFC FIRST Bank was founded by the merger of **IDFC Bank and Capital First** on **December 18, 2018.**