

Current Affairs Roundup - 2020

Places in News

India's first pollinator park opens in Uttarakhand

India's first pollinator park, established in Haldwani in Nainital district in Uttarakhand in an area of four acres, was opened for the public.

- ★ More than 40 pollinator species have been recorded in the park including various species of honeybees, birds, butterflies such as the common Jezebel (*Delias eucharis*), glassy bluebottle (*Graphium sarpedon*), red pierrot (*Teleca danayseus*) and lime butterfly (*Papilio dimorpha*), and many other insects.



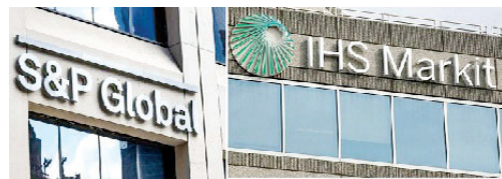
Mount Everest height increased

China and Nepal have jointly announced a new official height for Mount Everest.

- ★ The new height of the world's highest peak is 8,848.86 metres (29,031.7ft), which is slightly more than Nepal's previous measurement and about four metres (13ft) higher than China's.
- ★ The height of Everest, which is on the border between China and Nepal, was agreed after surveyors from Nepal scaled the peak in 2019 and a Chinese team did the same this year.
- ★ There had been debate over the height of the peak and concern that it might have shrunk after a major earthquake in 2015, which killed 9,000 people, damaged about a million structures in Nepal and triggered an avalanche that killed 19 people at the base camp.
- ★ Everest's height was first determined by a British team around 1856 as 8,842 metres (29,002ft). But the most accepted height has been 8,848 metres (29,028ft), determined by the Survey of India in 1954.
- ★ In 1999, a National Geographic Society team using GPS technology came up with a height of 8,850 metres (29,035ft). A Chinese team in 2005 said it was 8,844.43 metres (29,009ft) because it did not include the snow cap. A Nepal government team of climbers and surveyors scaled Everest in May 2019 and installed GPS and satellite equipment to measure the peak and snow depth on the summit.

2020's biggest merger- S&P Global and IHS Markit

Data giant S&P Global Inc has agreed to buy IHS Markit Ltd in a deal worth \$44 billion that will be 2020's biggest merger. It is creating a heavyweight in the increasingly competitive market in financial information.



- ★ The mega-deal, which includes \$4.8 billion of debt, is a sign that deal-making activity is accelerating as breakthroughs in developing COVID-19 vaccines improve the economic outlook.
- ★ Deals touched a record high in the September quarter, with more than \$1 trillion worth of transactions, mostly focused on coronavirus-resilient sectors such as technology and healthcare, according to Refinitiv data. Under the terms of the deal, each share of IHS Markit will be exchanged for a fixed ratio of 0.2838 shares of S&P Global stock.

'Rattiest city in the US' ... Chicago

Chicago in the United States has been awarded a title for the sixth year in a row, that any city would not be proud of.

- ★ The title is the “Rattiest City in the United States” and is given by Orkin, a pest control service. The annual award ranks cities in the country based on the number of new rodent treatments carried out in a year. Chicago has retained the top spot for the sixth consecutive time.
- ★ The rankings are based on a survey carried out by the company from September 1 to August 31 every year. These rankings include both residential and commercial treatments.

Egypt reveals 59 ancient coffins

Egypt's tourism and antiquities minister Khalid el-Anany said archaeologists have unearthed dozens of ancient coffins in a vast necropolis south of Cairo, Pyramid of Djoser in Saqqara.



- ★ They found at least 59 sealed sarcophagi, with mummies inside. Most of them were found that had been buried in three wells more than 2,600 years ago.
- ★ The Saqqara plateau hosts at least 11 pyramids, including the Step Pyramid, along with hundreds of tombs of ancient officials and other sites that range from the 1st Dynasty (2920 B.C.-2770 B.C.) to the Coptic period (395-642).
- ★ The Saqqara site is part of the necropolis of Egypt's ancient capital of Memphis that includes the famed Giza Pyramids, as well as smaller pyramids at Abu Sir, Dahshur, and Abu Ruwaysh. The ruins of Memphis have designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in the 1970s.

Kerala cultivates 'chocolate' rice

Poomangalam, a little panchayath in Thrissur, will now be known to the world for this special matta rice variety, which has been developed independently by a farmers' collective here.

- ★ According to reports, the farmers collective cultivated 'Poomangalam Matta', a rice variety, which gives away taste and aroma of chocolate and contains several medicinal properties as well. - A team of 15 farmers were trained at the Mannuthy Agricultural University under Haritha Karma Sena. They began the cultivation process with support from Krishi Bhavan and the Panchayath.

MoHUA declares star rating of garbage free cities

The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) announced the results of star rating of garbage free cities. MoHUA minister Hardeep Singh Puri said that Ambikapur (Chhattisgarh), Rajkot (Gujarat), Surat(Gujarat), Mysuru (Karnataka), Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra) have been certified with 5-Star ratings for Garbage free cities.

- ★ For the assessment year 2019-2020, 65 cities have been certified as 3-Star and 70 cities as 1-Star City.

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