

Current Affairs Today –25.08.2020

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CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL

Validity of motor vehicle documents extended till Dec 31 amid Covid-19 pandemic



- **Central government** extended the validity of **expiring driving licenses** and **motor vehicle** documents till **December 31** in the wake of coronavirus crisis.
- This is the third such extension after the earlier advisories on March 30 and June 9.
- “Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has decided to extend the validity of Fitness, Permits, Licenses, Registration or other documents under Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 till the 31st of December 2020,” a release from the ministry stated.
- “The Ministry had earlier issued advisories on 30th March and 9th June this year regarding extension of validity of the documents related to Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989. It was advised that the validity of Fitness, Permit (all types), License, Registration or any other concerned document(s) may be treated to be valid till 30th of September 2020,” the statement added.

About MoRTH:

- Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Minister of Shipping and MSME: Nitin Jairam Gadkari
- Constituency: Nagpur, Maharashtra

CMIA partners with UNDP to set up help desk for MSMEs



- **Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture (CMIA)** has partnered with **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** to establish **Covid-19 help desk** to **facilitate Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**.
- The help desk will provide various information on government safety guidelines, regulatory norms and government Covid-19 response schemes and support measures.
- 'Covid-19 help desk will support MSMEs through in-person and phone consultation. It will offer advisory services on scaling operations and bridging the skill gap. It will also facilitate linkages to financial institutions and government departments," stated CMIA.
- The helpdesk will facilitate the recruitment of skilled workforce requirements based on the demand of MSMEs in partnership with state skill development missions and other relevant government departments/support agencies.

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- "The help desk will host regular webinars, consultation and interactive sessions for MSMEs to address and alleviate the Covid-19 related business challenges, clarify their queries, promotion of the business, financial guidance with necessary linkage to get support from the government and other stakeholders," the statement added.
- The help desk will be active till January 2021. MSMEs are requested to reach out to CMIA for their relevant jobs and apprenticeship opportunities available with the industries with skill requirements, location, qualification, experience etc and challenges faced by MSMEs.

About Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture (CMIA):

- President– Kamleish Dhoot
- Headquarter– Aurangabad, Maharashtra

About United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):

- Administrator– Achim Steiner
- Headquarter– New York, United States of America (USA)

CURRENT AFFAIRS: INTERNATIONAL

India, Uzbekistan Co-Chair First National Coordination Committee Meet; Discuss Trade, Investment



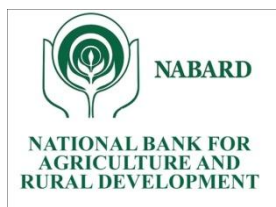
- **India** and **Uzbekistan** co-chaired the **first National Coordination Committee** meeting, wherein they held "fruitful" discussions on issues of bilateral interests such as Line of Credit (LoC) projects, trade and investment.
- The meeting was co-chaired by Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan and Uzbekistan Deputy Prime Minister Sardor Umurzakov.
- India and Uzbekistan have a modest bilateral trade turnover of over **USD 300 million**. Pharmaceuticals is a major area of both trade and investment by India. Medical tourism to India has increased sharply in the recent past.
- Notable Indian investments in Uzbekistan have been made by Indian companies in the fields of pharmaceuticals, amusement parks, automobile components and hospitality industry. A Joint Centre for Information Technology was set up in 2006 and upgraded in 2014.
- An IT Park in Tashkent, established with Indian assistance, was inaugurated in July last year.

About Uzbekistan:

- Capital– Tashkent
- Currency– Uzbekistani soʻm

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING AND FINANCE

Nabard introduces debt and credit guarantee product



- The **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard)** has introduced a **dedicated debt and credit guarantee product, 'Structured Finance and Partial Guarantee Program for Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFC)-Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs)'**, to ensure unhindered flow of credit to the last mile in rural areas hit by the pandemic.
- The program entails providing partial guarantee on pooled loans extended to small and mid-sized MFIs.
- **Pooled Loan Issuance (PLI)** structure provides the lending bank adequate comfort through **partial credit protection, reduces cost of capital** as the rating of the loans get notched up, and **helps lenders meet priority sector goals**.
- Average size of **Rs.500 crore** of assets under management) that operate in rural hinterlands and serve farmers, traders, rural businesses and households.
- Nabard has collaborated with **Vivriti Capital**, a technology-led credit platform, as the structurer for the facility.
- Vivriti Capital manages and runs CredAvenueTM, a marketplace for enterprise debt, which enables enterprises to raise debt from loan, bond and securitisation markets.
- **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** has tied up with **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank** and **Vivriti** to provide **Rs 25000 crore** funding support to low income households.

About NABARD

- Founded: 12 July 1982
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Chairman: G R Chinthala

Government of India and AIIB Sign Agreement For \$500 Million To Improve Network Capacity Of Mumbai Suburban Rail



- The **Government of India, the Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation** and the **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** signed a loan agreement for a **\$500 million Mumbai Urban Transport Project-III** to improve the network capacity, service quality and safety of the suburban railway system in Mumbai.
- The Project is expected to increase network capacity in the region with the reduction in journey time and fatal accidents of commuters. It is estimated that among primary beneficiaries of the project, 22% are female passengers who will benefit from improved safety and quality of service. The loan agreement was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, on behalf of the Government of India.
- This project will assist in improved mobility, service quality and safety of passengers of the sub urban railway system of Mumbai, by providing faster, more reliable and higher quality transport services compared to road-based transport. There will be direct safety benefits to passengers and the public through introduction of trespass control measures.

About AIIB:

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- Headquarters: Beijing, China
- President: Jin Liquan

RBI announces OMO worth Rs.20,000 crore to tame G-Sec yields



- The **Reserve Bank of India** has decided to conduct **simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities (G-Secs)** under **open market operation (OMO)** for **Rs.10,000 crore** each on **August 27** and **September 3** in a bid to tame **G-Sec yields**, which jumped almost 24 basis points in the last six trading sessions.
- This announcement seems to have had the intended effect, with the yield on the benchmark 10-year G-Sec immediately softening about 5 basis points. One basis point is equal to one-hundredth of a percentage point.
- Under the OMO to be conducted on August 27, the Central bank will purchase four G-Secs — those maturing in 2024, carrying a coupon rate of 6.18 per cent (6.18 per cent G-Sec 2024); 8.24 per cent G-Sec 2027; 5.79 per cent G-Sec 2030; and 7.95 per cent G-Sec 2032 — for Rs.10,000 crore.
- Simultaneously, the RBI will be selling four 182-day Treasury Bills, maturing on October 15, October 22, October 29 and November 6, 2020, for Rs.10,000 crore.
- The spike in G-Sec yields came in the backdrop of a rise in retail inflation and the RBI holding the repo rate in the last policy review.
- The move to sell 182-day Treasury Bills will ensure that the liquidity that will be released due to purchase of G-Secs by the RBI is neutralised, he added.
- The securities for the second tranche auction (purchase and sale of G-Secs under OMO for Rs.10,000 crore each) on September 3 will be announced separately, the Central bank stated.

About Reserve Bank of India (RBI):

- Headquarters— Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Formation— 1 April 1935
- Governor— Shaktikanta Das
- Deputy Governors— 4 (Bibhu Prasad Kanungo, Mahesh Kumar Jain, Michael Debabrata Patra, one is yet to be appointed).

NSE to launch 'silver options' in commodity derivatives segment from September 1



- **Leading stock exchange NSE** will launch **'silver options'** in the commodity derivatives segment from **September 1**.
- The exchange has received markets regulator SEBI's nod for 'options' in goods contracts on the underlying silver spot price for trading in the commodity derivatives segment, the NSE stated.
- The move is aimed at offering new products to commodity market participants and to deepen the market ecosystem.

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- Earlier, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) had launched '**gold mini options**' on June 8.
- An options contract gives the buyer or holder of the contract the right (but not the obligation) to buy or sell the underlying asset at a pre-determined price within or at the end of a specified period.

About NSE:

- Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer – Mr. Vikram Limaye
- Headquarters – Mumbai.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Tech Mahindra and NITI Aayog collaborate to support women entrepreneurs in India



- **Tech Mahindra** announced a collaboration with **NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)** to support **women entrepreneurs** across the country.
- Tech Mahindra will provide mentorship, co-create solutions leveraging **new age technologies** and support in **developing a go-to-market strategy**.
- The partnership is to recognise women leaders in entrepreneurship across various sectors like Healthcare and Lifesciences, Agritech, Education amongst others.
- Tech Mahindra's Research & Development arm, Makers lab will support women entrepreneurs through joint research, building go-to-market strategies to drive their growth and by leveraging next-generation technologies to develop cutting-edge solutions.
- Through this collaboration, Tech Mahindra and WEP will jointly focus on breeding new ideas, identifying gaps and providing technological prowess to develop innovative solutions for better positioning in the market and commercial success.

About Tech Mahindra

- CEO: C. P. Gurnani
- Headquarters: Pune

About Niti Aayog

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chairperson: Narendra Modi

CURRENT AFFAIRS: STATES

Delhi govt launches Niraman Mazdoor Registration Abhiyan for construction workers



- The **Delhi government** launched **Niraman Mazdoor Registration Abhiyan**, under which a mega registration campaign will be held **for construction workers** from August 24 to September 11.

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- Delhi government will set up camps at 70 schools for registration of construction labourers at all the 70 assembly constituencies.
- Carpenters, worker grinders, construction site guards, the people who work in concrete mixers, crane operator, electrician, comp operator, Mason (Raj Mistry), tiles stone fitters, welders, coolies, and others can apply for respective jobs.
- The labourers can also submit their application online by visiting --- **edistrict.delhigovt.nic.in**.
- For the registration, the age limit is between 18-60.
- Documents like -- certification of work, photo, local ID proof, bank account number and Aadhaar card are required for the registration.
- After the successful completion of this 15-day registration camp, the Delhi government will analyse the process and decide the future action plan.

About New Delhi

- Chief minister: Arvind Kejriwal
- Lt. Governor: Anil Bajjal

Kerala's first-ever Dragonfly Festival



- **WWF-India Kerala State Office** is joining hands with the **Society for Odonate Studies (SOS)** and **Thumbipuranam** for the first-ever state **Dragonfly Festival in Kerala**, christened '**Thumbi Maholsavam 2020**'.
- This is part of the National Dragonfly Festival organised by WWF India, Bombay Natural History Society and Indian Dragonfly Society in association with National Biodiversity Board, UN Environmental Programme, UN Development Programme and IUCN-CEC.
- Dragonfly Festival, a series of events will be rolled out in the coming months to reach out to various sections of the society.
- The official mascot of the festival is "**Pantalu**" which is the genus of dragonfly in the family Libellulidae commonly known as rainpool gliders.
- A 'Dragonfly Backyard Watch' has also been announced to enhance the participation of people and improve their observation skills.
- A field guide on '**Common Dragonflies of Kerala**' and a '**Children's Dragonfly Coloring & Activity Book**' is also under development.

About Kerala

- Capital: Thiruvananthapuram
- Chief minister: Pinarayi Vijayan
- Governor: Arif Mohammad Khan

CURRENT AFFAIRS: MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

Axis Bank to acquire 17% in Max Life Insurance instead of 29%



- **Axis Bank** has decided to cut down on its investments in **Max Life Insurance**. It now plans to acquire **17.002 per cent** of the equity share capital of the life insurer.
- This will result in total ownership of 18 per cent post the transaction, Axis Bank stated
- The private sector lender had in April announced plans to **acquire 29 per cent** stake in Max Life Insurance. This would have taken its overall shareholding in the insurer to 30 per cent.
- The parties have executed the definitive agreements. Axis Bank and Max Life will shortly approach the respective regulatory authorities, with revised applications for their consideration and approval, Axis Bank further stated.
- The lender did not specify the reasons for this change in plans but it is understood that the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India had wanted some changes in the proposed agreement.

About Axis Bank:

- CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry
- Headquarters: Mumbai

About Max Life Insurance

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- CEO: Prashant Tripathy

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPS AND PORTALS

IAF launches mobile app 'MY IAF' to provide career-related information to aspirants



- **Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria** launched a mobile application, "MY IAF", that **will provide career-related information** to those who want to join the Indian Air Force.
- The application, developed in association with **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)**, provides career-related information and details for those desirous of joining the IAF.
- The application is available on Google Play store for android phones and is linked to the IAF's social media platforms.

Uttar Pradesh: CM Yogi Adityanath launches NRI unified portal



- In **Uttar Pradesh**, the State Government will prepare a database of the migrant workers of the state working in different countries of the world. It will help in providing them assistance during any emergency. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched an ambitious **NRI unified portal**.

- The Chief Minister stated that the portal would also prove helpful to overseas Indians and NRIs to get their problems with the local administration or the State Government resolved. He stated that many people who are living abroad, but are in constant touch with their village and family. Sometimes, they could not find a platform to help their families resolve the problems related to their house and issues with local administration.
- The website - **nri.up.gov.in** - will also provide a platform for NRIs keen to know about their roots or those seeking help from the UP Government related to their homes or families in the state.
- The NRI department of state will use festivals to connect with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in other countries. The NRI department in the state will be live streaming the Deepotsav festival in Ayodhya during Diwali and then the Holi celebrations in Vrindavan too. Other Uttar Pradesh festivals and cultural events will also be a part of this initiative.

About UP:

- Capital: Lucknow
- Governor: Anandiben Patel
- Chief minister: Yogi Adityanath

Government launches 'Open API Service' in Aarogya Setu app



- **The Government** has introduced '**Open API Service**', a novel feature to help the people, businesses and the economy to return to normalcy.
- The Open API Service of Aarogya Setu, can be availed by organisations and business entities, who are registered in India with more than 50 employees, and they can use the Open API Service to query **the Aarogya Setu Application** in real-time and get the health status of their employees or any other Aarogya Setu User, who have provided their consent for sharing their health status with the organization.
- The Open API shall only provide the Aarogya Setu status and name of the Aarogya Setu User (with User's consent). No other personal data shall be provided through the API, a government statement stated adding this service would enable organisations to get the health status of their employees or any other Aarogya Setu Users without violating their data privacy.
- The **Aarogya Setu ITIHAS** interface which uses location data and Aarogya Setu analytics to predict emerging hotspots at sub pincode levels, has been also effective in helping the health officials and administration to take necessary precautionary steps.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

DRDO chief G Satheesh Reddy gets two-year extension





- **G Satheesh Reddy** has been given a **two-year extension** as the **Chairman of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**.
- He was appointed to the post in August 2018 for two years, and now has gotten two year extension.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the extension of Reddy's tenure as the DRDO chairman and as the Secretary of the Department of Defence Research & Development for a period of two years beyond August 26.

About DRDO

- Headquarters: DRDO Bhavan, New Delhi
- Founded: 1958

CURRENT AFFAIRS: AWARDS AND HONORS

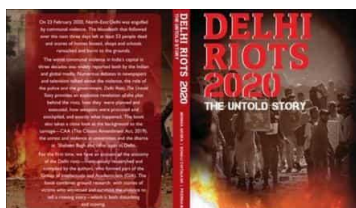
Wabag Wins Prestigious Global Water Award For Project In Chennai



- **Water technology major Va Tech Wabag** has won the **prestigious Global Water Award** for its 45 million litres a day **tertiary treatment reverse osmosis (TTRO) plant** at Koyambedu in **Chennai**.
- The TTRO plant is one of the largest and technologically most advanced water reuse plants in India designed and built by a consortium comprising Wabag and IDE Technologies for Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board.
- The plant makes Chennai the first Indian city to reuse more than 20 per cent of its treated wastewater.
- The project will boost Chennai's water resilience and sustainability in the wake of the city's ongoing struggles with drought and water scarcity.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Garuda Prakashan to publish book on Delhi riots



- **Garuda Prakashan** will publish "**Delhi Riots 2020: The Untold Story**".
- The authors — advocate **Monika Arora** and Delhi University teachers **Sonali Chitalkar** and **Prerna Malhotra**.
- Bloomsbury India said that Bloomsbury UK has pressurised them to withdraw this book.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Start up RoDeSo develops gesture controlled robot Astra for remote use in Covid, hazardous environment



- A student start-up **RoDeSo** of the **BITS Pilani Hyderabad Technology Business Incubator (TBI)** has developed a voice and gesture controlled robot '**Astra**' (**Automated Solution for Transportation in Remote Area**) which can be deployed in isolation wards for Covid-19 infected cases.
- This could be used for delivery of essentials to patients, collection of contagious waste and virtual visits to the patient by doctors.
- The rover is an AI-powered, compact, multi motor, gesture and voice controlled transportation solution.
- The start-up also has an IOT (internet of things) based application to control the bot remotely.
- RoDeSo has already developed the alpha version and plans to add more functionalities like screen for live video conference with doctors, infrared sensors for temperature recording, health management system and navigation control for zero human intervention.

Manipur student develops mobile game 'Coroboi' amid COVID-19



- A class 9 student from Imphal, **Baldeep Ningthoujam** has developed a mobile game '**Coroboi**' amid COVID-19 pandemic.
- The game, based on COVID guidelines is now available for Android users.
- "**Coroboi**", a boy from India (Manipur) is stranded and wants to return home. Wearing Leirum Phee (Manipuri traditional cloth) and a Mask, he will run towards his goal. He will be earning points during his journey. If the police caught him, a fine of 5000 points will be deducted.

IIT Madras, Stuttgart University develop method to dispose pharma waste



- **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras** along with **German researchers** have developed '**co-composting**' methods that can be used to safely **dispose of toxic pharmaceutical wastewater and sludge**.
- Their method converts the **waste into compost of high quality and within just 20 days**.
- A few composting facilities have already been set up in various villages across India based on these studies.
- The Research team is also in discussion with the Government of India for setting up more such facilities for septage management. While the initial objective of the study was to understand how pharmaceuticals and personal care

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products affect the composting process, the results obtained in the study have opened up the avenue of use of 'Co-composting' to treat toxic wastewater sludge.

- The Research team was led by Prof. Ligy Philip, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras, and included Anu Rachel Thomas from IIT Madras and Prof. Martin Kranert from the Germany-based Institute for Sanitary Engineering, Water Quality and Solid Waste Management, Stuttgart University.
- For this study, the team decided to determine the degradation pattern of Triclosan and carbamazepine. While triclosan is a commonly used antimicrobial compound in toothpaste, detergents and soap, among other products. Carbamazepine is a widely used antiepileptic drug.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SPORTS

Kallis, Sthalekar and Zaheer Abbas inducted into ICC Cricket Hall of Fame



- The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** inducted **three retired greats of the game** into the **ICC Cricket Hall of Fame** during an absorbing show broadcast around the world via ICC digital channels.
- **South Africa's** gritty all-rounder **Jacques Kallis** and talented **Australian World Cup-winning** all-rounder **Lisa Sthalekar** were joined by **Zaheer Abbas of Pakistan**, a stylish batsman of the 1970s and 80s who was also known as the Asian Bradman.
- Kallis is the fourth South African player inducted and Zaheer the sixth from Pakistan. Lisa is the 27th from Australia and the ninth woman player in the list, which includes five from Australia.

About ICC

- CEO: Manu Sawhney
- Headquarters: Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Australia all-rounder Cameron White announces retirement from professional cricket



- **Former Australia captain** and **all-rounder Cameron White** has announced his **retirement from all forms of professional cricket**.
- Cameron White also played for Royal Challengers Bangalore and the now-defunct Deccan Chargers in the Indian Premier League between 2007 and 2012. He was later bagged by the Sunrisers Hyderabad for the 2013 season.
- White won 10 domestic trophies - 6 Sheffield Shields, a domestic one-day crown, 2 wins in the old state-based T20 league and a Big Bash League trophy. He played 240 Twenty20 matches, scoring 5469 runs and 708 wickets at 27.23.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARY

Filmmaker AB Raj passes away at 95



- **Veteran filmmaker AB Raj passed away**, following a cardiac arrest. He was 95.
- A B Raj began his career as a filmmaker in Sri Lanka. He directed more than 10 films in Sinhalese under the name A Bhaskar Raj.
- He also assisted English filmmaker David Lean during the making of the 1957 movie The Bridge on the River Kwai.
- The filmmaker made his directorial debut in Tamil at the beginning of the 1970s with Thulli Odum Pullimaan.

DAILY CA 23rd & 24th AUG

- Earth Overshoot Day- 22nd aug
- International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief - 22 August
- Shri Ram Vilas Paswan launches online system of Registration and Renewal for Jewellers and online system of recognition and renewal of Assaying and Hallmarking (A&H) Centers
- India's longest river ropeway connecting Guwahati and North Guwahati over Brahmaputra river inaugurated
- Govt activates Aadhaar authentication for new GST registration
- Centre Forms National Council for Transgenders to Formulate Policies Aimed at Equality & Participation
- Mahatma Gandhi's Iconic Glasses Sold For \$340,000 In UK
- WHO blasts 'vaccine nationalism' in last-ditch push against hoarding
- Axis Bank launches hiring initiative named 'Gig-a-Opportunities'
- Digital payments market in India likely to grow 3-fold to Rs 7,092 lakh cr by 2025
- Paytm Payments Bank enables banking through Aadhaar cards
- RBL Bank Selects Accenture to Accelerate Its Digital Journey
- Odisha celebrates festival Nuakhai festival
- Odisha Introduces Scheme to Promote Bio-Floc Fish Farming Technology
- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari to lay foundation stone & inaugurate 35 highway projects in MP
- Ministry of Tourism virtually signs an MoU with Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) & FICCI Ladies Organisation(FLO) to promote tourism as sustainable livelihood model for women's economic empowerment
- People's Bank of China picks up stake in ICICI Bank via QIP issue
- Tata Plans 'Super App' To Bring Together Its Consumer Services
- Anand Mahindra, Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen to receive 2020 Leadership Awards from USISPF
- NLCIL bags "Swachhta Hi Seva award" for transforming Neyveli Township into plastic-free, green campus
- Govt school teacher from Ladakh selected for National Awards to Teachers, 2020
- IIT Bombay, Shiv Nadar researchers develop environment friendly lithium batteries
- China sends a new Earth observation satellite Gaofen-9 05 into space
- Book titled "Who painted my lust red?" authored by Sree Iyer launched
- India Pavilion At Army-2020 Forum Inaugurated In Russia
- National Sports Awards 2020 announced: Dhronacharya and Dhyan Chand winners list

- Football: Bayern Munich beat Paris Saint-Germain to win UEFA Champions League
- First female golfer from Germany Sophia Popov wins Women's British Open

DAILY CA 25th AUG

- Validity of motor vehicle documents extended till Dec 31 amid Covid-19 pandemic
- CMIA partners with UNDP to set up help desk for MSMEs
- India, Uzbekistan Co-Chair First National Coordination Committee Meet; Discuss Trade, Investment
- Nabard introduces debt and credit guarantee product
- Government of India and AIIB Sign Agreement For \$500 Million To Improve Network Capacity Of Mumbai Suburban Rail
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