UPPCS प्रारंभिक परीक्षा
ब्रह्मास्त्र 2020-21
Current Affairs का महासंग्राम
परीक्षा में इस से बाहर कुछ नहीं आएगा
UPPCS 2021 Special: UP Specific Current Affairs 2020-21

Uttar pradesh govt. to conduct special drive to make roads 'pothole-free'

• The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to conduct a 30-day special drive from September 15 to November 15, 2021, to make the roads in the state "pothole-free".

• As per the ministry of road transport and highway (MoRTH), Uttar Pradesh (UP) made up for the largest share - 15% of total road accident deaths in the country in 2019.

Smriti Irani inaugurates 'PM Matru Vandana Week' programme

• Union Minister Smriti Irani on 5 September 2021 inaugurated the 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana (PMMV) Week' programme organised at the community health centre in Amethi.

• In the programme, pregnant women were given information related to healthy living and better care.

• Under PMMV, assistance amounting to Rs 14.52 crores has been given to 42,000 beneficiaries in Amethi.

Former Minister Atmaram Tomar passes away

• Former minister, Atmaram Tomar, who had contested the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections, passed away in September 2021.

• He has also served as the principal of Janata Vedic College was a senior BJP leader from Uttar Pradesh.

• In 1993, Atmaram Tomar had contested elections on a BJP ticket from the Chhaprauli constituency.

• A few years later, he served as a BJP Minister in the state in 1997.

Foundation stones laid for UP National Law University

• President of India, Ram Nath Kovind visited Prayagraj in Uttar Pardesh on 11 September 2021.

• During his one-day visit, President laid the foundation stones for Uttar Pradesh National Law University and the new building complex of Allahabad High Court.
• He also laid the foundation stone for multi-level parking, advocate chamber library, and an auditorium.

Uttar pradesh govt. declares 22 wards of MVNN as holy pilgrimage sites

• The Uttar Pradesh government declared 22 wards of the Mathura-Vrindavan Nagar Nigam (MVNN) area as holy pilgrimage sites.
• Mathura and Vrindavan are the birthplace and 'krira sthal' of Lord Krishna.
• Dwarkapuri, Vankhandi, Arjunpura, Jagannathpuri, Gaughat, Manoharpur, Bairagpura, Radhanagar, Badrinagar, Mahavidya Colony, Krishna Nagar I are some of the wards among others.

Uttar pradesh Chief minister inaugurates and lays foundation stone of multiple projects

• Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple development projects in Sant Kabirnagar and Kushinagar districts on 12 September 2021.
• He informed the state government that will soon roll out 90,000 more jobs.
• He also informed that the work on the international airport in Kushinagar is in the final stage and it will be inaugurated soon.

PepsiCo commissions Rs 814 crore food plant in Uttar Pradesh

• Soft drinks and packaged foods company PepsiCo commissioned its greenfield food plant in Mathura in Uttar Pradesh, built at a cost of Rs 814 crore on 15 September 2021.
• The plant has been inaugurated by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
• The food plant is PepsiCo’s largest greenfield investment in manufacturing in India and will be used for making Lay’s potato chips.

UNDP, HDFC and Greater Noida Authority ink pact

• The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), HDFC Bank and the Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA) have inked a pact.
• They will set up a facility to manage up to 300 metric tonnes of dry waste in the city every month.
• The material recovery facility (MRF) in Greater Noida will come up at a cost of Rs 3 crore and will be funded by the HDFC bank.

Uttar pradesh Chief minister distributes tool kits to 21,000 beneficiaries under VSSY

• On the occasion of Vishwakarma Jayanti, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on 17 September 2021 distributed tool kits to 21,000 beneficiaries under ‘Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana’ (VSSY).

• Under VSSY, youths are imparted training in traditional work like carpentry, tailoring, blacksmith, goldsmith, pottery shop, and running sweat meat shop.

KVIC launches SPIN Scheme to empower potters' community in Varanasi

• Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) launched a unique scheme called SPIN (Strengthening the Potential of India) on the occasion of "Sewa Diwas", the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

• It also set up a pottery cluster under SFURTI (Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries Scheme) in Varanasi to empower over 1100 people of the marginalized potters' community.

Metro train services in Agra and Kanpur to start operations by November

• In Uttar Pradesh, two more cities Agra and Kanpur will have Metro rail service by November 2021.

• It was informed by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Gorakhpur while virtually unveiling the first prototype train for the two projects.

• These prototypes Metro trains were received from Vadodara in Gujarat.

• In Agra the Metro rail in first phase will run in the stretch of 6 kilometer.

Uttar pradesh govt. to set up electronic park in 250 acres near Jewar Airport

• The Uttar Pradesh government will set up an electronic park in the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (Yeida) area.

• It is expected to attract an investment of ₹50,000 crores.

• The Uttar Pradesh government had earlier announced a medical device park in Noida.
• Yeida has earmarked 350 acres of land for the first medical device park in Uttar Pradesh that will be built in two phases.

Uttar Pradesh’s homeopathic doctor awarded with IPA 2021

• World Against Corruption (WAC) People Council and WAC Global Human Rights Foundation awarded Dr. Bhasker Sharma with the International Prestigious Award (IPA) 2021.

• Dr. Bhasker Sharma is a renowned homeopathic doctor of Uttar Pradesh.

• WAC People Council is a Maharashtra-based non-profit foundation registered under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt.

President of Akhil Bhartiya Akhada Parishad Narendra Giri passes away

• President of the Akhil Bhartiya Akhara Parishad and Mahant of Bade Hanuman temple of Prayagraj, Narendra Giri, passed away in September 2021.

• He belonged to Shri Panchayati Akhara Niranjan, one of the ancient monastic orders of the country.

• Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad is the apex decision-making body of the 13 recognized Hindu monastic orders of the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi lays the foundation stone of Raja Mahendra Pratap University and Defense Corridor in Aligarh

• Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Raja Mahendra Pratap University and Defense Corridor during his visit to Aligarh on 14 September 2021.

• The university is being established by the state government in the memory and honor of the great freedom fighter, educationist and social reformer Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh.

“Nirbhaya-Ek Pahal” program launched in Uttar Pradesh

• Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched “Nirbhaya-Ek Pahal” program under Mission Shakti-Phase 3 in Lucknow.
During this, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath told that 75,000 women would join the state banks, get loans at affordable interest rates and avail the state subsidy under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana for 3 months.

**Home minister Amit Shah launches projects in Uttar Pradesh**

- The Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched several development projects in Uttar Pradesh on 1 Aug’21.
- He laid the foundation stone for Vindhyachal Corridor Project and inaugurated a ropeway in Mirzapur.
- He also laid the foundation stone of Uttar Pradesh Institute of Forensic Sciences, (UPIFS) in Lucknow.
- UPIFS would help provide assistance to maintain the law and order situation in the state.

**Uttar Pradesh to provide Rs 2,500 per month to children**

- The Uttar Pradesh cabinet has approved a proposal to provide financial assistance of Rs 2,500 per month under the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Bal Seva Yojana (general) to children below 18 years who lost their parents due to reasons other than COVID-19.
- The Cabinet also decided that monetary help will be provided to adults between 18 to 23 years who have lost their parents or guardians due to COVID-19.

**IIT-Kanpur approves students ENT policy**

- Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur has approved a comprehensive students entrepreneurship policy.
- The policy introduces the path-breaking concept of "innovation and entrepreneurship credit".
- The institute also has a faculty entrepreneurship policy under which the faculty members can start a company while continuing as regular employees of the institute.

**Centre releases grant-in-aid to Uttar Pradesh under JJM**

- The Jal Shakti ministry has released a Rs 2,400 crore grant-in-aid to Uttar Pradesh against an allocation of Rs10,870 crore for the financial year 2021-22 under the Jal Jeevan Mission.
• It is the highest allocation to any state under the JJM.
• JJM is envisioned to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India.

R. K. Singh launches e-certification programme
• Power Minister R K Singh has launched an e-certification programme, 'reform and regulatory knowledge base for power sector', to provide regulatory training.
• He also launched a Regulatory Data Dashboard.
• It is an e-compendium of data containing state-wise details of tariff and power discoms (distribution companies) performance, developed by IIT Kanpur.

Uttar Pradesh government renames Kakori Kand
• Uttar Pradesh government has renamed the 'Kakori Kand' to 'Kakori Train action'.
• It has been renamed since the word 'Kand' denotes a sense of insult to this incident under India's Independence struggle.
• The Uttar Pradesh Government celebrated the anniversary of the 'Kakori Train action' on 9 August 2021 under the program 'Chauri Chaura Mahotsav' which is going to complete 100 years in 2022.

Ghaziabad second most polluted city in 2020
• A recent report prepared by British company HouseFresh has revealed that Bangladesh was the most polluted country across the world in 2020, followed by Pakistan, India, and Mongolia.
• Out of the 50 'most polluted cities' in the world, the Indian city Ghaziabad in UP has been given the second spot.
• China's Hotan province is the most polluted city in the world.

Uttar Pradesh felicitates Tokyo Olympics medal winners
• The Uttar Pradesh government felicitated the Tokyo Olympics medal winners and contingent members of Uttar Pradesh at Lucknow on 19 August 2021.
• A cash prize of rupees 2 crores was given to the gold medal winner, Rs 1.50 crore to the silver medallists, and rupees 1 crore to the bronze medallists.

• Those who stood at fourth place and did better show were honoured with rupees 50 lakh.

Uttar Pradesh setting up ATS training centre in Deoband

• The Uttar Pradesh govt has decided to set up a training centre for Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) commandos in Saharanpur's Deoband, known for its Islamic seminary Darul Uloom Deoband.

• Over one and a half dozen ATS officers, selected from all over the state, will be deputed there.

• The government has already allotted over 2,000 square meters of land for establishing the ATS training center in Deoband.

Former Uttar Pradesh Chief minister Kalyan Singh passes away

• Former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Kalyan Singh died at the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGI) in Lucknow on 21 August 2021.

• Kalyan Singh was Rajasthan's first governor in five decades to complete his five-year term in the gubernatorial office.

• In 1991, Singh became the first BJP chief minister of the country's most populous state.

Uttar Pradesh launches 3rd phase of 'Mission Shakti'

• The Uttar Pradesh government launched the third phase of 'Mission Shakti' with an aim to promote safety and self-reliance for women.

• The main schemes to be implemented in this phase are the launch of 'Mission Shakti Kaksha' at all the 59,000-gram panchayat bhawans, the formation of one lakh women self-help groups, and the construction of pink toilets in 1,286 police stations, etc.

Road in Ayodhya to be named after Kalyan Singh
Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya has that the road leading to the Ram Janmbhoomi in Ayodhya will be named after the former UP Chief Minister Kalyan Singh.

Besides Ayodhya, one road each in Lucknow, Prayagraj, Bulandshahr, and Aligarh will also be named after him.

A two-time UP CM, Kalyan Singh also served as Governor of Rajasthan from 2014-2019.

Ganga Expressway project receives loan

A loan of Rs 5100 c sanctioned by Punjab National Bank was transferred for Ganga Expressway construction in Uttar Pradesh on 21 August 2021.

The Ganga Expressway will connect Meerut in west Uttar Pradesh to Prayagraj in the eastern part of the state.

The proposed Ganga Expressway will be around 594 km long, a 6-lane wide (expandable to eight lanes) greenfield expressway.

Uttar Pradesh govt to build first handicrafts park

The Uttar Pradesh government is in the process of building the first handicrafts park of UP in Sector 29 of Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA).

The maiden handicrafts park of UP would feature workshops, factories, and outlets making, showcasing, and selling the wide-ranging handicrafts of the state to domestic and global visitors.

Uttar Pradesh’s 1st AYUSH University in Gorakhpur

President Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone of UP’s first AYUSH University in Gorakhpur on 28 Aug 2021.

He also inaugurated the Mahayogi Guru Gorakhnath Vishwavidyalaya in the city.

With this, the district will have four Universities and this will be a step forward towards establishing Gorakhpur as an educational hub in the Purvanchal region.

Ramayana conclave launched in Ayodhya
• President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the Ramayana Conclave in Ayodhya on 29 August 2021.

• The 65 days long conclave will be organised in Gorakhpur, Baliya, Varanasi, Vindhyachal, Chitrakoot, Lalitpur, Shringverpur bithoor, Bijnor, Bareilly, Ghaziabad, Mathura, Garhmukteshwar, Saharanpur and Lucknow.

• It will have special experts who will narrate and discuss the various events of Ramayana.

Ram Van Gaman Marg’s draft ready
• The draft of the proposed ‘Ram Van Gaman Marg’ has been prepared by the Public Works Department in Uttar Pradesh.

• The project seeks to retrace the path believed to have been taken by Lord Ram on his way to exile with Sita and brother Lakshman.

• The route is to be developed till Chitrakoot via Sultanpur, Pratapgarh, Shringverpur Dham, Manjhanpur, and Rajapur.

Uttar Pradesh to get 9 new medical colleges
• 9 new medical colleges will come up in UP in July 2021 and these will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

• The new colleges will come up in Deoria, Etah, Fatehpur, Ghazipur, Hardoi, Jaunpur, Mirzapur, Pratapgarh, and Siddharthanagar districts.

• It is for the first time in the history of UP that such a large number of medical colleges will be inaugurated simultaneously.

Martyr Captain Manoj Pandey’s Sacrifice Day
• The 21st sacrifice day of Param Vir Chakra winner Captain Manoj Pandey was celebrated on 3 July 2021 in his native village Rura, district Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh.

• Captain Manoj Kumar Pandey was an officer of the PVC Indian Army, He was posthumously awarded India’s highest military honour, the Param Vir Chakra, for his audacious courage and leadership during the Kargil War in 1999.

New record set during Van Mahotsav
• Set a new record by planting 25 crore saplings during the week-long Van Mahotsav that ended on 4th July 2021 in Uttar Pradesh.

• To achieve the target of planting 25 crore saplings under the campaign, each district was given its own target.

• Under Van Mahotsav, the government aims to plant 30 crore saplings in the year 2021.

75 Major Projects Completed in Varanasi

• The Uttar Pradesh government has completed 75 mega projects worth over Rs 736 crore in Varanasi.

• 75 major projects completed include International Facilitation Center 'Rudraksh'.

• Varanasi is the parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

• Proposals for 64 other major infrastructure development projects worth over Rs 417 crore have already been approved.

Uttar Pradesh Government announces new Population Policy

• The Uttar Pradesh Government announced the new Population Policy 2021-2030’ on the occasion of World Population Day on 11 July 2021.

• According to the policy draft, people having more than two children will not be able to fight local body elections.

• Those who have up to two offsprings will be provided more government facilities and incentives.

Indian Institute of Heritage to be set up

• The govt has decided to set up the Indian Institute of Heritage at Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar.

• This was announced by Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy.

• It is being set up as deemed to be a university by integrating Institute of Archaeology (Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology), School of Archival Studies under National Archives of India, New Delhi, and several other organizations.
India to get its second-longest expressway
• India will soon get its second-longest expressway.
• The new Ganga Expressway will run across the breadth of the state of Uttar Pradesh and will connect some major cities in the state.
• It will be approximately 594 kms long.
• Once the expressway is made operational, the travel time between Delhi and Prayagraj is expected to be cut short from the current 10-11 hours to just 6-7 hours.

Uttar Pradesh government to set up panchayat secretariat
• The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has decided to set up a panchayat secretariat in all panchayats of the state.
• The move is aimed at strengthening rural democracy and providing employment to rural youth.
• Panchayat secretariat will be established in all gram panchayats for the first time in the state.
• There are currently 58,189-gram panchayats in Uttar Pradesh.

Corteva Agriscience inks pact with World Bank
• Global agricultural firm Corteva Agriscience has signed a three-year project with the 2030 Water Resources Group (2030 WRG) hosted by the World Bank Group, to promote sustainable rice cultivation in 40,000 acres in Uttar Pradesh.
• Corteva will also assist farmers with hybrid seeds and mechanized sowing services as well as help in soil testing and management of weeds and pests on the farms.

'Bal sewa yojna' launched by Uttar Pradesh
• Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, along with Governor Anandi Ben Patel, launched the “Uttar Pradesh Mukhyamantri Bal Sewa Yojna” at a function in Lok Bhawan on 22 July 2021.
• At present, an advance 3-month allowance (of Rs 4000 for each month) is being given to these 4,050 children, who became orphaned during the pandemic.
• Those studying in schools will be given tablets or laptops.
Chaurasi Kosi Marg declared a National Highway

- The Chaurasi Kosi Parikrama Marg in Ayodhya, UP has been declared a National Highway.
- About 80 kms of Ring Road in Ayodhya and 275 kms of Ayodhya Chaurasi Kosi Parikrama Marg will be made National Highway.
- The Parikrama Marg covers districts Ayodhya, Barabanki, Gonda, Basti, Ambedkarnagar.
- Also, the Parikrama route will connect people living in Bahraich, Raibareli, and Sultanpur as well.

Government of Uttar Pradesh and Sapio Analytics join hands

- Department of MSME, Government of Uttar Pradesh, has signed an MoU with government advisory firm Sapio Analytics.
- It will provide licenses of automation software Accloud, worth Rs. 72 crores, to 20,000 MSMEs of the state.

Foundation laid for Sainik School in Gorakhpur

- Uttar Pradesh Chief minister Yogi Adityanath on 23 July 2021 laid the foundation stone of Sainik School in Gorakhpur.
- The school, to be built in Gorakhpur Fertilizer Complex, will be the 5th Sainik School in the state.
- He also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of various development projects of over Rs. 187 crore.
- A Sainik School will come up in each of the Commissionerates of the state.

IIT Kanpur launches technology innovation hub

- IIT Kanpur has launched the first technology innovation hub to find cybersecurity solutions for anti-drones technologies, intrusion detection systems, block-chain, and cyber-physical system.
• As many as 13 start-ups and 25 research and development principal investigators were selected after a rigorous application process.

"MyGov Uttar Pradesh" portal launched

• Chief minister Yogi Adityanath launched "MyGov Uttar Pradesh" portal on 26 July 2021.

• It aims to take forward the idea of citizen engagement and to achieve the goal of 'Good Governance' in the biggest State of India.

• With this “innovative effort”, now the citizens can share their opinion on the government’s policy and the government can receive their feedback on programs of public interest.

Rs 10 lakh help to families of journalists

• Rs 10 lakh financial aid had been announced for family members of scribes who died due to COVID-19 by CM Yogi Adityanath.

• Families of a total of 36 journalists have received financial assistance which included the family of TV journalist Rohit Sardana.

• The cheque of the financial help was distributed in a function in Lucknow, UP on 31 July 2021.

14 Tiger Reserves get Global CA/TS recognition

• 14 Tiger Reserves in India have received the accreditation of the Global Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CA/TS).

• The 14 tiger reserves include Manas, Kaziranga and Orang in Assam, Satpura, Kanha and Panna in Madhya Pradesh, Pench in Maharashtra, Valmiki Tiger Reserve in Bihar, Dudhwa in Uttar Pradesh, Sunderbans in West Bengal, Parambikulam in Kerala, Bandipur reserve in Karnataka, etc.

Uttar Pradesh government started welfare scheme

• Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched a welfare scheme for children who have lost one or both parents due to COVID-19.

• Under the 'Uttar Pradesh Mukhyamantri Bal Sewa Yojana', the government will provide financial assistance to the guardian of the child.
• As a part of the scheme, the state government will give Rs 4000 to the guardian or caregiver of the child till they attain adulthood.

**UP government set a target of planting 30 crore saplings**

• The Uttar Pradesh government has set a target of planting 30 crore (300 million) saplings during the Van Mahotsav (afforestation festival).

• Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath made this announcement on 5 June 2021 on the occasion of World Environment Day.

• The Van Mahotsav program will start in the first week of July 2021.

**'Believe' autobiography of Uttar Pradesh cricketer Suresh Raina**

• Cricketer Suresh Raina has come out with his autobiography 'Believe - What Life Taught Me'.

• The cricketer shares a glimpse of his cricketing career in the book which includes stories of success, failure, injuries, setbacks and recovery from them.

• Co-written by Bharat Sundaresan, Suresh Raina narrates his journey from being a schoolboy in Uttar Pradesh to living the dream of playing for India.

**Shooting range will be named after Chandro Tomar**

• The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to name a shooting range in Noida after international shooter 'Chandro Tomar', popularly known as 'Shooter Dadi'.

• Chandro Tomar passed away in April 2021 due to COVID.

• Shooter Dadi started shooting professionally at the age of 60, and went on to win several national competitions.

• She is considered the oldest shooter in the world.

**Munishwar Nath Acting Chief Justice of Allahabad HC**

• The Center has notified the appointment of Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari as the Acting Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court.

• Justice Bhandari, the senior-most Judge of the Allahabad High Court, will perform the duties of the office of the Chief Justice of the High Court.

• Justice Bhandari was appointed as a judge of the Rajasthan High Court on 5 July 2007.

**Smart City Awards 2020 announced**

• The Central Government has announced Smart City Awards 2020.
• Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Surat (Gujarat) jointly won the award for their overall development.

• Uttar Pradesh topped all the states under Smart City Award, 2020, followed by Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

• Chandigarh won the award for Union Territories, while Indore won the "Innovative Idea Award".

Deepak Agrawal first head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs

• Varanasi Divisional Commissioner Deepak Agrawal has been appointed as the first director of the Directorate of Religious Affairs (DRA), which is headquartered in Varanasi.

• The DRA Headquarters will be set up with the help of Kashi Vishwanath Special Area Development Board (KVSADB).

• The sub-office of DRA will be set up at Kailash Mansarover office building in Ghaziabad.

Shambhu Nath appointed President of IFUNA

• Justice Shambhu Nath Srivastava, former judge of the Allahabad High Court, has been appointed as the President of the Indian Association of United Nations Associations.

• It is a non-profit organization to promote the objectives of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

• Shambhu Nath will replace Mukul Sangma, former Chief Minister of Meghalaya.

President Ram Nath Kovind reached Paraunkh in his native village of Kanpur Dehat

• He participated in a Jan-Abhinandan ceremony, in which Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Adityanath Yogi and State Governor Anandiben Patel were also with him.

• President Kovind traveled from Delhi to Kanpur in a special train.

• President Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Memorial Cultural Center in the capital Lucknow.

Anup Chandra Pandey appointed as Election Commissioner

• Union government has appointed Anup Chandra Pandey, as Election Commissioner. He is a retired IAS officer if 1984 batch from Uttar Pradesh cadre. He will serve the office for around three years and will retire in February 2024.

• He retired from civil services in August 2019. He had served as Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. He also worked as the Infrastructure and Industrial Development Commissioner of UP.

Birth anniversary of freedom fighter Ram Prasad Bismil
• Recently, the Ministry of Culture organised a special ceremony at Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh to mark the birth anniversary of freedom fighter Ram Prasad Bismil.

• He was born on 11th June, 1897, in a village in Uttar Pradesh’s Shahjahanpur district to Murlidhar and Moolmati.

• In 1925, Bismil and his companions Chandrasekhar Azad and Ashfaqulla Khan decided to loot a train in Kakori near Lucknow.

• They were successful in their attempt but were arrested alongside a dozen other HRA members within a month of the attack and tried under the Kakori Conspiracy Case. The legal process lasted 18 months. Bismil, Lahiri, Khan and Thakur Roshan Singh were awarded death sentences.

**Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam lists itself at BSE**

• Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam in Uttar Pradesh listed itself at BSE on 31 March 2021 and successfully raised Rs.150 crores by issuing a municipal bond on a private placement basis using BSE BOND.

• This is the first-ever green bond issuance by any Municipal Corporation in the country.

• The money will be used for the construction of a tertiary sewage treatment plant at Indirapuram in Ghaziabad.

**Delhi-Meerut Expressway opened for traffic**

• The Delhi-Meerut Expressway has been opened for traffic from 1 April 2021.

• The Expressway will reduce the travel time between Meerut and Delhi to 45 minutes instead of over two and half hours taken currently.

• It has been constructed with over 8 thousand crore rupees and will also help in resolving the problem of congestion and pollution.

**Newgen Software partners with Akshaya Patra**

• Newgen Software and Akshaya Patra Foundation have joined hands to offer mid-day meals and happiness kits.

• The company has sponsored around 17378 children in Vrindavan, Lucknow, and Jhalawar by completing the distribution in 2 rounds/phases: 8689 kits in each round.

• Till now a total donation of Rs.99,28,428 has been made towards the mid-day meal program.
Uttar Pradesh government launches unique gift scheme

• UP govt has launched a unique gift scheme to promote covid vaccination in the state.

• On World Health Day on 7th April 2021, the state government will conduct a lucky draw for those who have taken the vaccine.

• Where more than 25,000 beneficiaries have taken both doses of vaccine they will be eligible for this gift scheme.

• 4 gifts will be given to the beneficiaries after the lucky draw.

Gita Press head Radheshyam Khemka passes away

• Radheshyam Khemka, the President of Gita Press in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, passed away on 4 April 2021.

• Khemka was also the editor of Kalyan, a famous magazine of Sanatan Dharma for nearly 40 years.

• He was the one, who took Sanatan literature to the masses.

IIT Kanpur develops touch-sensitive watch

• Two researchers from IIT Kanpur have developed a touch-sensitive, tactile, haptic watch that can help visually impaired people learn what time it is by touching the face.

• The watch has been developed by prof Siddhartha Panda and Vishwaraj Srivastava of IIT Kanpur.

• The user has to touch and scan the hour indicator of the watch to know the time.

• The watch provides user privacy.

Ramayana Museum to be established in Uttar Pradesh

• An international level 'Ramayana Museum and Cultural Center' will be established on 10 acres of land at Ramasnehi Ghat between Ayodhya and Lucknow.

• This will enable people to get "grand and divine darshan" of the entire life of Lord Ram in one location instead of flitting from city to city.
• The museum will have performances of the Ramayana through puppets from Russia, Japan, Malaysia, etc.

Eminent historian Yogesh Praveen passes away

• Eminent historian and an expert on Awadh especially Lucknow, Yogesh Praveen passed away in April 2021.

• Awarded with Padma Shri in 2019 he had a long association with All India Radio Lucknow also.

• He wrote more than 30 books on Awadi culture and Lucknow and contributed several articles in newspapers and magazines.

Surendra Kumar Yadav appointed 'Deputy-Lokayukta' in Uttar Pradesh

• Retired judge Surendra Kumar Yadav took oath as third 'Deputy-Lokayukta in UP on 12 Apr’21.

• The other two Deputy-Lokayuktas are Shambu Singh Yadav and Dinesh Kumar Singh.

• The tenure of a 'Deputy-Lokayukta is 8 yrs.

• The Lokayukta functions as a statutory authority probing cases primarily related to corruption, government mismanagement, or abuse of power by public servants or ministers.

Agriculture Ministry signs MoU with Microsoft

• Union Agriculture Ministry has signed an MoU with Microsoft for a pilot project in 100 villages of six states.

• These states are Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Andhra Pradesh.

• Under this project, Microsoft will develop a farmer interface for smart and well-organized agriculture, including post-harvest management and distribution.

Uttar Pradesh government decides to establish 10 oxygen plants

• The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to establish 10 oxygen plants for an unabated supply of oxygen to the hospitals.
• A team of DRDO officials will help the state administration in this task.

• On the other hand, Hindustan aeronautics limited will help state administration in preparing a new covid hospital in Lucknow.

• A 24/7 control room has been made active for this purpose.

DRDO to set up Covid hospitals in 3 cities

• DRDO Chairman Dr G Satheesh Reddy informed that work is on to set up a 450-bed hospital in Lucknow, a 750-bed hospital in Varanasi and a 900-bed hospital in Ahmedabad amid the surge in COVID-19 cases.

• Pucca structure is being used to build the wards of the hospital, which has all medical facilities.

• DRDO has also set up a facility in New Delhi with all basic facilities free of charge.

Uttar Pradesh government to invoke National Security Act

• UP govt will invoke National Security Act and Gangster Act on those persons who are involved in black marketing and holding of necessary medicines, oxygen, and injections required for covid treatment.

• Very soon the state will get 1.25 lakh doses of remdesivir injection.

• The state health department has issued new guidelines to private and government hospitals for better management.

Uttar Pradesh government sets up oxygen monitoring system

• The Uttar Pradesh government has set up an ‘oxygen monitoring system’ in Lucknow.

• Under this system a Command Control Centre has been opened at Home Department in Lucknow.

• The system will help to monitor the live report on the movement of Oxygen tankers on a map.

• It will analyse and inform, if the tanker is getting delayed either in filling or in transportation.
Uttar Pradesh government orders 50 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccines

• Uttar Pradesh government has ordered 50 lakhs doses of Covishield and Covaxin each from manufacturing companies to ensure the availability of adequate doses of Covid-19 vaccine in the state.

Uttar Pradesh won “e-panchayat award 2021”

• The Uttar Pradesh government won the “E-Panchayat Puraskar 2021”, ranking first in Category I. It was followed by Assam and Chhattisgarh at the second position, while Odisha and Tamil Nadu stood third.

• Every year, the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj awards those states, which ensure maximum use of information technology to keep a tab on the work done by gram panchayats.

Uttar Pradesh Government announces free vaccine for all above 18 years from May 1

• The Uttar Pradesh Government on April 20, 2021, announced that it has decided to vaccinate free of cost to all those above the age of 18 years from May 1, 2021.

• The decision was taken at a State Cabinet meeting which was chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The Cabinet also thanked PM Modi for permitting the administering of the vaccine to all those above the age of 18 years.

Renowned Hindustani classical singer Pandit Rajan Mishra Passes Away

• Renowned Hindustani classical singer, from ‘Banaras Gharana’ of India, Pandit Rajan Mishra, has passed away. He was a vocalist in the khyal style of Indian classical singing.

• Mishra was awarded Padma Bhushan in the field of art in 2007. Pandit Rajan Mishra was also a recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, the Gandharwa National Award and the National Tansen Samman.

The founder member of Samajwadi Party and former Uttar Pradesh minister Bhagwati Singh passed away

• Founder member of Samajwadi Party and former UP minister Bhagwati Singh passed away. He was 89 years old.
• Singh was not cremated as he pledged to donate his body to King George's Medical University.

**Suresh Raina’s autobiography will be published in May 2021**

• Suresh Raina’s much-awaited autobiography titled "Believe - What Life and Cricket Taught Me" is set for release in May 2021.

• This book is co-authored by Raina and sports writer Bharat Sundaresan, this biography will be published by the prestigious publishing house Penguin India.

• In this book, Suresh Raina will talk about his fast rise in the Indian cricket team and the challenges in the way of becoming a record-breaking batsman, The book will also get to know the story of Raina’s early days as a rising cricketer in Uttar Pradesh.

**Shivalik Small Finance Bank Limited started its operations**

• Uttar Pradesh based Shivalik Small Finance Bank Limited started its operations as a Small Finance Bank (SFB) with effect from 26 April 2021.

• The bank has been licensed under Section 22 (1) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 of the Reserve Bank of India to run the business of small finance bank in India. The Shivalik SFB’s operating area is in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and some parts of Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

• Shivalik Small Finance Bank Limited MD & CEO is Suvir Kumar Gupta.

**UP government orders removal of all roadside religious structures**

• Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has taken strict steps to remove the increasing encroachment on the roads. The UP government has issued orders to remove encroachments on roads in the name of religious places.

**Uttar Pradesh government to launch Arjuna Sahayak irrigation Project**

• The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath informed on March 10, 2021, that Arjuna Sahayak Irrigation Project worth Rs. 2,600 crores will bring positive changes in the lives of the farmers of Hamirpur, Mahoba, and Banda in the Bundelkhand region which was denied to them by the previous governments.

**Shri Ram University will be built in Ayodhya with the help of private sector**

• The government of Uttar Pradesh is going to build Sri Ram University in Ayodhya. This university will be the largest center for research on Lord Rama’s culture. Proposals were
also sought from private sector for this work. With the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, development has also knocked.

- Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma said that the Sri Ram University will be set up in Ayodhya in the private sector, with research on various Ramayanas. Ritual training will also be given. He said that if the proposal is received from the Ayodhya Festival Trust, then it will be provincialized like Deepotsav.

58,000 bank correspondents Sakhi appointed

- At least 58,000 Bank Correspondent (BC) Sakhis have been appointed in UP under the “Ek Gram Panchayat Ek Banking Correspondent” scheme.

- Through these, promotion and awareness of various financial inclusion products along with banking facilities will be carried out in the future.

Noida airport signs agreement with UP govt.

- Noida International Airport (NIA) and the Government of UP have signed a state support agreement.

- The agreement lays down the state government’s support to establish and continuously improve surface access to the airport.

- In Oct 2020, UP govt had signed a concession agreement with Zurich Airport International (ZAIA) to commence the development of the Noida International Airport at Jewar.

Communicable disease control drive in Uttar Pradesh

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched the communicable disease control drive and Dastak Abhiyan in Varanasi.

- The communicable disease control drive will run from March 1-31, 2021.

- The CM also informed that there has been a 75 percent drop in the Japanese encephalitis (JE) cases and a 95 percent fall in the number of JE deaths since 2017.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurates ‘Desikan Bhawan’

- Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the new research building ‘Desikan Bhawan’ on 6 March 2021 at ICMR-NJIL and OMD, Agra.

- The building is dedicated to research facilities like animal experimentation, COVID-19 diagnosis, whole-genome sequencing, etc.

- The capacity of COVID-19 Diagnostic Laboratory is around 1200 samples per day.
Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurates 27 power substations

- UP CM Yogi Adityanath on 6 March 2021 inaugurated 27 power substations developed at a cost of Rs 1,920 cr by UP Power Transmission Corporation Limited (UPPTCL).

- He informed that electricity is being provided to farmers of the state and it has helped reduce the cost of farming and improve productivity.

First flight to Bareilly flagged off

- Hardeep Singh Puri, Civil Aviation Minister, on 8 March 2021, flagged off the first flight from Delhi to the newly upgraded Trishul Military Airbase, Bareilly Airport, Uttar Pradesh.

- The Bareilly airport has been upgraded for commercial flight operations under the Regional Connectivity Scheme of the Government of India.

- It marks the commencement of the 56th airport under the UDAN scheme.

Two-day Gur Mahotsav underway in Lucknow

- Gur Mahotsav or Jaggery Festival, two-day event was inaugurated by CM Yogi Adityanath on 6 March 2021 at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

- The aim of this event is to motivate the jaggery producers to make high-quality jaggery & its products and create awareness about health benefits of jaggery.

UP govt launches 2nd phase of Mission Shakti

- Uttar Pradesh government launched the 2nd phase of Mission Shakti on the occasion of International women's day on 8 March 2021.

- Under this Mission, CM Yogi Adityanath inaugurated women's special Police stations in 18 districts along with pink booths and pink toilets.

- The ‘First Adarsh Mahila Barrack’ in Mahila Thana, Muzaffarnagar was also inaugurated.

Uttar Pradesh to get 16 new ITIs

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has issued directives to set up 16 new Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) based on a PPP model, across the state.

- The move is a part of the initiative to make the youth efficient and skilled and to provide them with decent job opportunities.

- At present, over 1.72 lakh students are undergoing skill training at 305 ITIs in Uttar Pradesh.

Uttar Pradesh government launches a campaign
Uttar Pradesh govt has launched a campaign to make golden cards of the Ayushman Bharat scheme across the state.

It aims to drive awareness about Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) across the state.

The campaign will run from 10-24 March’21.

Under this, a free Ayushman golden card will be given to those families who have still not taken the benefit of the scheme.

3000 HP cape gauge locomotive flagged off

Minister of Railways Piyush Goyal flagged off 3000 HP Cape Gauge Locomotive for export to Mozambique on 10 March 2021.

These locomotives are developed indigenously by Banaras Locomotive Works, Varanasi.

Indian Railways is exporting the first batch of 2 locomotives as part of the total order of 6 locomotives of 3000 HP cape gauge locomotive.

Prof AK Singh: New VC of PRSU, Prayagraj

Prof Akhilesh Kumar Singh has been appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor of Prof Rajendra Singh (Rajju Bhaiya) University Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

He has been appointed by the Chancellor of the university and UP Governor Anandiben Patel for a term of three years.

‘Kalanamak’ Rice Festival held in UP

The Uttar Pradesh govt organised a three-day ‘Kalanamak Rice Festival’ in the Siddharthnagar district from March 13, 2021.

UP CM Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the festival.

Kala Namak Rice, grown in this region, is One District One Product (ODOP) of some Eastern UP districts.

Those who attended the festival tasted the dishes made with Kala Namak rice and also purchased Kala Namak paddy seeds.

HFCL wins order worth ₹221 crore

Telecom equipment major HFCL has won a ₹221 crore order from the Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation for setting up telecommunication systems for the Kanpur and Agra metro projects.
• It will set up the telecommunication systems for 32.4 km (corridors one and two) of Kanpur Metro and 14 km (corridor one) of Agra Metro projects.

• The work for projects will be completed in the next 33 months.

Memorial of Captain Manoj Pandey

• Chief of Army Staff General MM Naravane has dedicated to the people the memorial of Param Vir Chakra awardee Captain Manoj Pandey at his native village Rura in Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh.

• Captain Pandey had laid down his life in the 1999 Kargil war.

• The memorial was constructed under the aegis of Surya Command.

Shehnai festival starts at Banaras Hindu University

• As a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, a 3-day Shehnai festival started at Banaras Hindu University campus Varanasi on 21 March 2021.

• The Sangeet Natak Academy and the music and performing arts faculty of BHU have come together to organize this music festival.

• This musical evening is organized to remember the shehnai Maestro Bharat Ratna Ustad Bismillah Khan on his birth anniversary.

Uttar Pradesh CM to establish 3 PAC women battalions

• UP CM Yogi Adityanath has announced to establish three PAC women battalions named after female warriors.

• The Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) battalions will be established after women warriors- Rani Avantibai Lodhi, Uda Devi, and Jhalkaribai who sacrificed themselves in India's freedom struggle.

• These will be set up in Badaun, Lucknow, and Gorakhpur.

Uttar Pradesh cabinet approves a proposal

• The Uttar Pradesh cabinet has approved a proposal for the acquisition of another 1,365 hectare land in Jewar for the second phase of the upcoming Noida International Airport.

• The cabinet also approved an expenditure of ₹2,890 crore for the land acquisition, besides resettlement and rehabilitation of the people who will be affected by the expansion of the greenfield project.

Uttar Pradesh CM launches UPFPO Shakti Portal

• UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched UPFPO Shakti Portal as part of Kisan Kalyan Mission.
• The portal, which is the first of its kind in the country, is aimed at benefitting the farmers at the grassroots level.

• The Farmer Producer Organization-centric (FPO-centric) portal will bring farmers, producer groups, traders, and the agriculture and other allied departments on one platform.

Jal Shakti Ministry ties up with UN

• The Jal Shakti Ministry has entered a partnership with the United Nations Office for Project Services and the government of Denmark.

• It will help bring tap water connections to 11 water-scarce districts in Uttar Pradesh’s water-starved Bundelkhand and Vindhya regions under the Jal Jeevan mission.

• The project will include capacity-building support, with the creation of village action plans.

UP government organises ‘banana festival’

• UP government organised a ‘Banana Festival’ in Kushinagar from March 22 to 25, 2021.

• It witnessed the participation of at least 35 farmers and entrepreneurs.

• At least 4,000 farmers are linked to banana cultivation and after inclusion in the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme, around 500 people are employed in its processing.

Kanpur to be made police Commissionerate

• The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has given its nod to change two more cities – Kanpur and Varanasi – into police Commissionerate.

• The police Commissionerate system was introduced earlier in Lucknow and Gautam Budh Nagar (Noida) districts.

• The system gives more powers, including magisterial powers, to police officers and is aimed at better and effective policing.

Gram Ujala Yojana started in Varanasi

• Union Power Minister RK Singh launched the Gram Ujala Yojana in Varanasi on 24 March 2021.

• Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL), a subsidiary company of Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) under this program, provides high quality LED bulbs per bulb in rural areas of Varanasi.

• Under the first phase of the Gram Ujala program, 1.50 crore LED bulbs will be distributed in the villages of five districts.
Gorakhpur-Lucknow flight to be flagged off

- UP CM Yogi Adityanath will flag off a flight service from Gorakhpur to Lucknow on 28 March 2021.

- With this new flight service from Gorakhpur, the number of flights to seven major cities including New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Prayagraj will increase to 12.

- He will also lay the foundation stone for the expansion of the Mahayogi Guru Gorakhnath Airport terminal building.

UP government to launch rental housing scheme

- The Uttar Pradesh government will start an affordable rental housing scheme for the students, poor people living in cities and the urban migrants.

- A proposal for the Affordable Rental Housing and Complexes (ARHC) scheme was approved by the Uttar Pradesh cabinet on 26 March 2021.

- Preference will be given to people belonging to SC/STs, OBCs, widows, working women and minorities.

Residential Hockey centre of excellence

- A centre of excellence in hockey will be soon set up in the Uttar Pradesh capital, Lucknow.

- This would be the first advanced excellence centre for hockey in the state.

- 100-bed hostel for boys and girls, modern sports medicine and physiotherapy centres as well as top coaches would be part of the centre.

- It will be run by the Uttar Pradesh Sports Directorate.

UP State with maximum international airports

- Uttar Pradesh will soon be the state with maximum number of international airports in the country.

- The state will soon have five international airports.

- The Jewar international airport is coming up in the NCR region, will be ready by 2023.

- International airport in Ayodhya is expected to start in early 2023.

- Upcoming Kushinagar airport will be the 3rd licensed international airport in UP.
UP Shaheed Ashfaq Ulla Khan Park inaugurated

- This is the 1st zoo in Purvanchal and 3rd in the state.
- The zoo has been named after great freedom fighter Shaheed Ashfaq Ullah Khan.
- The zoo also has 7D theatre with state-of-the-art facilities where audience will experience 13 effects, such as rain, lightning, fog & fragrance.

Maharaja Suheldev Memorial foundation laid by Prime Minister

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation of the Maharaja Suheldev Memorial.
- Also the foundation stone for the development work of Chittaura Lake in Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh had also laid down.

Central Government approves Toy Manufacturing Clusters in Uttar Pradesh.

- Recently, the Central Government has approved 8 toy manufacturing clusters at a cost of Rs 2,300 crore out of which one will be established in Uttar Pradesh.
- These clusters will be established under the “National Action Plan for Indian Toy Story” which aims to reduce import dependence of toys which was around $1.5 billion in FY2020 of which 90% of imports was from China and Taiwan.

Uttar Pradesh state government signed MoU with IKEA

- The Government of Uttar Pradesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IKEA, a Swedish furniture and home applications company, which is set to invest Rs.5500 crore in the state during the next 5 years.
- The opening of IKEA outlets in the various parts of the state is expected to generate various job opportunities and to support and provide opportunity to the farmers, artisans and artists.
- IKEA plans to open around 25 center’s in India by 2025 by investing Rs.10500 crore, most of these stores will be in UP.

Minister of Science and Technology Harsh Vardhan inaugurated ‘Common Research and Technology Development Hub’ at CDRI, Lucknow

- The Union Minister for Science & Technology, Dr Harsh Vardhan has inaugurated ‘Common Research and Technology Development Hub (CRTDH)’ in Lucknow.
- The hub was established on occasion of the institute’s 70th Annual Day Celebrations.
Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched ‘Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Yojana 2021’

- The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath has launched ‘Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Yojana 2021’.
- Under this scheme, students can prepare for competitive exams like IAS, PCS, NDS, CDS, NEET & JEE through free-of-cost coaching centres will be established across the state.
- In the First Phase, coaching centres will be set up at the divisional level & during the Second Phase at the district level.
- The major aim of this scheme is to provide assistance to students who want to prepare for various competitive examinations but are unable to prepare due to their financial conditions.

Uttar Pradesh Introduced 16 Digit Unicode to Identify the Landholdings

- Uttar Pradesh has introduced a new system to issue a unique 16-digit unicode to identify the landholding in the state.
- This unicode issued by the state revenue department will be used to check on cases of land dispute and protect people from fraudsters.
  - first 6 digits is based on the population of the land,
  - next 4 digit determines the identity of the land,
  - next 4 digit based on the number of divisions of the land and
  - last 2 digit based on the category of the land (agricultural, residential and commercial land)
- The revenue court is working on marking the disputed plots in the computerised management system.

Shravasti district of Uttar Pradesh tops Niti Aayog's Aspirational Districts Ranking in December 2020

- Shravasti district of Uttar Pradesh topped the Aspirational Districts Ranking of Niti Aayog in December 2020.
- Other rankings- Dhalai of Tripura secured the 2nd position, 3rd place goes to Garhwa of Jharkhand, Baksa of Assam stood at 4th place and Bokaro of Jharkhand remained at 5th position.
- Areas Covered- Health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion, skill development and basic infrastructure.
- The aspirational district programme was launched in January 2018 with an aim to transform the districts with lesser progress in the key social areas and have identified pockets of under development.

The tableau of Uttar Pradesh given the Best Tableau Award on Republic Day Parade
On 26th January, the Republic Day parade tableau of Uttar Pradesh has been declared as the best tableau among the 32 tableaux.

Theme of the Uttar Pradesh tableau: “Ayodhya: The cultural heritage of Uttar Pradesh”.

Uttar Pradesh Government to set up India’s first mega Leather Park in Kanpur

- A mega leather park will come up in Ramaiipur village of Kanpur with an investment of Rs 5,850 crores.
- Recently, the project has received approval from the Union Commerce Ministry. At least 50,000 people will get direct employment and indirect employment for 1.5 lakh people in the leather park to be built under the mega leather cluster project in Kanpur.

“HunarHaat” to be organised at Rampur and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

- Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi announced that the next “HunarHaat” will be organised at Numaish Ground, Rampur (UP) from 18th to 27th December, 2020 and Shilp Gram, Lucknow (UP) from 23rd to 31st January 2021.
- Note: Shri Naqvi announced that in the coming days, “HunarHaat” will be organized at Jaipur, Chandigarh, Indore, Mumbai, Hyderabad, India Gate-New Delhi, Ranchi, Kota, Surat/Ahmedabad, Kochi and other places.

Central Zoo Authority recognition to zoo in UP and Bihar

- CZA has given recognition to shaheed Ashfaq ulah khun prani udyan which is located in Gorakhpur and Rajgir Zoo Safari in Nalanda.
- It is the second largest zoo in UP after the Kanpur zoological park.

Uttar Pradesh’s Dandupur railway station to be renamed as ‘Maa Barahi Devi Dham’

- The Dandupur railway station situated between Pratapgarh and Badshahpur on Lucknow-Varanasi rail section will now be named Maa Barahi Devi Dham

Lucknow Municipal Corporation bonds list on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).

- With the listing of Municipal Corporation, Lucknow becomes the first city in Northern India and ninth overall.
- The Lucknow Municipal corporation bond will collect around Rs. 200 crore rupees which will be invested in developmental works of the city.
Note - Municipal corporations are government bodies that typically form the third tier of the government in urban areas after the central and state government. They have their own expenditures and sources of revenue. Typically, municipal bodies provide services like water, sanitation, sewage and solid waste management. Some bigger municipal bodies also run schools.

‘Ramayan Cruise Service’ will be launched on the river Saryu in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh

- ‘Ramayan Cruise Tour’ on the Saryu River in Ayodhya will be launched soon. Shri Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways chaired a review meeting for the implementation of cruise service.
- Note: It will be the first-ever luxury Cruise service on the Saryu river (Ghagra/National Waterways-40) in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh.

World Bank Signs $500 Million funding for ‘Green’ Highway Corridor Project in India

- India and the World Bank signed a $500 million project to build safe and green national highway corridors in the states of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.
- The Green National Highways Corridors Project will support the ministry to construct 783 km of highways in various geographies by integrating safe and green technology designs such as local and marginal materials, industrial by-products, and other bio-engineering solutions.
- The project will help reduce GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions in the construction and maintenance of highways.

Prime Minister inaugurates New Bhaupur-New Khurja section of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 351-km New Bhaupur- New Khurja section in Uttar Pradesh of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC).
- The Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor is 1875-km section that connects Punjab’s Ludhiana to Dankuni in West Bengal.
- He also inaugurated the EDFC’s Operation Control Centre (OCC) at Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. The OCC, which will be the command centre for the entire route, to be one of the largest control centres in the world.
• Note: Apart from EDFC, the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor is also being developed. It will connect Mumbai to Uttar Pradesh’s Dadri.

9 states successfully complete implementation of ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ system

• The Ministry of Finance has informed that as many as 9 states have completed the reforms in Public Distribution System (PDS) and have successfully implemented the ‘One Nation One Ration Card System’.
• These 9 states are Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, and Gujarat.
• Note: This was aimed to ensure that the beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and other welfare schemes, especially the migrant workers and their families, get ration from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) across the country.

Brain Fingerprinting for interrogation

• The brain fingerprinting method is to be conducted on all the four accused in the Hathras Rape Case. A team of forensic experts are to work along with the CBI team to prepare probe short questions for the test.
• Note: The Brain Fingerprinting or Brain Electrical Oscillation Signature is a neuro psychological method used to interrogate an accused in the crime by studying his or her brain responses. The test is carried out through a process called Electroencephalogram that studies the electrical behaviour of the human brain.
• The consent of the accused is first taken in order to perform the test. The accused then has to wear a head cap with dozens of electrodes attached to it and is then showed with visuals or audio clips that are related to the case in order to check if there are triggering neutrons in their brains generating brain waves.
• However, the test can only be used as an aid to question the accused in the Hathras case. The accused cannot be convicted based on the test. The conviction has to be done based on interrogation and other traditional legal practices of CBI.

Inauguration of Honey FPOs (Farmer Producer Organizations)

• The Honey FPO Programme of National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) was inaugurated by Minister of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.
• Under the making 10,000 FPOs of the Central government Scheme, 5 FPOs of honey were launched in five states. These are Sundarbans in West Bengal, East Champaran in Bihar, Mathura in Uttar Pradesh, Morena in Madhya Pradesh and Bharatpur in Rajasthan.

• NAFED, through its empanelled Cluster-Based Business Organisation (CBBO) Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals (ISAP) has initiated the formation and promotion of FPOs of beekeepers and honey collectors.

• Note: National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd is an apex organization of marketing cooperatives for agricultural produce in India. It was established on the auspicious day of Gandhi Jayanti on 2nd October 1958.

UP Government launches massive vaccination drive of 18-44 age group

• Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said a massive coronavirus vaccination drive will be initiated for 18-44 years age group in the state from May 10.

• He said the drive will be conducted in 17 municipal corporations and Gautam Buddh Nagar area.

Samsung provides oxygen concentrators to Uttar Pradesh

• Samsung Electronics provided 60 oxygen concentrators to Uttar Pradesh and half of them to Gautam Buddh Nagar district on 13 May 2021.

• The help comes as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) of Samsung, which has its biggest mobile phone manufacturing factory at Gautam Buddh Nagar, Noida.

• Samsung has also contributed Rs 7.5 cr for COVID-19 relief measures to the UP govt.

Department of Science and Technology sets up centers

• Several centres are being set up by the Dept of Science and Technology to house major analytical instruments to provide common services of high-end analytical testing.

• Three such centres have been set up at IIT Kharagpur, IIT Delhi, and BHU Varanasi.

• These centres have been initiated under the ‘Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes (SATHI)’ scheme.
Subsidy for units making medical equipment

• The UP Cabinet led by CM Yogi Adityanath on 15 May’21 approved a scheme to provide a subsidy of 25% or Rs10 cr, whichever is lower, of the total expenditure.

• Under the scheme, production of items like liquid medical oxygen, regulators, ventilators and cryogenic tankers will be allowed to avail the subsidy.

• UP COVID emergency financial support scheme will be available for a year after order.

Government nod to oxygen concentrators from IIT-Kanpur

• The Department of Science and Technology, with the backing of the Prime Minister’s Office, has sanctioned the production of oxygen concentrators from one of its science incubators at IIT-Kanpur.

• The startup Indeema Fibres Pvt Ltd in Kanpur, along with its sister concern ChemDist Membrane Systems Pvt Ltd based out of Pune, will roll out its 1st batch of 5,500 oxygen concentrators by 25 May’21.

UP imposed Essential Services Maintenance Act

• The UP govt imposed Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) in state on 27 May’21.

• The act will be imposed for next 6 months.

• The Uttar Pradesh Essential Services Maintenance Act 1966, prohibits strikes by employees in a long list of essential services like railway, airport, post and telegraph.

• It also bans the strike in govt departments, govt run corporations and development authorities.

UP Govt launches Bal-Seva Yojana

• Uttar Pradesh Govt has launched Bal-Seva Yojana for the children who lost their parents due to COVID pandemic.

• The state government will provide financial assistance of Rs. 4,000 per month to such children.

• Financial assistance of Rs. 1,01,000 will be provided for the marriage of girl children who lost their parents in this pandemic.

• Govt will also provide laptop/tablet to such children.
UP Government to take responsibility of children orphaned due to COVID-19

• The Government of Uttar Pradesh has announced that it will take responsibility for those children who lost both their parents during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in the state.

• The UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated that such children are an asset to the state and that the current government will take care of them and will also look after their education, health, and security.

Uttar Pradesh Govt Cancels Class 10 Board Exams 2021 In Wake Of Covid-19

• In view of surge in number of Coronavirus cases in the state, the Uttar Pradesh government has announced to cancel the Class-10 Board exams 2021.

• The Yogi government has also decided to promote students of classes 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,11 to promote to their next class.
**Important News: State**

**First edition of ‘The Himalayan Film Festival, 2021’**

**Why in News**
- The first edition of ‘**The Himalayan Film Festival-2021**’ (THFF) will begin from 24 to 28 September at Leh.
- **Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur** will inaugurate it.

**Key Points**
- The film festival is being organised by the Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh in collaboration with the Directorate of Film Festivals, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.
- The festival also aims to create an interactive and exposure platform to promote aspiring local filmmakers and to showcase Ladakh as an attractive film destination.

**Source:** ET

**Guru Ghasidas National Park to become India's 53rd Tiger Reserve**

**Why in News**
- Guru Ghasidas National Park will become the country’s 53rd Tiger Reserve, as soon as it gets approval from the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**.
- It will be the 4th of Chhattisgarh and 53rd of the country’s Tiger Reserve.

**Key Points**
- In the year 2019 a resolution was passed by Chhattisgarh Forest to make, Guru Ghasidas National Park and Tamor Pingla Sanctuary as Tiger Reserve.
- Before the formation of Chhattisgarh, this was part of Sanjay National Park in United Madhya Pradesh.
- The Tiger Reserve has been formed by combining Guru Ghasidas National Park of Korea and Tamor Pingla Sanctuary of Surguja.
- At present there are 3 tiger reserves, Achanakmar, Udanti Sitanadi and Indravati in the state.

**About National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA):**

**About Project Tiger:**
- Project Tiger is a tiger conservation programme launched in April 1973 by the Government of India.
- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme that provides the required support for the conservation of the tiger in the country.

**Source:** zeenews
India’s largest open-air fernery in Uttarakhand

Why in News
- India’s largest open-air fernery was inaugurated in Uttarakhand’s Ranikhet.

Key Points
About the Ranikhet fernery:
- The fernery has the largest collection of fern species, second to only Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanical Garden and Research Institute (TBGRI), Thiruvananthapuram.
- However, it is the country’s first open-air fernery in natural surroundings which is not under any poly-house/ shade house.
- The fernery spreads over 4 acres of land at an altitude of 1,800 metres.
- It has been developed by the Research Wing of Uttarakhand Forest Department over a period of three years, under Central Government’s CAMPA scheme.
- About CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority): The CAMPA by the Ministry of Environment and Forests was introduced in 2004 to accelerate activities for the preservation of natural forests, management of wildlife, infrastructure development in forests, and other allied works.
- The Ranikhet fernery has 120 different types of fern.
- The fernery has a mix of species from the western Himalayan region, the eastern Himalayan region, and the Western Ghats.
- It houses several rare species, including Tree Fern, a threatened species by the State Biodiversity Board of Uttarakhand.

About Ferns:
- Ferns are non-flowering pteridophytes.
- They have medicinal and edible purposes. Ferns clean the ecosystem and are good nitrogen fixing agents.

Note: Recently, India’s first cryptogamic garden was inaugurated in July 2021 in Uttarakhand’s Dehradun district.

Source: newsonair

Chandigarh gets its first pollen calendar

Why in News
- Chandigarh now has its first pollen calendar, which can identify potential allergy triggers and provide a clear understanding for clinicians as well as allergy sufferers about their causes to help limit their exposure during high pollen loads.
- PGIMER, Chandigarh developed the first Pollen Calendar for Chandigarh city.

Key Points
About Pollen calendars:
- Pollen calendars represent the time dynamics of airborne pollen present in a particular geographical area.
• They yield readily accessible visual details about various airborne pollen taxa present throughout the year, with their seasonality in a single picture.
• Pollen calendars are location-specific, with concentrations closely related to locally distributed flora.

**Note:** Europe, UK and the US are using regional pollen calendars in a big way to prevent and diagnose allergic rhinitis/hay fever and predict the timing and severity of the pollen season.

**About Pollen:**
• Pollen grains are male biological structures with the primary role of fertilisation, but when inhaled by humans, they may strain the respiratory system and cause allergies.
• About 20-30% of the population suffers from allergic rhinitis/hay fever in India, and approximately 15% develop asthma.
• Pollen is considered major outdoor airborne allergens responsible for allergic rhinitis, asthma, and atopic dermatitis in humans.

**Source:** PIB

---

**Tamil Nadu to set up India’s first Dugong Conservation Reserve**

**Why in News**
• The Tamil Nadu government announced to set up India’s first Dugong Conservation Reserve in the Palk Bay in Tamil Nadu.

**Key Points**

**About Dugong:**
• Dugong, also called the sea cow, is a marine mammal.
• They can grow up to three meters long, weigh about 300 kilograms, and live for about 65 to 70 years.
• Dugong is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
• They are found in over 30 countries and in India are seen in the Gulf of Mannar, Gulf of Kutch, Palk Bay, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

**Note:** Marine Conservation Reserve will be established over an area of 500km in Palk Bay.

**Source:** The Hindu

---

**Manipur CM launches e-ILP platform to regulate entry, exit and tracking of visitors**

**Why in News**
• Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh launched the e-ILP platform for effective regulation of the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system in the state.
• The ILP system came into effect in Manipur on January 1, 2020.
• Manipur issues 4 different categories of permissions: temporary, regular, special, and labour permits.

**Key Points**

**About Inner Line Permit (ILP):**
• **ILP** is a document that Indian citizens from other states are required to possess in order to enter states like Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur.

• **e-ILP platform** will play a vital role in **regulating the entry, exit and tracking of visitors**.

• e-ILP platform has a comprehensive dashboard system that actively shows varied information such as number of people entering the state on a particular day and time and a graphical break-up-based presentation of people visiting through different entry gates.

• An Inner Line Permit Monitoring Cell with DIG (Intelligence) as its chairman had been set up to ensure proper reading of entry and exit and to track over stay.

**Source: Indian Express**

**Ladakh declares Black-Necked Crane as its State Bird, Snow Leopard as State Animal**

**Why in News**

• The **Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh** declared the Black-Necked Crane (Grus nigricollis) and Snow Leopard (Panther unica) as its state bird and animal, respectively.

**Key Points**

• Black-necked crane was previously the State bird of the former state of J&K, along with Hangul as the state animal.

**About Black-necked crane:**

• Black-necked crane was chosen as the state bird since it is only found in the eastern region of Ladakh.

• Crane is listed in Schedule I of the **Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972** and as **Near Threatened** on the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List**.

**About Snow leopard:**

• Snow leopards are mainly found in the western and eastern regions of the Himalayas, including Ladakh, J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

• Leopard is listed in Schedule I of the **Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972** and as **Vulnerable** on the **IUCN Red List**.

**Note:** The Centre on August 5, 2019 abrogated Article 370 of Constitution to end J&K's special status and pave the way for notification of UTs of Ladakh and J&K in October that year.

**Source: TOI**

Chandigarh Railway Station awarded 5-star ‘Eat Right Station’ certification

**Why in News**
Chandigarh Railway Station has been awarded a 5-star 'Eat Right Station' certification by FSSAI for providing high-quality, nutritious food to passengers.

Key Points
- Chandigarh Railway Station becomes the fifth station in India to get this recognition.
- The other railway stations with this certification include Anand Vihar Terminal Railway Station; (Delhi), Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus; (Mumbai), Mumbai Central Railway Station; (Mumbai) and Vadodara Railway Station.

About ‘Eat Right Station’ certification:
- This certification is granted by FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) to railway stations adhering to standard food storage and hygiene practices.
- The certification is part of the 'Eat Right India' movement of FSSAI to transform the country's food system to ensure safe, healthy food for all Indians.

Source: PIB

UNESCO’s ‘Historic Urban Landscape’ Project for Gwalior, Orchha launched

Why in News
- In Madhya Pradesh, Gwalior and Orchha cities have been selected by UNESCO under its ‘Historic Urban Landscape’ Project.

Key Points
- 6 cities of South Asia, including Ajmer and Varanasi in India are already involved in this project. Gwalior and Orchha have been included as the 7th and 8th cities.
- The cities will be jointly developed by UNESCO, Government of India and Madhya Pradesh by focusing on their historical and cultural improvement.

Karnataka’s new Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai

Why in News
- Lingayat leader Basavaraj Bommai took oath as the new Chief Minister of Karnataka.

Key Points
- In the ceremony at the Glass House of the Karnataka Raj Bhavan in Bengaluru, Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot administered the oath of office and secrecy to Basavaraj Bommai.

First Central University and first ‘Integrated Multi-Purpose Infrastructure Development Corporation’ for Ladakh

Why in News
- The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of the first Central University and the first ‘Integrated Multi-Purpose Infrastructure Development Corporation’ for Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh.

Rudreswara Temple at Palampet, Warangal, Telangana inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List

Why in News
• **Rudreswara Temple**, (also known as the Ramappa Temple) at Palampet, Mulugu district, near Warangal in the state of Telangana has been inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage list.
• It is India’s **39th World Heritage Site**.
• The decision was taken at the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO.

**About the Rudreswara (Ramappa) Temple**
• The Rudreswara temple was constructed in 1213 AD during the reign of the **Kakatiya Empire** by **Recharla Rudra**, a general of Kakatiya king Ganapati Deva.
• The presiding deity here is Ramalingeswara Swamy.
• The temple is also known as the Ramappa temple, after the sculptor who executed the work in the temple for 40 years.
• The temple stands on a 6 feet high star-shaped platform with walls, pillars and ceilings adorned with intricate carvings that attest to the unique skill of the Kakatiyan sculptors.

**World Heritage Site in India:**
• The first sites to be inscribed were Ajanta Caves, Ellora Caves, Agra Fort, and Taj Mahal, of which all were inscribed in the 1983 session of the World Heritage Committee.
• Presently, there are **39 World Heritage Sites located in India**. Out of these, **31 are cultural**, **7 are natural**, and **1 is mixed**.
• India has the 6th largest number of sites in the world.

**About World Heritage Site:**
• A World Heritage Site is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**.
• The World Heritage Sites list is maintained by the international **World Heritage Program** administered by the UNESCO **World Heritage Committee**.
• The programme began with the "**Convention Concerning the Protection of the World’s Cultural and Natural Heritage**", which was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 16 November 1972.

**Types:**
• Cultural heritage sites
• Natural heritage sites
• Mixed heritage sites (contain elements of both natural and cultural significance)

**Note:** Recently, the **England’s city Liverpool** has been removed from UNESCO’s list of world heritage sites.

**Maharashtra to be first state to issue educational documents using blockchain technology**

**Why in News**
• Maharashtra will be the first state in the country to issue educational documents using blockchain technology.
• **India became the 4th Country** to roll out blockchain-powered educational documents after Singapore, Malta and Bahrain.

**Gujarat HC became the first high court in the country to start live streaming of court proceedings**

**Why in News**
• The **High Court of Gujarat** became the first high court in the country to start live streaming of court proceedings.

‘Common High Court of UT of Jammu and Kashmir and UT of Ladakh’ changed to ‘High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh’
• Long-winding and cumbersome' nomenclature 'Common High Court of UT of Jammu and Kashmir and UT of Ladakh' has been changed to 'High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh'.
• The order was notified by the Department of Justice in the Ministry of Law and Justice.
• President Ram Nath Kovind has signed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2021, to effect the change.

Manduadih railway station renamed as Banaras
Why in News
• The Manduadih railway station has been finally renamed as Banaras by the North eastern railways (NER).

Key Points
• The formal renaming of Manduadih railway station as Banaras Railway Station was done on September 16, 2020 in view of the NOC given by the Ministry of Home Affairs on March 31, 2020.

Note: Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Cooperation and Convention Centre “Rudraksh” in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

India’s first 'Grain ATM' in Haryana
Why in News
• Haryana Government has recently set up its first ATM machine 'Annapurti' for dispensing food grains at Farrukhnagar in Gurugram, which will provide three types of grains — wheat, rice, and millet.
• This machine is installed under the "World Food Programme" of the United Nations, and is called Automated, Multi Commodity, Grain Dispensing Machine.

Hisar Airport renamed as Maharaja Agrasen International Airport
• Manohar Lal Khattar, Chief Minister of Haryana has announced to rename the Hisar Airport as the Maharaja Agrasen International Airport (MAIA).

Mission Shakti 3.0 launched in Uttar Pradesh
About Mission Shakti:
• It is the Uttar Pradesh government’s flagship programme aimed at promoting the security, dignity and empowerment of women.
• The first phase was launched in October 2020.

About Mission Shakti 3.0:
• The 3rd phase will end on December 31, 2021.
• Under this scheme, CM Adityanath transferred Rs 30.12 crore into the accounts of 1.55 lakh girls and women as a part of the Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangla Yojana.
• The main schemes that are scheduled to be implemented in this phases are the launch of Mission Shakti Kaksha (classrooms), formation of one lakh women self-help groups, linking of 1.73 lakh new beneficiaries to the destitute women pension scheme, construction of pink toilets (for women) in 1,286 police stations, special recruitment for women battalions of Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) to 2,982 posts etc.

Source: TOI

India's first Smog Tower inaugurated in Delhi
About Smog Tower:
• The DPCC (Delhi Pollution Control Committee) is the nodal agency for the tower.
The tower was raised at a height of 24.2 metres.
The tower can filter around 1,000 cubic metres of air per second.
It is expected to have an impact on a 1 km radius from the centre of the tower.
Following this, the Delhi cabinet approved the smog tower project in October 2020.
"IQAir", a Switzerland-based air quality technology company that measures air quality levels of selected cities based on PM2.5 concentration, ranked Delhi the world's most polluted capital for the third straight year in 2020.
Note: Another 25-metre-tall smog tower, built by the central government at Anand Vihar, is expected to become fully operational by September 7.

Prime Minister inaugurates and lays foundation stone of multiple projects in Somnath
Why in News
Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple projects in Somnath, Gujarat.
The projects inaugurated include the Somnath Promenade, Somnath Exhibition Centre and reconstructed temple precinct of Old (Juna) Somnath.
He also laid the foundation stone of Shree Parvati Temple during the event.
The project “Development of Pilgrimage Amenities at Somnath, Gujarat under PRASHAD Scheme” was approved by the Ministry of Tourism with the cost of Rs. 45.36 crores in March 2017.
The ‘National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive’ (PRASHAD) was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in the year 2014-15 with the objective of integrated development of identified pilgrimage and heritage destinations.
The scheme aimed at creation of pilgrimage / religious and heritage tourism infrastructure development at the destinations.
Under PRASHAD Scheme, the Tourism Ministry is developing 40 major places of pilgrimage out of which, 15 are already completed.

Note: India has moved from 65th place in 2013 on Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index to 34th place in 2019.

Chhattisgarh CM announces 4 New Districts
The 4 new districts are Mohla Manpur, Sarangarh-Bilaigarh, Shakti, and Manendragarh.
At present, there are 28 districts in Chhattisgarh and after the announcement of 4 new districts, the number will increase to 32.
Apart from this, in every district headquarters and Municipal Corporation, a park will be developed exclusively for women, which will be known as the 'Minimata Udyan'.

Source: Indian Express

Forensic Sciences Institute in Lucknow
Why in News
Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation of a Forensic Sciences Institute in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
The Forensic Sciences Institute, which would operate under the Ministry of Home Affairs, is proposed to be affiliated to Gujarat-based National Forensics Sciences University (NFSU).

Key Points
The Forensic Sciences Institute will provide expertise in discourses such as behavioural science, civil and criminal law, police science, criminology and forensics.
Around Rs 200 crore will be spent and Rs 15 crore has been sanctioned for setting up a DNA centre, which will be the most modern in the country.

Source: Indian Express

West Bengal receives four SKOCH awards

Why in News
- The Government of West Bengal has received four SKOCH awards for its schemes under the Ease of Doing Business initiative.

Key Points
- The State scheme ‘Silpasathi’- the online single window portal won the platinum award.
- The Auto Renewal of Certificate of Enlistment through an online system for urban areas has received the gold award.
- Online issuance of trade licences in rural areas and the E-Nathikaran: the online system for registration, preparation and submission of deeds have won two silver awards.

About SKOCH Award:
- SKOCH Award, independently instituted in 2003, is India’s honest civilian honour conferred by an independent organisation as a third party assessment.
- It is the only award in the country that is based on felt-needs assessment and outcome evaluation based on evidence.
- It recognises people, projects and institutions.

Source: newsonair

Kerala becomes the first state to set floor price for vegetables

- Kerala became the first state in the country to fix the floor price for 16 vegetables.
- The floor price would be 20 percent above the production cost of the vegetables.
- Even if the market price will go below the floor price, the product would be procured at the floor price from the farmers.

Uttar Pradesh government secures first rank in disbursing loans under the PM Atmanirbhar Nidhi Scheme (SVANidhi Scheme)

- UP State has ranked first in all the categories - Applications, Sanctions and Disbursements of the loans under the scheme. As many as 6,22,167 applications were received under the scheme in the state which is highest in the country, out of which sanctions were given to 3,46,150 applicants while the loans were disbursed to 2,26,728 beneficiaries.
- Seven cities of the state also find place in the list of top 10 cities of the country. Varanasi, Lucknow and Aligarh are the top three cities in the list even as other cities of the state include Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Ghaziabad and Kanpur.
- About PM SVANidhi: It was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020 for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown.
- It aims at facilitating working capital loan up to Rs. 10,000 at a subsidised rate of interest.
- Note: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs signed MoU with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) in order to engage SIDBI as the Implementation Agency.
Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat Launches Integrated Model Agricultural Village Scheme

- Integrated Model Agricultural Village scheme (Ekikrit Adarsh Krishi Gram Yojana) in partnership with NABARD, is a concept which will prove to be a milestone in strengthening the economy of farmers and doubling their income.

Uttar Pradesh becomes top tourist destination for Indians, third for foreigners in 2019

- Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the top destination for attracting the highest number of domestic tourists in 2019. The Indian Tourism Statistics (ITS) 2020 has announced that as many as 53.6 crore domestic tourists visited Uttar Pradesh in 2019.

List of top three states with domestic tourist visits in 2019

1. Uttar Pradesh - 23.1%
2. Tamil Nadu - 21.3%
3. Andhra Pradesh - 10.2%

Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath launched ‘Mission Shakti’ for security of women in the state

- Uttar Pradesh government launched a six months long women empowerment campaign ‘Mission Shakti’ to raise awareness and tackle crime against women.
- Under this campaign, various awareness and training programs will be conducted regarding various schemes for the respect, protection and self-reliance of women and girls.

First-ever multi-modal logistic park in Assam

- Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for the first-ever multi-modal logistic park of the country in Assam.
- The 700-crore rupee park at Bongaigaon district will provide direct connectivity to road, air, rail and waterways to the people of Assam and other parts of Northeast.
- It will be developed under the Bharatmala Pariyojana of the Centre.
- **Note: Bharatmala Pariyojana** is a centrally sponsored and funded Road and Highways project of the Government of India. It was launched in 2017.

Facts about Assam:

- **World Heritage Sites**: Kaziranga Wildlife Sanctuary and Manas Wildlife Sanctuary
- **State Dance**: Bihu Dance
- **State Bird**: White-winged wood duck
- **State Animal**: One-horned rhinoceros
- **State Flower**: Foxtail orchids
- **State Tree**: Hollong
People celebrated **Kati Bihu festival** in Assam’s Bongaigaon on 17 October 2020.

**Haryana government launched “Lab on Wheels”**

- It is to test the water quality in the state. The water quality of Haryana state is mainly affected by iron, fluoride, nitrate & alkalinity. It is a mobile laboratory, launched under **Jal Jeevan Mission**.
- The mobile laboratory will test for hardness, alkalinity, chlorine, zinc, turbidity, nitrate, PH and other microbiological tests.

**Uttarakhand Government launches “Mukhya Mantri Saur Swarojgar Yojana.”**

- The aim of this scheme is to encourage the production of green energy and to provide self-employment opportunities to the youth of the State and returning migrants. Under this scheme, each beneficiary will be allocated solar plants of 25 KW and 10,000 people will get self-employment.

**Facts about Uttarakhand:**

- **Capital:** Gairsain (summer) Dehradun (winter)
- **Governor:** Baby Rani Maurya
- **Chief Minister:** Trivendra Singh Rawat

**Kerala becomes the first State Digital in Public Education**

The State of Kerala is the first state in the country to make public education completely digital.

**Facts about Kerala:**

- Kerala has the highest literacy rate in the country.
- **Capital:** Thiruvananthapuram
- **Chief Minister:** Pinarayi Vijayan
- **Governor:** Arif Mohammad Khan

**Gujarat government announces setting up of world’s biggest Zinc Smelter Complex in Dosawada in Tapi district**

- Memorandum of Understanding for this project was signed by State government with Vedanta Group.
- Vedanta Group’s subsidiary – Hindustan Zinc Limited will set up the world’s largest zinc smelting complex at Tapi in Gujarat. Hindustan Zinc is India’s largest and world’s second largest Zinc lead miner company.

**Andhra Pradesh Government launches ‘Jaganna Vidya Kanuka’ scheme for students in government schools.**
Under this scheme, 42,34,222 kits will be distributed to students of government schools studying from class 1 to 10 standard. The kit comprises three pairs of uniforms, a belt, a school bag, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, prescribed textbooks and notebooks.

Goa becomes first ‘Har Ghar Jal’ state across India to provide tap water connections to every rural household

- Note: The aim of Jal Jeevan Mission is to provide piped water to all the rural households by 2024. It was launched on 15 August 2019. It comes under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.

India’s first Vulture Conservation and breeding centre in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

- The establishment of the centre dedicated to red-headed king vulture will be under the control of Gorakhpur forest department, Uttar Pradesh and Bombay Natural History Society and technical help will be provided by the Wildlife Research Institute.

Vijay Kumar Sinha elected as Bihar Legislative Assembly Speaker

- This is the first time that any BJP leader was elected as Vidhan Sabha speaker.
- Total 126 votes have been polled in his favour.

Pilibhit Tiger Reserve gets global award for doubling tiger population

- The Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (PTR) and the Uttar Pradesh Forest department have bagged the first-ever international award, TX2, for doubling the number of tigers in four years against a target of 10 years.
- PTR was the first to receive the award among 13 tiger range countries.
- The International Tiger Day is celebrated on July 29 every year.
- 13 tiger range countries are India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia, Nepal, Russia, Vietnam & Thailand.

India’s first ‘Moss Garden’ comes up in Uttarakhand

- The Uttarakhand forest department dedicated the newly-built Moss Garden to the people, claiming that it is the country’s first such garden, spread over 10 hectares at Khurpatal in Nainital district.
- Two of the moss species found here- Hyophila involuta (Cement Moss) and Brachythecium Buchanani- figure in the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s red list.
- About Moss Garden: Mosses are non-vascular plants that belong to the Bryophyta division. They are small flowerless plants that typically grow in damp and shady locations. They play a very important role in maintaining and developing the ecosystem and biodiversity.

Asia’s second beautiful Church is located in Sihor (Madhya Pradesh).

- It is an 186 years old church which was built by JW Osborne in 1834.
- It took around 27 years in its construction.
Kolkata gets world's first children's library on wheels

- The West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) in association with Apeejay Anand Children’s Library has launched the “world’s first tram library for children”.
- The initiative was a tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru whose birth anniversary on November 14 is celebrated as Children’s Day.

Nitish Kumar took oath as Chief Minister of Bihar for the seventh time

- Nitish Kumar sworn in as the CM of Bihar for the seventh time—his fourth consecutive term.
- Tarkishore Prasad and Renu Devi also took oath as the Deputy Chief Ministers of Bihar.
- Note: Nitish Kumar is on course to becoming the longest-serving Chief Minister of the state. As CM, he had a continuous run since November 2005, except for the period in 2014-15.

Tourist Facilitation Centre facility in Kerala

- Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel inaugurated Tourist Facilitation Centre at Guruvayur, Kerala under PRASHAD Scheme.
- Note: PRASHAD (The Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive) scheme was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2014-15 with the objective of integrated development of identified pilgrimage and heritage destinations. The scheme is aimed at infrastructure development such as entry points, last mile connectivity, basic facilities like information centers, eco-friendly modes of transport, area lighting and illumination with renewable sources of energy, drinking water, toilets, cloak room and waiting rooms.

UNESCO allots Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh ‘Biosphere Reserve’ status

- This is 12th Biosphere Reserve from India and after Panchmarhi and Amarkantak, this is 3rd from Madhya Pradesh which are a part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.
- Panna National Park to Tiger Reserve
  - The Panna ‘National Park’ was initially set up in 1981. It received the status of a tiger reserve in the early 1990s under “Project Tiger.”
  - Note: There are currently 714 biosphere reserves across the world, located in 129 countries, which form the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

India’s first ‘Tyre Park’ to come up in West Bengal

- West Bengal will soon feature India’s first ‘Tyre Park’ where artworks made from scrap and defective parts will be on display.
- The West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) will launch this Tyre Park soon.
- Scrap tyres, lying as waste in various bus depots, have been reworked and converted to colourful shapes.

Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel released a 'sciencetoon' book (Bye Bye Corona) published by Vigyan Prasar of the Department of Science and Technology
The book has been written by **Pradeep Srivastava**, former Senior Principal Scientist at CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), Lucknow. **Note:** The book contains comprehensive information on the COVID-19 pandemic. A 'scientoon' is a cartoon communication based on science.

India's First Solar-Powered Miniature Train launched in Kerala

- A solar energy-driven miniature train, billed as the country's first of its kind, was inaugurated at the Veli Tourist Village in Thiruvananthapuram by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
- The train, which would be an attraction for children especially, was part of a string of projects totally worth ₹ 60 crore taken up to elevate the facilities at the panoramic destination to international standards.

Karnataka unveils ‘FRUITS’ portal for farmers

- The Karnataka government has unveiled the FRUITS (Farmer Registration and Unified beneficiary Information System). It is an e-governance single portal to create a repository of farmland information and farm loan details.
- **Note:** Canara Bank has agreed to run FRUITS on a pilot basis.

Bengal's first Oil and Gas Reserve to Nation

- Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel, Dharmendra Pradhan dedicated the eighth oil and gas producing basin to the nation in Ashok Nagar, around 47 km from the state capital Kolkata.
- The first proven reserve of oil and gas in the state was discovered in 2018.

Madhya Pradesh: India's 1st tiger reserve hot air balloon wildlife safari launched

- India's first hot air balloon wildlife safari in a tiger reserve was launched in the world famous Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve by Madhya Pradesh.

Bihar wins Digital India award 2020 for transferring money to beneficiaries’ accounts during COVID-19

- More than 21 lakh stranded workers outside Bihar were provided financial assistance through the "Bihar Sahayata Mobile App".
- The Chief Minister Secretariat, the Disaster Management Department besides the National Informatics Centre (NIC) of the state have jointly been chosen as winners in the "pandemic category" Digital India Awards 2020.

Nehru Zoo becomes the first Indian zoo to receive ISO certification

- The Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad became the first zoo in the country to receive ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Standards Certificate from Accreditation Service for Certifying Bodies (ASCB), United Kingdom.
- **About ISO:** International Organization for Standardization is an international standard-setting body composed of representatives from various national standards organizations. Founded on 23 February 1947, the organization promotes worldwide proprietary, industrial, and commercial standards. Its headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland.

Lakshadweep declared first UT (Union Territory) to become 100% organic
Lakshadweep has been declared as an organic agricultural area under the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) of India.

**Organic farming** is the technique of crop and livestock production which involves choosing not to use pesticides, fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, antibiotics and growth hormones to grow crops.

**Note:** Sikkim became India’s first 100 percent organic state in 2016.

**Central Zoo Authority recognition to zoo in UP and Bihar**

- CZA has given recognition to shaheed Ashfaq ullah khan prani utdyan which is located in Gorakhpur and Raigir Zoo Safari in Nalanda.
- It is the second largest zoo in UP after the Kanpur zoological park.

**Gwalior and Orchha included in UNESCO’s world heritage cities list**

- The historical fort cities of Gwalior and Orchha in Madhya Pradesh have been included in the list of UNESCO’s world heritage cities under its urban landscape city programme.
- **Note:** Gwalior was established in the 9th century and ruled by Gurjar Pratihar Rajvansh, Tomar, Baghel Kachvaho and Scindias. Gwalior is known for its palaces and temples.
- Orchha is popular for its temples and palaces and was the capital of the Bundela kingdom in the 16th century.

**Uttarakhand gets its first Eco-Bridge for small animals**

- In an attempt to save reptiles and small animals from vehicular accidents while crossing the road, the Ramnagar Forest Division of Uttarakhand has constructed the state's first eco-bridge across Kaladhungi-Nainital highway.
- It is 90-feet-long and 5-feet-wide. No cement or iron was used in the construction of the bridge. It's made of eco-friendly items like bamboo, rope, and grass.

**Uttar Pradesh’s Dandupur railway station to be renamed as ‘Maa Barahi Devi Dham’**

- The Dandupur railway station situated between Pratapgarh and Badshahpur on Lucknow-Varanasi rail section will now be named Maa Barahi Devi Dham.

**Assam government launches Orunodoi scheme**

- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched a massive beneficiary scheme covering almost 22 lakh families across the state from December 1.
- **Note:** Under the Orunodoi scheme, an amount of Rs 830 per month will be given to the qualified 22 lakh families to purchase fundamental items like medicines, pulses, sugar, etc. and the state government will spend Rs 2,400 crore annually.

**Lucknow Municipal Corporation bonds list on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).**

- With the listing of Municipal Corporation, Lucknow becomes the first city in Northern India and ninth overall.
- The Lucknow Municipal corporation bond will collect around Rs. 200 crore rupees which will be invested in developmental works of the city.
India’s first organ donor memorial inaugurated in Jaipur

- On the occasion of National Organ Donation Day 27 November, Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot inaugurated the country’s first organ donor memorial in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- The memorial has been built by the Mohan Foundation Jaipur Citizens Forum and the Jaipur Municipal Corporation.

‘Ramayan Cruise Service’ will be launched on the river Saryu in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh

- ‘Ramayan Cruise Tour’ on the Saryu River in Ayodhya will be launched soon. Shri Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways chaired a review meeting for the implementation of cruise service.
- **Note:** It will be the first-ever luxury Cruise service on the Saryu river (Ghagra/National Waterways-40) in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh.

Floating solar project at Omkareshwar to begin power generation by 2022-23

- The world’s largest floating 600 MW solar energy project to be constructed at Omkareshwar dam on Narmada River in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh will begin power generation by year 2022-23.
- The International Finance Corporation, World Bank and Power Grid have granted in-principle consent for providing aid for the said project development.
- Electricity will be produced in about 2000-hectare water area by installing solar panels in the dam.

4th edition of Cherry Blossom Festival

- The 4th edition of the Cherry Blossom Festival, Mao area of Senapati district in Manipur was virtually inaugurated by Chief Minister N Biren Singh.
- It was jointly organized by the Department of Tourism and Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR), Shillong in association with the Organizing Committee Flower Festival, Mao.
- **Note:** Manipur has been celebrating this festival every year since 2017.
- The International Cherry Blossom Festival which is celebrated in Shillong was cancelled too for the global pandemic. Japan is renowned for its Cherry Blossom Festival too.

Arunachal Pradesh can become India’s prime producer of Vanadium

- In an exploration being carried out by the Geological Survey of India, the eastern Himalayan State has been placed on the vanadium map and geologists are confident of finding a deposit soon.
- **About Vanadium:** In its pure form, it is a grey, soft and ductile element primarily derived from mined iron ore, steel slag, and phyllites. It is a high-value metal that has been used in strengthening steel and titanium.
- **Note:** The largest deposits of Vanadium are in China, followed by South Africa and Russia.

India’s first Fire Park comes up in Odisha

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated in Bhubaneswar the ‘Fire Park’, a first of its kind initiative in the country, to bring awareness on fire safety measures.
- He also launched a dynamic online portal, ‘AgnishamaSeva’ of Odisha Fire Service.
• Demonstrations on use of first aid fire-fighting equipment, rescue and disaster operations, visit to exhibition hall, screening of films and distribution of leaflets on fire safety will be part of the activities.

India’s first air taxi service starts from Chandigarh.
• Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar inaugurated air taxi services from Chandigarh to Hisar under the UDAN scheme of the Central Government.
• For the first time in the country, a small aircraft in the form of an air taxi is being used for services.

India’s first Labour Movement museum to come up in Kerala
• The country’s first Labour Movement Museum, showcasing the history of world labour movement, would be launched in Kerala’s houseboat tourism hub, Alappuzha.

Madhya Pradesh becomes first State to give power subsidy to farmers through DBT
• Madhya Pradesh has become the first State to give electricity subsidy through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme. With this, it has fulfilled a power reform condition as proposed by the Centre and thus eligible for additional borrowing.
• Note: Recently, the historical fort cities of Gwalior and Orchha in Madhya Pradesh have been included in the list of UNESCO’s world heritage cities under its urban landscape city programme.

1st small-scale LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) supply infrastructure of Shell Energy India at Hazira, Gujarat
• Union Minister for Petroleum, Natural Gas and Steel Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated the first small-scale LNG supply infrastructure of Shell Energy India at its LNG terminal at Hazira in Gujarat.

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced the ‘Horticulture Development Mission’ (Bagayat Vikas Mission)
• The aim of this mission is to double the income of farmers involved in medicinal and horticulture farming.
• The government has included Kutch, Surendranagar, Patan, Sabarkantha and Banaskantha districts in the first phase.
• Under this mission, a tax on land conversion will be waived off. Lease amount applicable will be Rs 100 to Rs 500 per year per acre during 6th to 30th year. Lease holders will be able to set up solar panel, windmills to generate energy for their own use, but will not be allowed to sell it.
• Note: Chief Minister of Gujarat also announced that the state government has decided to rename dragon fruit as 'Kamalam'. This fruit is largely grown in Kutch, Navsari and different parts of Saurashtra.

Maharashtra government renamed Nagpur’s Gorewada International Zoo as Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park
• The zoological park will come up on nearly 2,000 hectares forest land. It also said that Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will inaugurate the Indian safari at the zoo on January 26.

Home Minister Amit Shah attends first BTR (Bodoland Territorial Region) Accord Day celebration at Kokrajhar in Assam
• Note: The BTR accord was signed on January 27, 2020 in New Delhi.
• Facts about Bodoland Territorial Region: The Bodoland Territorial Region is an autonomous region in Assam, Northeast India.
  Government body: Bodoland Territorial Council
Districts: 4
Established: 9 February 2003
Headquarters: Kokrajhar

Union Home Minister also launched the Ayushman CAPF scheme in Guwahati for about 28 lakh central arms forces and their families in all the states where Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana is in operation.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs virtually launches “Shramshakti” Digital Data Solution for Migrant Workers

- The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda launched “ShramShakti”, a National Migration Support Portal at a programme held at Panjim, Goa.
- It would effectively help in the smooth formulation of state and national level programs for migrant workers.
- He also launched a tribal migration cell, a tribal museum at Goa and “ShramSaathi”, a training manual for migrant workers.
- Note: The Chief Minister of Goa, Pramod Sawant informed that Goa is going to be the first destination state of India to set up a dedicated migration cell to address diverse issues of migrant workers.

India’s longest road arch bridge in Meghalaya

- Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma inaugurated India’s longest road arch bridge, the Wahrew Bridge at Sohbar in East Khasi Hills district.
- The bridge connects Bholaganj and Sohbar to Nongjri in East Khasi Hills, bordering Bangladesh.
- Note: The funds for the construction of the bridge were sanctioned from the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources of the Union ministry of development of Northeastern region (DoNER).

Gujarat inks pact with Adani Ports for India’s largest multi-modal logistics park

- The Gujarat Government inked an agreement with India’s largest ports operator, Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ), to set up India’s largest multi-modal logistics park.
- The park, which will be spread across 1,450 acres at Virochan Nagar near Sanand automobile hub, will attract investments worth ₹50,000 crore in the logistics and transport space.
- This park will be directly connected with the Dedicated Freight Corridor and all major ports. The park will have a dedicated Air Cargo Complex.

Haridwar teen Shrishti Goswami becomes Uttarakhand CM for one day

- To mark the National Girl Child Day (24 January), Haridwar teenager Srishti Goswami took charge as the chief minister of Uttarakhand for one day.
- 19-year-old Goswami, a student of BSc Agriculture, lives in Daulatpur village of the district.
- The one-day chief minister had administered from Gairsain, the summer capital of the state.
- Note: She had in 2018 become the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Bal Vidhan Sabha. In 2019, she went to Thailand to take part in Girls’ International Leadership.

Madhya Pradesh CM launches 'PANKH Abhiyan'

- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the 'PANKH Abhiyan' under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme in order to aid in empowerment and growth of the girl child on the occasion of National Girl Child Day (24 January).
- Facts about Madhya Pradesh: Recently, UNESCO has allotted Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh ‘Biosphere Reserve’ status.
Uttar Pradesh becomes the first state in the country with two airstrips on expressways
- One airstrip is on Lucknow-Agra Expressway while the other is near Kurebhar on Purvanchal Expressway (3,300-metre-long airstrip).
- Airstrips on expressways are designed to facilitate emergency landing and take-off of fighter planes.
- **Facts about Uttar Pradesh:** Recently, ‘Udyam Sarathi’ app was launched on UP Diwas by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to promote entrepreneurship among youth and help them explore new opportunities for self-employment.

Maharashtra launches ‘Jail Tourism’ initiative from Pune’s Yerawada Jail
- The Prison Department of Maharashtra launched its jail tourism initiative starting with more than 150-year-old Yerawada Central Prison in Pune.
- **About Yerawada Jail:** It is the largest jail in Maharashtra and one of the largest maximum security prisons in the country. Several freedom fighters including Mahatma Gandhi, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak were imprisoned at Yerawada jail. Poona Pact between Gandhi and Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar was signed here.

Meghalaya selected for Special Award for Information Technology applications in Elections
- The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Meghalaya was selected for a Special Award for Information Technology applications in Elections by the Election Commission of India (ECI), in the National Best Electoral Practices Awards-2020.

Hoshangabad in Madhya Pradesh to be renamed as Narmadapuram
- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has announced that Hoshangabad city in the state would be renamed as Narmadapuram.
- He made the announcement during the Narmada Jayanti programme held in Hoshangabad.
- **Famous attractions in Hoshangabad:** Bori Wildlife Sanctuary, Hill station- Pachmarhi, Satpura Tiger Reserve (STR) also known as Satpura National Park.

Mamata Banerjee launches 'MAA' scheme
- West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee launched the "Maa" scheme under which her government would provide a meal at a nominal cost of ₹ 5 to poor people.
- They will get a platter of rice, dal, a vegetable and egg curry for ₹ 5 and the state government will bear a subsidy of ₹ 15 per plate.
- Self-help groups will operate the kitchens from 1 pm to 3 pm every day and such kitchens will be set up everywhere in the state gradually.

Kerala Governor inaugurates India’s first Digital University
- The Governor of Kerala Arif Mohammed Khan has inaugurated the country’s first Digital University in the state which has been set up in Kerala’s Technocity, Mangalapuram.
- **Kerala University of Digital Sciences, Innovation and Technology (KUDSIT-Digital University)** is established by upgrading the two-decade old state government’s Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Kerala (IIITM-K).

President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates 'Narendra Modi Stadium', world's largest cricket stadium, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat
- The Motera Stadium (Sardar Patel Stadium), world's largest cricket stadium, was inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind, and was renamed the ‘Narendra Modi Stadium’.
• The President also performed ‘Bhoomi Pujan’ (ground breaking ceremony) of the 'Sardar Vallabhbhai Sports Enclave'.
• Note: 1.32 lakh spectators will be able to witness matches at this stadium. The stadium has 11 pitches, unrivalled by any stadium in the world.
• It hosted its first ever pink ball Test match on 24 February 2021 between India and England.

**Odisha hosts 17th India International Mega Trade Fair 2021**
• The 11 days long International Trade Fair from February 19 to March 1 has been organised by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI) in collaboration with the Odisha Chamber of Commerce and West Bengal Chamber of Commerce.
• Odisha Law Minister Pratap Jena inaugurated the 17th India International Mega Trade Fair at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar.

**Asia’s largest Livestock Research Centre in Salem**
• Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami inaugurated the Advanced Institute of Integrated Research in Livestock and Animal Science (AIIRLAS), the largest in Asia, near Thalaivasal in Salem district.
• The AIIRLAS, which also accommodates the State’s fifth veterinary college, was constructed at a cost of Rs 1,023 crore on 1,100 acres.

**Mandu Festival**
• In Madhya Pradesh, the three-day (13-15 February) Mandu Festival was celebrated at Mandu in the historic town of Dhar district.
• Handicrafts related to handmade art have been displayed in the Mandu Utsav.
• Mandu is an ancient fort city in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. It's also known for its Afghan architectural heritage.
• Note: Dino Adventure Park & Fossils Museum was also inaugurated by the state culture and tourism minister.
• The State Minister informed that the Dinosaur Park is the country's first modern fossil park which has 24 eggs and other fossils of dinosaurs on display. The park also provides information related to the life of the dinosaurs.

**Odisha government to construct ‘COVID Warrior Memorial’**
• Odisha is set to inaugurate the Covid warrior memorial in Bhubaneswar on Independence Day this year. The memorial will be established at the Biju Patnaik Park in the Capital city.
• Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had on January 1 announced the decision to construct the memorial to honour and recognise the sacrifice and selfless service of the frontline workers, who lost their lives fighting the pandemic.

**Bhuri Bai of Madhya Pradesh invited as Chief Guest at Foundation Day celebrations of Bharat Bhavan**
• The tribal painter Bhuri Bai of Madhya Pradesh was invited as the Chief Guest at the Foundation Day celebrations of Bharat Bhavan.
• When the construction of this building started, she used to work here as a labourer on a daily wage of Rs six.
• **Bhuri Bai’s award:** Shikhar Samman-Government of Madhya Pradesh in 1986, Ahalya Samman in 1998, Rani Durgavati Award in 2009, Padma Shri Award in 2021

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches ‘Mahabahu-Brahmaputra’ in Assam**
To mark the launch of ‘Mahabahu-Brahmaputra’, he inaugurated the Ro-Pax vessel operations between Neamati-Majuli Island, North Guwahati-South Guwahati and Dhubri-Hatsingimari.

He laid the foundation stone of Inland Water Transport (IWT) Terminal at Jogighopa and various tourist jetties on River Brahmaputra and launched digital solutions for Ease-of-Doing-Business.

**Note:** ‘Mahabahu-Brahmaputra’ programme will strengthen water connectivity by Brahampurta water through port-led development.

**Facts about Assam:**

**World Heritage Sites:** Manas Wildlife Sanctuary and Kaziranga Wildlife Sanctuary

---

**Prime Minister launches ‘Asom Mala’ and lays Foundation Stone of two Hospitals in Assam**

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi laid the Foundation Stone of two hospitals in Biswanath and Charaideo and launched ‘Asom Mala’, a programme for state highways and major district roads, at Dhekiajuli in Sonitpur District, Assam. ‘Asom Mala’ has been started in line with ‘Bharat Mala Project’.

**About Bharatmala Pariyojana:** It is a centrally-sponsored and funded Road and Highways project of the Government of India. It was established on 31 July 2015.

**Note:** The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation the LPG import terminal, 348 km Dobhi – Durgapur Natural Gas Pipeline section, which is part of the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga project.

He also laid the foundation stone of the second Catalytic-Isodewaxing unit of Haldia Refinery.

**Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman attends third phase of Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar mela in Guwahati**

- In the event, the Assam government distributed financial assistance of 3000 rupees each to nearly 7.5 lakh people belonging to tea garden areas.

**About Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar Mela Scheme:** The scheme was launched by the Assam government in Financial Year 2017-18.

- The main objective of the scheme is to incentivize and strengthen the efforts of financial inclusion of the tea tribe community.

- A sum of Rs 2,500 was transferred to 6.3 lakh bank accounts in the first phase of the Assam Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar Mela Scheme in 2017-18. An additional Rs 2,500 was deposited in 7.15 lakh accounts in the second phase in 2018-19.

**Himachal Pradesh becomes first State in the country to implement e-cabinet**

- The new system will bring greater efficiency in the overall process of conducting a cabinet meeting by removing dependencies which arise due to the physical movement of cabinet memos.

**Note:** On April 23, 2020, Uttar Pradesh became the first state to have the requisite infrastructure in all its courts for hearing cases through video conferencing.

**Madhya Pradesh launches 'SAANS' campaign to reduce infant mortality**

- The health department in Madhya Pradesh has launched the Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully (SAANS) campaign with the aim of reducing infant mortality due to pneumonia.

**About SAANS campaign:** It was launched by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan in 2019 to child mortality due to pneumonia.

- Under SAANS, the government is targeting a reduction in pneumonia-caused deaths by 2025 to less than 3 deaths out of 1000 live births.
Arvind Kejriwal launches ‘Switch Delhi’ campaign
- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched the ‘Switch Delhi’ campaign to promote electric vehicles and appealed to people to buy such vehicles to combat pollution in the city.
- Under its electric vehicle policy, the Delhi government has planned extensive subsidies on purchase of electric two-wheelers and four-wheelers, besides waiving road tax and registration charges.

Preliminary survey shows deposits of Lithium in Mandya district of Karnataka
- Preliminary surveys on surface and limited subsurface by Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD) have shown presence of Lithium resources of 1,600 tonnes in the pegmatites of Marlagalla – Allapatna area, Mandya district, Karnataka.
- About Lithium: The well-known uses of Lithium are in Lithium ion batteries, lubricating grease, high energy additive to rocket propellants, optical modulators for mobile phones and for thermonuclear reactions.

Uttar Pradesh announces 16-Digit Unicode to Identify Landholdings
- The revenue department will be issuing the Unicode for marking all kinds of agricultural, residential and commercial land and a person will now be able to know the details of the land with a single click.
- Unicode numbers: The Unicode number of the land will be 16 digits with the first six digits based on the population of the land, the next 4 digits determining the unique identity of the land. The digits from 11 to 14 will be the number of the division of the land. The last 2 digits will have the details of the category, through which, the agricultural, residential and commercial land will be identified.

Vijayanagara becomes 31st district of Karnataka
- The Karnataka state Cabinet formally approved the borders for the newly carved out Vijayanagara district from the existing Ballary district.
- Vijayanagara will now be the 31st district in the state and will comprise six taluks - Hospet, Harapanahalli, Hoovina Hadagali, Hagari Bommanahalli, Kotturu and Kudligi.

India's First 'Gender Park' in Kerala's Kozhikode
- The Kerala government is all set to launch Rs 300 crore three-tower 'Gender Park' in Kozhikode.
- This launch will coincide with the second edition of the International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE-II). Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will inaugurate the February 11-13 IGC-IE II and the Gender Park.

Justice Sunil Kumar Awasthi tenders his resignation from office of Judge of MP High Court
- Shri Justice Sunil Kumar Awasthi has tendered his resignation from the office of Judge, Madhya Pradesh High Court, in pursuance of proviso (a) to clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution.
- He was appointed as an Additional Judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court on October 13, 2016 and as Permanent Judge on March 17, 2018.

Lucknow Metro becomes the first metro in the country to use ultraviolet (UV) rays to sanitise train coaches
- UPMRC got the idea from the New York Metro's experiment to sanitise trains with UV lamp rays.
- The remote operated equipment also reduces the cost by 40 times less than what comes in sanitizing the coach by sodium hypochlorite.

Kerala's first Human Milk Bank (HMB) to be opened on February 5
• The HMB shall open at the Ernakulam general hospital in the city by Health Minister KK Shailaja.
• The milk bank will be set up to ensure breast milk for newborn babies whose mothers cannot breastfeed them.

PGIMER, Chandigarh launches India’s first ‘Amputee Clinic’
• India’s first amputee clinic has been launched by the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh. It was inaugurated by the PGIMER Director Prof. Jagat Ram.
• It has been set up to improve the care of amputee patients by providing a wide range of services under one roof and with significant coordination.

Punjab CM launches ‘Har Ghar Pani, Har Ghar Safai’ Mission
• Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh launched the ‘Har Ghar Pani, Har Ghar Safai’ mission as part of the state government’s campaign to accomplish the goal of 100 percent potable piped water supply in all rural households by 2022.
• The scheme is being funded by the World Bank, Jal Jeewan Mission of GoI, NABARD, and State Budget.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated Shaheed Ashfaq Ulla Khan Zoological Park in Gorakhpur
• The Chief Minister said the zoo has been named after great freedom fighter Shaheed Ashfaq Ullah Khan.
• It will be the second biggest zoo in Uttar Pradesh after Kanpur Zoological Park.
• Note: Recently Uttar Pradesh government has organized Banana Festival in Kushinagar district under ODOP (One District One Product) scheme.

Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu launched ‘Dekho Apna Pradesh’
• Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu launched ‘Dekho Apna Pradesh’ – an initiative of the chief minister himself, conceptualized on the lines of the union tourism ministry’s ‘Dekho Apna Desh’ initiative.
• It aims to restart tourism activities and encourage citizens to take a pledge to visit at least 10 places in Arunachal Pradesh by 2022.
• About Dekho Apna Desh: It is an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism which was launched by Union Minister for Tourism Shri Prahlad Singh Patel at Konark, Odisha on 24th January 2020.

‘Anandam: The Center for Happiness’ in IIM Jammu
• Union Minister of Education Ramesh Pokhriyal inaugurates ‘Anandam: The Center for Happiness’ at Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu virtually.
• Lieutenant Governor, Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha; Founder, Art of Living Foundation, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar virtually attended the occasion.
• It aligns with the National Education Policy 2020 that aims to transform India’s education system by 2021.
• ‘Anandam: The Center for Happiness’ will be divided into five broad categories, namely, Counselling, Holistic wellness, Elective courses on Happiness Development, Research and Leadership & Faculty Development

First-of-its-kind Cruise service starts between Surat and Diu
- Minister of State for Ports, Shipping & Waterways (I/C) Shri Mansukh Mandaviya flagged off the Cruise service from Hazira Port of Surat to Diu.
- Before 2014, there were 139 cruise calls at the Indian Ports but today there are 450 cruise calls in the country.
- The number before 2014 was one lakh and the number of tourists in 2019-20 was 4.5 lakhs.

Note: Indian coastline has a huge potential for the cruise tourism industry and 6 International cruise terminals are being planned on both the west coast (Mumbai, Goa, Kochi) and east coast (Visakhapatnam, Kolkata, Chennai) of India

Power Minister R K Singh launches ‘GRAM UJALA’ in Bihar
- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ministry of Power and Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, R K Singh launched the ‘GRAM UJALA’ programme in Arrah, Bihar.
- Under the GRAM UJALA programme, Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) will distribute high quality LED bulbs, at an affordable cost of 10 rupees per bulb in rural areas.
- The Village Ujala program will be funded entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such program in India.
- In the first phase of this programme, 1.5 crore LED bulbs will be distributed across villages of Aarah (Bihar), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Vijaywada (Andhra Pradesh), Nagpur (Maharashtra), and village in western Gujarat.

Bihar becomes first state in country to implement ‘Ethanol Production Promotion policy 2021’
- Bihar has become the first state in the country to implement ‘Ethanol Production Promotion policy 2021’ that would allow investors to directly make ethanol from maize, molasses, broken rice and rotten grains.
- Note: Currently, India produces 5.30 thousand barrel of ethanol, which is very low compared to countries like the USA and Brazil.
- At present, Bihar has been producing 12 crore litre ethanol per year and is the fifth highest ethanol-producing state in the country.
- Uttar Pradesh is the highest ethanol-producing state in the country.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister launches India’s first FPO portal
- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched ‘UPFPO Shakti Portal’ as part of Kisan Kalyan Mission at an event in Gorakhpur.
- The Farmer Producer Organization-centric (FPO-centric) portal will bring farmers, producer groups, traders and the agriculture and other allied departments of the UP government on one platform.
- The portal was developed with technical and funding support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).
- Note: The state currently has 576 FPOs comprising around 2.15 lakh farmers. Of these, 471 FPOs have registered themselves on the portal.

Asia's largest Tulip Garden in Srinagar opens
- About Tulip Garden (Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip garden): It is the largest tulip garden in Asia spread over an area of about 30 hectares.
- It is situated in the valley of the Jabarawan Hills on the banks of Dal Lake.
- The garden was opened in 2007 with the aim to boost floriculture and tourism in Kashmir Valley.

Andhra Pradesh to launch India's first “Government-run Ambulance Network” for animals
• The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to set up mobile ambulance services “Government-run Ambulance Network” for animals to boost the animal husbandry and veterinary sector in the state.
• The Animal Husbandry Department has been further directed to set up one Mobile Ambulance Veterinary Clinic at every assembly constituency.
• These mobile ambulances shall provide veterinary first aid services along with spot diagnosis and attending to emergency cases.

India's largest floating solar power plant at Telangana to be commissioned by May 2021
• India's largest floating solar power plant of 100 MW capacity is being developed in Telangana's Ramagundam and is likely to be commissioned by May, 2021.
• It is one of the solar plants being developed by the energy conglomerate NTPC, which is all set to commission around 217 MW floating solar capacity in the next few months.
• The other renewable energy plants that are likely to be commissioned this year are 92 MW floating unit at Kayamkulam gas plant in Kerala and 25 MW unit at Simhadri power plant.
• Note: The world's largest solar power plant with 600 MW capacity is being set up on Omkareshwar Dam on Narmada river in Madhya Pradesh. The project is expected to start power generation only by 2022-23.

Kalanamak Rice Festival
• Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated a three-day ‘Kalanamak Rice Festival’ in Siddharthnagar district on March 13, 2021.
• Kalanamak rice has been recognised with a geographical indication (GI) tag.
• It is under ODOP (One District One Product) scheme of the state government.
• Kalanamak rice is rich in micro-nutrients such as Iron and Zinc. Regular intake of Kalanamak rice can prevent Alzheimer’s disease.
• Note: Earlier, the Chief Minister had inaugurated the Strawberry Festival in Jhansi and the Jaggery Festival in Lucknow.

Bengaluru airport launches India’s first dedicated express cargo terminal
• The Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru now has India’s first dedicated Express Cargo Terminal exclusively for export and import of international couriers.
• The two lakh square feet built to suit facility will be operated by Express Industry Council of India.

India's first AC railway station ‘Sir M Visvesvaraya Terminal’ to function soon in Bengaluru
• Named after one of the foremost civil engineers, Bharat Ratna Sir M Visvesvaraya, the nation's first centralised AC (Air Conditioned) railway terminal at Baiyappanahalli in Bengaluru is set to become operational soon.
• India's first AC railway terminal, built at an anticipated cost of Rs 314 crore, is all set to be inaugurated later this month.

Mumbai’s CSMT becomes first railway station in Maharashtra to get IGBC Gold Certification
• Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) Railway Station of Central Railway is the first railway station in Maharashtra to be awarded with Gold certification as per CII’s Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) ratings.
Note: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) also known by its former name Victoria Terminus and it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), part of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) was formed in the year 2001. The council offers a wide array of services which include developing new green building rating programmes, certification services and green building training programmes.

Delhi government approves the formation of a separate school board in the city

- The Delhi government approved the formation of the Delhi Board of School Education (DBSE).
- The new Board will have a governing body headed by the Education Minister of the Delhi government and an executive body headed by a chief executive officer.
- Note: There are around 1,000 Delhi government schools and about 1,700 private schools, most of them affiliated to the CBSE, in the city.

India’s first ‘Transgender Community Desk’ opens in Hyderabad

- The Cyberabad Police launched India’s first-ever ‘Transgender Community Desk' at the Gachibowli Police Station in Hyderabad.
- The desk will provide support to file cases in offences related to violence or discrimination against any transgender person. Cyberabad Police chief VC Sajjanar inaugurated the desk.
- The desk will be managed by a police liaison officer and a transgender person who is designated as a community coordinator.

President of India inaugurates conservation works at Singorgarh Fort in Madhya Pradesh

- The President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone for the conservation works of Singorgarh Fort in Singrampur village of Damoh district in Madhya Pradesh.
- The President also inaugurated the newly carved Jabalpur Circle of Archaeological Survey of India.

Uttarakhand opens India’s first ‘forest healing centre’

- The country’s first ‘forest healing centre’ was inaugurated by noted environmentalist Joginder Bisht at Kalika near Ranikhet, Uttarakhand.
- The country’s first forest healing centre based on the concept of making people healthy by bringing them into direct contact with nature was opened to the public.
- Drawing inspiration from the Japanese technique of forest bathing (shinrin - yoku), the healing centre has been developed by the research wing of Uttarakhand Forest Department.

India’s first ‘World Skill Centre’ in Bhubaneswar

- Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the ‘World Skill Centre’ (WSC) at Mancheswar. It will provide skills training to 3000 students in eight trades.
- The State government has partnered with Institute of Technical Education Services (ITEES), Singapore to support Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) in operationalising the centre.
Note: The State will create Odisha Skill Vision 2030 that will guide all future efforts in the skill development sector.

World's tallest Chenab rail bridge in Jammu & Kashmir

- The world’s highest railway bridge is being constructed over Jammu & Kashmir’s Chenab River.
- The iconic steel arch is almost complete and the completion of the mega infrastructure project is scheduled for March this year.
- Note: The bridge which is being built by Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd (KRCL) is a part of the 111-km Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail link Project (USBRL) which aims to connect Kashmir Valley with the rest of the country through a railway line.

Fossils of world’s oldest animal Dickinsonia discovered inside Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh

- Researchers are of the opinion that has traced Dickinsonia on the roof of Auditorium Cave at Bhimbetka, which dates back 570 million years.
- The fossil was discovered by chance by two experts from the Geological Survey of India (GSI) when they went ahead to explore Bhimbetka ahead of the 36th International Geological Congress.
- About Bhimbetka rock shelters: The Bhimbetka rock shelters are an archaeological site in central India. It is located in the Raisen District of Madhya Pradesh.

It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that consists of seven hills and over 750 rock shelters distributed over 10 km.

‘Udaipur Science Centre’ inaugurated in Tripura

- The Governor of Tripura Ramesh Bais has inaugurated the ‘Udaipur Science Centre’, at Udaipur, Tripura.
- Udaipur Science Centre has been developed at a cost of Rs 6.00 crore funded jointly by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India and Dept. of Science, Technology & Environment, Government of Tripura.

Haryana implements 75 percent reservation for locals in private sector jobs

- The Haryana Governor has approved a bill (The Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill, 2020) that reserves 75 percent of the private sector jobs, that includes companies, societies and trusts, with gross salary upto ₹ 50,000 per month for the people of the state.
- The Bill was passed by the state assembly last year.

Maharashtra government declares Amboli as biodiversity heritage site

- The Maharashtra government declared an area at Amboli in Western ghats in Sindhudurg district, where a rare freshwater fish species was discovered, as a biodiversity heritage site.
- Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray’s son Tejas Thackeray, who is a wildlife researcher, and his team had discovered the new freshwater fish species - Schistura Hiranyakeshi near Amboli in Sawantwadi tehsil of Sindhudurg district.
- The discoveries of the freshwater fish species were published in the International Journal of Ichthyology in the October 2020 edition by Tejas Thackeray and co-authors.
Other Biodiversity Heritage Site in Maharashtra:
Glory of Allapalli in Gadchiroli district, Landor Khor Park in Jalgaon, Ganesh Khind in Pune, Myristica Swamp Vegetation in Sindhudurg district

Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan receives ‘Kalinga Ratna’ award 2021

Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India presented the ‘Kalinga Ratna’ award for the year 2021 to Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan for literary works.
The award was presented during the 600th Birth Anniversary of Adikabi Sarala Das and 40th Annual Celebrations of Sarala Sahitya Sansad during the programme held at Sarala Bhawan in Cuttack.
The Kalinga Ratna award carried a silver statue of Goddess Saraswati and a copper plaque.

Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation in Uttar Pradesh lists at BSE

Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation in Uttar Pradesh listed itself at BSE (Bombay Stock Exchange) and successfully raised Rs. 150 Crores by issuing Municipal Bond on Private Placement Basis using BSEBOND.
This is the first ever green bond issuance by any Municipal Corporation in the country.
Note: Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation is the second Municipal Corporation to raise funds in the state of Uttar Pradesh.
Earlier, Lucknow Municipal Corporation had listed itself at BSE.
About BSE Limited: It, formerly known as the Bombay Stock Exchange Ltd., is an Indian stock exchange located at Dalal Street, Mumbai. Established in 1875, it is Asia's oldest stock exchange.

Rajasthan becomes first state to provide health insurance for all its residents

The state began the registration for Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme, announced by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot in the state budget 2021-22.
Rajasthan has become the first state in the country, where each family will get health insurance of Rs 5 lakh each year.

India’s first farm-based solar power plant comes up in Rajasthan

The first farm-based solar power plant under the Prime Minister’s Kisan Urja Suraksha Evum Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) scheme has come up in Jaipur district’s Kotputli tehsil with a provision for production of 17 lakh units of electricity every.
Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Limited (RRECL) commissioned the first of India’s farm based solar power projects under the KUSUM Scheme.
A 1 MW project established on 3.5 acres of farmland in Bhaloji village, Kotputli tehsil in Jaipur, it is also the first of 623 farm based solar projects selected by RRECL for generating 722 MW capacity in Rajasthan under the first phase of Kusum scheme.

Central Farm Machinery Training & Testing Institute, Budni (Madhya Pradesh) tests the first-ever electric Tractor in the Institute

The institute received the application for an electric tractor under Confidential Test initially.
Accordingly, the institute has tested the tractor & released the Draft Test Report in February 2021. After the release of the draft test report, the manufacturer has requested for conversion of the nature of the test from “Confidential to Commercial” and the competent authority has accepted the request of the manufacturer. Accordingly, the Test Report was released as a Commercial Test Report.

The Institute has obtained the NABL Certificate of Accreditation for CMVR Test Laboratory on 30th March 2021.

**Puducherry becomes ‘Har Ghar Jal’ UT**

- Puducherry has become ‘Har Ghar Jal’ UT by ensuring that every rural home in the Union Territory gets a household tap connection.
- With this, the UT becomes the fourth State/UT after Goa, Telangana and Andaman & Nicobar Islands to provide assured tap water supply to every rural home under Union Government’s flagship programme, Jal Jeevan Mission.
- All 1.16 lakh rural households in Puducherry have tap water supply now.
- **Note:** Further, the State of Punjab and the UTs of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu have also crossed the milestone of covering 75% of rural homes with assured tap water supply.
- **About JJM (Jal Jeevan Mission):** It is a flagship programme of the Union Government, which aims to provide tap water connection to every rural household of the country by 2024.

**Assam becomes first Indian state to have a digital flood reporting system**

- Jishnu Barua, Chief Secretary, Assam, launched a digital real-time Flood Reporting and Information Management System (FRIMS) in the state of Assam.
- With the launch of FRIMS, Assam becomes the first Indian state to have a real-time digital flood reporting system.
- FRIMS has been developed jointly by Assam State Disaster Management Agency (ASDMA) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

**Madhya Pradesh government launches 'Mukhyamantri COVID Upchar Yojana'**

- Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced the launch of the 'Mukhyamantri COVID Upchar Yojana' (Chief Minister’s Covid Treatment Programme).
- **The scheme has been divided into three sections:**
  - **Under the first section,** hospitals run by state medical colleges, district and civil hospitals and community health centres will give free treatment to COVID-19 patients.
  - **In the second section,** 20 percent ICU/HDU and isolation beds will be reserved in hospitals run by private medical colleges to give free treatment.
  - **In the third section,** 20 percent beds will be reserved for free treatment in hospitals accredited under Ayushman scheme for economically weaker sections of the society holding Ayushman cards.

**Goa Maritime Symposium (GMS) – 2021**

- Towards fostering friendly relations with its maritime neighbours, Indian Navy hosted ‘Goa Maritime Symposium, GMS-21’ under the aegis of Naval War College, Goa on 11 and 12 May 21.
• Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event for the first time was hosted in virtual mode, with online participation of Naval representatives from 13 Indian Ocean Littoral countries, which included India, Bangladesh, Comoros, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Myanmar, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
• The theme for GMS-21 was focused on “Maritime Security and Emerging Non-Traditional Threats: A Case for Proactive Role for IOR Navies,” with emphasis on capacity building amongst the IOR Navies to tackle emerging common maritime threats.

Pinarayi Vijayan takes oath as Chief Minister of Kerala for the 2nd time
• Pinarayi Vijayan was sworn in as Kerala Chief Minister for a second time, after guiding the CPM-led Left Democratic Front government to a historic second successive term in the April-May 2021 election.
• He was administered the oath by Governor Arif Mohammad Khan at the Central Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram.
• Apart from Pinarayi Vijayan, 20 other ministers of the new cabinet of Kerala were also sworn in. He has been serving as the Chief Minister of Kerala since 25 May, 2016.

'AYUSH Ghar Dwar' for COVID-19 patients in Himachal Pradesh launched
• AYUSH Department has launched a state-wide wellness programme 'AYUSH Ghar Dwar' for COVID-19 patients, in Solan district, Himachal Pradesh.
• The Ayush Ghar Dwar program is being launched by AYUSH Vibhag Himachal Pradesh in collaboration with the Art of Living Organization.

Haryana declares Black Fungus a notified disease
• Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij has informed that black fungus has been declared a notified disease in the state.
• If any cases of this disease are found, the doctors will have to report them to the concerned chief medical officer (CMO).
• **About black fungus:** It, also known as mucormycosis, is caused by a fungus called mucor.
• **Mucormycosis** mainly affects people on medication for other health problems that reduces their ability to fight environmental pathogens, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research.

Malerkotla to be 23rd district of Punjab
• Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh announced the creation of a new district of Malerkotla (23rd district of Punjab), carving the state's only Muslim-majority town from Sangrur district on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.
• Adjoining Amargarh and Ahmedgarh will also form part of Punjab's 23rd district.
• **About Malerkotla:** It was established in 1454 by Sheikh Sadruddin-i-Jahan from Afghanistan, and subsequently the state of Malerkotla was established in 1657 by Bayazid Khan.
• During the reorganisation of states in 1956, the territory of the erstwhile state of Malerkotla became part of the state of Punjab.

Punjab to join global COVAX alliance to procure anti-COVID-19 vaccines
The Punjab government has decided to join the COVAX alliance for global sourcing and procurement of COVID vaccines at the best price, becoming the **first state in the country** to take such an initiative.

The decision to join COVAX alliance was taken during a Cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.

**About COVAX: COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access, abbreviated as COVAX**, is a worldwide initiative aimed at equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines directed by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), and the World Health Organization (WHO) and key delivery partner UNICEF.

It aims at accelerating the development and manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines and to guarantee fair and equitable access for every country in the world.

**Uttarakhand government announces ‘Chief Minister Vatsalya Yojana’**

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat has announced ‘Chief Minister Vatsalya Yojana’ for orphaned children who have lost their parents due to COVID-19.

**About the ‘Chief Minister Vatsalya Yojana’**

- Under the scheme, the state government will make arrangements for their maintenance, education and training for employment up to the age of 21 years.
- Such orphaned children of the state will be given a maintenance allowance of 3000 rupees per month.
- The children will be given 5 percent horizontal reservation in government jobs of the state government.

**Exports of GI certified Gholvad Sapota for Maharashtra to UK begins**

In a major boost to exports of Geographical Indication (GI) certified products, a consignment of Gholvad Sapota from Palghar district of Maharashtra was shipped to the United Kingdom.

**About Gholvad Sapota (chikoo)**

- The fruit is known for its sweet and unique taste. The unique taste is derived from calcium rich soil of Gholvad village in Palghar district (Maharashtra).
- Sapota is grown in many states- Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh.
- **Karnataka** is known to be the highest grower of the fruit, followed by Maharashtra.

**Recent Related News**

- First consignment of GI certified **Shahi Litchi from Bihar** was exported to the United Kingdom.
- **Shahi litchi was the fourth agricultural product to get GI certification from Bihar in 2018, after Jardalu mango, Katarni rice and Magahi paan.**
- India is the second largest producer of litchi in the world, after China.
- Earlier, a consignment of **GI certified Banganapalli & Survarnarekha mangoes** sourced from farmers in Krishna & Chittor districts of Andhra Pradesh was exported to South Korea.

**Karnataka government launches online portal 'Akanksha' on CSR activities**

- Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa launched an online portal 'Akanksha' on CSR activities to provide comprehensive details on all the CSR activities in the state.

**Key Points**
Named as Akanksha, the portal will help the corporate sector, government and the donors to utilise CSR funds for Government programmes.

- The portal will usher in transparency in the utilisation of CSR funds.
- The portal will also help achieve the sustainable development goals set by the UN.

**Assam Chief Minister appoints ‘Guardian Ministers’**

- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has appointed ‘Guardian Ministers’ for its various districts.

**Key Points**

- These guardians, each a minister of the Himanta Biswa Sarma Cabinet, have been given the responsibility of 2-3 districts to review implementation of all centrally sponsored schemes & the state's own priority programmes.
- 13 ministers will be responsible for the implementation of the government’s policy decision, Administrative reforms and other welfare schemes for the public in the 34 districts.
Important News: India

High Level Expert Committee for a comprehensive review of NCC

Why in News
• The Ministry of Defence has constituted a 15-member High Level Expert Committee for a comprehensive review of the National Cadet Corps (NCC).

Key Points
• The committee will be chaired by former Member of Parliament (MP) Baijayant Panda and will include former Indian cricket team captain MS Dhoni, industrialist Anand Mahindra and former sports minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore.

Objective:
• Committee to suggest measures to empower NCC cadets to contribute more effectively towards nation building
• To propose ways for gainful engagement of NCC Alumni for betterment of the organisation
• To recommend best practices of similar international youth organisations for inclusion in NCC curriculum

About National Cadet Corps (NCC):
• The NCC is the largest uniformed organisation which aims at developing character, discipline, a secular outlook and ideals of selfless service amongst young citizens.
• The NCC is the youth wing of the Indian Armed Forces.
• Headquarters: New Delhi
• Founded: 16 April 1948

Source: PIB

KVIC launches SPIN (Strengthening the Potential of India) Scheme

Why in News
• Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) launched a unique Scheme called SPIN (Strengthening the Potential of India).
• SPIN is a specially designed program to make potters self-sustainable.

Key Points
Salient Features of SPIN Scheme:
• It is a no-subsidy program.
• KVIC facilitates potters to get bank loans under Pradhan Mantri Shishu Mudra Yojana.

Other Related Schemes:
• Terracotta Grinder
• Prime Minister’s Employment Generation Programme
• Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana

Source: TOI
Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana (RKVY)
Why in News
- The Ministry of Railways launched Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana under the aegis of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY).

Key Points
About Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana (RKVY):
- The aim is to impart training skills to the youth in various trades to bring qualitative improvement.
- The training will be provided to 50000 candidates over a period of three years.
- The training will be provided in 4 trades viz. Electrician, Machinist, Welder and Fitter.
- The scheme is being launched for 1000 participants initially and will be over and above the training provided to apprentices under the Apprentice Act 1961.

About Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):
- It is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) implemented by National Skill Development Corporation.
- The 1st version of PMKVY was launched in 2015.
- PMKVY 2.0 was launched for 2016-20.
- PMKVY 3.0 was launched in 2021.

Other Related Initiatives:
- ASEEM (Atma Nirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping)
- SANKALP (Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood)
- STRIVE (Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement)
- SHREYAS (Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills)
- YuWaah Youth Skilling Initiative
- National Career Service Project

Source: PIB

‘Reforms in Urban Planning Capacity in India’ Report: NITI Aayog
Why in News
- NITI Aayog launched the report, titled ‘Reforms in Urban Planning Capacity in India’.

Key Points
About the Report:
- The report has been developed by NITI Aayog, in consultation with concerned ministries and eminent experts in the domain of urban and regional planning.

Reforms in Urban Planning Capacity:
- India is the second largest urban system in the world with almost 11% of the total global urban population living in Indian cities.
Urban growth is expected to contribute to 73% of the total population increase by 2036.
Over 75% of the urban population is in 10 States: Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Kerala.
Urban planning is the foundation for an integrated development of cities, citizens, and the environment. Unfortunately, it has received due attention so far.

Report’s main recommendation: Programmatic Intervention for Planning of Healthy Cities: Every city must aspire to become a ‘Healthy City for All’ by 2030. The report recommends a Central Sector Scheme ‘500 Healthy Cities Programme’, for a period of 5 years, wherein priority cities and towns would be selected jointly by the states and local bodies.

Schemes/Programmes Related to Urban Development:
- AMRUT Mission
- Smart Cities
- Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban
- The National Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY)

Source: PIB

Crime in India Report 2020: NCRB
Why in News

Key Points
Findings of the Report:
Communal riots:
- Communal riots registered an increase of 96% in 2020 over the previous year (2019).
- Delhi Police alone registered the highest 520 cases of communal riots in 2020.
- Uttar Pradesh did not record a single case of communal violence in 2020.

Caste riots:
- Caste riots saw an increase of close to 50%, agrarian riots 38% and riots during ‘andolan/morcha’ increased by 33%.
- Cases of caste conflict increased from 492 in 2019 to 736 in 2020. Bihar recorded the highest number in this category at 208.

Traditional Crimes:
- While 2020 — a year marked by months of a national lockdown due to the pandemic — saw fewer “traditional crimes” such as those committed against women and children, among others, it witnessed a big spike in civil conflicts.
• The number of cases registered for crimes against women, children and senior citizens, theft, burglary, robbery and dacoity, among others, dropped by about 2 lakh.
• Murder registered a marginal increase of 1% even as offences falling under the “violent crimes” category decreased by 0.5%.

**Offences against the State:**
• The year also saw a significant drop in cases related to ‘Offences against the State’, with a drop of 27% over 2019.
• Uttar Pradesh, however, was the only major state to record an increase in this category, mostly due to the large number of ‘Damage to Public Property’ cases registered by the state, many of them during the anti-CAA protests.
• It includes cases related to sedition and waging war against the nation, those falling under provisions of the Official Secrets Act, Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and Damage to Public Property Act.

**Source: Indian Express**

**Connect Karo 2021 Why in News**
• **Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri** addressed the inaugural session of ‘Connect Karo 2021 - Towards Equitable, Sustainable Indian Cities’ program.
• It was organized by the World Resources Institute (WRI) India.

**Key Points**
**Minister’s Address:**
• **By 2030, almost 70% of the national GDP** will come from our cities as rapid urbanisation facilitates efficiencies of agglomerations.
• The best-performing cities globally contribute **five times more to national GDP** than comparable Indian cities.
• **By 2030, the urban population in India will almost double to 630 million.**
• **Improved urban ecosystems will have quantifiable positive impacts on not just the targets of SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) but also on other national priorities such as poverty, health, education, sanitation, energy, and climate action,** the Minister added.

**Related Government Initiatives:**
• Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
• Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT Mission)
• Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework
• Urban Transport scheme
• Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban)
• Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban)

**Source: PIB**
Prime Minister lays the foundation stone of Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh State University in Aligarh

Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone of **Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh State University in Aligarh**.
- **Prime Minister** also visited the exhibition models of the **Aligarh node of Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor** and Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh State University.

Key Points

**About Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh State University:**
- The University is being established by the Uttar Pradesh State Government in the memory and honour of Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh.
- The University is being set up in a total area of over 92 acres at village Lodha and village Musepur Kareem Jarouli of Aligarh’s Koil tehsil.

**About Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh:**
- Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh was born in the Hathras District of Uttar Pradesh on 1 December 1886.
- He was an Indian freedom fighter, journalist, writer, revolutionary.
- He was a member of the second Lok Sabha in 1957–1962.
- He was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1932.

**About UP’s Defense Industrial Corridor:**
- The establishment of a Defense Industrial Corridor in Uttar Pradesh was announced by the Prime Minister while inaugurating the UP Investors Summit in Lucknow on February 21, 2018.
- A total of 6 nodes – Aligarh, Agra, Kanpur, Chitrakoot, Jhansi and Lucknow – have been planned in the Defense Industrial Corridor.

Source: PIB

---

Swachh Survekshan Grameen (SSG) 2021

Why in News

- The Minister of State, Jal Shakti Ministry, Prahlad Singh Patel launched **Swachh Survekshan Grameen (SSG) 2021** under **Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase –II**.
- He also released the SSG 2021 Protocol document; SSG 2021 Dashboard and the mobile App for Citizens feedback.

Key Points

- The **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS)** will undertake Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2021.
- DDWS had commissioned Swachh Survekshan Grameen on two occasions earlier in 2018 and 2019.
- One of the country’s largest such survey with around 17,475 villages, it not only gives huge publicity to the programme and ODF Plus goals, but at the same time
engages districts and states in enhancing their reputation in sanitation, overall cleanliness and waste management.

**About Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase –II:**
- SBM (G) Phase-II will focus on Open Defecation Free Plus (ODF Plus), which includes ODF sustainability and Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM).
- It will be implemented from 2020-21 to 2024-25 with a total outlay of Rs. 1,40,881 crores.

**Other Schemes as part of Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM):**
- GOBAR-DHAN (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources) Scheme
- Individual Household Latrines
- Swachh Vidyalaya Abhiyan

Source: PIB

---

**National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2021**

**Why in News**
- Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Education Minister released the India Rankings 2021 instituted by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).

**Key Points**

**About National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF):**
- NIRF, launched in November 2015 by the Ministry of Education, was used for this edition as well as for the past 5 editions of India Rankings released for the years 2016 to 2021.
- This is the sixth consecutive edition of India Rankings of HEIs in India.
- During its maiden year in 2016, rankings were announced for the University category as well as for three domain-specific rankings, namely Engineering, Management and Pharmacy institutions.
- Over the period of six years, three new categories and five new subject domains were added to bring the total tally to 4 four categories, namely Overall, University, College and Research Institutions and 7 subjects, namely Engineering, Management, Architecture, Medical, Pharmacy, Law and Dental in 2021.
- Research institutions have been ranked for the first time in India Rankings 2021.
- **Parameter: These are** Teaching, Learning & Resources, Research and Professional Practice, Graduation Outcomes, Outreach and Inclusivity, Perception.

**Number of Participants:** In all, 6272 applications for ranking were made by these 4030 unique applicant institutions under various categories / domains.

**Key Highlights of India Rankings 2021:**
- **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras** retains 1st Position in Overall Category as well as in Engineering for the third consecutive year.
Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru tops the University as well as Research Institution category introduced for the first time in India Rankings 2021.

IIM Ahmedabad tops in Management subject and All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi occupies the top slot in Medical for the fourth consecutive year.

Jamia Hamdard tops the list in Pharmacy subject for the third consecutive year.

Miranda College retains 1st position amongst colleges for the fifth consecutive year.

IIT Roorkee takes the top slot for the first time in Architecture subject displacing IIT Kharagpur.

National Law School of India University, Bangalore retains its first position in Law for the fourth consecutive year.

Manipal College of Dental Sciences, Manipal, secures 1st position in “Dental” category.

Source: PIB

“PRANA” Portal

Why in News

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav launched the “PRANA” – Portal for Regulation of Air-pollution in Non-Attainment cities under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) on the occasion of the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies (September 7).

He also inaugurated the first functional smog tower in India at Anand Vihar, Delhi. The tower has been built by Tata Projects Limited with NBCC (India) Ltd. as the project management consultant.

Earlier, India’s Tallest Air Purifier was inaugurated in Chandigarh and a Smog Tower was also installed in Delhi’s Connaught Place.

Key Points

About PRANA:

“PRANA” (Portal for Regulation of Air-pollution in Non-Attainment cities) is a portal for monitoring the implementation of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

The portal will support tracking of physical as well as financial status of city air action plan implementation and disseminate information on air quality to the public.

City-specific action plans for improving air quality for 132 Non-attainment cities/Million Plus Cities targeting city specific air polluting sources (Soil & Road Dust, Vehicles, Domestic Fuel, MSW Burning, Construction Material and Industries) have been prepared and are already being implemented.
Note: 86 cities showed better air quality in 2019 in comparison to 2018, which increased to 104 cities in 2020.

About National Clean Air Programme (NCAP):
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) are implementing the National Clean Air Programme in the country since 2019 with targets to achieve 20 to 30% reduction in Particulate Matter (PM10 and PM2.5) concentrations by 2024 across the country.

Related Initiatives:
- Air Quality Index
- New Commission for Air Quality Management
- Reducing Vehicular Pollution

Source: PIB

Prime Minister releases a special commemorative coin on the occasion of 125th Birth Anniversary of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Why in News
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a special commemorative coin on the occasion of the 125th Birth Anniversary of ISKCON founder Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

Key Points
- Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada founded the ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) commonly known as the “Hare Krishna movement”.
- He also established over a hundred temples and wrote several books, teaching the path of Bhakti Yoga to the world.
- ISKCON has translated Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta and other Vedic literature in 89 languages, playing a stellar role in the dissemination of Vedic literature across the world.

Source: PIB

Shikshak Parv 2021

Why in News
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the inaugural conclave of Shikshak Parv 2021.
- He also launched multiple key initiatives in the Education Sector on the occasion.
- The Ministry of Education is celebrating Shikshak Parv, 2021 from September 5-17 in recognition of the valuable contributions of teachers and to take National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 a step forward.
- The theme of ‘Shikshak Parv-2021’ is “Quality and Sustainable Schools: Learnings from Schools in India”.

Source: PIB
Key Points

Five Initiatives launched by Prime Minister:

i. **Indian Sign Language dictionary** of 10,000 words (audio and text embedded sign language video for the hearing impaired, in conformity with Universal Design of Learning)

ii. **Talking Books** (audio books for visually impaired)

iii. **School Quality Assurance and Assessment Framework (S.Q.A.A.F.)** of CBSE

iv. **NISHTHA teachers' training programme for NIPUN Bharat**

   NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement) is a capacity building programme for "Improving Quality of School Education through Integrated Teacher Training".

   NIPUN (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy) Bharat was launched to ensure that every child in the country necessarily attains foundational literacy and numeracy by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27.

v. **Vidyanjali 2.0 portal** (For facilitating education volunteers/donors/CSR contributors for school development)

Related Recent Initiatives:

- Samagra Shiksha Scheme 2.0
- Academic Bank of Credit
- Vidya Pravesh
- Structured Assessment For Analyzing Learning Levels (SAFAL)
- National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR)
- National Education Technology Forum (NETF)

Note:

- **National Teachers’ Day**: 05th September
- President Ram Nath Kovind on National Teachers’ Day (05th September 2021) conferred the National Teachers’ Awards on 44 teachers.
- **World Teachers’ day**: 05th October

Source: PIB

“AYUSH AAPKE DWAR” Campaign

**Why in News**

- Ayush Ministry launched the campaign “AYUSH AAPKE DWAR” from more than 45 locations across the country.

**Key Points**

- The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) and Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Science (CCRA), Ministry of Ayush distributed medicinal saplings and Ayurvedic medicines to the public.
- **Aim**: The campaign aims to distribute medicinal plant saplings to 75 lakh households across the country in one year.
The medicinal plants include Tejpatta, Stevia, Ashoka, Jatamansi, Giloy/Guduchi, Ashwagandha, Kumari, Shatavari, Lemongrass, Guggulu, Tulsi, Sarpagandha, Kalmegh, Brahmi and Amla.

**About Ministry of AYUSH:**
- The Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy (abbreviated as AYUSH) is purposed with developing education, research and propagation of indigenous alternative medicine systems in India.
- It was established on November 9, 2014.
- The Ministry of Ayush includes the seven traditional systems of healthcare.

*Source: PIB*

**‘Y-Break’ Yoga protocol App**

**Why in News**
- **Union Minister of Ayush Sarbanand Sonowal** launched the ‘Y-Break’ mobile application (Yoga protocol App).

**Key Points**

**About ‘Y-Break’ Yoga protocol App:**
- It has been developed by Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi.
- The five-minute Yoga protocol, especially designed for working professionals to de-stress, refresh and re-focus at their workplace to increase their productivity, consists of Asanas, Pranayam and Dhyana.
- The Y- Break application will bring awareness about different Yoga practices and help the masses to practice Yoga anytime with ease.

*Note:* This module was launched in January, 2020 as a pilot project basis in six major Metro cities in coordination with different stake-holders.

*Source: PIB*

**Mission Poshan 2.0**

**Why in News**
- **The Ministry of Women and Child Development** has decided to celebrate the POSHAN Maah across the nation throughout the month of September starting from September 1, 2021.

**Key Points**

**About POSHAN Abhiyaan:**
- **POSHAN (Prime Minister’s Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition) Abhiyaan** is Government of India’s flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, adolescent Girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- It was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of International Women’s Day on 8 March, 2018 from Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan.
• Focusing on the aims of POSHAN Abhiyaan, Mission Poshan 2.0 (Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0) has been announced in the Budget 2021-2022 as an integrated nutrition support programme.
• Every year, the month of September is celebrated as POSHAN Maah across the country.

About Mission Poshan 2.0:
• The Ministry of Women and Child Development has planned a series of activities throughout the month (September) in tandem with the States and Union Territories.
• The weekly themes are Plantation Activity as PoshanVatika, Yoga and AYUSH for Nutrition, Distribution of ‘Regional Nutrition Kit’ to Anganwadi beneficiaries of High Burdened Districts and Identification of severe acute malnourished children and distribution of nutritious food.

Source: PIB

NIPUN Bharat Programme
• Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ launched a National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat).
• NIPUN Bharat ensures that every child in the country necessarily attains foundational literacy and numeracy by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27.

Key Points
• This Mission has been launched under the aegis of the centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha.
• This Mission will focus on providing access and retaining children in foundational years of schooling; teacher capacity building; development of high quality and diversified Student and Teacher Resources/Learning Materials; and tracking the progress of each child in achieving learning outcomes.
• NIPUN Bharat aims to cover the learning needs of children in the age group of 3 to 9 years.
• The success of NIPUN Bharat will primarily depend on teachers, so, there will be a special emphasis on capacity building of teachers.
• A special package for foundational literacy and Numeracy under NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers’ Holistic Advancement) is being developed by NCERT and around 25 lakh teachers teaching at pre-primary to primary grade will be trained this year on FLN.

Central government extends superannuation age of LIC chairman to up to 62 years

Why in the News?
• The Central government has extended the superannuation age of IPO-bound LIC Chairman to up to 62 years by amending the Life Insurance Corporation of India (Staff) Regulations, 1960.
• The changes made in the rules will be called the Life Insurance Corporation of India (Staff) Amendment Rules, 2021.
Central Government creates a new ‘Ministry of Co-operation’

Why in the News?
- A separate ‘Ministry of Co-operation’ has been created by the Central Government for realizing the vision of ‘Sahkar se Samriddhi’ or prosperity through cooperation.
- The creation of a separate Ministry for Co-operation also fulfils the budget announcement made by the Finance Minister.

‘Matsya Setu’ for Fish Farmers

Why in the News?
- The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying launched the Online Course Mobile App ‘Matsya Setu’.
- The ‘Matsya Setu’ app was developed by the ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA), Bhubaneswar, with the funding support of the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), Hyderabad.

Key Points
- Matsya Setu app aims to disseminate the latest freshwater aquaculture technologies to the aqua farmers of the country.
- The app has species-wise/ subject-wise self-learning online course modules, where renowned aquaculture experts explain the basic concepts and practical demonstrations on breeding, seed production and grow-out culture of commercially important fishes like carp, catfish, scampi, murrel, ornamental fish, pearl farming etc.

India gets its 40th UNESCO World Heritage Site- Dholavira: A Harappan City

Why in News
- India’s nomination of Dholavira, the Harappan City in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat has been inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage list.

Key Points
- Dholavira site was on UNESCO’s tentative list since 2014.
- India now enters the Super-40 club for World Heritage Site inscriptions.
- With this successful nomination, India has 40 world heritage properties overall, which includes 32 cultural, 7 natural and one mixed property.

Note: This follows a few days after the Rudreswara Temple, (also known as the Ramappa Temple) at Palampet, Mulugu district, Telangana State becoming the 39th World Heritage Centre in India.

Indian Labour Conference

Why in News
- Recently, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (Labour Union) wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking him to convene the Indian Labour Conference (ILC).
- India also has a legal obligation to hold the ILC since the Indian Parliament has ratified Convention No. 144 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) related to strengthening the tripartite mechanism.

Key Points
About Indian Labour Conference (ILC):
- It is the apex level tripartite consultative committee in the Ministry of Labour & Employment.
- It suggests the Government on the issues concerning the working class of the country.
• **Members:** Central Trade Union Organisations, Central Organisations of employers, all State Governments and Union Territories and Central Ministries/Departments concerned with the agenda, are the members of the ILC.
• The **first meeting** of the ILC (then called Tripartite National Labour Conference) was held in 1942 and so far a total of 46 Sessions have been held.
• The most recent session of Indian Labour Conference was held in 2015.

**Indian Institute of Heritage**

**Why in News**
- The central government has decided to set up the ‘Indian Institute of Heritage’ at Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar (Uttar Pradesh).
- Indian Institute of Heritage will be a world-class university that would focus on the conservation and research in India’s rich tangible heritage.

**Key Points**
**About 'Indian Institute of Heritage':**
- The Institute is being set up as Deemed to be University.
- **Note:** Presently, there are **38 World Heritage Sites located in India**. India has the 6th largest number of sites in the world. Among these 38 UNESCO Heritage sites of India, the list includes **30 cultural sites, 7 natural sites, and 1 mixed site**.
- Presently, a total of **1,121 World Heritage Sites** (869 cultural, 213 natural, and 39 mixed) exist across 167 countries. With 55 selected areas, China and Italy are the countries with the most sites on the list.

**Digital Platform ‘Kisan Sarathi’**

**Why in News**
- ‘Kisan Sarathi’, a digital platform, was launched jointly by the Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare with the Minister for Electronics and Information Technology.
- It was launched on the occasion of 93rd Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) Foundation Day.

**Ministry of Electronics & IT enables map services in “UMANG App”**

**Why in News**
- The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology has enabled map services in **UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) mobile app** through a MoU with MapmyIndia.

**Key Points**
- Citizens will be able to find government facilities nearest to their location, such as mandis, blood banks and much more, at the click of a button.
- They will also be able to see these on the most detailed and interactive street and village level maps of India, built by MapmyIndia.
- Citizens will also be able to view the driving distance, get directions and turn by turn voice and visual guidance to locations, including traffic and road safety alerts during navigation, through the linkage between UMANG App and MapmyIndia.

**“The India Story” booklet on Indian initiatives shaping energy transition**

**Why in the News?**
- Minister of State (I/C) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, R.K. Singh launched “The India Story” booklet on Indian initiatives shaping energy transition.
• The booklet was launched at the event on “Accelerating Citizen Centric Energy Transition”, organized by The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of India (PMI) to the United Nations and the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW).
• The Minister also launched a website which will act as a repository of energy transition related knowledge resources from around the world.

Key Points

Main Points of the booklet:
• In the last 6 years, India’s installed renewable energy capacity has increased by over two and a half times and stands at more than 141 Giga Watts (including large Hydro), which is about 37 percent of the country’s total capacity (as on 16th June 2021).
• During the same period, the installed solar energy capacity has increased by over 15 times and stands at 41.09 GW.
• India’s renewable energy capacity is the 4th largest in the world.

“Enforcing Contracts Portal”

Why in the News?
• The Department of Justice, New Delhi launched “Enforcing Contracts Portal”.
• The Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, as the nodal department, has been monitoring an array of legislative and policy reforms to strengthen the “Enforcing Contracts” regime for Ease of Doing Business in India.

Key Points
• The portal aims to promote ease of doing business and improve the ‘Contract Enforcement Regime’ in the country.
• The portal provides easy access to latest information on commercial cases in Dedicated Commercial Courts of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata.

Need:
• The Doing Business Report of World Bank Group benchmarks business regulations across 191 economies of the world.
• Within this, the Ease of Doing Business index is a ranking system which is an indication of an economy’s position relative to that of other economies across 11 areas of business regulation.
• Currently, only the cities of Delhi and Mumbai are under the purview of the Ease of Doing Business survey by World Bank.
• Kolkata and Bengaluru are likely to be included in the Doing Business Report in future.
• Note: India ranked 63rd out of 190 countries in Ease of Doing Business 2020: World Bank Report.

37th PRAGATI Meeting

Why in News
• Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the meeting of the 37th edition of PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) - the ICT based multi-modal platform, involving Centre and State governments.
• He reviewed the scheme of ‘One Nation – One Ration Card’ (ONORC).

Key Points
About PRAGATI:
- PRAGATI is a unique integrating and interactive platform.
- The platform is aimed at addressing common man’s grievances, and simultaneously monitoring and reviewing important programmes and projects of the Government of India as well as projects flagged by State Governments.
- It is a three-tier system (PMO, Union Government Secretaries, and Chief Secretaries of the States).
- The system has been designed in-house by the PMO team with the help of National Informatics Center (NIC).

Note: In the previous 36 PRAGATI meetings, 292 projects having a total cost of 13.78 lakh crore have been reviewed.

Source: PIB

UN Women and MyGov launch Amrit Mahotsav Shri Shakti Innovation Challenge 2021 on Women’s Safety and Empowerment

About Amrit Mahotsav Shri Shakti Innovation Challenge 2021:
- It will support and promote women entrepreneurs and women led Start-ups to find technology solutions for women’s safety and empowerment.
- It provides a much-needed platform to foster women-led solutions that can improve women’s safety, build economic gains and benefit thousands of other women as we build back from COVID-19.
- The first Shri Shakti Challenge was held in 2020.

About MyGov:
- It is the citizen-centric platform of the Government of India that empowers people to connect with the Government and contribute towards good governance.
- It is a unique path-breaking initiative which was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014.

About UN Women:
- UN Women, as the UN agency with the mandate to work on gender equality, is responsible for leading and coordinating United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world and at the country level.

Government’s Initiatives towards Women Empowerment:
- MUDRA scheme
- Ujjwala scheme
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
- Abolition of Triple Talaq
- New Labour Code
- POSHAN Abhiyaan

Source: PIB

India’s evacuation mission from Afghanistan named “Operation Devi Shakti”
- India’s complex mission to evacuate its citizens and Afghan partners from Kabul after its swift takeover by the Taliban has been named as “Operation Devi Shakti”.
- Apart from them, three saroops of the Guru Granth Sahib were also brought back.
- Note: There were 13 saroops of Guru Granth Sahib in Afghanistan of which 7 were already shifted to India earlier.

New Geospatial Planning Portal, ‘Yuktdhara’

Why in News
- Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Giriraj Singh launched a new Geospatial Planning Portal, ‘Yuktdhara’.
- It will help in facilitating new MGNREGA assets using Remote Sensing and GIS (Geographic Information System) based information.
- Yuktdhara is a new portal under Bhuvan.

Earthquake Observatories
Why in News
- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences Dr Jitendra Singh said that India is going to have 35 more Earthquake Observatories by the end of 2021 and 100 more such Observatories by 2026.
- He announced it while addressing the inaugural ceremony of Joint Scientific Assembly of International Association of Geomagnetism and Aeronomy (IAGA) - International Association of Seismology and Physics of the Earth’s Interior (IASPEI).

Key Points
About Earthquake Observatories:
- National Center for Seismology is the nodal agency of the Government for monitoring of earthquake activity in the country.
- At present, India has only 115 Earthquake Observatories.

Earthquakes in India:
- The Indian subcontinent is considered as one of the world's most disaster-prone areas in terms of earthquakes, landslides, cyclones, floods, and tsunamis.
- According to seismic zoning mapping, India is divided into 4 zones.
- These zones are divided on the basis of the estimation of the intensity of the earthquake. India is divided into Zone 2, Zone 3, Zone 4, and Zone 5.

Some of the major earthquakes in the Indian Subcontinent:
- Shillong (1897), Kangra (1905), Bihar-Nepal border (1934), Assam-Tibet border (1950), Bhuj (2001), Kashmir (2005), Sikkim (2011) and Manipur (2016).

Source: PIB

NeoBolt, India’s first indigenous motorised wheelchair vehicle
Why in News
- Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) has developed India’s first indigenous motorised wheelchair vehicle, NeoBolt.

NTPC commissions largest Floating Solar PV Project in the country
Why in News
- The National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Ltd. has commissioned the largest Floating Solar Photo Voltaic (PV) Project of 25MW on the reservoir of its Simhadri thermal station in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- This is also the first solar project to be set up under the Flexibilisation Scheme, notified by the Government of India in 2018.

‘IndiGau’ India’s first Cattle Genomic Chip
Why in News
Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh released **“IndiGau’, India’s first Cattle Genomic Chip** for the conservation of pure varieties of indigenous cattle breeds like, Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal, Ongole etc.

This indigenous chip was developed by the **National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NAIB), Hyderabad**, an autonomous institution under the aegis of the **Department of Biotechnology**.

**Key Points**

**About IndiGau:**
- IndiGau is purely indigenous and the largest cattle chip of the world.
- It has 11,496 markers (SNPs) more than that placed on 777K Illumina chip of United States & United Kingdom breeds.
- This chip will have practical utility in the Government’s schemes to achieve the goal of conservation of own breeds with better characteristics and help towards doubling of farmers’ income by 2022.
- The manufacturing of IndiGau Chip is in synergy with **Rashtriya Gokul Mission** and a great example of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

**About Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM):**
- It was launched in December 2014 for development and conservation of indigenous breeds through selective breeding in the breeding tract and genetic upgradation of nondescript bovine population.
- The scheme comprises two components namely **National Programme for Bovine Breeding (NPBB)** and **National Mission on Bovine Productivity (NMBP)**.

Source: PIB

**2nd Phase of SAMVAD Initiative**

**About SAMVAD:**
- **SAMVAD (Support, Advocacy & Mental health interventions for children in Vulnerable circumstances And Distress)** is a National Initiative and Integrated Resource that works in child protection, mental health and psychosocial care in difficult circumstances.
- The initiative is funded by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.

**Purpose:**
- SAMVAD’s efforts is providing coping mechanisms for children in distress by training close to 1 lakh stakeholders comprising of Child Protection Functionaries, tele-counsellors, educators, law professionals among others.
- SAMVAD is slated to begin work with Panchayati Raj systems to integrate child protection and mental health in aspirational districts across the country to facilitate awareness generation and improve service delivery at the grassroot level.

**Mental Health Scenario in India:**
- A report published in The Lancet Psychiatry in February 2020 indicates that in 2017, there were 197.3 million people with mental disorders in India.

Source: PIB

**GSLV-F10: Earth Observation Satellite (EOS-03)**

**Why in News**
- The **GSLV-F10 rocket** failed to put the **Earth Observation Satellite (EOS-03)** in orbit.

**Key Points**
- The launch took place from the second launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota. The performance of the first and second stages of the launch was normal. However, the cryogenic upper stage ignition failed due to a technical anomaly.
An Ogive shaped payload fairing was flown for the first time in this GSLV flight. It was the fourteenth flight of the GSLV.

The GSLV-F10 was a three-stage/engine rocket.

Objective of the satellite EOS-03:

The objective of the satellite EOS-03, which was to have a mission life of 10 years, was to provide near real time imaging of a large region of interest at frequent intervals for quick monitoring of natural disasters, episodic events and any short-term events to obtain spectral signatures for agriculture, forestry, water bodies as well as for disaster warning, cyclone monitoring and cloud burst/thunderstorm monitoring.

Note: For ISRO, the launch of GSLV-F10 was the second space mission in 2021 after the successful launch of the Brazilian satellite Amazonia-1 by the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle early this year.

Future Missions:

- Satellites: OCEANSAT-3, GISAT-2, RISAT-2A, etc.
- Gaganyaan and Chandrayaan-3 will be launched on GSLV Mk-III
- NISAR mission, a first-of-its-kind collaboration between NASA and ISRO for a joint earth-observation satellite

Source: The Hindu

Fit India Freedom Run 2.0
Why in News

Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports Anurag Singh Thakur on August 13th launched the nationwide programme of Fit India Freedom Run 2.0 as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav which celebrates 75 years on India’s Independence.

- The event was held at 75 other locations across the country, including iconic locations.

Key Points

- The Fit India Freedom Run 2.0 will start on August 15th and will go on till October 2nd, 2021.
- The aim is to reach more than 7.50 crore youth and citizens across the country.
- Weekly programmes will be held in 75 districts and at 75 villages in each district.
- The aim of the campaign is to encourage people to take up fitness activities such as running and sports in their daily life.

Source: PIB

Elephant and Tiger population estimation protocol
Why in News

Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav released the Elephant and Tiger population estimation protocol on the occasion of World Elephant Day (12th August).

- The protocol is to be adopted in the exercise for the All India elephant and tiger population estimation in 2022.
- The Ministry for the first time is converging both elephant and tiger population estimation.
- The programme also witnessed release of the fourth edition of the quarterly newsletter “Trumpet” of the Elephant Division of the Ministry.

Key Points

About Asian Elephants:

- Asian elephants are listed as "Endangered" on the IUCN Red List of threatened species.
- The current population estimates indicate that there are about 50,000-60000 Asian elephants in the world. More than 60% of the population is held in India.
• Indian Elephant has also been listed in the Appendix I of the Convention of the Migratory species in the recently concluded Conference of Parties of CMS 13 at Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat in February 2020.

• **Project Elephant** was launched in 1992 by the Government of India Ministry of Environment and Forests to provide financial and technical support to wildlife management efforts by states for their free-ranging populations of wild Asian Elephants.

**Note:** On the occasion of **International Tiger Day (29th July)**, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change announced that **14 tiger reserves in India** have received accreditation of the **Global Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CA|TS)**.

Source: PIB

India to host the first-ever ‘Internet Governance Forum’

**Why in News**

The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology announced that India will host first-ever **India Internet Governance Forum (IIGF) 2021**.

It will be planned for three days, starting from 20th October, 2021.

**Key Points**

- The theme of this year’s meeting is ‘Inclusive Internet for Digital India’.

**Note:** India is the second-largest broadband subscription country in the world and also has the highest data consumption per user per month.

**About Internet Governance Forum (IGF):**

- It is a multi-stakeholder governance group for policy dialogue on issues of Internet governance.

- The establishment of the IGF was formally announced by the **United Nations Secretary-General** in July 2006.

Source: PIB

Kakori Conspiracy renamed to Kakori Train Action

**Why in News**

Uttar Pradesh government has renamed **Kakori Train Conspiracy (Kakori Kand)** to **Kakori Train Action**.

**Key Points**

**About Kakori Train Action:**

- The Kakori Train Action was a train robbery that took place at Kakori, a village near Lucknow, on 9 August 1925 during the Indian Independence Movement against the British Raj.

- The robbery was organised by **Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)**.

- On December 19, 1927, freedom fighters Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan and Roshan Singh were hanged to death for their involvement in the robbery.

**About Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA):**

- HSRA was a revolutionary organisation, founded by Ram Prasad Bismil, Sachindra Nath Bakshi, Sachindranath Sanyal and Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee.

- Previously, it was known as the **Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)**.

Source: Indian Express

PM-DAKSH Portal

**Why in News**

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar launched ‘PM-DAKSH’ Portal and ‘PM-DAKSH’ Mobile App, developed by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, in collaboration with **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)**.
This Portal makes the skill development schemes accessible to the target groups of Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Safai Karamcharis.

Key Points

About PM-DAKSH Scheme:
- The Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment from the year 2020-21.
- Under this Yojana, eligible target groups are being provided skill development training programmes on (i) Up-skilling/Re-skilling (ii) Short Term Training Programme (iii) Long Term Training Programme and (iv) Entrepreneurship Development Program.
- These training programs are being implemented through Government Training Institutes, Sector Skill Councils constituted by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and other credible institutions.

Implementation:
- Under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, 3 Apex Corporations - National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation, National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation and National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation are implementing this scheme.

Status of Skill Development Training:
- As per the information available, skill development training has been imparted to 2,73,152 persons of target groups in the last 5 years by these 3 Apex Corporations.
- During the year 2021-22, a target has been set to provide skill development training to approximately 50,000 persons of the target groups through the above 3 Apex Corporations.

Initiatives Related to Skill Development:
- National Career Service Project
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0
- Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood
- Atmanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping
- Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills

Source: PIB

Major Administrative Reforms

Why in News
- The Union Government gave the information on administrative reforms which were introduced in recent years.
- Administrative reforms are a continuous process and the Government follows the “Minimum Government - Maximum Governance”.
- Administrative reforms aim to encourage greater efficiency, transparent and corruption free governance, accountability and reduce scope for discretion.

Key Points
- Mission Karmayogi-National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB), a new national architecture for civil services capacity building has been launched. It is a comprehensive reform of the capacity building apparatus at individual, institutional and process levels for efficient public service delivery.
- e-Samiksha- A real time online system for monitoring and follow up action on the decisions taken by the Government at the Apex level in respect of implementation of important Government programmes / projects.
- e-Office- e-Office Mission Mode Project has been strengthened for enabling Ministries/ Departments to switchover to paperless office and efficient decision making.
Citizen Charters- Government has mandated Citizen Charters for all Ministries/Departments which are updated and reviewed on a regular basis.

Good Governance Index 2019- was launched, which assesses the Status of Governance and impact of various interventions taken up by the State Government and Union Territories (UTs).

National Conference on e-Governance - provides a platform for government to engage with experts, intellectuals from industry and academic institutions to exchange experiences relating to e-Governance initiatives.

National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment - aims at assessing the States, UTs and Central Ministries on the efficiency of e-Governance service delivery.

Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)- The Government is undertaking CPGRAMS reforms in the top grievance receiving Ministries/Departments by enabling questionnaire guided registration process and providing for automatic forwarding of grievances to field level functionaries thereby reducing the redress time.

Comprehensive restructuring of the Scheme for ‘Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Public Administration’ in 2014 and thereafter in 2020.

About Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC):

- It is the committee appointed by the Government of India for giving recommendations for reviewing the public administration system of India.
- The first ARC was established on 5 January 1966.
- The Administrative Reforms Commission was initially chaired by Morarji Desai, and later on K. Hanumanthaiah became its chairman.
- The second ARC was constituted on 31 August 2005, as a Commission of Inquiry, under the Chairmanship of Veerappa Moily.

Source: PIB

Second Phase of Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP Phase II)

Why in News

- The Government of India signed a $250 million loan agreement with the World Bank for the DRIP Phase II.

Key Points

About Second Phase of Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP Phase II):

- DRIP Phase II is the first phase of externally aided DRIP Phase II and Phase III, approved by Government of India in October 2020.
- The Scheme has the participation of 19 States and 3 Central Agencies.
- The Budget Outlay for both Phases of DRIP is Rs 10,211 Cr for an implementation period of ten years.
- The Scheme will be implemented in two Phases, each of six years’ duration, with two years’ overlap.
- Objective: This new Scheme will strengthen dam safety initiatives through physical rehabilitation of selected dams by addressing various concerns to improve safety and operational performance, institutional strengthening in various ways, incidental revenue generation for sustainable operation & maintenance of dams etc.
- This programme complements the provisions in the Dam Safety Bill 2019, by ensuring capacity building of the dam owners as well as the proposed regulators, as well as creating necessary protocols for dam safety.
- Finance: DRIP Phase II is being co-financed by World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank with US$250 million each, covering large dams in 19 states of the country.

Number of Dams in the Country:
• India ranks 3rd globally after China and the United States of America, with 5334 large dams in operation.
• Presently, about 411 dams are under construction.
• There are also several thousand smaller dams.

About First phase of the DRIP programme:
• The first phase of the DRIP programme, which covered **223 dams in 7 states**, improved the safety and operational performance of selected dams, along with institutional strengthening through a system wide management approach, has been recently **closed in March 2021**.

Note:
• Ageing Dams in India, US, and other nations pose growing threat according to a UN report, titled 'Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk'.
• In India, there are over 1,115 large dams that will be roughly 50 years old in 2025, more than 4,250 large dams in the country will be over 50 years old in 2050 and 64 large dams will be more than 150 years old in 2050.

Source: PIB

KVIC’s Unique Plastic-Mixed Handmade Paper
Why in News
• Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has secured Patent registration for its innovative Plastic-mixed Handmade Paper developed to reduce plastic menace from nature.
• The patent certificate was issued to KVIC’s Kumarappa National Handmade Paper Institute, Jaipur.

Key Points
• The plastic-mixed handmade paper was developed under **Project REPLAN (REducing PLAs tic from Nature)**.
• This is the **first of its kind project in India**, where plastic waste is de-structured, degraded, diluted and used with paper pulp while making handmade paper and thus reduces plastic waste from nature.
• Its production is likely to serve the twin objectives of **protecting the environment alongside creating sustainable employment**.
• KVIC has developed products such as carry bags, envelopes, files/folders, etc. using plastic mixed handmade paper.

About Patents:
• A patent is a type of intellectual property that gives its owner the legal right to exclude others from making, using, or selling an invention for a limited period of years, in exchange for publishing an enabling public disclosure of the invention.
• The term of every patent in India is 20 years from the date of filing.
• In India, the **Patents Act, 1970** was brought into the force on 20 April 1972.
• The Patent Rules, 2003 were introduced along with the Patent Act (amendment), 2002, and recent amendments were carried in 2016, and 2017.

Source: PIB

Cabinet approves continuation of Samagra Shiksha Scheme for next 5 years
Why in News
About Samagra Shiksha Scheme:
• It is an integrated scheme for school education covering the entire range from **pre-school to class XII**.
The Ministry of Education launched the Samagra Shiksha in 2018 by subsuming the erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE).

Benefits:
- The scheme covers 1.16 million schools, over 156 million students and 5.7 million Teachers of Govt. and Aided schools (from pre-primary to senior secondary level).

New interventions incorporated in the revamped Samagra Shiksha based on the recommendations of the NEP 2020:
- In order to enhance the direct outreach of the scheme, all child centric interventions will be provided directly to the students through DBT mode on an IT based platform over a period of time.
- Provision of training of Master Trainers for training of Anganwadi workers and In-service teacher training for Early childhood care and education (ECCE) teachers
- Provision of upto Rs 500 per child for Teaching Learning Materials, indigenous toys and games, play based activities per annum for pre-primary sections in Government Schools.
- NIPUN Bharat, a National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy to ensure that every child achieves the desired learning competencies in reading, writing and numeracy at the end of grade III and not later than grade V has been launched under the scheme.
- Holistic, 360-degree, multi-dimensional report showing progress/ uniqueness of each learner in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains will be introduced in the form of Holistic Progress Card.
- Support for activities of PARAKH, a national assessment centre (Performance, Assessments, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development)
- Additional Sports grant of upto Rs. 25000 to schools in case at least 2 students of that school win a medal in Khelo India school games at the National level.
- Provision for Bagless days, school complexes, internships with local artisans, curriculum and pedagogical reforms etc included.
- Provision of ICT labs, Smart classrooms including support for digital boards, smart classrooms, virtual classrooms and DTH channels have been provided
- Support for Social Audit covering 20% of schools per year so that all schools are covered in a period of Five years.

Source: PIB

Governor of a State can pardon prisoners, including death row ones: Supreme Court of India

Why in News
- The Supreme Court of India held that the Governor of a State can pardon prisoners, including death row ones, even before they have served a minimum 14 years of prison sentence.
- In fact, the Governor’s power to pardon overrides a provision in the Code of Criminal Procedure, Section 433A which mandates that a prisoner’s sentence can be remitted only after 14 years of jail.

Key Points
- Governors can pardon the prisoners even before they have completed a minimum 14 years of prison sentence.
- Section 433A of the Code cannot and does not in any way affect the constitutional power conferred on the President/Governor to grant pardon under Articles 72 or 161 of the Indian Constitution.
- The court noted that the sovereign power of a Governor to pardon a prisoner under Article 161 is actually exercised by the State government and not the Governor on his own.

Pardoning Power of the President in India:
• Under Article 72, the President shall have the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment or to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offence where the sentence is a sentence of death.

Governor’s Pardoning Power:
• Under Article 161, the Governor of a State shall have the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment or to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offence against any law relating to a matter.

Source: The Hindu

BRO constructs highest motorable road in the world in Eastern Ladakh
Why in News
• Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed the highest motorable road in the world at 19,300 ft at Umling La Pass in Eastern Ladakh, creating a record in high-altitude road construction.

Key Points
About the Road:
• It has constructed a 52-km long tarmac road through Umling La Pass, bettering the previous record of a road in Bolivia connecting to its volcano Uturuncu at 18,953 ft.
• The road now connects the important towns in Chumar sector of Eastern Ladakh.

SATNAV Policy – 2021
Why in News
• The Department of Space plans to devise a "comprehensive and substantive" national policy for satellite based navigation ‘Indian Satellite Navigation Policy - 2021 (SATNAV Policy - 2021)’.

Key Points
About Indian Satellite Navigation Policy – 2021:
• The policy has been formulated with the objective to address the growing demands of space-based navigation and timing applications.
• These applications include tracking, telematics, location-based services, automotive, survey, mapping & GIS, and timing.
• For aviation safety in the defined coverage area, the draft ensures guaranteed and continuous availability of the Satellite-Based Augmentation System (SBAS).
• The draft also aims to focus on technology development for enhancing the navigation satellite systems and work towards compatibility and interoperability of Indian satellite navigation and augmentation signals with other GNSS/SBAS signals.
• Over the last few decades, there has been tremendous growth in the number of applications that depend on Position, Velocity, and Time (PVT) services that are provided by Space-Based Navigation Systems.

About Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS):
• It is a general term describing a space-based navigation system that provides positioning, navigation, and precise-time (PNT) services on a global or regional basis.
• Currently, there are 4 GNSS -- GPS from the USA; GLONASS from Russia; Galileo from European Union & Beidou from China -- offering PVT solutions globally.
In addition, there are 2 regional navigation satellite systems -- NavIC from India and QZSS from Japan.

Source: AIR

Haldibari-Chilahati railway link between India and Bangladesh

Why in News
- Commercial services on the Haldibari-Chilahati railway link between India and Bangladesh, which had been defunct for over 50 years, commenced with a goods train.
- The Haldibari (India)-Chilahati (Bangladesh) rail link was reopened by both the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh on 17th December, 2020 for movement of passenger and goods traffic.

Key Points
Background:
- The Haldibari-Chilahati railway link was operational till 1965.
- The (Indo-Pak) war of 1965 effectively cut off all railway links between India and Bangladesh (then East Pakistan).
- As of now, 5 links connecting India with Bangladesh have been made operational which include Petrapole (India) - Benapole (Bangladesh), Singhabad (India) Rohanpur (Bangladesh), Gede (India) - Darshana (Bangladesh), Radhikapur (India) - Birol (Bangladesh) with Haldibari-Chilahati forming the 5th such link.

Significance:
- The Rail link will aid the growth of trade and economic development.
- The 75-kilometre long track will also help better integrate the rest of the country with the Siliguri corridor, also known as the 'Chicken's Neck.'

Note:
- A passenger train service Mitali Express (New Jalpaiguri-Dhaka) was announced jointly by Indian PM and Bangladesh PM during the Indian Prime Minister’s visit to Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 27th March’21.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated ‘Maitri Setu’ (1.9 Km long bridge) between India and Bangladesh on 9th March 2021. It has been built over the Feni River which flows between Indian boundary in Tripura State and Bangladesh.
- Another railway line between Agartala and Akhaura in Bangladesh will be completed by the end of 2021.

Source: Indian Express

Intel launches ‘AI For All’ initiative in partnership with CBSE

Why in News
- Chipmaker Intel has collaborated with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to launch the ‘AI For All’ initiative.

Key Points
About ‘AI For All’ initiative:
- Based on Intel's ‘AI For Citizens’ programme, 'AI For All' is a 4-hour, self-paced learning programme.
- It aims to create a basic understanding of artificial intelligence (AI) for people in India.
- The programme aims to introduce AI to one million citizens in its first year.
- AI has the power to drive faster economic growth, address population-scale challenges and benefit the lives and livelihoods of people.

Note:
National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 acknowledges the importance of AI and emphasises on preparing everyone for an AI-driven economy.

AI For All is one of the largest AI public awareness programmes worldwide and will help demystify AI in an inclusive manner strengthening India's position as a global leader for emerging technologies.

Source: The Hindu

First anniversary of National Education Policy 2020 and new initiatives in Education Sector

Why in News

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi addressed policy makers in the domain of education and skill development, students and teachers, across the country to mark the completion of one year of reforms under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- He also launched multiple new initiatives in the education sector.
- He noted the changes brought by the pandemic and how normal online education became for the students. More than 2300 crore hits on portals like Diksha and Swayam are clear proof of this fact.

Key Points

Academic Bank of Credit:
- It will provide multiple entry and exit options for students in Higher Education.

Engineering Programmes in Regional Languages:
- 14 engineering colleges of 8 states are starting to impart education in 5 Indian languages Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Bangla.
- A tool has been developed for translating engineering courses in 11 languages.
- This emphasis on mother tongue as the medium of instruction will instil confidence in the students from poor, rural and tribal backgrounds.

Vidya Pravesh:
- Vidya Pravesh is a 3 month play based school preparation module for Grade 1 students.

Indian Sign Language:
- Indian Sign language, for the first time, has been accorded the status of language subject. Students will be able to study it as a language also.
- There are more than 3 lakh students who need sign language for their education.
- This will give a boost to Indian sign language and will help the divyang people.

NISHTHA 2.0:
- It is an integrated programme of teacher training designed by NCERT.
- It will provide training to teachers as per their needs and they will be able to give their suggestions to the department.

SAFAL (Structured Assessment For Analyzing Learning Levels):
- It is a competency based assessment framework for Grades 3, 5 and 8 in CBSE schools.

National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) and National Education Technology Forum (NETF):
- NDEAR and NETF will go a long way in providing a digital and technological framework to the entire country.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) programme:
- It will make the student future oriented and will pave the way for an AI-driven economy.

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu launches festival of ‘Parampara Series 2020-National Festival of Music and Dance’

- It is organized by Natya Tarangini in partnership with the United Nations.
Natya Tarangini is organising the ‘Parampara Series’ continuously since past 23 years, and adopting innovative efforts to make it happen for the 24th year, even in difficult times like this.

**MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari launches India’s first-ever high quality Khadi Fabric Footwear**

- Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME, Nitin Gadkari launched India’s first-ever high quality Khadi Fabric Footwear, designed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).
- These footwear are made of Khadi fabric like Silk, Cotton and Wool.
- **Note: Khadi and Village Industries Commission** is a statutory body formed in April 1957 by the Government of India, under the Act of Parliament, ‘Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956’. Vinai Kumar Saxena is the Chairman.

**ECI constitutes committee to examine issues concerning expenditure limits**

- Election Commission has constituted a committee comprising Harish Kumar, Ex. IRS and DG (Investigation), Umesh Sinha, Secretary General and DG (Expenditure) to examine the issues concerning expenditure limit for a candidate in view of increase in number of electors and rise in Cost Inflation Index and other factors.
- **About ECI (Election Commission of India)**
  - **Formed:** 25 January 1950 (Later celebrated as National Voters Day)
  - **Headquarters:** New Delhi
  - **Commission executives:** Sunil Arora, Chief Election Commissioner of India
  - Rajeev Kumar, Election Commissioner of India
  - Sushil Chandra, Election Commissioner of India

**Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Shri Prahlad Singh Patel virtually launches “Life in Miniature” project**

- It is a collaboration between the National Museum, New Delhi, Ministry of Culture, and Google Arts & Culture.
- Several hundred miniature paintings from the National Museum, New Delhi can be viewed online on Google Arts & Culture.
- **Note:** The project reinforces the comprehensive collaboration between the National Museum and Google Arts & Culture, a partnership that began in 2011.
- **About The National Museum, New Delhi:** The National Museum, New Delhi, under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is the premiere cultural institution of the Nation. The National Museum has in its possession over 2,00,000 antiquities & art objects, both of Indian and Foreign origin covering more than 5,000 years of our cultural heritage.
- **About Google Arts & Culture:** Google Arts & Culture puts the collections of more than 2,000 museums at one’s fingertips. It’s an immersive way to explore art, history and the wonders of the world.

**Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) extends coverage of health insurance scheme to Arunachal Pradesh**
Government of India has now extended the Employees State Insurance (ESI) Scheme for the first time to Arunachal Pradesh, with effect from 1st November, 2020.

All factories located in the district of Papum Pare of Arunachal Pradesh employing 10 or more persons shall become eligible for coverage.

Employees' State Insurance (ESI) is a self-financing social security and health insurance scheme for Indian workers. The fund is managed by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation according to rules and regulations stipulated in the ESI Act 1948.

‘Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities’ Report

NITI Aayog, Ministry of Power, Rockefeller Foundation and Smart Power India launched the report.

According to the report, 92% of customers reported the overall availability of electricity infrastructure within 50 metres of their premises.

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launches AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR scheme

Ayushman Sahakar scheme aims at bringing transformation in the health services primarily in the rural areas.

This scheme has been formulated by the NCDC (National Cooperative Development Corporation). NCDC would extend term loans to prospective cooperatives to the tune of 10000 crore in the coming years.

Government to make India free of Trans fat by 2022

Health Minister Dr Harsh said that the aim of the government is to make India Trans Fat free by 2022, a year ahead of target set by World Health Organization.

This year is the elimination of trans-fat from the food supply chain.

He also launched the 'Eat Smart City' challenge by FSSAI in partnership with Smart City Mission and The Food Foundation, UK to create an environment of right food practices and habits in India's smart cities and can set an example for others to follow.

Note: Trans fats are a form of unsaturated fat associated with a number of negative health effects. Artificial trans fat is created during hydrogenation, which converts liquid vegetable oils into semi-solid partially hydrogenated oil. Trans fat can also be found naturally in meat and dairy.

Union Education Minister launched 'KAPILA' (Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness Education campaign)

The program was launched on the 89th birth anniversary of former President Late Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.

The Institution Innovation Council (IIC 2.0) annual report was presented and the launch of IIC 3.0 was announced. It has also been decided to celebrate the week of 15th to 23rd October as ‘Intellectual Property Literacy Week’.

Note: Institution Innovation Council (IIC) was established by the Ministry of Education in 2018. It aims to conduct various innovation and entrepreneurship-related activities.
- **National Intellectual Property Rights Policy** was approved by the Indian cabinet on 12 May 2016 to ensure compliance to the Doha Development Round and TRIPS Agreement. With its seven objectives, it aims at creating a “Creative India; Innovative India”.

6th India International Science Festival (IISF)

- The 6th edition of IISF 2020 will be held from 22nd to 25th December, 2020.
- IISF is organised jointly by Science & Technology-related Ministries & Departments of the Government of India and Vijnana Bharati (Vibha).
- **Note**: IISF is a festival to celebrate the achievements of India’s scientific and technological advancements with students, innovators, craftsmen, farmers, scientists and technocrats from India and abroad.
- The 1st and 2nd IISF were held in New Delhi, the 3rd in Chennai, the 4th in Lucknow, and the 5th was in Kolkata.

Indian government launches ‘e-Dharti Geo portal’

- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri, launched the ‘e-Dharti GeoPortal’ which will integrate legacy drawings such as maps and lease plans in the management information system.
- **Note**: Portal will allow the data to become geographic information system (GIS)-enabled. The ministry issued in a statement that the Land and Development office has developed a property certificate incorporating details and the outline map of the property which is available online on the portal.

NITI Ayog to formulate a national policy on water conservation under ‘Buldhana Pattern’

- Union Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari said that Maharashtra's 'Buldhana Pattern' of water conservation has won national recognition and the NITI Aayog is in the process of formulating National Policy on water conservation based on it.
- **Note**: Buldhana Pattern- The synchronization of national highway construction and water conservation was achieved for the first time in Buldhana district, by using soil from the water bodies, nallas and rivers. This consequently led to the increase in capacity of water storage across the water-bodies in Buldana district.
- By this activity in Maharashtra, 225 lakh cubic metre of soil was used in National Highway construction and the resultant widening / deepening resulted in increase of 22,500 Thousand Cubic Metre (TMC) of water storage capacity with no cost to state government.

NECHIPHU TUNNEL

- Union Defence minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone of the Nechiphu Tunnel on the Balipara-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) road in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- It will be constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

Zozila Tunnel – the longest tunnel road in Asia
This tunnel will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar valley and Leh (Ladakh plateau) on NH-1. It involves construction of a 14.15 Km long tunnel at an altitude of about 3000 m under Zojila pass. It will bring about an all-round economic and socio-cultural integration of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Government launched the Ambedkar Social Innovation Incubation Mission (ASIIM)

- It was launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- ASIIM aims to promote innovation and entrepreneurship amongst SC students and with special preference to Divyans in higher education campuses because there is a need to identify innovative ideas and provide focused support to young entrepreneurs who are engaged in working on innovative and technology-oriented business ideas either in educational campuses or Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) to help them set up successful commercial enterprises.
- Apart from that, the Government set up the Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes (VCFSC) and supporting 1,000 innovative ideas till 2024 through a synergetic work with the (TBIs) Technology Business Incubators set up by the Department of Science and Technology among others.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Atal Tunnel, Rohtang

- Atal Tunnel is the 9.02 Kilometre long which connects Manali to Lahaull-Spiti valley. This is the longest highway tunnel in the World.
- The Tunnel is built with ultra-modern specifications in the Pir Panjal range of Himalayas at an altitude of 3000 Metres (10,000 Feet) from the Mean Sea Level (MSL).
- It reduces the road distance by 46 Kilometre between Manali and Leh and the time by about 4 to 5 hours.

The Southeastern Railway has launched an 'Operation My Saheli (friend)'

- It aims to boost the security of women passengers in trains during their entire journey.
- In this project "Teams of women sub-inspectors (SI) interact with lady passengers in the train at the starting station, tell them about precautions & guideline should be followed and provide the emergency contact numbers in case of emergency.

Ravi Chopra Committee: The chairman of an expert committee has alleged violations of the Supreme Court orders in the execution of the Chardham project.

- Ravi Chopra is the Chairman of the High Powered Committee (HPC) appointed by Supreme Court. Supreme Court ruled that the width of the road should not exceed the 5.5 metres that the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) specified in 2018 for construction roads in the mountain.

Note: Chardham Pariyojana: The Chardham road connects the pilgrimage centres of Gangotri, Yamunotri, Badrinath and Kedarnath. This programme is under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for
connectivity improvement for Chardham in Uttarakhand. It is a 900-km, ₹12,000-crore enterprise to connect pilgrimage spots in Uttarakhand.

Constitution Day of India

- Constitution Day is celebrated in our country on 26th November every year to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India. The day is also known as National Law Day.
- On 26th November 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India, which came into effect from 26th January 1950.
- Note: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 19th November 2015 notified the decision of Government of India to celebrate the 26th day of November every year as 'Constitution Day' as a tribute to Dr B R Ambedkar who played an important role in its framing as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee.

PM Modi releases book on the life and ideals of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji

- The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi released a book on the life and ideals of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji, the founder of Sikhism and first of its ten gurus.
- The book has been written by Kirpal Singh, who is based in Chandigarh.

‘National Portal for Transgender Persons’ and ‘Garima Greh’

- National Portal for Transgender Persons has been developed within 2 months of Notification of Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020 on 29 September, 2020.
- This highly useful Portal would help a transgender person in applying for a Certificate and Identity card digitally from anywhere in the country.
- Garima Greh: A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons, e-inaugurated in Vadodara, Gujarat will be run in association with Lakshya Trust, a Community based organisation entirely run by the Transgenders.
- The purpose of the Shelter Home is to provide shelter to Transgender persons, with basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and recreational facilities.
- To implement the provisions of the Act the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment issued the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020 which have been notified in the Gazette of India.

LIC launches digital application ‘ANANDA’

- Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has launched a digital application for agents for onboarding to get a life insurance policy.
- The Digital Application is called “ANANDA”, which is an acronym for Atma Nirbhar Agents NewBusiness Digital Application.
● “The Digital application is a tool for the onboarding process to get the life insurance policy through a paperless module with the help of the agent or intermediary.
● It is built on a paperless KYC process using Aadhaar-based e-authentication.

Petroleum Minister inaugurates Seismic Survey Campaign in Mahanadi Basin in Odisha

● Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon’ble Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel, inaugurated the seismic survey campaign of Oil India Limited (OIL), India’s second largest National Exploration & Production Company, at Kakatpur in Puri District, Odisha in the Mahanadi Basin.
● The Government also is implementing the National Seismic Programme (NSP) for appraising unappraised areas of Indian sedimentary basins. Seismic data acquired under NSP in the state of Odisha led to an offer of five blocks by DGH and OIL won all the five blocks for hydrocarbon exploration under OALP-II and III rounds.
● The total envisaged expenditure on the entire exploration campaign in the five blocks in Mahanadi Basin (Onshore) is Rs. 1248.00 Crores of which Rs. 220.00 Crores is for Seismic survey.
● The blocks are spread in eleven districts of Odisha namely Puri, Khurda, Cuttack, Jagatsingapur, Kendrapara, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Baleshore, Maubhanj and Keonjhar.

Union Minister of Education inaugurates 46 online ATAL Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) organised by AICTE

● Union Education Minister, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ inaugurated 46 online AICTE Training and Learning (ATAL) Academy Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) to train teachers of higher education institutions associated with All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) in thrust and emerging areas in technology.
● ATAL Academy is to be included in the Book of World Records. London-based organization has recognized the FDPs as a world record, under which 1,000 online FDPs in over 100 emerging areas will benefit one lakh faculty members across premier institutions like IITs, NITs, and IIITs.

Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge

● Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge was launched on the occasion of World Toilet Day- 19 November, is aimed at preventing hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and promotes their mechanized cleaning.
● An independent agency will assess participating cities in May 2021 and on 15 August 2021, results of the same will be declared. Award will be given to cities in three sub-categories – with a population of more than 10 lakhs, 3-10 lakhs and up to 3 lakhs, with total prize money of Rs 52 crores to be given to winning cities across all categories.

Union Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar unveils e-books ‘The Republican Ethic Volume III’ and ‘Loktantra Ke Swar’
Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shri Prakash Javadekar unveiled ebook versions of two books ‘The Republican Ethic Volume III’ and ‘Loktantra Ke Swar’.

The hard copy versions of the books were unveiled by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh.

About the Book: The Republican Ethic, Volume 3, is a collection of selected speeches of the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind during the third year of his presidency.

Divided into 8 sections, the 57 speeches covered in this volume reflect the thoughts and vision of Shri Kovind for building a new India that is forward-looking, growing, and also strongly rooted in its historical and cultural value systems.

RBI names 2 startups as a part of its regulatory sandbox programme

Reserve Bank of India has announced the names of two startups that have been selected as a part of its regulatory sandbox programme.

First company is Jaipur based Natural Support Consultancy Services Private Limited and second is New Delhi based Nucleus Software Exports Limited.

The first company has named its product ‘eRupaya’, which will facilitate offline Person-to-Merchant transactions and offline digital payments in remote locations;

The second company’s product 'PaySe', proposes to help in digitisation of payments in rural areas, starting with Self Help Groups, through an offline payment solution and a digitised SHG-centered ecosystem.

Note: Regulatory sandbox is a framework set up by a regulator that allows FinTech startups and other innovators to conduct live experiments in a controlled environment under a regulator's supervision.

First solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia

In Maharashtra, the first solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia is coming up in Parbhani district.

The Jai Bhawani women’s cooperative textile mill will be the first in Asia that will operate on solar power.

Chairman of the textile mill Dr. Sampriya Rahul Patil said that the finest quality cotton will be procured from Parbhani itself.

Note: Parbhani is the leading cotton producing district in Maharashtra.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled ‘Statue of Peace’ to mark 151st Birth Anniversary celebrations of Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj

The Statue unveiled in the honour of the Jain acharya, has been named as ‘Statue of Peace’. The 151 inch tall statue has been made from Ashtadhatu i.e. 8 metals, with Copper being the major constituent, and is installed at Vijay Vallabh Sadhana Kendra, Jetpura, in Pali, Rajasthan.

Note: The Jainacharya established many institutions for girl children and brought women to the mainstream. Bird Hospital and many gaushalas are running in the country today.

India’s first Sandalwood Museum
• This first of a kind museum has been set by the Mysuru Forest Division at the Sandalwood Depot in Aranya Bhavan, Mysuru, Karnataka.
• Visitors can learn about sandalwood classification, varieties of sandalwood, its farming methods, etc. It will also display posters with information about sandalwood growth and its role in prevention of diseases. Later, the museum might get shifted to the Mysuru Palace.

‘Project Air Care’ launched in Gurgaon to control pollution

• Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar unveiled ‘Project Air Care’ in the district, as part of which 65 Wind Augmentation Air Purifying Units (WAYU) will be installed across the district.
• The creators of the devices, which can provide purified air in an area of 500 square metres, claim these can reduce PM10 by 60-70 % and PM2.5 by 30-40 % at traffic junctions.

The 15th Finance Commission submits its Report for 2021-22 to 2025-26 to the President of India on 9 November 2020

• Shri N K Singh is the chairman of Fifteenth Finance Commission.
• Note: As per the terms of reference (ToR), the Commission was mandated to give its recommendations for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 by 30 October, 2020. Last year, the Commission had submitted its report containing recommendations for the year 2020-21 which was accepted by the Union Government and tabled in the Parliament on 30 January 2020.

Saffron bowl of India extends to the North East

• The saffron bowl, which was so far confined to Kashmir, may soon expand to the North East of India. Plants from seeds transported from Kashmir to Sikkim and acclimatized there are now flowering in Yangyang in the Southern part of the North-East state.
• **North East Centre For Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR)**, an autonomous body under the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India supported a pilot project to explore the feasibility of growing saffron in North East region of India, with the same quality and higher quantity.
• **The Botany and Horticulture department of Sikkim Central University** carried out tests to understand the soil and actual pH conditions of Yangyang of Sikkim and found it comparable to saffron growing places of Kashmir.
• **Note: Saffron** is a spice derived from the flower of Crocus sativus, commonly known as the "saffron crocus". It is used in cosmetics and for medicinal purposes.

“HunarHaat” returns after a gap of seven months

• Union Ministers Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and Kiren Rijiju inaugurated the “HunarHaat”, being organised at Delhi Haat, Pitampura from 11th to 22nd November, 2020.
• Note: “HunarHaat” is available at virtual and online platform also. Products of artisans are also available on http://hunarhaat.org. Union Minority Affairs Ministry is registering these artisans and their indigenous products on “GeM” (Government e Marketplace).
India's first solar-based water supply project launched in Arunachal Pradesh

- India's first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP) was dedicated to the people of Arunachal Pradesh by Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- The solar-based lift water supply project for 39 villages in Lower Dibang Valley district in northeastern Arunachal Pradesh was commissioned at a cost of Rs 28.50 crore.
- The project is designed to provide drinking water to 17,480 people and has been conceived as an integrated project with an element of drinking water, green energy and tourism component in it.
- **Note:** The Chief Minister Pema Khandu launched the "Arunachal Jal Sankalp", a state government dedicated flagship programme to supplement the Jal Jeevan Mission and to sustain the drinking water systems.

Shaktikanta Das Chairs 40th SAARCFINANCE Governors' Group Meeting

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das inaugurated and chaired the 40th meeting of the SAARCFINANCE Governors' Group.
- The group took stock of the macroeconomic situation in the SAARC region and discussed the current SAARCFINANCE initiatives.
- Mr. Das is also the chairperson of the SAARCFINANCE, which is a network of central bank governors and finance secretaries of the SAARC region.
- **Note:** The meeting was attended by the Governors from SAARC Central Banks- Bangladesh Bank, Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, Maldives Monetary Authority, Nepal Rastra Bank, State Bank of Pakistan, Central Bank of Sri Lanka and Da Afghanistan Bank.

Former Delhi chief secretary M M Kutty to be first chairperson of Air Quality Commission

- The Centre has notified the Commission for Air Quality Management for the National Capital Region (NCR) to set up the new agency with sweeping powers to monitor and act against sources of air pollution across five north Indian states (Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan).

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting constitutes a committee to review guidelines on Television Rating Agencies in India

- The Chairman of the Committee shall be **Shri Shashi S. Vempati, CEO, Prasar Bharti.**
- The present guidelines issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) on Television Rating Agencies in India were notified after detailed deliberations by the Parliamentary Committee, Committee on Television Rating Points (TRP) constituted by the MIB and recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority.
- A committee has been hereby constituted to study different aspects of the television rating system in India.

Chacha Chaudhary becomes the Brand Ambassador for Namami Gange Project
● The iconic Indian superhero, Chacha Chaudhary, whose brain works faster than a computer has now come forward to join hands with the Namami Gange Programme. Diamond Toons will conceptualize and publish this new ‘Talking Comics’ with Chacha Chaudhary spreading awareness on the cultural and spiritual significance of River Ganga and deploy best available knowledge across the masses for Ganga rejuvenation. The teaser was released during Ganga Utsav 2020.

Note: The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) organised three-day Ganga Utsav 2020 from Nov 02 to 04.

Ministry of Shipping renamed Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

● The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, a branch of the Government of India, is the apex body for formulation and administration of the rules and regulations and laws relating to ports, shipping and waterways.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates Ro-Pax terminal at Hazira and Flags off Ro-Pax ferry service between Hazira and Ghogha in Gujarat

● There will be several wide-ranging benefits of the Hazira-Ghogha Ro-Pax ferry service.
● It will work as a Gateway to South Gujarat and Saurashtra region. It will reduce the distance between Ghogha and Hazira from 370 Km to 90 Km.
● The reduced cargo travel time from 10 to 12 hours to about 4 hours will result in huge savings of fuel and lower the maintenance cost of vehicles drastically.

India's first-ever E-resource centre ‘Nyay Kaushal’ in Nagpur

● Chief Justice of India, Sharad Arvind Bobde inaugurated India's first-ever E-resource centre Nyay Kaushal. The centre was inaugurated at Judicial Officers Training Institute in Maharashtra’s Nagpur. Nyay Kaushal will facilitate e-filling of cases in Supreme Court, any High court and district courts across the country.
● Note: Delhi was the first to start virtual traffic courts across India.

Kiren Rijiju inaugurates SAI Regional Centre in Zirakpur, Punjab

● Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju inaugurated Sports Authority of India's (SAI) new Regional Centre in Zirakpur, Punjab which will now act as one of the main SAI centres for the northern belt of India.
● The northern belt of India covers a huge region, right from Jammu and Kashmir and Leh to Himachal Pradesh.

ESSCI (The Electronics Sector Skill Council of India) announced appointment of PVG Menon as its chief executive officer (CEO)

● Menon will be responsible for overseeing the operations of ESSCI and work closely with its governing Council on strategic issues related to the growth of the electronic systems design and manufacturing industry in India.
- **ESSCI (Electronics Sector Skill Council of India)** works with industry, the National Skill Development Corporation, and the Ministry of Electronics and IT to provide skilling and re-skilling services to the industry.
- **ESDM (Electronic Systems Design and Manufacturing)** industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the Indian economy. It will be an important contributor to achieving the vision of a trillion dollar manufacturing economy for India.

**The Airports Authority of India (AAI) hands over Lucknow airport to Adani group on lease for 50 years**

- The central government in February 2019 privatized six major airports of the country -- Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, and Guwahati. After a competitive bidding process, the Adani group won the rights to run all of them for 50 years.
- The AAI had signed concession agreements with the Adani group on February 14 for operations, management and development of the Mangaluru, Lucknow and Ahmedabad airports.

**Paul Zacharia selected for Ezhuthachan Puraskaram**

- Noted Malayalam writer Paul Zacharia was chosen for his contribution to Malayalam literature during the past five decades.
- **Note:** Ezhuthachan Puraskaram is the highest literary honour that is given by the Kerala Sahitya Akademi, Government of Kerala. The award is named after Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan, the father of the Malayalam language and consists of a cash prize of ₹5,00,000 and a citation.

**Indian Railways launches ‘Meri Saheli’ initiative**

- Indian Railways has launched “Meri Saheli” initiative which aims for focused action on the security of women across all zones.
- An initiative of RPF (Railway Protection Force), the Strategy entails interaction for security with lady passengers especially those travelling alone by a team of young lady RPF personnel at the originating station.
- **Note:** “Meri Saheli” initiative was started as a pilot project in South Eastern Railway in September 2020.

**The Prime Minister inaugurated Water Aerodrome at Kevadia and the Sea-plane service connecting Statue of Unity in Kevadia with Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad**

- **Note:** Seaplanes have the ability to land and take-off from water thus offering access to areas that do not have landing strips or runways. It can help in connecting the geographies/regions that have challenges owing to its topography and bring the remotest parts of India into the mainstream aviation network without the high cost of building airports and runways.

**The Prime Minister inaugurated 'Aarogya Van' near the Statue of Unity in Kevadiya village of Gujarat’s Narmada district**
Note: ‘Aarogya Van’ (health forest) is spread over an area of about 17 acres, displaying a wide range of medicinal plants which play an important role in the well-being of human beings. Five lakh plants of 380 selected species have been grown in the sprawling garden.

Public Affairs Index-2020

- The Public Affairs Index-2020 was released by the Public Affairs Centre, headed by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman K. Kasturirangan. The states were ranked on governance performance based on a composite index in the context of sustainable development defined by three pillars of equity, growth and sustainability.
- In the large state category in terms of governance
  - Kerala (1.388 PAI Index point), Tamil Nadu (0.912) and Andhra Pradesh (0.531) stood in the first three ranks.
  - Uttar Pradesh (-1.461), Odisha (-1.201) and Bihar (-1.158) were at the bottom of the ranking.
- In the small state category in terms of governance
  - Goa ranked first with 1.745 points, followed by Meghalaya (0.797) and Himachal Pradesh (0.725).
  - Worst performers are Manipur (-0.363), Delhi (-0.289) and Uttarakhand (-0.277).
- In the category of union territory in terms of governance
  - Chandigarh emerged the best governed with 1.05 points, followed by Puducherry (0.52) and Lakshadweep (0.003).
  - Dadar and Nagar Haveli (-0.69), Andaman, Jammu and Kashmir (-0.50) and Nicobar (-0.30) were the least performers.

Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha to be next Chief Information Commissioner

- Sinha was appointed as information commissioner in the CIC on January 1, 2019. A former diplomat, Sinha has served as high commissioner of India to the United Kingdom and Sri Lanka.

Annual State of Education Report (ASER) 2020

- As per ASER, survey conducted in September across the country, about 20% of rural children have no textbooks at home. About one in three rural children had done no learning activity at all. About two in three had no learning materials or activity given by their school, and only one in ten had access to live online classes.
- It found that 5.3% of rural children aged 6-10 years had not yet enrolled in school this year, in comparison to just 1.8% in 2018. Among 15-16-year-olds, however, enrolment levels are actually slightly higher than in 2018. Enrolment patterns also show a slight shift toward government schools, with private schools seeing a drop in enrolment in all age groups.
- Note: ASER is a nationwide survey of rural education and learning outcomes in terms of reading and arithmetic skills that has been conducted by the NGO Pratham for the last 15 years.
15 States identified for implementing centrally sponsored pilot scheme on Fortification of Rice & its
distribution through Public Distribution System

- Department of Food & Public Distribution has approved the pilot scheme for a period of three years
  beginning 2019-2020. Fifteen State Governments have identified their respective districts (1 district
  per state) for implementing the pilot scheme.
- Already 5 states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh have
  started the distribution of fortified rice in their respective identified districts.
- **Note:** The **fortified rice** is a mixture of iron, vitamin B-12 and folic acid enriched fortified rice
  kernel (FRK), which meet the nutritional requirements in the diet and thereby help in controlling
  malnutrition and anemia.

COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge Award

- Six women led startups have won COVID-19 Shri Shakti.
- The Jury selected top 3 entries as winners, 3 additional entries as Promising Solutions.

**Top 3 winners:**

(i) Dr. P. Gayatri Hela (Bengaluru-based Resada Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd).

(ii) Romita Ghosh (Shimla-based iHeal HealthTech Pvt. Ltd).

(iii) Dr. Anjana Ramkumar and Dr. Anushka Ashokan (Kerala based Thanmatra Innovations Pvt. Ltd).

**Top 3 Startups identified as ‘Promising Solutions’:**

(i) Vasanthi Palanivel (Bengaluru-based Seragen BioTherapeutics Pvt. Ltd).

(ii) Shivi Kapil (Bengaluru-based Empathy Design Labs).

(iii) Jaya Parashar and Ankita Parashar (STREAM Minds).

**Note:** COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge was launched by **MyGov in collaboration with UN Women** in
April 2020. It aims to encourage and involve women led startups to come up with innovative solutions that
can help in the fight against COVID19 or solve problems that impact a large number of women.

“JSA(Jal Shakti Abhiyan) II: Catch the Rain” Awareness Generation Campaign launched

- National Water Mission (NWM), Ministry of Jal Shakti in collaboration with Nehru Yuva Kendra
  Sangathan (NYKS), Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports launched the “JSA II: Catch the Rain”
  Awareness Generation Campaign.
- **Note:** As a preparatory phase of JSA-II, the Ministry has involved Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangthan
  for undertaking ‘Catch the Rain’ awareness campaign to cover 623 districts. The awareness
  generation phase of the campaign will run from mid-December 2020 to March 2021.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flags off 100th Kisan Rail

- The train will run from Sangola in Maharashtra to Shalimar in West Bengal.
The multi-commodity train service will carry vegetables such as cauliflower, capsicum, cabbage, drumsticks, chillies, onion, as well as fruits like grapes, oranges, pomegranate, banana and custard apple.

Note: The Central Government has extended a subsidy of 50 per cent on transportation of fruits and vegetables.

The first Kisan Rail was introduced from Devlali in Maharashtra to Danapur in Bihar on August 7, 2020, which was further extended upto Muzaffarpur.

KVIC brings alive 1000-yrs old ‘Monpa’ Handmade Paper Industry in Tawang to revive the Heritage Art

- The 1000-year old heritage art – the Monpa Handmade Paper of Arunachal Pradesh – which was driven to extinction, has come to life once again, with the committed efforts of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).
- The fine-textured handmade paper, which is called Mon Shugu in the local dialect, is integral to the vibrant culture of the local tribes in Tawang.
- The Monpa handmade paper will be made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng, which has medicinal values too.

Prime Minister inaugurates New Bhaupur-New Khurja section of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 351-km New Bhaupur- New Khurja section in Uttar Pradesh of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC).
- The Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor is 1875-km section that connects Punjab’s Ludhiana to Dankuni in West Bengal.
- He also inaugurated the EDFC’s Operation Control Centre (OCC) at Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. The OCC, which will be the command centre for the entire route, to be one of the largest control centres in the world.
- Note: Apart from EDFC, the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor is also being developed. It will connect Mumbai to Uttar Pradesh’s Dadri.

MPEDA launches India’s first aqua farmers call center

- The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), headquartered in Kochi, has launched a multilingual call centre for aquafarmers at Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh, which will address their technical issues and impart knowledge about efficient farming methods round the clock.
- Note: The call centre primarily caters to aqua farmers of Andhra Pradesh, the state that contributes more than 60 percent of the country’s marine products export.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addresses International Bharathi Festival 2020

- This festival was organised by Vanavil Cultural Centre to celebrate the 138th birth anniversary of Tamil poet and writer, Mahakavi Subramanya Bharathi.
- Scholar Shri Seeni Viswanathan received the Bharathi Award 2020.

Note: Bharathi Award was instituted in 1994 by Vanavil Cultural Centre. Every year it is being conferred on eminent persons who have done laudable service in any field of social relevance and thus worked towards the fulfilment of Bharathi’s dreams.
Norwegian Institute signs agreement with cGanga for development of sludge management framework in India

- Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO) has signed an agreement with cGanga, a think-tank of the National Mission for Clean Ganga, for development of sludge management framework in India.
- **Note:** The agreement was signed during the 5th India Water Impact 2020 summit. The five-day summit is held to discuss and debate issues related to water conservation, water security and river rejuvenation.
- The event is co-organised by National Mission for Clean Ganga and Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies.

International Sand Art Festival

- The 9th edition of the International Sand Art Festival has begun at the Chandrabhaga Beach of Konark in Odisha’s Puri district.
- Sudarsan Pattnaik, world-renowned sand artist and Padmashree Awardee, has been appointed as Chief Curator of the festival.
- This year, the main themes of the sculptures are ‘Environment’ and ‘Covid-19’.
- **Note:** Every year, the festival is celebrated with great fervour in the first week of December as part of the Konark Dance Festival that is organised during the same time.

10th National Science Film Festival of India (NSFFI) 2020

- It has been jointly organized by VigyanPrasar, an autonomous agency under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and the Tripura State Council of Science and Technology from 24 to 27 November 2020.
- A total of 115 shortlisted films selected by the ten-member jury have been screened during the festival. These include films in Hindi, English, Urdu, Malayalam, Kashmiri, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi and Tamil.
- **Note:** NSFFI is India’s first of its kind of film festival where documentaries and short films on popular science, technology, health & environmental issues have been screened.

India Mobile Congress 2020

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2020 on 08 December 2020. IMC 2020 was organised by the Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, and the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI). It is scheduled for 8th -10th December.
- **The theme for IMC 2020 is “Inclusive Innovation - Smart, Secure, Sustainable”.**
- About IMC 2020: It aims to promote Digital Inclusivity, Sustainable development, entrepreneurship & innovation. It also aims to drive foreign and local investments, encourage R&D in the telecom and emerging technology sectors.
- IMC 2020 will see the participation from various Ministries, the telecom CEOs, global CEOs, and domain experts in 5G, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Data Analytics, Cloud and Edge computing, Blockchain, Cyber-security, Smart Cities and Automation.

Union Minister unveiled Sahakar Pragya

- Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Rural Development, Panchayat Raj and Food Processing Industries, unveiled Sahakar Pragya.
● The 45 new training modules of Sahakar Pragya of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) will impart training to primary cooperative societies in rural areas of the country.

Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launches world-class premium-grade Petrol (Octane 100) in the country

● Indian Oil has launched a world-class premium-grade Petrol (Octane 100) in the country. Branded as XP100, the premium grade petrol was launched across ten cities by Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel.
● Indian Oil plans to roll-out XP100 premium grade petrol in 15 identified cities across the country in two phases. In the first phase, it has been made available at select ROs w.e.f December 1, 2020, in Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida, Agra, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Mumbai, Pune and Ahmedabad. In the second phase, the availability of this 100 Octane petrol would be extended to Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kochi, and Kolkata.
● Note: Worldwide, 100 Octane petrol has a niche market for luxury vehicles that demand high performance, and is available only in six countries like Germany, USA, etc.
● India has already adopted the BS-VI category of fuel since April this year and invested over Rs 30,000 crore in the technology.

Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda launches ‘Aadi Mahotsav’

● The 10-day-long ‘Áadi Mahotsav’, Madhya Pradesh, a festival of tribes has been launched on December 1, 2020.
● Keeping in view of restrictions due to Covid-19, the TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India) has decided to organise its annual event Aadi Mahotsav-2020 in an online mode.
● Note: Aadi Mahotsav is a unique celebration of the spirit of tribal crafts, culture, cuisine and commerce. It commenced in 2017.
● It was also announced that the next focus state from the 11th December would be Gujarat, following which the spotlight would shift to Bengal from the 21st December 2020.

The Government of India appointed Varsha Joshi as the new Chairperson of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)

● She replaces Dilip Rath on completion of his tenure on November 30.
● Joshi is the Joint Secretary (CDD), Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India.
● Note: The National Dairy Development Board is an institution of national importance set up by an Act of Parliament of India. The main office is in Anand, Gujarat with regional offices throughout the country. It was founded on 16 July 1965.

IAS Utpal Kumar Singh appointed as General Secretary of Lok Sabha

● He is the 1986 batch IAS officer of Uttarakhand cadre and will replace Snehlata Srivastava.
● Note: The post of Lok Sabha General Secretary is equivalent to the rank of Cabinet Minister.

Brain Fingerprinting for interrogation
The brain fingerprinting method is to be conducted on all the four accused in the Hathras Rape Case. A team of forensic experts are to work along with the CBI team to prepare probe short questions for the test.

Note: The Brain Fingerprinting or Brain Electrical Oscillation Signature is a neuro psychological method used to interrogate an accused in the crime by studying his or her brain responses. The test is carried out through a process called Electroencephalogram that studies the electrical behaviour of the human brain.

The consent of the accused is first taken in order to perform the test. The accused then has to wear a head cap with dozens of electrodes attached to it and is then showed with visuals or audio clips that are related to the case in order to check if there are triggering neutrons in their brains generating brain waves.

However, the test can only be used as an aid to question the accused in the Hathras case. The accused cannot be convicted based on the test. The conviction has to be done based on interrogation and other traditional legal practices of CBI.

Hornbill Festival

- Nagaland hosts the first virtual celebration of Hornbill Festival 2020 from 1 to 5 December.
- It showcases the rich cultural heritage and tradition of the Nagas in one platform at Naga Heritage Village Kisama under Kohima District.
- However, due to Coronavirus pandemic, the state is holding its 21st edition of Hornbill festival 2020 completely in virtual mode.
- Note: The Hornbill Festival is a celebration held every year from 1 to 10 December, in Nagaland, Northeast India. It is also called the 'Festival of Festivals'. The Festival is named after the Indian Hornbill, the large and colourful forest bird which is displayed in folklore in most of the state's tribes.
- The start of the festival marks the Nagaland statehood day i.e. December 01.

Inauguration of Honey FPOs (Farmer Producer Organizations)

- The Honey FPO Programme of National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) was inaugurated by Minister of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.
- Under the making 10,000 FPOs of the Central government Scheme, 5 FPOs of honey were launched in five states. These are Sundarbans in West Bengal, East Champaran in Bihar, Mathura in Uttar Pradesh, Morena in Madhya Pradesh and Bharatpur in Rajasthan.

RE-Invest 2020

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-Invest 2020) through video conferencing. The summit is organized by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- The theme for RE-Invest 2020 is ‘Innovations for Sustainable Energy Transition’.
- India’s renewable power capacity is the 4th largest in the world and is growing at the fastest speed among all major countries. The renewable energy capacity in India is currently 136 Giga Watts, which is about 36% of our total capacity.
India’s annual renewable energy capacity addition has been exceeding that of coal-based thermal power since 2017. In the last 6 years, India has increased installed renewable energy capacity by two and half times.

**Note:** In September last year at the United Nations Climate Action Summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced increasing the renewable energy target to 450 GW by 2030 from 175 GW by 2022.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs 33rd PRAGATI interaction

- It marked Prime Minister’s 33rd interaction through PRAGATI - the ICT based multi-modal platform for **Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation**, involving Central and State governments.
- In the PRAGATI meeting, multiple projects, grievances, and programs were reviewed. The projects taken up were of the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade, and Power Ministry. These projects, with a total cost of Rs 1.41 lakh crore, were related to ten states and union territories, including Odisha, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Dadra, and Nagar Haveli.

80th All India Presiding Officers’ Conference

- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 80th All India Presiding Officers’ Conference on November 25, 2020 in Kevadia, Gujarat. The two-day conference has been organized by Lok Sabha to celebrate **Constitution Day on November 26**. Om Birla, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, was the Chairperson of the conference.
- The **theme of the conference** was **Harmonious Coordination of Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary- Key to Vibrant Democracy**.

MEA launches ‘Global Pravasi Rishta Portal’ and mobile app

- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) launched the Global Pravasi Rishta Portal and app in order to connect with nearly 3.12 crore Indians across the world.
- The app aims at creating a three-way communication between the Indian missions, ministry and the Indian diaspora.
- The app will be used by the Indian nationals and diaspora, while the portal will be used by the Indian missions.


- The publication of the Police K9 Journal is another step in creating an ecosystem in the country to train and learn on augmenting this vital resource.
- This is a unique initiative which will further enrich the subjects related to Police Service Canine (K-9) (PSK) teams in the country.
- **Note:** A special ‘Police K9 Cell’ was established in November 2019 under the Police Modernisation Division of the ministry of home affairs with the mandate of ‘Mainstreaming and Augmentation of Police Service K9s in the country’.

PM inaugurates 450 km Kochi-Mangaluru natural gas pipeline
Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 450-km Kochi-Mangaluru natural gas pipeline at a cost of Rs 3,000 crore built by GAIL (India) Ltd. marks an important milestone towards the creation of “One Nation One Gas Grid”.

The pipeline will carry natural gas from Kochi in Kerala through Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargod districts to Mangaluru in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka.

Note: Natural gas pipeline network will be doubled in 5-6 years and CNG stations will be raised to 10,000 from current 1,500.

PM dedicates to nation new Section of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor and flags off world’s first Double Stack Long Haul Container Train

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the 306-Kilometre long New Rewari-New Madar Section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor.
He also flagged off the world's first Double Stack Long Haul 1.5 Kilometre long Container Train hauled by electric traction from New Ateli-New Kishangarh.

National Youth Parliament Festival 2021

The Finals of National Youth Parliament Festival (NYPF) 2021 was held in the Central Hall of Parliament.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Valedictory Function of National Youth Parliament Festival 2021.
The objective of the National Youth Parliament Festival is to hear the voice of youth between 18 and less than 25 years of age, who will join various careers in coming years, including public services.
The 2nd National Youth Parliament Festival 2021 was launched on 23rd of December 2020 across the country at district, state and national level.
Note: The first NYPF 2019 was organised from 12 January to 27 February 2019 at District, State and National level.

51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI)

From 16 January to 24 January, 2021, the 51st Edition of the International Film Festival of India is going to be held in Goa.
On 11 January, 2021, the International Film Festival of India announced this edition's Country in Focus. For the 51st IFFI, the Country in Focus is Bangladesh.
About International Film Festival of India: It was founded in 1952. It is conducted jointly by the Directorate of Film Festivals (under Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and the state Government of Goa.

Suriname's Indian-origin President to be Chief Guest at Republic Day 2021

Chandrikapersad Santokhi, Indian-origin President of Suriname, will be the chief guest at India’s Republic Day Parade on January 26, 2021.
Note: The Suriname President was earlier the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention, which was conducted by the Ministry of External Affairs.
India had initially invited UK PM Boris Johnson to be the Republic Day Chief Guest but the British PM later decided to cancel his visit due to the escalating COVID-19 situation in the United Kingdom.

The Supreme Court stayed the implementation of the three farm laws and set up a committee
The court formed a four-member committee of experts to listen to the grievances of the farmers on the farm laws and the views of the government and make recommendations. The committee will comprise agricultural economist Ashok Gulati, Pramod Kumar Joshi, Director South Asia International Food Policy Research Institute, Anil Ghanwat of the Sethkari Sangathan and B S Mann of the Bharatiya Kisan Union.

The laws whose implementation has been suspended are:
1. The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020
2. Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020
3. Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020

3rd phase of PMKVY (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana) launched
- The 3rd phase of PMKVY was launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in 600 districts across the country.
- Skill India Mission-PMKVY 3.0 envisages training of eight lakh candidates over a scheme period of 2020-2021 with an outlay of Rs 949 crore.
- Note: The government had launched the PMKVY scheme in 2015 to mobilize youth to take up skill training with the aim of increasing productivity and aligning the training and certification to the needs of the country. The scheme was revamped as PMKVY -2 in 2016 with an aim to train one crore youth by the year 2020.

First National Road Safety Month 2021
- The first-ever National Road Safety Month (January 18-February 17) was inaugurated by Union Minister for Defence Shri Rajnath Singh and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari to build awareness about road safety and reduce road accidents in India.
- The theme is “Sadak Suraksha- Jeevan Raksha”.
- Note: During the last few years, a road safety week was being organised, but considering the importance of the issue, a month-long programme has been made this year.
- As per a recent report, around 400 people die every day in India due to road accidents. India tops in the number of road accident deaths across the 195 countries.

Ministry of Railways approves the naming of Train No. 12311/12312 Howrah-Kalka Mail as “Netaji Express”
- Howrah -Kalka Mail is a very popular and one of the oldest trains of Indian Railways. The Howrah-Kalka Mail is running between Howrah (Eastern Railway) and Kalka (Northern Railway) via Delhi.

Bharat Parv 2021 to be inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla on 26th January 2021
- The annual event Bharat Parv is being organised on a virtual platform from 26th Jan to 31st Jan 2021 wherein themed pavilions of multiple States & UTs will showcase their tourism destinations, cuisine, handicraft and other features.
- Note: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India organizes Bharat Parv every year since 2016 in front of the ramparts of the Red Fort on the occasion of Republic Day Celebrations from 26th to 31st January.

Republic Day parade: Uttar Pradesh wins best tableau award
- Uttar Pradesh was adjudged the best tableau among the 32 tableaux that participated in the Republic Day Parade this year.
- The tableau of Uttar Pradesh was based on the theme Ayodhya: Cultural Heritage of Uttar Pradesh.
- The tableau of Tripura was adjudged the second best followed by Uttarakhand’s at third.
Transport Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari launches ‘Go Electric’ Campaign

- Shri Nitin Gadkari, the union minister for Road Transport & Highways, Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises launched the “Go Electric” Campaign to spread awareness on the benefits of e-mobility and EV Charging Infrastructure as well as electric cooking in India.
- Note: Electric fuel is a major alternative for fossil fuels which have an import bill of Rs. 8 lakh Crore.
- When compared to conventional fuels the electric fuel has low cost, reduced emissions and it is also indigenous.

47th Khajuraho Dance Festival begins

- The week-long (20th -26th February) 47th Khajuraho Dance Festival began in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh which is based on the Indian classical dance tradition.
- The festival is being organized by the Culture Department through Ustad Alauddin Khan Music and Arts Academy Bhopal.
- Note: The ceremony is being held once again in the temple premises after a gap of 44 years.

Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge cohort announced

- The Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, announced 25 shortlisted cities for the ‘Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge’ cohort, in collaboration with the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) and technical partner WRI India.
- The Challenge is a 3-year initiative aimed at supporting early childhood-friendly neighbourhoods under the government’s Smart Cities Mission.
- About the Challenge: The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge, launched on November 4th, 2020, invited participation from all Smart Cities, capitals of States and UTs, and other cities with population above 5 lakhs were eligible to participate.

Centre reconstitutes NITI Aayog governing council

- The Centre has reconstituted the governing council of the NITI Aayog with Prime Minister Narendra Modi as its chairperson.
- According to a notification of the Cabinet Secretariat, chief ministers of all states and those of the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Puducherry are full time members of the council.
- The Lieutenant Governors of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh, and the administrators of Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep will be special invitees of the governing council.

11th ‘Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav’ inaugurated at Cooch Behar, West Bengal

- The Governor of West Bengal Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar in the presence of Minister of State (I/C) for Culture and Tourism, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel inaugurated the 11th Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav on 14th February, 2021 at Cooch Behar Palace at Cooch Behar in West Bengal.
- The eleventh edition of Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav is being held between 14th to 28th February, 2021 in West Bengal.
- Note: Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav, the flagship festival of this Ministry organized since 2015 with the active participation of Seven Zonal Culture Centres has been playing a pivotal role to take the vibrant culture of India out to the masses instead of confining to auditoria and galleries.

Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship launches MGNF with nine IIMs as academic partners
The Union Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Mahendra Nath Pandey chaired a function ‘Transforming skilling through strategic partnerships under SANKALP’ and rolling out of the Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship (MGNF).

The fellows under MGNF will acquire academic expertise and technical competency in understanding the overall skill ecosystem along with being attached to DSCs (District Skill Committees) and help them manage the skill development planning at district level through the mechanism of formulating District Skill Development Plans (DSDPs).

SANKALP (Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) is a World Bank loan assisted programme to strengthen the district skill administration and the District Skill Committees.

Prime Minister lays the foundation stone of Maharaja Suheldev Memorial and development work of Chittaura Lake

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Maharaja Suheldev Memorial and development work of Chittaura Lake at Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh via video conference.
- The Prime Minister also inaugurated the medical College building named after Maharaja Suheldev.
- About Maharaja Suheldev: He was an Indian king from Shravasti, popularly known to have defeated and killed the Ghaznavid general Ghazi Saiyyad Salar Masud at Bahraich in 11th century.
- He is mentioned in the 17th century Persian-language historical romance Mirat-i-Masudi. Since the 20th century, various Hindu nationalist groups have characterized him as a Hindu King who defeated a Muslim invader.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh launches E-Chhawani portal & mobile app

- The portal has been created to provide online civic services to over 20 lakh residents of 62 Cantonment Boards across the country.
- Through the portal, the residents of cantonment areas will be able to avail basic services like renewal of leases, application for birth & death certificates, water & sewerage connections, trade licences, mobile toilet locators and payment of different types of taxes and fees, with just a click of a button.
- The portal, jointly developed by eGov Foundation, Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Directorate General Defence Estates (DGDE) and National Informatics Centre (NIC), provides a platform to the residents to avail these services from the comfort of their home.

3rd edition of Indian Sign Language Dictionary with 10,000 terms

- Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot virtually released the 3rd edition of the Indian Sign Language (ISL) Dictionary with 10,000 terms (including 6,000 earlier terms).
- The 3rd Edition contains a total of 10,000 terms of everyday use, academic terms, legal & administrative terms, medical terms, technical terms and agricultural terms.
- Note: The Dictionary has been brought out by the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC), an autonomous Institute under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- The 1st Edition of the ISL Dictionary was launched on 23rd March, 2018 with 3000 terms and the 2nd Edition with 6000 terms (including earlier 3000 terms) was launched on 27th February, 2019.

Sandes, the government’s new Instant Messaging platform

- The National Informatics Centre has launched an instant messaging platform called Sandes on the lines of WhatsApp.
• Like WhatsApp, the new NIC platform can be used for all kinds of communications by anyone with a mobile number or email id.
• Although there is no option to transfer the chat history between two platforms, the chats on Government Instant Messaging Systems (GIMS) can be backed up to a users’ email.
• Note: In August 2020, the NIC released the first version of the app, which said that the app could be used by both central and state government officials for intra and inter-organisation communication.

Shri Prahlad Singh Patel virtually attends the 8th Meeting of ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers' meeting
• The Union Minister of State for Culture & Tourism, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel co-chaired the 8th Meeting of ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers meeting with Minister of Tourism of Cambodia H.E. Dr. Thong Khon on February 05, 2021.
• The Meeting was in conjunction with the 24th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers (M-ATM).

Initiatives taken by Government of India to revive Tourism activities:
• To organise the International Buddhist Conclave (IBC) to create awareness about India’s Buddhist Heritage and to increase foreign tourist traffic to Buddhist sites.
• SAATHII (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for Hospitality Industry) and the Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (IITF) Certification Programme, an online learning platform with the objective of creating a pool of well trained and professional Tourist Facilitators across the country.
• To organize a series of webinars under the theme Dekho Apna Desh

Cabinet Secretary Chairs review meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) to take stock of the Glacial Burst in Uttarakhand and the actions taken
• The National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) under the chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary, Shri Rajiv Gagua met to review the situation arising out of the natural disaster in Uttarakhand caused by glacial burst.

Schools under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan to be renamed after Subhas Chandra Bose
• The Ministry of Education has decided to name residential schools and hostels funded under Samagra Shiksha of the Ministry as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose residential schools or hostels.
• About Samagra Shiksha: Samagra Shiksha - an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12 has been, therefore, prepared with the broader goal of improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes. It subsumes the three erstwhile Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE).
• Note: A total of 1063 residential facilities which include 383 residential Schools and 680 Hostels have been sanctioned to States and UTs so far.

National Horticulture Fair 2021 begins in Bengaluru
• The country’s largest horticulture event, the five days National Horticulture Fair 2021, has been organized by the Indian Institute of Horticulture Research (IIHR) from February 8 to February 12 at its IIHR campus situated in Hessarghatta, Bengaluru.
• The theme of the event is ‘Horticulture for Start-up and Stand-up India’.
• Cutting edge technologies, crop varieties, pest and disease management practices, and processing methods will be demonstrated.
First ever India Toy Fair-2021 to be organised
- The Government is organising the first ever India Toy Fair from 27th February to 2nd March.
- Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Zubin Irani, Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal jointly inaugurated the website of The India Toy Fair-2021 in New Delhi.

ICC announces BYJU'S as global partner until 2023
- The three-year agreement will see BYJU'S partner all ICC (International Cricket Council) events over the period, including the forthcoming men’s T20 World Cup in India and the women's World Cup in New Zealand.
- As a global partner, BYJU's will have extensive in-venue, broadcast, and digital rights across all ICC events.
- Note: In August 2019, the company became the official jersey partners of the Indian cricket team.

Prime Minister addresses 125th anniversary celebrations of 'Prabuddha Bharata'
- Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the 125th anniversary celebrations of ‘Prabuddha Bharata’ organised by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati in Uttarakhhand.
- 'Prabuddha Bharata' is a monthly journal of the Ramakrishna Order which was started by Swami Vivekananda. It has been in publication since 1896 and carries articles on social sciences and humanities comprising historical, psychological, cultural and social sciences themes.

8th India International Silk Fair
- Union Minister for Women & Child Development and Textiles, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani inaugurated the 8th edition of India International Silk Fair on Virtual Portal from 31st January to 4th February.
- India International Silk Fair is the Sourcing Fair for silk and silk blend products organised by the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council under the aegis of Ministry of Textiles and sponsored by Department of Commerce.
- Note: India has a long history of silk production and is the 2nd largest producer of Silk after China.
- India is the only country in the world which produces all the four major varieties of silk i.e. Mulberry, Eri, Tassar, and Muga.

Prime Minister to inaugurate ‘Chauri Chaura’ Centenary Celebrations on 4th February
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Chauri Chaura Centenary Celebrations at Chauri Chaura, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, on 4th February 2021.
- The day marks 100 years of the ‘Chauri Chaura’ incident, a landmark event in the country’s fight for independence.
- Prime Minister will also release a postal stamp dedicated to the Chauri Chaura centenary during the event.
- About Chauri Chaura incident: It took place on 4 February 1922 at Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district of the United Province (modern Uttar Pradesh) in British India, when a large group of protesters participating in the Non-cooperation movement, clashed with police who opened fire.

Pattachitra Artform
- Bhagyasheer Sahu belonging to Odisha's Rourkela found mention in Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s 73rd "Mann ki Baat" for her artwork to promote cloth-based scroll paintings "Pattachitra".
About Pattachitra: It is a general term for traditional, cloth-based scroll painting, based in the eastern Indian states of Odisha and West Bengal.

Geographical Indication (GI) of Pattachitra: Geographical indication of Patachitra is registered under to different state of India as the style and motif of Odisha and West Bengal Patachitra are so different. The Patachitra of Odisha is registered as Orissa Patachitra. The Patachitra of West Bengal is registered as Bengal Patachitra.

Year-long birth centenary celebrations of legendary classical singer Pandit Bhimsen Joshi begins
- Different events have been organised including SwarBhaskar 100 by Jayateerth Mevundi, 'Abhivadan' by Arya Sangeet Prasarak Mandal.
- Note: Pandit Bhimsen Joshi (February 4, 1922 - January 24, 2011) was a vocalist from Karnataka.
- He received the Bharat Ratna in 2008.

New passenger train ‘Mitali Express’ inaugurated between India and Bangladesh
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated a new passenger train, ‘Mitali Express’, between Dhaka and New Jalpaiguri in West Bengal on the occasion of 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birth centenary and golden jubilee of Bangladesh's Independence on March 27, 2021.
- Note: This is the third passenger train after Maitree Express (Dhaka-Kolkata) and Bandhan Express (Khulna-Kolkata) running between the two neighbouring countries.

Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launches 'Tribal TB Initiative' in pursuit of TB Mukt Bharat
- The government accords top priority to ensuring Universal Access to free treatment and care for TB (Tuberculosis) across the country.
- Over ten crore tribal population is living with a huge diversity in their population dynamics.
- Note: The Union Territories of Lakshadweep and district of Badgam in Jammu and Kashmir have been declared TB Free on World TB Day 2021.
- India has 30 percent of the world's TB cases.

AYUSH Ministry set up interdisciplinary team to explore potential of Yoga
- The Ministry of AYUSH has set up an interdisciplinary team of experts to explore the potential of Yoga as a productivity enhancing tool for the population.
- The committee is chaired by H. R Nagendra, Chancellor, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana and its members include representatives from AIIMS New Delhi, IIM Bangalore, IIT Bombay, various leading Yoga institutions, the corporate sector and the AYUSH Ministry.
- The committee will submit its preliminary recommendations by May 2021.
- Note: The Sports Ministry formally recognised Yogasana as a competitive sport, which will enable the ancient practice to avail government funding.

Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman launches Central Scrutiny Centre and IEPFA’s Mobile App
- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman launched Central Scrutiny Centre (CSC) and Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority’s (IEPF) Mobile App — two tech-enabled initiatives by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA).
- The Central Scrutiny Centre will scrutinize certain Straight Through Process (STP) Forms filed by the corporates on the MCA21 registry.
• The **Mobile App** aims at achieving the goal of financial literacy, spreading investors’ awareness, education, and protection among investors.

**Prime Minister Modi unveils new version of 'Exam Warriors'**
- The new version of ‘Exam Warriors’ written by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is now available with many new mantras for students as well as for parents.
- The book reaffirms the need to remain stress free before an exam.
- The Exam Warriors module is also available on the NaMo App.
- **Note:** The initial version of the book ‘Exam Warriors’ was written by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and was published in 2018.

**Shri Prahlad Singh Patel and Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurates the ‘Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre at Khajuraho**
- Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (Independent Charge) and Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh inaugurated the ‘Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre at Khajuraho developed under **Swadesh Darshan Scheme** of Ministry of Tourism in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh.
- **The UNESCO world Heritage site Khajuraho** attracts tourists for its mesmerising temples. Adding on more to its features is the convention Centre with brilliant facilities, Named as Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre Khajuraho, this venue will cater to all your business needs.

**AYUSH Ministry in collaboration with Vinoba Seva Pratishthan organizes 'Ayurveda Parav'**
- In a bid to promote Ayurveda as the mainstream treatment for the prevalent lifestyle related diseases, Vinoba Seva Pratishthan (VSP), in collaboration with the Ministry of AYUSH, has successfully organized ‘Ayurveda Parav’ in Bhubaneswar from 26th to 28th March 2021.
- The 3-days event was inaugurated by **Padma Vibhushan Dr Raghunath Mohapatra**, Hon’ble Member of Rajya Sabha along with **Shri Naba Kishore Das**, Hon’ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of Odisha and **Shri Trilochan Majhi**, Director of AYUSH, Govt. of Odisha.
- During this Parv, nearly 25 research papers were presented by experts and researchers.

**MA Ganapathy appointed as Director General of NSG**
- Mr Ganapathy, a 1986-batch IPS officer has been appointment as the Director General (DG) of National Security Guard (NSG) by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).
- He was serving as the DG of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS).
- **About National Security Guard (NSG):** NSG was raised in 1984 as the federal contingency commando force and its primary task includes undertaking specific counterterrorist, counter-hijack operations and VIP protection duties.

**Prime Minister launches ‘Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain’ campaign**
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi launched the ‘Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain’ campaign on World Water Day.
- The campaign launched under the theme: ‘**Catch the Rain, where it falls, when it falls**’ will be implemented in all districts, rural as well as urban areas, of the country during the period March 22, 2021 to November 30, 2021 (the pre-monsoon and monsoon period).

**Union Education Minister inaugurates Shaheed Bhagat Singh Smarak in New Delhi**
- The University of Delhi organized a programme to pay homage and commemorate 90 years of martyrdom of our national icons of the Indian National Movement -**Shaheed Bhagat Singh**,
Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru on ‘Shaheed Diwas’ in the Convention Hall of the Viceregal Lodge.

- On this occasion Shaheed Bhagat Singh Smarak was inaugurated by the Union Minister of Education, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’.
- The existing collection of books on freedom fighters in the Bhagat Singh Smarak has been announced to be converted into “Shaheed Smriti Pustakalaya.”

Parliament passes the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021

- Rajya Sabha on March 24, 2021, passed the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021. The bill was earlier passed in the Lok Sabha on March 22, 2021.
- The Bill provides that the term ‘government’ referred to in any law made by the Legislative Assembly of Delhi will imply Lieutenant Governor, LG.

Prime Minister addresses 4th Global Ayurveda Festival

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the 4th Global Ayurveda Festival (12-19 March, 2021, Kerala) through virtual mode.
- The National AYUSH Mission has been started to promote AYUSH medical systems through cost effective AYUSH services.
- India’s policy regarding Ayurveda and other Indian systems of medicine is already aligned with the Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023 of the World Health Organisation.
- Note: The WHO has also announced the setting up of the Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India.

Government launches ‘Mera Ration’ mobile app

- The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution launched the ‘Mera Ration’ mobile app in line with the “One Nation One Ration Card” (ONORC) scheme.
- This app will benefit especially those ration card holders who move to new areas for livelihoods.
- Note: The system which was started initially in 4 States in August 2019 has been swiftly rolled out in a very short span of time in 32 States/UTs by December 2020 and the integration of remaining 4 States/UT (Assam, Chhattisgarh, Delhi and West Bengal) is expected to be completed in next few months.
- At present, the system covers nearly 69 Crore NFSA beneficiaries (about 86% NFSA population) in the country.
- The ONORC scheme is being implemented by the Department of Food & Public Distribution for the nation-wide portability of ration cards under National Food Security Act (NFSA).

Union Minister Anurag Thakur appointed as Captain in Territorial Army

- Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur became the first serving MP (Member of Parliament) to be appointed as Captain in the Territorial Army.
- Mr Thakur has been promoted to the rank of Captain at 124 Infantry Battalion Territorial Army (Sikh).
- Note: The four-time BJP MP from Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur was commissioned into the Territorial Army as a Lieutenant by then Chief of Army Staff General Dalbir S Suhag in July 2016.

Government appointed GP Samanta as Chief Statistician of India
Samanta will also hold charge as Secretary in the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI).

He will replace Kshatrapati Shivaji who was given additional charge in MoSPI in September.

Samanta is currently as an advisor in the Reserve Bank of India’s department of statistics and information management.

**Maths, physics, chemistry not compulsory for engineering admissions: AICTE**

In a major change in the eligibility criteria for engineering courses, the AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) has made Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics (PCM) optional for students who wish to pursue technical courses like biotechnology, textile or agriculture engineering at the undergraduate level.

However, PCM remains mandatory for most engineering subjects like computer science.

**Former PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi’s memoir titled “My Life in Full: Work, Family and Our Future”**


Indra Nooyi was honoured with Padam Bhushan in 2007.

She worked at PepsiCo for 24 years.

**Rajya Sabha passes the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2021**

The Rajya Sabha has approved the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2021 to amend the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 on 16th March 2021.

The Bill was approved in Lok Sabha on 17th March 2020.

Some salient features of amendments:

- Enhancing the upper gestation limit from 20 to 24 weeks for special categories of women which will be defined in the amendments to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Rules and would include survivors of rape, victims of incest and other vulnerable women (like differently-abled women, minors) etc.
- Opinion of only one provider will be required up to 20 weeks of gestation and of two providers for termination of pregnancy of 20-24 weeks of gestation.

The Government constitutes a National Committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to commemorate 75 years of India’s Independence

- The committee has 259 members and includes dignitaries and eminent citizens.
- The Government intends to commemorate 75 years of India’s Independence in a befitting manner at national and international level in the form of ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’.
- The 75 years of India’s Independence falls on 15th August 2022 and celebrations are proposed to be launched 75 weeks prior to this date on 12th March 2021.
- Note: 12th March is the 91st anniversary of the historic Salt Satyagraha led by Mahatma Gandhi.

**Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan launches ’CSIR Floriculture Mission’**

- Harsh Vardhan encouraged scientists of CSIR laboratories across the country to develop the land available at each laboratory to be set up as a model under the “CSIR Floriculture Mission”.
- CSIR Floriculture Mission has been approved for implementation in 21 States and Union Territories of India.
- Harsh Vardhan also launched CSIR’s Societal Portal along with the Android App.
Note: The Indian floriculture market was worth Rs 15700 cr in 2018. The market is projected to reach Rs 47200 cr by 2024 during 2019-24.

All major schemes of Women and Child Development Ministry classified under 3 Umbrella Schemes

- For effective implementation of various schemes and programmes of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD), all major schemes of the Ministry have been classified under 3 umbrella schemes viz. Mission Poshan 2.0, Mission Vatsalya and Mission Shakti.
- For these 3 Umbrella Schemes, the following allocation has been made in the Budget 2021-22 under Demand No. 100 for Ministry of Women and Child Development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Umbrella Scheme</th>
<th>Schemes included</th>
<th>Budget 2021-22 (Rs. In crores)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Mission POSHAN 2.0</td>
<td>Umbrella ICDS - Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyan, Scheme for Adolescent Girls, National Creche Scheme</td>
<td>20,105.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mission Shakti (Mission for Protection and Empowerment for Women)</td>
<td>Sambal (One Stop Centre, Mahila Police Volunteer, Women's Helpline/Swadhar/Ujjawala/Widow Homes etc.) Samarthya (Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Creche, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana/ Gender Budgeting/Research</td>
<td>3,109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indian Railway announces integrated Rail Madad Helpline number “139”

- Indian Railway has integrated all railway helplines into single number 139 (Rail Madad Helpline) for quick grievance redressal and enquiry during the journey.
- Various Railway grievances helplines were discontinued last year. Now, Helpline no. 182 would also be discontinued from 1.4.21, and merged into 139.
- The Ministry of Railways has also launched a Social Media campaign #OneRailOneHelpline139 to inform and educate the passengers.
- Note: Recently, Indian Railways’ Western Railway zone has introduced a mobile train radio communication (MTRC) system to prevent the train accidents by effective communication.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the first-ever India Toy Fair 2021

- The Toy Fair is being organized from 27th February to 2nd March 2021.
• **Note:** Today India’s share in the $100 billion global toy market is very small. 85% of the toys in the country are sourced from abroad.

• The **National Toy Action Plan** has also been prepared. It has included 15 ministries and departments to make these industries competitive.

• Recently, **Toyathon-2021** was also organized to promote Indian sports based toys and more than 7000 ideas were brainstormed.

**Swachh Iconic Places - Ministry of Jal Shakti announces selection of 12 sites for transforming them into ‘Swachh Tourist Destinations’ under Phase IV**

• Under Swachh Iconic Places initiative of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G), the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti has announced the selection of the following 12 iconic sites under Phase IV—

1. Ajanta Caves, Maharashtra
2. Sanchi Stupa, Madhya Pradesh
3. Kumbhalgarh Fort, Rajasthan
4. Jaisalmer Fort, Rajasthan
5. Ramdevra, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan
6. Golconda Fort, Hyderabad, Telangana
7. Sun Temple, Konark, Odisha
8. Rock Garden, Chandigarh
9. Dal Lake, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir
10. Banke Bihari Temple, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh
11. Agra Fort, Agra, Uttar Pradesh
12. Kalighat Temple, West Bengal

**Real-Time Monitoring System of Toll Plazas**

• Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari launched the Real-Time Monitoring System of Toll Plazas.

• It improves traffic congestion problem at toll plazas/city roads/highways by using central monitoring system.

• It uses several technologies like Satellite Imagery, GIS, Remote Sensing along with a proprietary algorithm to remotely monitor the congestion status of the roads.

• **Note:** The government has made **FASTag** mandatory from the 15th February midnight and any vehicle not fitted with it will be charged double the toll at electronic toll plazas across the country.

**Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot launched “Sugamya Bharat App” and a handbook entitled “Access – The Photo Digest”**

• The App and the handbook have been developed by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

• **Sugamya Bharat App** — a Crowd sourcing Mobile Application is a means for sensitising and enhancing accessibility in the 3 pillars of the Accessible India Campaign i.e. built environment, transportation sector and ICT ecosystem in India.

• The handbook entitled **“Access - The Photo Digest”** is a collection of photographs from across different States and UTs.
This Book is envisaged as a tool and guide to sensitise stakeholders about 10 basic features of accessibility and related good-bad practices in easy to understand pictorial form.

Rajya Sabha TV and Lok Sabha TV merges, now to be known as Sansad TV

- Retired IAS officer Ravi Capoor has been appointed as its Chief Executive Officer of Sansad TV.
- The decision has been taken jointly by the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, M. Venkaiah Naidu, and Speaker of Lok Sabha, Om Birla, based on the report of a committee set up to look into the integration of the two channels.

Labour Bureau launches two of the five All-India Surveys

- These surveys have been developed and designed by the Labour Bureau under the technical guidance of an expert group chaired by Prof S. P. Mukherjee and co-chaired by Dr Amitabh Kundu.
- The first surveys to be launched are the All-India Survey of Migrant Workers and All-India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey (AQEES).

Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ launches the “MyNEP2020” Platform of NCTE Web Portal

- The platform seeks to invite suggestions/inputs/membership from the stakeholders for preparing draft for development of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) and National Mission for Mentoring Program membership (NMM).
- The “MyNEP2020” platform will be operational from 1st April 2021 to 15th May 2021.
- For preparing the documents on above two major recommendations of NEP 2020, NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) will work in close consultation with individuals/organizations.

Labour Bureau launches two of the five All-India Surveys

- These surveys have been developed and designed by the Labour Bureau under the technical guidance of an expert group chaired by Prof S. P. Mukherjee and co-chaired by Dr Amitabh Kundu.
- The first surveys to be launched are the All-India Survey of Migrant Workers and All-India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey (AQEES).

TRIFED launches “Sankalp se Siddhi”- Village and Digital Connect Drive

- It is a 100-day drive which was started from 1st April 2021.
- The main aim of this drive is to activate the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras in villages.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs in a statement said that 100 villages in each region and 1500 villages in the country will be covered in the next 100 days.
- The visiting teams will also identify locations and potential Van Dhan Vikas Kendras for TRIFOOD and Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI).
- Facts about Tribal Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (TRIFED):
  Founded: 1987
Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan launches the Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP)

- The Integrated Health Information Platform is the next generation highly refined version of the presently used Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP).
- In addition to tracking 33 diseases now as compared to the earlier 18 diseases, it shall ensure near-real-time data in digital mode.
- This is the world's biggest online disease surveillance platform. It is in sync with the National Digital Health Mission and fully compatible with the other digital information systems presently being used in India.

Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar launches “Madhukranti portal” and Honey Corners of NAFED

- “Madhukranti portal” is an initiative of National Bee Board (NBB), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare under National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM).
- This portal is being developed for online registration to achieve a traceability source of Honey and other beehive products on a digital platform.
- The technical and banking partner for development of this digital platform is Indian Bank.

Harsh Vardhan launches Tribal Health Collaborative ‘Anamaya’

- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare along with Shri Arjun Munda, Union Minister of Tribal Affairs launched ‘Anamaya’, the Tribal Health Collaborative.
- A multi-stakeholder initiative supported by Piramal Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), ‘Anameya’ will converge efforts of various Government agencies and organisations to enhance the health and nutrition status of the tribal communities of India.
- The Ministry will undertake several activities such as: setting up of the National Council on Tribal Health, establishment of a Health Cell and Tribal Health Action Plan and so on.
- Note: Recently, the ‘Tribal TB Initiative’ was launched by both the Ministries to fulfil the Prime Minister’s goal of ‘TB Mukt Bharat’ by 2025, five years ahead of the global deadline.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs the meeting of the High Level Committee to commemorate 400th Birth Anniversary (Prakash Purab) of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur

- The High Level Committee was constituted by the Union Government earlier on October 24, 2020, to approve policies, plans and programs related to the commemoration of the 400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur along with supervision of the events.
- The High Level Committee has 70 members including the Prime Minister as Chairman.
- About Guru Tegh Bahadur: Guru Tegh Bahadur is the ninth of the ten Gurus who founded the Sikh religion. He was the head of the followers of Sikhism. He was born on 1 April 1621.
- Note: Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with students, teachers and parents during 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2021' via video conferencing on 7th April 2021.
'Tika Utsav'; aim to vaccinate maximum eligible people

- Prime Minister, Narendra Modi announced a special initiative vaccination festival, 'Tika Utsav' with an aim to vaccinate maximum number of eligible people against the coronavirus.
- The Utsav started on 11 April, 2021, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and will continue till the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar on 14 April, 2021 to ensure the maximum vaccination coverage of people aged above 45.
- Mr. Modi urged citizens to imbibe these four principles which include 'Each One, Vaccinate One', 'Each One, Treat One', 'Each One, Save One', and 'Micro Containment Zones'.
- Note: Recently, Drugs Controller General of India (DGCI) has given approval to use vaccines- Covishield from Serum Institute of India (SII) based on the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine and Covaxin from Bharat Biotech.

Government of India to soon roll out Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) system in country

- Government of India will soon roll out a Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) system in the country allotting distinct IDs for each land parcel.
- Pilot testing has been successfully carried out in 11 States namely Bihar, Haryana, Jharkhand, Odisha, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh and Goa.
- Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) - 14 digits Alpha–numeric unique ID for each land parcel based on Geo reference coordinate of vertices of international standard and compliance of Electronic Commerce Code Management Association standard and Open Geospatial Consortium standards.

NITI Aayog launches Online Dispute Resolution Handbook

- NITI Aayog in association with Agami and Omidyar Network India and with the support of ICICI Bank, Ashoka Innovators for the Public, Trilegal, Dalberg, Dvara, NIPFP launched the first-of-its kind Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) handbook in India.
- ODR is the resolution of disputes outside courts, particularly of small and medium-value cases, using digital technology and techniques of alternate dispute resolution (ADR), such as negotiation, mediation, and arbitration.

CSIR adopts 295 Atal Tinkering Labs established by Atal Innovation Mission nationwide

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog’s flagship 295 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) were officially adopted by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) across the country in an ambitious step towards inculcating scientific research and innovation culture among students.
- CSIR with their 36 labs have adopted 295 ATLs and their students across the country.
- This partnership with CSIR is a crucial landmark achievement for Atal Innovation Mission spurring STEM research and innovation collaborations with public and private organizations playing a pivotal role.
Launch of India Energy Dashboards Version 2.0 by NITI Aayog

- The India Energy Dashboards Version 2.0 was launched by Dr Rajiv Kumar (Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog), Dr V K Saraswat (Member, NITI Aayog), Shri Amitabh Kant (CEO, NITI Aayog) and Dr Rakesh Sarwal (Additional Secretary, NITI Aayog).
- **India Energy Dashboards (IED)** is an endeavour to provide single-window access to the energy data for the country.
- Energy data published/provided by Central Electricity Authority, Coal Controller’s Organisation, and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is compiled in the Dashboards.

Justice Chandrachud inaugurates Judgments & Orders portal and e-filing 3.0 module

- Dr Justice Dhananjaya Y. Chandrachud, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Chairperson, e-Committee of the Supreme Court inaugurated a Judgments and Orders Portal for searching past judgments and orders and an e-Filing 3.0 module to allow electronic filing of court documents.
- The initiatives developed by Pune based e-Courts project team are aimed to strengthen the legal system.
- **The Judgments and Orders search portal** is a repository of judgments pronounced by various High Courts in the country. It provides facility to search judgements and final orders based on multiple search criteria.
- **The e-filing 3.0 module**, introduced by the e-Committee of the Supreme Court, allows electronic filing of court documents. With the introduction of the new module, there will be no need for lawyers or clients to visit the court premises for filing of a case.
- **Note**: The judgment search portal has data today of 38 million cases available. We have data of 106 million cases which are being disposed of & are available & the total number of 141 million orders.

NITI Aayog launches ‘Poshan Gyan’, a digital repository on nutrition information

- NITI Aayog, in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University, launched Poshan Gyan, a national digital repository on health and nutrition.
- The Poshan Gyan repository was conceptualized as a resource, enabling search of communication materials on 14 thematic areas of health and nutrition across diverse languages, media types, target audiences and sources.

Dr Harsh Vardhan launches ‘Aahaar Kranti’

- Union Minister for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences and Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan has launched “Aahaar Kranti”, a mission dedicated to spreading awareness about nutrition and accessible to all locally available nutritious food, fruits, and vegetables in India.
- Aahaar Kranti has been launched as a public movement on the first day of Ma Annapurna’s Chaitra Navaratri.
- Vijnana Bharati (Vibha), ‘Global Indian Scientists and Technocrats’ Forum (GIST), Vigyan Prasar, and Pravasi Bharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark (PRABHASS) have come together to
launch the mission “Aahaar Kranti”, with the motto of ‘Uttam Aahaar- Uttam Vichaar’ or `Good Diet-Good Cognition’.

India holds National Dialogue on UN Food Systems Summit 2021

- The first National Level Dialogue on Agri-Food Systems-Advancing Equitable Livelihoods was conducted on 12 April 2021.
- The National Dialogue was facilitated by the Inter departmental Group constituted by Department of Agriculture Cooperation & Farmers Welfare and the representatives from UN Agencies in Delhi.
- Note: The United Nations Secretary General has called for the first ever UN Food Systems Summit to be held in September 2021 to strategize the actions for positive change in Agri-food systems in the World to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology announces #FOSS4GOV Innovation Challenge

- The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology announced a #FOSS4GOV Innovation Challenge to accelerate adoption of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) In Government.
- The #FOSS4GOV Innovation Challenge calls upon FOSS innovators, technology entrepreneurs and Indian Startups to submit implementable open source product innovations in CRM and ERP with possible applications for Govtech in Health, Education, Agriculture, Urban Governance etc.

Shri Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurates ‘National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign-2021’

- The conference was organized to interact with the States on challenges & strategies for effective crop management during the ensuing Kharif season.

NCW launches WhatsApp helpline number for pregnant women

- The National Commission for Women (NCW) has launched a WhatsApp helpline number for providing emergency medical assistance to pregnant women. The number is 9354954224.
- Expectant mothers from across the country can reach out to the Commission through this number which will be functional round the clock.
- About National Commission for Women (NCW): The National Commission for Women (NCW) is the statutory body of the Government of India, generally concerned with advising the government on all policy matters affecting women.
- It was established on 31 January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian Constitution, as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act.
- The first head of the commission was Jayanti Patnaik.
- Rekha Sharma is the current chairperson.
Petroleum Minister flags off 1st supply of Used Cooking Oil-based Biodiesel from Indian Oil’s Tikrikalan Terminal

- Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan remotely flagged off the first supply of UCO (Used Cooking Oil) based Biodiesel blended Diesel under the EOI Scheme from Indian Oil’s Tikrikalan Terminal, Delhi.
- To create an eco-system for collection and conversion of UCO into Biodiesel and developing entrepreneurship opportunities, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel, along with Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, had initiated Expressions of Interest for “Procurement of Bio-diesel produced from Used Cooking Oil” on the occasion of World Biofuel Day on 10th August 2019.
- Indian Oil has started constructing eight Biodiesels plants across Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh.
- Biodiesel is an alternative fuel, similar to conventional or ‘fossil’ diesel. It can be produced from vegetable oils, animal fats, tallow and waste cooking oil.
- A significant advantage of Biodiesel is its carbon-neutrality, i.e. the oilseed absorbs the same amount of CO2 as is released when the fuel is combusted in a vehicle. Also, Biodiesel is rapidly biodegradable and completely non-toxic.

Ayush Ministry launches nationwide distribution campaign of AYUSH 64 & Kabasura Kudineer

- In a concerted response to the second surge of COVID-19 infection in the country, Ministry of Ayush is launching a massive nationwide campaign to distribute its proven poly herbal Ayurvedic drugs AYUSH 64 and Sidha drug Kabasura Kudineer for the benefit of the vast majority of out of hospital COVID patients.
- The multi stakeholder campaign being launched by Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State (independent charge) for Youth Affairs and Sports and Minister of Ayush (additional charge) will ensure that medicines reach the needy in a transparent and efficient manner. The main collaborator in the campaign is Sewa Bharati.
- Note: The Ministry has also set up an Interdisciplinary Committee for Inclusion of Ayurveda and Yoga Interventions in the National Clinical Management Protocol: COVID-19, which was chaired by Dr V M Katoch, former Director General ICMR.

DCGI approves anti-COVID drug ‘2-DG’ developed by DRDO for emergency use

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has granted permission for emergency use of anti-COVID-19 therapeutic application of the drug 2-deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG).
- An anti-COVID-19 therapeutic application of the drug 2-deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG) has been developed by Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), a lab of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), in collaboration with Dr Reddy’s Laboratories (DRL), Hyderabad.
- Clinical trial results have shown that this molecule helps in faster recovery of hospitalised patients and reduces supplemental oxygen dependence.
- The drug comes in powder form in sachet, which is taken orally by dissolving it in water.
- It accumulates in the virus infected cells and prevents virus growth by stopping viral synthesis and energy production. Its selective accumulation in virally infected cells makes this drug unique.

Armed Forces launch Operation ‘CO-JEET’ to fight COVID-19 in India
The armed forces (the Army, the Indian Air Force and the Navy) have launched operation "CO-JEET" to aid anti-COVID-19 efforts, like strengthening medical infrastructure and oxygen supply chains, as well as take measures to ensure mental wellbeing of people.

Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Medical) Lieutenant General Dr Madhuri Kanitkar, who is the third woman to become a three-star general in the armed forces, is working round the clock to strategise and monitor steps to provide relief to COVID-19 patients.

"CO-JEET stands for co-workers of all the three services who will finally achieve 'Jeet' (victory) over COVID.

India participates in the 3rd Arctic Science Ministerial 2021

- The 3rd Arctic Science Ministerial Meeting (ASM3) entitled “Knowledge for a sustainable Arctic”, was co-organized by the governments of Japan and Iceland and took place on 8 and 9 May 2021 in Tokyo.
- ASM3 is the first Ministerial meeting being held in Asia.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Science and Technology, Health and Family Welfare, and Earth Sciences represented India and shared India’s vision and long-term plans for research, work, and cooperation in the Arctic region with the stakeholders.
- The launch of NISER (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) satellite mission, in collaboration with the USA, is underway.
- India’s contributions to the Sustained Arctic Observational Network (SAON) would continue.
- Note: The first two meetings—ASM1 and ASM2—were held in the USA in 2016 and Germany in 2018, respectively.
- Since 2013, India enjoys ‘Observer’ status in the Arctic Council with twelve other countries (Japan, China, France, Germany, UK, Italy, Switzerland, Poland, Spain, Netherlands, Singapore, and South Korea).
- India’s engagement with the Arctic dates back to 1920 with the signing of the Svalbard Treaty in Paris.
- Since July 2008, India has a permanent research station in the Arctic called Himadari at NyAlesund, Svalbard Area in Norway.
- It has also deployed a multi-sensor moored observatory called IndARC in the Kongsfjorden fjord since July 2014.

NITI Aayog and Mastercard release a report titled ‘Connected Commerce: Creating a Roadmap for a Digitally Inclusive Bharat’

- The report was released by NITI Aayog’s Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar, CEO Amitabh Kant.
- The report identifies challenges in accelerating digital financial inclusion in India and provides recommendations for making digital services accessible to its 1.3 billion citizens.

Key recommendations in the report include:

- Strengthening the payment infrastructure to promote a level playing field for NBFCs and banks,
- Enabling agricultural NBFCs to access low-cost capital and deploy a ‘phygital’ (physical + digital) model for achieving better long-term digital outcomes.

INTERPOL launches a mobile app ‘ID-Art’ to help identify stolen cultural property
The INTERPOL (International Criminal Police Organization) has launched a mobile application ‘ID-Art’ which will help identify stolen cultural property, reduce smuggling and increase the possibility of recovering stolen works and artefacts.

The app’s users can immediately cross-check if an object is among the over 52,000 items registered as stolen in the Interpol’s “Stolen Works of Art” database.

During the pilot phase, the app was successfully used in Italy and Netherlands.

Children impacted by COVID-19 Pandemic provided Tele-Counselling through ‘SAMVEDNA’

- National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is providing Tele-Counselling to children through SAMVEDNA (Sensitizing Action on Mental Health Vulnerability through Emotional Development and Necessary Acceptance) - a Toll-Free Helpline (1800-121-2830) launched to provide psycho-social mental support for Children affected during COVID 19 Pandemic.

- **Tele counselling is provided to the children under three categories:**
  - Children who are in Quarantine/isolation/COVID Care centers, have COVID positive parents or family members and near ones, and have lost their parents due to COVID-19 Pandemic.
  - **Note:** SAMVEDNA was launched in September, 2020.
  - NCPCR is a statutory body and works under the aegis of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India.

Airline company GoAir rebrands as ‘Go First’

- After 15 years, Wadia Group-owned GoAir has rebranded itself as ‘Go First’ as the airline focuses on an ultra-low-cost business model.
- The Go First as ULCC (ultra-low-cost carrier) would operate single aircraft type across its fleet, which currently has both Airbus A320 and A320Neos (new engine option) planes in operation.
- **About Go First:** Go First, founded as GoAir, is an Indian ultra-low-cost airline based in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It is owned by the Indian business conglomerate Wadia Group. It commenced operations in November 2005.

India's first Agriculture Export Facilitation Center (AEFC) launched in Pune

- Mahratta Chamber of Commerce Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA), in association with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), launched India's first Agriculture Export Facilitation Center (AEFC) in Pune, Maharashtra.
- Dr. G.R. Chintala, Chairman, NABARD, inaugurated the center in a virtual program organized by MCCIA.
- The center aims to boost Maharashtra's agricultural and food exports by disseminating need-based information, providing timely guidance and organizing training courses for all the stakeholders.

Culture Ministry organizes panel discussions on the occasion of International Museum Day 2021

- **International Museum Day** is celebrated every year on 18 May.
The objective of International Museum Day, as declared by International Council of Museums (ICOM), is to raise awareness about the fact that, “Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples.”

The theme for International Museum Day 2021 is ‘The Future of Museums: Recover and Reimagine’.

Union Minister of Rural Development, Narendra Singh Tomar launches NMMS app and Area officer monitoring app

- Union Minister of Rural Development, Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, Panchayati Raj and Food Processing Industries, Narendra Singh Tomar launched National Mobile Monitoring Software (NMMS) app and Area officer monitoring app.
- The NMMS app permits taking real time attendance of workers at MGNREGA worksites along with geotagged photographs, which will increase citizen oversight of the programme besides potentially enabling processing payments faster.
- Area Officer Monitoring app facilitates them to record their findings online along with time stamped and go-coordinate tagged photographs for all the schemes of Deptt of Rural Development-MGNREGA, PMAYG, PMGSY.

Defence Minister launches SeHAT OPD Portal

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the ‘Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT)’ OPD Portal.
- The Portal will help the Armed Forces in providing tele-medicine services.

Key Points
- It is an online medical consultation service for the armed forces personnel and ex-servicemen to ensure hassle-free health services for them.
- Tele-medicine services will be provided by defence services doctors who are on regular duties.

Note: In last one month on ‘eSanjeevani platform’ 5 lakh people availed the facility of telecommunication.

- eSanjeevani platform has enabled two types of telemedicine services viz. Doctor-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani) and Patient-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani OPD) Tele-consultations.
- About e-Sanjeevani OPD: It is a Government of India flagship telemedicine platform, developed by the C-DAC, Mohali under the aegis of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of India. It facilitates free online medical consultation to all citizens of India, as well as provides for online prescription of medicines.

Ayush Clinical Case Repository Portal and Ayush Sanjivani App

- The Ministry of Ayush launched the Ayush Clinical Case Repository (ACCR) Portal and the third version of Ayush Sanjivani App in a virtual event.

Key Points

About the Ayush Clinical Case Repository Portal:
- It will serve as a platform to support both Ayush practitioners and the general public.
- This portal aims at aggregating information about clinical outcomes achieved by Ayush practitioners on a large scale.

About the third version of Ayush Sanjivani App:
The third version of Ayush Sanjivani App will facilitate a significant study regarding the efficacy of selected Ayush interventions, including Ayush 64 and Kabasura Kudineer medicines in the management of asymptomatic and mild to moderate COVID 19 patients.

- First version was launched in May 2020.
- It is developed by the Ministry of Ayush and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- Ayush 64 is a poly-herbal formulation developed by the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences. Ayush 64 is useful in the treatment of asymptomatic, mild and moderate COVID-19 infection. Initially the drug was developed for Malaria in the year 1980.
- Kabasura Kudineer is a traditional formulation used by Siddha practitioners. It is useful in the treatment of common respiratory health.

**IBF renamed as Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation**

- In a bid to expand its purview to the OTT segment, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), the apex industry body of broadcasters, has been renamed as the Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation (IBDF).
Important News World

New Global Air Quality Guidelines: WHO
Why in News
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) revised its air quality guidelines for the first time since 2005.

Key Points
- WHO has revised air quality levels for six pollutants that include particulate matter (PM 2.5 and PM10), ozone (O₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and carbon monoxide (CO).
- Air pollution kills at least seven million people prematurely each year.
- Air pollution affects all parts of the body, from the brain to a growing baby in a mother’s womb.
- In 2019, a total of 90 percent of the global population was breathing air considered unhealthy by the 2005 guidelines, according to WHO data.
- Some countries, including India, still have national standards that are lower than those 2005 recommendations. The new guidelines indicate that almost the entirety of India would be considered a polluted zone.

Source: TOI

21st Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO
Why in News
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated virtually in the 21st Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) and through video-message in the Joint SCO-CSTO Outreach Session on Afghanistan.
- It was held on 17 September 2021 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.
- It was chaired by Emomali Rahmon, the President of Tajikistan.

Note: Iran became a full member of SCO during the summit. So far Iran was an observer member of the SCO.

Key Points
Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s address:
- The Prime Minister highlighted the problems caused by growing radicalisation and extremism in the broader SCO region, which runs counter to the history of the region as a bastion of moderate and progressive cultures and values.
- He noted that recent developments in Afghanistan could further exacerbate this trend towards extremism.
- He suggested that SCO could work on an agenda to promote moderation and scientific and rational thought, which would be especially relevant for the youth of the region.
Joint SCO-CSTO Outreach Session on Afghanistan:
- The SCO Summit was followed by an Outreach session on Afghanistan between SCO and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).
- Prime Minister suggested that SCO could develop a code of conduct on 'zero tolerance' towards terrorism in the region, and highlighted the risks of drugs, arms and human trafficking from Afghanistan.

Facts about SCO:
- Formed: 15 June 2001
- Members: China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan and Iran (Newest Member).
- Headquarter: Beijing, China

Source: Indian Express

Climate Action and Finance Mobilization Dialogue
Why in News
- India and the United States (USA) launched the “Climate Action and Finance Mobilization Dialogue (CAFMD)”.
- The CAFMD is one of the two tracks of the India-U.S. Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 partnership launched at the Leaders' Summit on Climate in April 2021, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden.
- Earlier, the revamped U.S.-India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) (first track) was launched.

Key Points
- The dialogue was launched by Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Bhupender Yadav and John Kerry, U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate in New Delhi.
- The dialogue will help to demonstrate how the world can align swift climate action with inclusive and resilient economic development, taking into account national circumstances and sustainable development priorities.

Note:
- The launch was preceded by a bilateral meet where both sides discussed at length a wide range of climate issues relating to COP26, Climate Ambition, Climate Finance, Global Climate Initiatives including International Solar Alliance, Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM4C).
- Currently India's installed power capacity is projected to be 476 GW by 2021-22 and is expected to rise to at least 817 GW by 2030.

Source: The Hindu

6th edition of SCO Peaceful Mission Exercise 2021
Why in News
The **Indian military contingent** comprising of an all arms combined force of 200 personnel to include 38 personnel from the Indian Air Force is participating in the **6th edition of SCO Peaceful Mission Exercise 2021**.

The Exercise is being hosted by **Russia** in the **Orenburg Region of South West Russia** from 13 to 25 September 2021.

**Key Points**

**About SCO Peaceful Mission Exercise:**
- Joint Counter Terrorism Exercise Peaceful Mission is a Multilateral Exercise, which is conducted biennially as part of military diplomacy between Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states.
- The aim is to foster close relations between SCO member states and to enhance abilities of the military leaders to command multi-national military contingents.

**Facts about Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO):**
- **SCO or Shanghai Pact** is a Eurasian political, economic and security alliance.
- **Formed:** 15 June 2001
- **Members:** China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India & Pakistan.
- **Headquarter:** Beijing, China

Source: PIB

**First 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue between India and Australia**

**Why in News**
- Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar of India and Minister for Defence Peter Dutton and Minister for Foreign Affairs Marise Payne of Australia held the first 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue between India and Australia in **New Delhi**.

**Key Points**
- A number of issues were discussed during the meeting, including possibilities of further expanding bilateral strategic and economic cooperation, the common approach of both countries towards the Indo-Pacific region, and the growing importance of the Indian community in Australia as a human-bridge between both sides.

**India-Australia Relations**
- **Geo-Political Relations**
- **Defence Relations:** Bilateral naval exercise (AUSINDEX), EX PITCH BLACK (Australia’s multilateral air combat training exercise), Ex AUSTRA HIND (Bilateral Exercise with Army) and multilateral Malabar Exercise (Quad countries).

**Multilateral Cooperation:**
- Both Australia and India are part of Quad that resolved to work towards ensuring a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific. The other two members of the Quad are the US and Japan.
Further, recently India-Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE) was also organised.

**Note:** India also holds ‘2+2’ Dialogue with Japan and the USA.

**Source:** *Indian Express*

**Mullah Mohammad Hasan Akhund named as acting Prime Minister of Afghanistan**

**Why in News**
- The Taliban named Mullah Mohammad Hasan Akhund as acting Prime Minister of Afghanistan.
- Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar and Molavi Abdul Salam Hanafi have been appointed as the deputy Prime Ministers of Afghanistan.

**Key Points**
- Mullah Mohammad Hasan Akhund has been the head of the Taliban’s Rehbari Shura or Leadership council, for more than 20 years.
- He had also served as foreign minister and deputy prime minister during the Taliban's previous government in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001.

**Source:** *TOI*

**13th BRICS Summit**

**Why in News**
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** chaired the 13th BRICS Summit on 9 September 2021 virtually.
- The **Summit’s theme** was **BRICS@15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus.**
- The Summit saw the participation of all other BRICS Leaders - President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, President Xi Jinping of China, President Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa.

**Key Points:**
- **Prime Minister’s Address:**
  - The Prime Minister expressed his appreciation for the cooperation received from BRICS partners during **India's Chairship this year (2021)**, which allowed the achievement of several new initiatives.
  - These included the first BRICS Digital Health Summit; the first BRICS Ministerial Joint Statement on multilateral reforms; a BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan; an Agreement on cooperation in field of remote-sensing satellites; a virtual BRICS vaccine Research & Development Centre; BRICS Alliance on Green Tourism, etc.
  - Highlighting the leading role that BRICS countries can play in the post-COVID global recovery, Prime Minister called for enhanced BRICS cooperation under the motto of 'Build-back Resiliently, Innovatively, Credibly and Sustainably'.
  - The leaders also adopted the 'New Delhi Declaration'.
About 'New Delhi Declaration': The declaration called for reforms of the principal organs of the United Nations including that of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Note: It is the third time India hosted the BRICS Summit after 2012 and 2016.

Facts about BRICS:
- **Formation:** 2009
- **Countries:** Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

It is an important grouping bringing together the major emerging economies from the world, comprising:
- 41% of world population
- Total combined area of 29.3% of the total land surface of the world
- 24% of global GDP
- 16% of world trade

Note: The above data is based on World Bank data (2019).

Source: PIB

Sri Lanka declares Economic Emergency to contain Inflation

**Why in News**
- The President of Sri Lanka Gotabaya Rajapaksa had declared an economic emergency due to rapidly depleting forex reserves, depreciating currency, and rising food prices in the country.
- The emergency was declared under the Public Security Ordinance to prevent the hoarding of essential items, including sugar and rice.

**Key Points**

**Reasons for Sri Lankan Economic Crisis:**
- Sri Lanka during the COVID-19 pandemic suffered a severe setback in its tourism industry which contributes to over 10 percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and brings in foreign exchange.
- Due to the depletion in the forex reserves, the country had to increase the amount of money to purchase the foreign exchange to import goods. This increase has led to the depreciation of the Sri Lankan rupee by approximately 8 percent so far in 2021.
- Since Sri Lanka heavily relies on imports to fulfill the basic food supplies in the country, the depreciating currency has further led to a rise in the price of food items.
- The ban on the use of chemical fertilizers in farming by the government has led to a reduction in the agricultural production sector.

**Measures Taken Under Economic Emergency Crisis:**
- The Sri Lankan government has ascertained that the rise in food prices is due to speculators hoarding essential supplies.
The government has appointed a former Army General as Commissioner of essential services who is authorized to seize food stocks held by traders and retailers and regulate their prices.

The army has also been given powers to ensure that forex reserves be used only for the purchase of essential goods.

Source: The Hindu

New Development Bank admits UAE, Uruguay and Bangladesh as new members

Why in News

The New Development Bank (NDB) has admitted the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Uruguay and Bangladesh as the first batch of new members as part of its expansion drive.

Key Points

- New Development Bank has initiated its membership expansion and started formal negotiations with prospective members in late 2020.
- After a round of successful negotiations, NDB approved the admission of the UAE, Uruguay and Bangladesh as its first new member countries.
- New members will have in NDB a platform to foster their cooperation in infrastructure and sustainable development.

About New Development Bank (NDB):

- It is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries.
- It is headquartered in Shanghai, China.
- On 15 July 2014, the first day of the 6th BRICS summit held in Fortaleza, Brazil, the BRICS states signed the Agreement on the New Development Bank.

Authorized Capital: NDB has an authorized capital of US$ 100 billion, which is open for subscription by members of the United Nations.

- Since the beginning of its operations, the bank approved about 80 projects in all of its members, totalling a portfolio of USD 30 billion.

Projects: Projects in areas such as transport, water and sanitation, clean energy, digital infrastructure, social infrastructure and urban development are within the scope of the bank.

Source: newsonair

6th Eastern Economic Forum 2021

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently addressed the plenary session of the 6th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) 2021 in Vladivostok, Russia.
- The theme of the forum was “The Opportunities for the Far East in a World under Transformation”.
- It may be recalled that the Prime Minister was the Chief Guest for the 5th EEF in 2019, the first by an Indian Prime Minister.
Key Points

Highlights of Prime Minister’s Address:
• Applauding President Putin’s vision for the development of the Russian Far East, Prime Minister reiterated India’s commitment as part of its "Act East Policy” of being a reliable partner of Russia in this regard.
• He underlined the natural complementarities of India and Russia in the development of the Russian Far East.
• He stressed on the importance of greater economic and commercial engagement between the two sides in line with the ‘Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership’.

About Eastern Economic Forum (EEF):
• EEF was established by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in 2015.
• The Forum business programme includes a number of business dialogues with leading partner countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and with ASEAN.

India-Russia Relations:
• Russia is the largest investment destination for the Indian oil and gas companies and Indian public sector companies have made investments in Russia of about $16 billion, including in the Far East and East Siberia, in oil and gas assets such as Sakhalin-1, Vankor and Taas-Yuryakh.
• Russia is also the largest investor in India's oil and gas sector.
• India is the second largest market for the Russian defence industry.

Source: PIB

India and US sign Project Agreement for Air-Launched Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

Why in News

Key Points
• The Project Agreement (PA) outlines the collaboration between Air Force Research Laboratory, Indian Air Force, and Defence Research and Development Organisation towards design, development, demonstration, testing and evaluation of systems to co-develop an ALUAV Prototype.

Background:
• The PA for ALUAV falls under the Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation (RDT&E) Memorandum of Agreement between Ministry of Defence and US Department of Defence, which was first signed in January 2006 and renewed in January 2015.

Significance:
• The agreement is a significant step towards deepening defence technology collaboration between the two nations through co-development of defence equipment.

Aim of the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI):
• The main aim of DTTI is to bring sustained leadership focus to promote collaborative technology exchange and create opportunities for co-production and co-development of future technologies for Indian and US military forces.
• Under DTTI, Joint Working Groups on land, naval, air, and aircraft carrier technologies have been established to focus on mutually agreed projects in respective domains.

Source: The Hindu

UNSC adopts resolution on Afghanistan
Why in News
• The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), under India's Presidency, adopted a strong resolution 2593 (2021) on Afghanistan.

Key Points
• The resolution, sponsored by the United Kingdom, France and United States, was adopted with 13 members, including India.
• But permanent and veto-wielding members Russia and China abstained.
• This was the first resolution adopted by the powerful 15-nation Council on the situation in Afghanistan following the takeover of Kabul by the Taliban and came on the penultimate day of India's Presidency of the Security Council for the month of August, 2021.
• The resolution- The territory of Afghanistan is not to be used to threaten any country or shelter terrorists, and that the international community expects the Taliban to adhere to the commitments they made regarding the safe and orderly departure of Afghans and all foreign nationals from the country.

India’s steps:
• India has directed a high-level group composed of EAM (External Affairs Minister) S. Jaishankar, NSA (National Security Adviser) Ajit Doval and Other Senior officials to monitor the ground situation in Afghanistan with a focus on the immediate priorities of India.

Source: Indian Express

8th Meeting of Agricultural Experts of BIMSTEC Countries
Why in News
• India hosted the 8th Meeting of Agriculture Experts of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Countries.

Key Points
Objective: To enhance the engagement and deepen the cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors amongst the BIMSTEC Member States by encouraging the exchange of knowledge, germplasm, students and experts.

About Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC):

- The BIMSTEC provides a unique link between South and South-East Asia with 5 countries - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka from South Asia and 2 countries - Myanmar and Thailand from South-East Asia.
- The BIMSTEC was founded in 1997 with an ambition to pursue mutual trade, connectivity and cultural, technical and economic development in the region.
- Initially, six sectors- trade, technology, energy, transport, tourism and fisheries were included for sectoral cooperation which was later expanded to 14 areas of cooperation.
- Agriculture is one of the 14 sectors. As about 1.7 billion+ people i.e., 22 percent of the global population live in BIMSTEC countries, agriculture & allied activities are central to the economic and social development of the region.

Source: PIB

SCO Defence Ministers' meeting 2021 in Tajikistan

Why in News

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Defence Ministers’ meeting 2021 took place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.
- Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh addressed the meeting.

Facts about Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO):

- SCO or Shanghai Pact is a Eurasian political, economic and security alliance.
- Formed: 15 June 2001
- Members: China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India & Pakistan.
- Headquarter: Beijing, China
- India became a full member of the SCO in 2017. Prior to that, India had an observer status, which was granted to it in 2005.

US, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan to form QUAD group

Why in News

- According to the Biden administration, the United States, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan, have agreed in principle to establish a new quadrilateral diplomatic platform focused on enhancing regional connectivity.

7th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

Why in the News?

- Recently, the 7th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), a biennial event, was hosted by the French Navy at La Reunion.

Key Points
The Symposium held panel discussions themed on the three IONS working Groups viz., Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Maritime Security and Information Sharing & Interoperability. The Naval Maritime Foundation (NMF) also participated in the Panel Discussion on HADR.

About Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS):
- It is a series of biennial meetings between the littoral states of the Indian Ocean region.
- It provides a forum to increase maritime security cooperation, discuss regional maritime issues, and promote friendly relationships among the member states.

China declared malaria-free by WHO

Why in the News?
- China was certified as malaria-free by the World Health Organization (WHO), following a 70-year effort to eradicate the mosquito-borne disease.
- China is the first country in the Western Pacific region to be declared malaria-free in more than 30 years, following Australia in 1981, Singapore in 1982 and Brunei in 1987.

Key Points
- China has now maintained zero indigenous malaria cases for four consecutive years, down from an estimated 30 million cases and 300,000 deaths per year in the 1940s.

Global Status:
- China becomes the 40th territory certified malaria-free by the WHO.
- The last countries to gain the status were El Salvador (2021), Algeria and Argentina (2019), and Paraguay and Uzbekistan (2018).

About Malaria:
- Malaria is a life-threatening disease caused by parasites transmitted to people through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes.
- According to the WHO’s World Malaria Report 2020, there were an estimated 229 million malaria cases worldwide in 2019. The estimated number of malaria deaths stood at 409000 in 2019.
- Note: The WHO has also identified 25 countries with the potential to eradicate malaria by 2025 under its ‘E-2025 Initiative’.

Initiatives in India:
- The National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination, 2017-22
- The High Burden to High Impact initiative in four states (West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh)
- Distribution of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets to high burden areas
- Malaria Elimination Research Alliance-India (MERA-India) by the ICMR

Bhutan’s Tax Inspectors Without Borders programme

Why in the News?
- Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB), a joint initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), launched its programme in Bhutan.
- India was chosen as the Partner Jurisdiction and has provided the Tax Expert for this programme.
Forum for Decarbonizing Transport

Why in News

- NITI Aayog and World Resources Institute (WRI), India, jointly launched the ‘Forum for Decarbonizing Transport’ in India.
- The forum is a part of the NDC-Transport Initiative for Asia (NDC-TIA) project.

Source: PIB

UNITE AWARE Platform

Why in News

- India in collaboration with the United Nations (UN) launched UNITE AWARE - a technology platform to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers who are operating in complex and risky environments across the world.
- The launch of the UNITE AWARE came as India assumed the Presidency of the 15-nation UN Security Council for the month of August.

Source: The Hindu

India to host second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC)

Why in News

- India will host the second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) in October 2022, at Hyderabad.
- The theme for 2022 is ‘Towards Geo-enabling the Global Village.’

Key Points

About UNWGIC:

- The United Nation Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) organizes the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) every 4 years.
- Its objective is to enhance international collaboration among the Member States and relevant stakeholders in Geospatial information management and capacities.
- The first UNWGIC was organized by China in October 2018.

India expresses desire to expand the horizon of New Development Bank (NDB) for strengthening social infrastructure

Why in News

- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal recently chaired the “5th meeting of BRICS Industry Ministers” under the Chairship of India.
- During the meeting, India expressed the desire to expand the horizon of New Development Bank (NDB) for strengthening social infrastructure besides promotion of the Industrial sector.
- Social infrastructure includes especially for funding service delivery in the education and health sector.

Key Points

About New Development Bank (NDB):

- NDB is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).
- The bank is headquartered in Shanghai, China.
- On 15 July 2014, the first day of the 6th BRICS summit held in Fortaleza, Brazil, the BRICS states signed the Agreement on the New Development Bank.

Major Projects funded by NDB in India:
Major infrastructure projects in India, including the Mumbai Metro rail, Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System and many Renewable Energy projects.

The NDB has so far approved 14 Indian projects for an amount of nearly USD 4.2 billion.

In 2020, 1 billion USD loan pact with NDB to boost rural employment and infrastructure

Source: PIB

11th Annual Meeting of the Forum of the Election Management Bodies of SouthAsia (FEMBoSA) for 2021

Why in News

Chief Election Commissioner of India and current Chairman, FEMBoSA Sushil Chandra inaugurated the 11th Annual meeting of the Forum of the Election Management Bodies of SouthAsia (FEMBoSA) for the year 2021.

The meeting in virtual mode was hosted by the Election Commission of Bhutan.

Key Points

About the Meeting:

The theme of the meeting was ‘Use of Technology in Elections’.

Election Commission of India (ECI) handed over the Chairmanship of FEMBoSA to the Election Commission of Bhutan for 2021-22.

A Thimphu Resolution was unanimously adopted by the FEMBoSA members to extend the tenure of chairmanship to two years during the current pandemic situation.

About Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA):

It was established at the 3rd Conference of Heads of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of SAARC Countries in 2012.

It has 8 Member Election Management Bodies from Afghanistan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

About ECI (Election Commission of India):

It is a permanent and independent body established by the Constitution of India directly to ensure free and fair elections in the country.

Formed: 25 January 1950 (Later celebrated as National Voters Day)

Headquarters: New Delhi

Commission executives:
Sushil Chandra, Chief Election Commissioner of India,
Rajeev Kumar, Election Commissioner of India,
Anup Chandra Pandey, Election Commissioner of India

Source: PIB

India assumes UNSC presidency for August 2021

Why in News

India assumed the presidency of the UNSC (United Nations Security Council) for the month of August 2021.

This is the India’s first presidency during its 2021-22 tenure as a non-permanent member of the UNSC.

India began its 2 year tenure as a non-permanent member of the UNSC on January 1, 2021.

It is India’s 8th term as a non-permanent member of the UNSC.

Key Points

About India’s UNSC presidency:

India is set to organise key events in three major areas of maritime security, counter-terrorism and peacekeeping.
India will decide the United Nations agenda for the month and coordinate important meetings on a range of issues.

UNSC will also have on its agenda several important meetings including Somalia, Yemen, Syria, Iraq and the Middle East.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the first Indian PM to preside over a meeting of the UNSC.

The last time an Indian PM was engaged in this effort was the then PM PV Narasimha Rao in 1992 when he attended a UNSC meeting.

Facts about UNSC (United Nations Security Council):
- **Formation:** 24 October 1945
- **Membership:** 15 countries
- **Permanent members:** 5 (United States, China, France, Russia and United Kingdom)
- **Non-permanent members:** 10 including India

Source: Indian Express

Russia’s Nauka Module

Why in News
- Russia’s uncrewed **Nauka laboratory module** was launched to the International Space Station (ISS).
- The Nauka module was launched using a Proton rocket from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

Key Points

About Russia’s new Nauka module:
- Nauka means “science” in Russian. It is the biggest space laboratory.
- Russia detached Pirs from the ISS. In its place, Russia’s space agency Roscosmos attached the significantly larger module Nauka, which will serve as the country’s main research facility on the space station.

Significance:
- It will serve as a new science facility, docking port, and spacewalk airlock for future operations.

About International Space Station (ISS):
- ISS is a modular space station (habitable artificial satellite) in low Earth orbit.
- It is a multinational collaborative project involving five participating space agencies: NASA (United States), JAXA (Japan), Roscosmos (Russia), ESA (Europe) and CSA (Canada).

Note: Recently, China has launched an unmanned module ‘Tianhe’ of its permanent space station that it plans to complete by the end of 2022.

Source: Indian Express

Indian Diplomat Dr Neena Malhotra appointed as next Ambassador to Republic of San Marino

- Dr Neena Malhotra, a 1992-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, has been concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of San Marino. Presently, she is serving as the Ambassador of India to the Republic of Italy.

Indian Diplomat Sushil Kumar Singhal appointed as next Ambassador to Solomon Islands

- Sushil Kumar Singhal, a 2000-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, has been concurrently accredited as the next High Commissioner of India to the Solomon Islands. He is presently serving as the High Commissioner of India to the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.
6th BRICS Parliamentary Forum

- The 6th BRICS Parliamentary Forum under the Russian Chairmanship (Chairman- Vyachaslav Volodin) was held on 27 October. Five members of BRICS- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa participate in this forum.
- The theme was BRICS partnership in the interest of the global stability, general safety and innovative growth: parliamentary dimension.
- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that BRICS countries need to intensify their collective fight against terrorism which poses the biggest threat to humankind.
- Note: 12th BRICS Summit is scheduled to be held on 17th November 2020 under the chairmanship of Russia.

Luis Arce declared as Bolivia's president-elect

- Luis Arce, the candidate for the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) party, has won the presidential elections.
- About Bolivia:
  - Capitals: La Paz, Sucre
  - Currency: Boliviano
  - Continent: South America

The Principality of Andorra becomes the 190th member state of the IMF

- The Principality of Andorra became the 190th member state of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- About Andorra: Located between France and Spain, this principality has only 78,000 inhabitants. Its economy depends on trade and tourism. Not being a member of the European Union, this small state did not benefit from the community recovery plan.
  - Capital: Andorra la Vella
  - Currency: Euro
  - Continent: Europe

Indian-origin Wavel Ramkalawan is elected Seychelles President

- Ramkalawan, a former Anglican priest, defeated President Danny Faure after three decades of runs for the presidency of the East African nation. Wavel Ramkalawan, whose grandfather came from Gopalganj, Bihar.
- About Seychelles
  - Capital: Victoria
  - Currency: Seychellois rupee
  - Continent: Africa

Note:
India and Seychelles have been conducting joint military exercise 'Lamitye' since 2001 with the aim of enhancing military cooperation and interoperability between the armies of the two countries.

Saad al-Hariri named as Lebanon's new prime minister

Lebanon's President Michel Aoun designated Sunni Muslim politician Saad al-Hariri as Prime Minister to form a new government.

- This will be Hariri's third stretch as prime minister.
- About Lebanon: Lebanon, officially known as the Lebanese Republic, is a country in the Levant region of Western Asia.
  - Capital: Beirut
  - Currency: Lebanese pound
  - President: Michel Aoun

Feni bridge connecting India and Bangladesh

- Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari announced that 1.8 kilometre long Feni bridge connecting Sabrum in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh will be completed by December this year.
- This bridge will be built on Feni River. The Feni bridge being built at the cost of Rs. 129 crore will ease the transportation of goods from Chattogram and Kolkata ports. An integrated check post is also proposed to be built near Sabrum.
- Note: Feni River flows in southeast Bangladesh and Indian state of Tripura.

India gets Chairmanship of ILO Governing Body after a gap of 35 years

- Labor and Employment Secretary, Apurva Chandra, has been elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Body of the ILO for the period October 2020 - June 2021.
- Mr. Chandra belongs to the 1988 batch of the Indian Administrative Service, Maharashtra Cadre.

Singapore in the world first for facial verification

- Singapore will be the first country in the world to use facial verification in its national identity scheme.
- Note: London-based biometric and facial authentication company, iProov, provides this technology. The technology will be integrated with the country's digital identity scheme SingPass and allows access to government services.

Vishal V. Sharma has been appointed as India's next permanent representative to UNESCO

- Facts about UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
- Formation: 1945
- Headquarters: Paris, France
- Head-Director General: Audrey Azoulay
IMF’s World Economic Outlook Report, October 2020

- International Monetary Fund predicted a deep global recession this year and the world growth to be -4.4 percent, asserting that the global economic crisis is far from over mainly due to the impact of the corona virus pandemic.
- **India’s economy** is projected to contract by -10.3% in FY21 which is 5.8% lower than the June projections. The economy is expected to recover to 8.8% in FY22. In June 2020, IMF had projected the Indian economy to contract by 4.5% in FY21.
- **Note: International Monetary Fund** is an organization to promote global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty. Created in 1945, the IMF is governed by and accountable to the 189 countries that make up its near-global membership. India joined on December 27, 1945.

India Gets Re-elected As President of International Solar Alliance

During a virtual meeting of the International Solar Alliance, India was re-elected as the President of the organization for a term of two years with France as the Co-President.

*Note: International Solar Alliance (ISA) is an association of 121 countries initiated by India, most of them being sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. It aims to work for efficient consumption of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.*

On 17th November 12th BRICS Summit to be held virtually.

- **The theme of this summit is “BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth”**.

Scotland becomes first nation to make sanitary pads, tampons free

- Scotland became the first country to make sanitary products free.
- It is the first nation in the world to take a step against period poverty, which refers to the prevalent phenomena of being unable to afford products such as pads or tampons to manage menstrual bleeding.

APEC Summit 2020

- APEC 2020 (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation)’s Economic Leaders meetings were held under the chairmanship of Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin.
- This is Malaysia's second time hosting an APEC meeting, having hosted one in 1998.
- After the virtual summit held on 20 November 2020, the APEC leaders issued the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 and Kuala Lumpur Declaration.
- The theme of the APEC Malaysia 2020 was "Optimising Human Potential Towards a Resilient Future of Shared Prosperity: Pivot. Prioritise. Progress".
About Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC): The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation is an inter-governmental forum for 21 member economies in the Pacific Rim that promotes free trade throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

- **Headquarters:** Singapore
- **Founded:** November 1989

India to host G20 Summit in 2023

- India is set to host the G20 summit in 2023, instead of 2022 — the 75th year of Independence.
- Indonesia will assume the G20 presidency in 2022 after a swap with India.
- Indonesia would also chair the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2023.
- **Note:** Now the G20 Summit is set to be hosted by Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.

15th G20 Summit

- The theme of the summit was "**Realizing Opportunities of 21st Century for All**" which has assumed greater importance in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

World’s Best Cities: Only one Indian city features in the ranking

- India has only one city in the list. Delhi is ranked 62 on the list.

PMs of India and Bhutan launched RuPay Card phase-2 in Bhutan

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with his Bhutanese counterpart Lotay Tshering virtually launched RuPay card Phase-II on 20th November.
- The phase-2 will now allow Bhutanese cardholders to access RuPay network in India.

India – Luxembourg Virtual Summit 2020

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a Bilateral Summit with Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister of Luxembourg on November 19, 2020.
- This is the first stand-alone summit between India and Luxembourg in the past two decades.

World Economic Forum selects 4 Indian cities to pioneer roadmap for smart cities

- The World Economic Forum has selected 36 cities out of 22 countries and 6 continents for pioneering a new global policy roadmap for the smart cities that are developed by the G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance.
- The four Indian cities are Indore, Faridabad, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad.
Note: The G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance- It was established in June 2019 during the G20 Summit in Osaka, Japan.

12th BRICS summit 2020

- The 12th BRICS summit, hosted by Russian President Vladimir Putin, was also attended by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa on Nov 17, 2020.
- The theme was **BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth.**
- Note: India will host the 13th BRICS Summit next year. Since its inception, it would be the third BRICS Presidency for India, after 2012 and 2016.

15th East Asia Summit

- External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar represented India at the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) on 14 November 2020.
- The Summit was chaired by the Prime Minister of Vietnam H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc in his capacity as ASEAN Chair. All the eighteen EAS countries participated in the virtual Summit.

Armenia, Azerbaijan sign Russia brokered peace deal

- Armenia and Azerbaijan have signed an agreement to end military conflict over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.
- **Reason for Dispute: Nagorno-Karabakh:** the border region claimed by both Armenia and Azerbaijan

Aung San Suu Kyi’s Democratic Party wins majority in Myanmar Election

- Aung San Suu Kyi’s political party National League for Democracy (NLD) has secured a victorious majority in the 2020 Myanmar election, securing enough seats to form the next government.
- The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), the military-backed party was, Suu Kyi’s main opposition party.
- **Note:** With this win in Myanmar’s second only general election since 50 years of oppressive military rule, NLD is set to serve its second term in Parliament. Nobel Laureate Suu Kyi has gained another five years as State Counsellor of Myanmar.

20th Summit of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) Council of Heads of State held on November 10, 2020

- The Meeting was chaired by the President of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir Putin.
- SCO summit was attended by the Heads of States of all 8 SCO Member States- Russia, India, China, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. The Heads of States of 4
observer states of SCO- Iran, Afghanistan, Mongolia and Belarus are also participated in the
summit.

- The summit focused on regional peace, security and prosperity, against terrorism, smuggling of
illegal weapons, drugs and money-laundering.
- **Note:**
  - India had become a full member of the SCO in 2017. Prior to that, India had an observer
    status, which was granted to it in 2005.

**Indian diplomat Vidisha Maitra elected to United Nations Advisory Committee**

- In a significant victory for India at the United Nations, Indian diplomat Vidisha Maitra was elected
to the UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), a
subsidiary organ of the General Assembly.
- The victory comes as India gets ready to sit in the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member
for a two-year term beginning January 2021.

**Indian Army Chief General M M Naravane conferred honorary rank of General of Nepali Army by
President of Nepal, Bidya Devi Bhandari**

- He was honoured at a special ceremony at the President's official residence 'Shital Niwas' in
Kathmandu. He was also presented with a sword and scroll during the function.

**John Magufuli won a second term as Tanzanian President**

- **Facts about Tanzania**
  - Country in East Africa
  - **Capital:** Dodoma
  - **Currency:** Tanzanian shilling

**Mission Sagar-II**

- Indian government is providing assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries to overcome natural
calamities and COVID-19 pandemic and towards the same INS (Indian Naval Ship) Airavat is
carrying a consignment of 100 Tonnes of food aid for the people of Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti
and Eritrea.
- **Note:** ‘Mission Sagar-I’ undertaken in May-June 2020, wherein India provided food and
medicines to Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros.
- **Mission Sagar** is in line with the Prime Minister’s vision of Security and Growth for All in the
Region ‘SAGAR’ and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her maritime
neighbours and further strengthens the existing bond.

**Duarte Pacheco of Portugal has been elected the new President of IPU (Inter Parliamentary Union)
for the period 2020-2023**

- **Note:**
206th Session of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union is being held from November 1 to 4, 2020.

About The Inter-Parliamentary Union: It is an international organization of national parliaments. Its purpose is to promote democratic governance, accountability, and cooperation among its members.

- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- President: Gabriela Cuevas Barron
- Founded: 1889

Dilip Rath elected to International Dairy Federation board (IDF)

- National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) Chairman Dilip Rath has been elected to the board of global dairy body International Dairy Federation.
- Rath has been associated with IDF for the last 10 years as Member Secretary of Indian National Committee and as a member of the Standing Committee on Dairy Policy and Economics.
- Note: International Dairy Federation (IDF) is an international non-governmental, non-profit association having members from national committees constituted by dairy organisations in each country.

Singapore's 'Hawker' Culture gets UNESCO recognition

- The Hawker Culture in Singapore, a popular Singaporean style of street dining and culinary practices in a multicultural urban environment has been recognized by UNESCO.
- The Hawker culture of Street food in Singapore has been listed on the UN’s prestigious 'Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'.

UNESCO to launch international prize in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

- UNESCO has decided to launch an international prize in the field of ‘creative economy’ in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Starting November 2021, the dollar 50 thousand award will be given away once in two years for global economic initiatives of the youth.
- Sheikh Mujibur was a Bangladeshi politician. He is called the “Father of the Nation”. He served as the first President of Bangladesh and later as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh.
- Note: UNESCO has declared 2021 as ‘International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development’.
- Currently, there are 23 UNESCO International Awards in the name of international celebrities and organisations.

Mt Everest is now 86 cms taller

- China and Nepal jointly announced that the new height of Mt Everest, the world's highest peak, is 8,848.86 meters.
- The new height is 86 cms more than the previous measurement. According to the measurement done in 1954 by Survey of India, the height of Mount Everest is 8,848 metres.

Japan to join Five Eyes alliance

- Note: The Five Eyes is an alliance of five major nations including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.
The US and the UK formed a secret treaty known as the 'BRUSA Agreement' in May 1943 for cooperation in intelligence sharing.

This agreement was later formalized as the 'UKUSA Agreement' in 1946. The Five Eyes was an outcome of the UKUSA Agreement.

**US Congress passes "Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act" for Pakistani women**
- The US Congress has passed the "Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act" which will expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women to receive higher education under a merit and needs-based programme.
- Passed by the House of Representatives in March 2020, the bill was passed by the United States Senate by a voice vote on January 1.
- **Note:** On October 10, 2014, Malala shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Indian children's rights activist Kailash Satyarthi for her "struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education".

**Japan to launch the first wood-based satellite by 2023**
- Japan’s Sumitomo Forestry firm and Kyoto University goals to launch the world’s first wood-based space satellite to fight the drawback of space junk.
- **Note:** According to the European Space Agency (ESA) statistical model, there are greater than 130 million items of anthropogenic space debris due to human actions. The debris can journey at a pace of greater than 22,300 mph and may affect different satellites.

**India to chair 3 important committees of United Nations Security Council (UNSC)**
- India began its eighth term as a non-permanent member of the UNSC on January 4, 2021.
- The 3 key subsidiary bodies of UNSC are Taliban Sanctions Committee (also called the 1988 Sanctions Committee), Counter Terrorism Committee (for 2022) and Libya Sanctions Committee.

**Uganda’s President Museveni wins sixth term**
- Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has scored a decisive election victory to win a sixth term.
- The 76-year-old Museveni has been in power since 1986 and is one of Africa’s longest-serving leaders.
- **Facts about Uganda:** Country in East Africa
  - Capital: Kampala
  - Currency: Ugandan shilling

**Russia withdraws from Open Skies Treaty**
- Russia announced that it was leaving the Open Skies Treaty (OST), an accord between over 30 countries that allows participants to fly unarmed reconnaissance flights over any part of their fellow member states.
- In November 2020, the United States left the OST.
- **Facts about Open Skies Treaty:** It establishes a program of unarmed aerial surveillance flights over the entire territory of its participants. It entered into force on January 1, 2002.

**First-ever treaty to ban nuclear weapons enters into force**
- The first-ever treaty to ban nuclear weapons (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons-TPNW) entered into force, hailed as a historic step to rid the world of its deadliest weapons but strongly opposed by the world's nuclear-armed nations.
- When the treaty was approved by the U.N. General Assembly in July 2017, more than 120 approved it. But none of the nine countries known or believed to possess nuclear weapons - the
United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel - supported it and neither did the 30-nation NATO alliance.

- The treaty received its 50th ratification on 24 October 2020 and came into effect from 22 January 2021.

**Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa has won a second term as Portugal’s president**
- The 72-year-old former leader of the Social Democratic Party won 61 percent of the vote.
- **Facts about Portugal:** Portugal is a southern European country on the Iberian Peninsula, bordering Spain.
- **Capital:** Lisbon
- **Currency:** Euro

**UN report on Ageing Dams**
- Ageing Dams in India, US, other nations pose growing threat according to UN report.
- The report, titled 'Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk' and compiled by United Nations University's Canadian-based Institute for Water, Environment and Health, says most of the 58,700 large dams worldwide were constructed between 1930 and 1970 with a design life of 50 to 100 years.
- In India, there are over 1,115 large dams that will be roughly 50 years old in 2025, more than 4,250 large dams in the country will be over 50 years old in 2050 and 64 large dams will be more than 150 years old in 2050.
- The report said that approximately 3.5 million people are at risk if India's Mullaperiyar dam in Kerala, built over 100 years ago, "were to fail".
- **Note:** The report said that 32,716 large dams (55% of the world's total) are found in just four Asian countries: China, India, Japan, and South Korea - a majority of which will reach the 50-year threshold relatively soon.

**Bangladesh Supreme Court launches Artificial Intelligence (AI) based translation software ‘Amar Vasha’**
- The software will translate orders and judgements of the Supreme Court from English to Bangla.
- **Note:** The Software has been developed with ‘EkStep’ foundation of India. It is based on their ‘Anuvaad’ translation software used in India to translate from English to Indian languages including Bangla.
- Anuvaad was deployed by the Supreme Court of India as SUVAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software) from November 2019.

**External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar launches the BRICS-2021 website**
- The website will provide comprehensive information about events and activities during the BRICS under the Chairship of India.
- He also launched the upgraded facilities at Sushma Swaraj Bhavan that will serve as the Secretariat for BRICS Summit.
- **Note:** The 13th BRICS Summit will be held under India’s Chairship in 2021, and it will be the third time India will host the BRICS Summit after 2012 and 2016.
- The theme for India’s Chairship for 2021 would be ‘BRICS @ 15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus’.
- **Facts about BRICS:**
  - **Formation:** 2009
  - **Countries:** Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
- The report titled “Traffic Crash Injuries and Disabilities: The Burden on Indian Society”, was released by Union transport minister Nitin Gadkari.
- The report highlights the disproportionate impact of a road crash on poor households that pushes them into a vicious cycle of poverty and debt.

Indian-origin Preeti Sinha to lead United Nations Capital Development Fund
- The United Nations Capital Development Fund has appointed Indian-origin investment and development banker Preeti Sinha as its Executive Secretary.
- Sinha succeeds Judith Karl, who retired in February.
- About The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF): It makes public and private finance work for the poor in the world's 47 least developed countries.
  - Headquarters: New York, United States
  - Founded: 1966
  - Parent organizations: United Nations General Assembly, United Nations Economic and Social Council

US extends New START Nuclear Arms Control Treaty with Russia for five years
- United States has extended the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) nuclear arms control treaty with Russia for five years.
- The treaty had been set to lapse on 5 February, as the Trump administration had refused to approve the extension. Now the pact has been extended to 5th February 2026.

14th International Children’s Film festival concludes in Bangladesh (ICFFB)
- 179 films from 37 countries were shown at various venues during the 7-day long festival organised by the Children’s Film Society (CFS) of Bangladesh.
- Apart from Bangladesh, films from India, Armenia, US, UK, Ireland, Japan and China among others were shown in the course of the festival.
- Dutch Film Jackie and Oopjen was awarded the Best International Feature Film Award. The Best Director award went to Ani Oganesyan for his film Stork’s Nest from Armenia.

India, Afghanistan sign MoU to build Shahtoot Dam in Kabul
- External affairs minister S Jaishankar and his Afghan counterpart Haneef Atmar signed the memorandum of understanding (MoU) for building Lalandar or Shatoot dam, which will meet the drinking water needs of two million people in Kabul, provide irrigation water to nearby areas and rejuvenate irrigation and drainage networks.
- Note: Shahtoot dam is the second major dam being built by India in Afghanistan, after the Friendship Dam or Salma dam, inaugurated by Modi and Ghani in June 2016.
- As a part of our Development Cooperation with Afghanistan, India has completed more than 400 projects covering all 34 provinces of Afghanistan.

The UAE’s Hope Probe has successfully entered orbit around Mars
- The United Arab Emirates' first mission to Mars arrived at the red planet and successfully entered orbit on its first attempt.
- The Emirates Mars Mission, known as the Hope Probe, marked the UAE as only the fifth country (after US, the Soviet Union, Europe and India) in history to reach the red planet and the Arab nation's first interplanetary mission.
- Facts about the United Arab Emirates (UAE):
  - Capital: Abu Dhabi
Currency: United Arab Emirates dirham  
President: Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan

Nepal decides to award hydropower project to India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam  
- Nepal has decided to award the contract for construction of 679 megawatt Lower Arun Hydropower Project to India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN).  
- This was decided at a meeting of the Investment Board Nepal (IBN), chaired by Prime Minister of Nepal.  
- The project was awarded to the SJVN under the Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) delivery method.  

Facts about Nepal:  
- Capital: Kathmandu  
- President: Bidya Devi Bhandari  
- Prime minister: K. P. Sharma Oli  
- Currency: Nepalese Rupee

Oxford names "Aatmanirbharta" as Hindi word of the year 2020  
- The word was chosen by an advisory panel of language experts Kritika Agrawal, Poonam Nigam Sahay and Imogen Foxell.  
- Note: Previous Hindi words of the year are Aadhaar (2017), Nari Shakti (2018) and Samvidhaan (2019).

World's first ship tunnel to be constructed in Norway  
- The world's first ship tunnel ‘Stad Ship Tunnel’ is to be constructed in Norway.  
- As per Norwegian Coastal Administration, the construction on the engineering project is expected to begin in 2022 and get completed by 2025-26.  
- The ship tunnel is planned to run underneath the mountains in Norway's Stadhavet peninsula.  
- It is expected to measure 1,700 metres long, 37 metres high and 26.5 metres wide after completion.

India takes part in 2nd Sherpas meeting of G7, guest countries  
- The 2nd meeting of the Sherpas of G7 and guest countries was held on March 30, 2021.  
- India’s representative (Sherpa) Suresh Prabhu attended the meeting.  
- The priority issues under the UK’s G7 Presidency agenda were discussed, including preparations for the COP26 Summit and global health cooperation.  
- Note: The United Kingdom has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attend the G7 Summit as a guest, along with Australia, South Korea and South Africa.  
- The G7 Summit is to be held on June 11-13, 2021.  

Facts about G7:  
- Founded: 1975  
- Members: United Kingdom, United States, Japan, France, Germany, Canada, Italy

3rd phase of Indian Beamline Project for materials research in Japan initiated  
- The 3rd phase of the Indian Beamline Project, a facility for materials research set up under India-Japan Scientific and Technological Cooperation, was initiated on March 23, 2021, with special focus on industrial application research.  
- The phase would increase the number of young researchers from India to be trained in advanced X-ray techniques of material research.
About Indian Beamline: The Indian Beamline has been constructed and maintained by Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics (SINP), Kolkata and Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bangalore; in Japanese synchrotron light source Photon Factory (PF) of High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK), with support from Nano Mission, Department of Science and Technology.

UNDP launches "Sahi Disha" campaign in rural India
- The UNDP has launched "Sahi Disha" campaign to celebrate women's livelihoods and entrepreneurship in rural India.
- The Disha initiative, a five-year collaboration between UNDP and the IKEA Foundation, enabled one million women through skilling and counselling services to access job and livelihood opportunities across five states - Delhi NCR, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Telangana.
- Facts about UNDP (United Nations Development Programme):
  - **Headquarters:** New York, United States
  - **Founded:** 22 November 1965
  - **Parent organization:** United Nations General Assembly

Italy joins International Solar Alliance under the amended ISA Framework Agreement
- The amendments to the Framework Agreement of the ISA entered into force, opening its Membership to all Member States of the UN.
- The Framework Agreement was signed by Italy's Ambassador, Vincenzo De Luca.
- About International Solar Alliance (ISA): The International Solar Alliance was launched jointly by the Indian Prime Minister and the French President during the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, or COP21, in Paris.
  - **Headquarters:** Gurugram, Haryana, India
  - **Founded:** 30 November 2015

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates ‘Maitri Setu’ between India and Bangladesh
- ‘Maitri Setu’, 1.9 kilometres long, joining Sabroom in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh, has been built over the Feni River which flows between the Indian boundary in Tripura and Bangladesh.
- Due to this bridge over Feni River, Agartala will become the nearest city to an international sea port in India.
- Note: Two ships of Indian navy (INS Kulish and INS Sumedha) arrived at the port city of Mongla in Bangladesh to commemorate the ongoing ‘Swarnim Vijay Varsh’.

France launches first military exercises in space
- France launched its first military exercise in space to evaluate its ability to defend its satellites and other defense equipment from an attack.
- The exercise, codenamed "AsterX" in memory of the first French satellite from 1965, will be based on 18 simulated events in an operations room.
- Note: The French Space Forces Command was created in 2019 and is set to have 500 personnel by 2025.

Israel officially receives first ever UAE ambassador
Israel formally received the first-ever ambassador from the UAE (United Arab Emirates), following last year's historic agreement between the countries to normalise ties.

The UAE's first ambassador to Israel, Mohamed Al Khajah delivered his credentials to Israeli President Reuven Rivlin at a ceremony in Jerusalem.

The UAE was the first country to agree to establish full diplomatic relations with the Jewish state under the Abraham Accords, a pact brokered by former US president Donald Trump.

UN General Assembly adopts India's resolution to declare 2023 as 'International Year of Millets'

The resolution titled 'International Year of Millets 2023' was initiated by India with Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia and Senegal and was co-sponsored by over 70 nations.

The primary objective of the proposal is to increase awareness and direct policy action for nutritional and health benefits for consumption of millet and their suitability for farming in adverse and changing climatic conditions.

Note: In April 2016, the UN General Assembly had proclaimed the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025, recognizing the need to eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition worldwide.

India hosts first meeting of BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors

This was the first meeting of the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors under India Chairship on April 6, 2021.

The meeting was jointly chaired by Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman and Governor, Reserve Bank of India, Shri. Shaktikanta Das.

The Finance Minister talked about thematic priorities for New Development Bank for discussion during 2021 and the issues of membership expansion.

Note: The theme of BRICS this year is - "BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus".

The 13th BRICS Summit will be held under India’s Chairship in 2021, and it will be the third time India will host the BRICS Summit after 2012 and 2016.

Facts about BRICS:

Formation: 2009
Countries: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

Russia registers World's first COVID-19 vaccine ‘Carnivac-Cov’ for animals

According to agricultural regulator Rosselkhoznadzor, Russia has registered the world's first vaccine for animals ‘Carnivac-Cov’ against COVID-19, after tests showed it generated antibodies against the virus in dogs, cats, foxes and mink.

Note: Russia already has three coronavirus vaccines for humans: Sputnik V, EpiVacCorona and CoviVac.

Raisina Dialogue-2021

The 6th edition of the prestigious Raisina Dialogue was jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation.

It is being held from 13 to 16 April 2021.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a video address at the Inaugural Session of the Raisina Dialogue in virtual format, along with Chief Guests H.E. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda and H.E. Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of Denmark.

The theme for the 2021 Edition is "#ViralWorld: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control".

Italy launches first ever mega food park & food processing unit in India

- The pilot project “The Mega Food Park” was launched with the signing of a Letter of Intent between the ICE Office in Mumbai and Fanidhar Mega Food Park, in Gujarat.
- Ambassador of Italy to India, Vincenzo de Luca, and the Ambassador of India to Italy, Neena Malothra were part of the launch.
- The project aims to create synergy between agriculture and industry of the two countries and focuses on the research and development of new and more efficient technologies in the sector.
- Note: Mega Food Park is a scheme of the Ministry of Food Processing, Government of India with the aim of establishing a "direct linkage from farm to processing and then to consumer markets" through a network of collection centres and primary processing centres. A sanction of 42 food parks has been planned.

India and Germany sign agreement on ‘Cities combating plastic entering the marine environment’

- This project is envisaged under the contours of the Joint Declaration of Intent regarding cooperation in the field of ‘Prevention of Marine Litter’ signed between Republic of India and Federal Republic of Germany in 2019.

India elected to 3 bodies of UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

- India has been elected by acclamation to three bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2022.
  i. Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)
  ii. Executive Board of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
  iii. Executive Board of the World Food Programme (WFP)

Facts about United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):
- Parent organization: United Nations
- Headquarters: New York, United States
- Formation: 26 June 1945
- President: Munir Akram

Singapore becomes first country to ratify RCEP trade agreement

- Singapore has become the first country to complete the official process for ratification of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement.
• **Note: RCEP agreement** was signed by all 10 ASEAN members and key partners including China, South Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand at the 4th RCEP leader’s summit in November 2020.
• The RCEP agreement will enter into force after six ASEAN member states and three ASEAN FTA partners have ratified it.

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses Leaders' Summit on Climate**

• Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Leaders’ Summit on Climate at the invitation of the President of U.S.A. Joseph R. Biden, which was held virtually on 22-23 April 2021.
• The theme of the summit was **"Our Collective Sprint to 2030"**.
• India's ambitious renewable energy target is 450 Gigawatts by 2030.
• India’s per capita carbon footprint is 60 percent lower than the global average.
• PM Modi announced the launch of **India-US climate and clean energy Agenda 2030 partnership**, which can be a template of green collaborations to help developing countries access to affordable green finance and clean technologies.
• The Summit was a part of a series of global meetings focusing on climate issues, being held in the run up to COP26 in November 2021.
**Note:** The US has joined the **India-Sweden climate initiative**, the Leadership Group for Industry Transition, LeadIT.

**Dr. Harsh Vardhan chairs the “Reaching Zero” Forum on Malaria Elimination**

• Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare chaired the “Reaching Zero” forum on malaria elimination to celebrate World Malaria Day.
• **Every year, 25th April is observed as ‘World Malaria Day’**.
• This year’s theme for the day is **“Reaching the Zero Malaria target.”**

**UK becomes first country to announce regulation of use of self-driving vehicles at slow speeds on motorways**

• Britain's transport ministry said that it was working on specific wording to update the country's highway code for the safe use of self-driving vehicle systems. It added that the ministry will start with Automated Lane Keeping Systems (ALKS) - which use sensors and software to keep cars within a lane, allowing them to accelerate and brake without driver input.
• According to the government, the use of ALKS would be restricted to motorways, at speeds under 60 km per hour. The UK government wants to be at the forefront of rolling out autonomous driving technology and the transport ministry forecasts by 2035 around 40% of new UK cars could have self-driving capabilities, creating up to 38,000 new skilled jobs.

**Italy hosts G20 Global Health Summit 2021**

• The Global Health Summit took place in Rome on 21 May, 2021. The Summit was a special event of the G20 Presidency, organized by **Italy (which holds the G20 Presidency in 2021)** in
partnership with the European Commission and is co-chaired by the President of the Council of Minister Mario Draghi and the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen.

- At the summit, G20 countries agreed to the Rome Declaration, which reaffirms continued multilateral support for preparedness, prevention, detection, and response to the pandemic, as well as appropriate and sustainable funding for collaborative global response efforts, especially the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator.

Facts about G20:
- **Formation:** 26 September 1999
- **Members:** 20
  (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and European Union)
- **Note:** The G20 Summit is set to be hosted by Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.

74th World Health Assembly

**Why in News**
- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare and the Chairman of WHO Executive Board chaired the 74th World Health Assembly.

**Key Points**
- The Board called for further efforts to ensure fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility.
- The Board recommended that the 74th World Health Assembly must consider the report on mental health preparedness and response for the COVID-19 pandemic. It also recommended endorsing the updated comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan for the period of 2013 to 2030.
- The Board has recommended that the 74th World Health Assembly should adopt a decision to present a road map for the global action plan for prevention and control of non-communicable diseases till the year 2030.

**Facts about World Health Assembly:**
- **Founded:** 1948
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
- **Parent organization:** World Health Organization
- **Membership:** 194 Countries

WHO and Switzerland launch first ‘WHO BioHub Facility’

**Why in the News?**
- The World Health Organization (WHO) and Switzerland signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch the first ‘WHO BioHub Facility’ for pathogen storage, sharing and analysis as part of the WHO BioHub System.

**Key Points**
- Switzerland supports the WHO BioHub initiative in its initial phase by providing the necessary infrastructure of a Swiss biosafety laboratory in Spiez.
- The facility will serve as a centre for the safe receipt, sequencing, storage and preparation of biological materials for distribution to other laboratories, in order to inform risk assessments, and sustain global preparedness against these pathogens.
Following results from the pilot project, the BioHub will expand from SARS-COV-2 and its variants to other pathogens, and connect partners with other repositories and laboratory networks in 2022.

**About Pathogen:**
- In biology, a pathogen in the oldest and broadest sense, is any organism that can produce disease. A pathogen may also be referred to as an infectious agent, or simply a germ.
- Typically, the term is used to describe an infectious microorganism or agent, such as a virus, bacterium, protozoan, prion, viroid, or fungus.
Economy

FDI inflows in April-July, 2021-22

Why in News
- **India** has attracted total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows of US$ 27.37 billion during the **first four months (April-July)** of F.Y. 2021-22 which is 62% higher as compared to corresponding period of F.Y. 2020-21 (US$ 16.92 billion).

**Key Points**
- FDI equity inflow grew by 112% in the first four months of F.Y. 2021-22 (US$ 20.42 billion) compared to the year ago period (US$ 9.61 billion).
- ‘**Automobile Industry**’ has emerged as the **top sector** during the first four months of F.Y. 2021-22 with 23% share of the total FDI Equity inflow followed by Computer Software & Hardware (18%) and Services Sector (10%) respectively.
- Under the sector ‘Automobile Industry’, majority of FDI Equity inflow (87%) was reported in the state of Karnataka during the first four months of the current financial year (2021-22).
- **Karnataka** is the **top recipient state** during the F.Y. 2021-22 (upto July, 2021) with 45% share of the total FDI Equity inflows followed by Maharashtra (23%) and Delhi (12%).

**About Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):**
- **FDI** is an investment in the form of a controlling ownership in a business in one country by an entity based in another country.
- **Routes through which India gets FDI:** Government Route, Automatic Route
- **Government Measures to promote FDI:** Measures taken by the Government on the fronts of FDI policy reforms, investment facilitation and ease of doing business have resulted in increased FDI inflows into the country.

Source: PIB

Cabinet approves major Reforms in Telecom Sector

Why in News
- The Union Cabinet approved a number of structural and process reforms in the Telecom sector.
- These are expected to protect and generate employment opportunities, promote healthy competition, protect interests of consumers, infuse liquidity, encourage investment and reduce regulatory burden on **Telecom Service Providers (TSPs)**.

**Key Points**

**About the Main Reforms:**
- Rationalization of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR): Non-telecom revenue will be excluded on prospective basis from the definition of AGR.
• **Spectrum Tenure:** In future Auctions, tenure of spectrum increased from 20 to 30 years. Surrender of spectrum will be permitted after 10 years for spectrum acquired in the future auctions.

• **FDI:** To encourage investment, **100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) under automatic route** permitted in Telecom Sector.

• Auction calendar fixed - Spectrum auctions to be normally held in the last quarter of every financial year.

• Moratorium/Deferment of upto four years in annual payments of dues arising out of the AGR judgement, with however, by protecting the Net Present Value (NPV) of the due amounts being protected.

Source: PIB

**NITI Aayog launches ‘Shoonya’ Campaign**

**Why in News**

• NITI Aayog, with RMI and RMI India’s support, launched ‘Shoonya’ Campaign.

• It is an initiative to promote zero-pollution delivery vehicles by working with consumers and industry.

**Key Points**

**About ‘Shoonya’ Campaign:**

• The campaign aims to accelerate adoption of Electric Vehicles (EVs) in the urban deliveries segment.

• As part of the campaign, a corporate branding and certification programme is being launched to recognise and promote industry’s efforts towards transitioning to Electric Vehicles for final-mile deliveries.

• An online tracking platform will share the campaign’s impact through data such as vehicle kilometers electrified, carbon savings, criteria pollutant savings and other benefits from clean delivery vehicles.

**Need:**

• Urban freight vehicles account for 10 percent of freight transportation-related CO2 emissions in India, and these emissions are expected to grow by 114 percent by 2030.

• Electric Vehicles emit no tailpipe emissions, which can contribute immensely to an improved air quality.

• Even when accounting for their manufacture, they emit 15-40 percent less CO2 compared to their internal combustion engine counterparts and have lower operational cost.

**Initiatives Taken:**

• National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage

• National Electric Mobility Mission Plan

• Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India)
Digital Agriculture
Why in News
• The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare signed 5 MoUs with private companies for taking forward Digital Agriculture.
• MoUs were signed for pilot projects with CISCO, Ninjacart, Jio Platforms Limited, ITC Limited and NCDEX e-Markets Limited (NeML).
• The MoUs are on the line of the Digital agriculture mission.

Key Points
About Digital Agriculture:
• Digital Agriculture is “ICT and data ecosystems to support the development and delivery of timely, targeted information and services to make farming profitable and sustainable while delivering safe, nutritious and affordable food for all.”

Benefits:
• Based on these pilot projects farmers will be able to take informed decisions on what crop to grow, what variety of seed to use and what best practices to adopt to maximise the yield.
• The agriculture supply chain players can plan their procurement and logistics on precise and timely information.

About Digital agriculture mission:
• A Digital agriculture mission has been initiated for 2021-2025 by the government for projects based on new technologies like artificial intelligence, block chain, remote sensing and GIS technology, use of drones and robots etc.

Related Other Government Initiatives:
• Unified Farmer Service Platform
• “Digital agri-stack”, a hi-tech national farmers’ database
• National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGP-A)
• Kisan Call Centres
• Kisan Suvidha App
• Soil Health Card (SHC) Portal
• Agri Market App

Source: PIB

'Main Bhi Digital 3.0' Campaign
Why in News
• The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology launched the 'Main Bhi Digital 3.0' - A special Campaign for Digital Onboarding and Training for street vendors under PM SVANidhi scheme across 223 cities in the country.

Key Points
- **Participating agency:** The BharatPe, Mswipe, Paytm, PhonePe, Aceware are participating in this drive to issue UPI IDs, QR code and provide digital training.
- Digital Payment Aggregators will handhold the street vendors to bring about enhanced adoption of digital transactions and behaviour change.

**Loans and Amounts:**
- So far, 45.5 lakh applications have been received. Out of these, 27.2 lakh loans have been sanctioned and 24.6 lakh loans have been disbursed.
- The amount disbursed so far is ₹2,444 Cr.

**About PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme:**
- It was launched on June 1, 2020 as a Central Sector Scheme.
- The scheme facilitates affordable working capital loans of up to ₹10,000 with an interest subsidy @7% on regular repayment.
- The street vendors also stand a chance to avail a loan of ₹20,000 and ₹50,000 in the second and third tranches respectively on timely repayment of the loan.
- SIDBI has been appointed as the implementation agency for scheme administration.

Source: PIB

---

**IIT Ropar’s startup company introduces World’s first ‘Plant based’ smart air-purifier “Ubreathe Life”**

**Why in News**
- Scientists of Indian Institutes of Technology, Ropar and Kanpur and Faculty of Management Studies of Delhi University have developed a living-plant based air purifier “Ubreathe Life”.
- It amplifies the air purification process in the indoor spaces. These indoor spaces can either be hospitals, schools, offices and Homes.

**Key Points**
- IIT Ropar’s startup company, Urban Air Laboratory, that has developed the product claims it to be the world’s first, state-of-the art ‘Smart Bio-Filter’ that can make breathing fresh.
- It has been incubated at IIT Ropar, which is a designated iHub - AWaDH (Agriculture and Water Technology Development Hub) by the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India.

**About Air purifier “Ubreathe Life”:**
- The technology works through the air-purifying natural leafy plant.
- The room-air interacts with leaves and goes to the soil-root zone where maximum pollutants are purified.
- The novel technology used in this product is ‘Urban Munnar Effect’ along with patent pending “Breathing Roots” to exponentially amplify the phytoremediation process of the plants.
Phytoremediation is a process by which plants effectively remove pollutants from the air.  

**Note:** According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report the indoor air spaces are five times more polluted than outdoor air space.  
**Source:** PIB

### Loan Guarantee Scheme for COVID-affected Sectors

**Why in News**
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman asked all stakeholders to conclude **Rs 50,000 crore Loan Guarantee Scheme for COVID-affected Sectors (LGSCAS)**, aimed at shoring up healthcare infrastructure in non-metros in time to deal with any future third wave.
- The Scheme is aimed at upscaling the medical infrastructure in the country specifically targeting underserved areas.

**Key Points**

**About Loan Guarantee Scheme for COVID-affected Sectors (LGSCAS):**
- LGSCAS was approved by the Union Cabinet on 30th June 2021.
- Loans under the scheme are made available at a cheaper interest rate of 7.95%.
- It is expected to provide the help the country needs in getting the much-needed healthcare infrastructure and provide employment opportunities after the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic.
- This is necessary across the country, from metro cities to small towns as well as rural areas.
- It provides a guarantee of 50 percent for brownfield projects and 75 percent to greenfield projects for loans sanctioned up to Rs.100 crore, set up at urban or rural locations other than 8 Metropolitan Tier 1 cities (Class X cities).
- For aspirational districts, the guarantee cover for both brownfield expansion and greenfield projects is 75%.
- The Scheme is applicable to all eligible loans sanctioned up to 31.03.2022, or till an amount of Rs. 50,000 crore is sanctioned, whichever is earlier.

**Note:**
- Recently, the **Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance** has released an amount of **Rs. 13,385.70 crore to 25 States for providing grants to the Rural Local Bodies.**
- This Grant-in-aid is the 1st installment of Tied grants of the year 2021-22.
- The grants have been released as per the recommendations of the **15th Finance Commission.**

**Source:** PIB

India’s first green hydrogen electrolyzer gigafactory

**Why in News**
USA-based renewable energy start-up, **Ohmium International**, has launched India’s first green hydrogen electrolyzer gigafactory at Bengaluru through its India subsidiary.

**Key Points**

**About Green Hydrogen:**
- Green Hydrogen is the pollution-free fuel of the future.
- With zero carbon footprint, the green hydrogen can be utilized for fertilizer production, refinery processing, steel production, conventional vehicle transportation with methanol blending, and direct hydrogen transportation in fuel-cell-based vehicles.
- Green Hydrogen can also be stored and transported.
- Green hydrogen is made from non-fossil sources, while blue hydrogen is made from fossil sources.
- To produce green hydrogen through any process, electrolysis is required.

**About Gigafactory:**
- It will manufacture India-made PEM (Proton Exchange Membrane) hydrogen electrolyzers with an initial manufacturing capacity of about 500 MW per year and will scale it up to 2 GW per year.
- The PEM hydrogen electrolyzer is the main equipment for the production of green hydrogen as it uses power generated from renewable resources to break water into hydrogen and oxygen.

**Note:**
- India has already set a target of achieving 450 GW renewable energy by 2030.
- According to industry data, the world is currently producing around 70 million metric tonnes of hydrogen (blue), out of which 6 MT is coming from India.

**Source:** TOI

**e-Shram Portal**

**Why in News**
- Minister for Labour and Employment, Bhupender Yadav launched e-Shram portal.
- Portal will help build a comprehensive National Database of Unorganized Workers (NDUW) in India.
- For the first time in India, a system is being made to register 38 crore Unorganised Workers.

**Key Points**

**About e-Shram Portal:**
- The registration under the e-Shram portal is totally free and workers do not have to pay anything for his or her registration at Common Service Centres (CSCs) or anywhere.
It will not only register them but would also be helpful in delivering various social security schemes being implemented by the Central and State Governments.

After registration, the workers shall be issued an **e-Shram card with a unique Universal Account Number (UAN)** and will be able to access the benefits of the various social security schemes through this Card anywhere anytime.

**Insurance Coverage:**
- If a worker is registered on the e-Shram portal and meets with an accident, he will be eligible for Rs 2.0 Lakh on death or permanent disability and Rs 1.0 lakh on partial disability.

**Other Initiatives to Support Unorganised Sector:**
- Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan
- Labour Code
- PM SVANidhi
- Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission
- PM Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana
- One Nation One Ration Card
- Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi

Source: PIB

**e-GOPALA & IMAP web portal**

**Why in News**
- Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying launched the National Dairy Development Board’s web version of e-GOPALA application and IMAP web portal.
- It is a digital platform for dairy farmers to provide real-time information on animal health, nutrition and breed development.

**Key Points**

**About e-GOPALA:**
- The web version of e-GOPALA application has been developed by National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).
- The e-GOPALA platform helps farmers manage their livestock including buying and selling of disease-free germplasm in all forms; informs about availability of quality breeding services and guides farmers for animal nutrition, treatment of animals using appropriate Ayurvedic ethno veterinary medicine.
- **Note:** The e-GOPALA app was launched in September 2020 as a breed improvement marketplace for the direct use of farmers.
- **IMAP web portal** will facilitate real time checking of coverage and progress of various projects and government schemes.
Source: The Hindu

Kandla becomes first Green SEZ
Why in News
- Kandla SEZ (KASEZ) was awarded IGBC Platinum Rating.
- KASEZ is the first Green SEZ to achieve the IGBC Green Cities Platinum Rating for Existing Cities.

Key Points
- The efforts of KASEZ were appreciable for water conservation and afforestation in Bhuj region of Gujarat.
- IGBC Platinum rating has been awarded for ‘Green master planning, policy initiatives and implementation of green infrastructure’ by CII’s Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).

About Kandla SEZ (KASEZ):
- It was Asia’s first Export Processing Zone (EPZ).
- It was set up in Kandla, Gujarat in 1965.

About Special Economic Zones (SEZs):
- A Special Economic Zone is an area in which the trade and business laws are different from the rest of the country.
- SEZs are located within a country's national borders, and their aims include increasing trade balance, employment, increased investment, job creation and effective administration.
- The Special Economic Zone (SEZ) policy in India first came into inception on April 1, 2000. The prime objective was to enhance foreign investment and provide an internationally competitive and hassle free environment for exports.
- The Special Economic Zones Act, 2005, was passed by Parliament in May, 2005 which received Presidential assent on the 23rd of June, 2005.

SMILE Scheme
Why in News
- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has formulated a scheme “SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise”.
- SMILE also includes a subscheme - ‘Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging’.

Key Points
About the scheme:
- This scheme covers several comprehensive measures including welfare measures for persons who are engaged in the act of begging.
- It focuses extensively on rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counselling, basic documentation, education, skill development, economic linkages and so on.
- It provides for the use of the existing shelter homes for rehabilitation of the persons engaged in the act of begging.

India's first green hydrogen plant at Mathura refinery
Why in News
- India's largest oil firm Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) will build the nation's first 'green hydrogen' plant at its Mathura refinery.
- It aims to prepare for a future catering to the growing demand for both oil and cleaner forms of energy.

Key Points
• This will be the nation's first green hydrogen unit.
• Hydrogen, in itself, is a clean fuel but manufacturing it is energy-intensive and has carbon byproducts.
• **Green hydrogen** production - the ultimate clean hydrogen resource - uses renewable energy to create hydrogen fuel.

**Stand Up India Scheme extended up to the year 2025**

**Why in News**
• The Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance informed that the Stand Up India Scheme has been extended up to the year 2025.

**Key Points**

**About Stand Up India Scheme:**
• The Scheme was launched by the Prime Minister on 05<sup>th</sup> April, 2016.

**Objective and Nature of Loan:**
• The objective of this Scheme is to facilitate loans from Scheduled Commercial Banks of value between Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 1 Crore to at least one Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a green field enterprise.
• This enterprise may be in manufacturing, services, agri-allied activities or the trading sector.
• In case of non-individual enterprises, 51% of the shareholding and controlling stake should be held by either an SC/ST or Woman Entrepreneur.
• The offices of SIDBI and NABARD are designated Stand-Up Connect Centres (SUCC).

**India emerges as 5th largest forex reserves holder in the world**

**Why in News**
• **India** has emerged as the 5<sup>th</sup> largest forex reserves holder in the world with **$608.99 billion** as on June 25, 2021 after **China, Japan, Switzerland and Russia**.
• This was stated by Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary in the Lok Sabha on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

**Exports of GI certified Bhalia wheat from Gujarat**

**Why in the News?**
• The first shipment of Geographical Indication (GI) certified **Bhalia variety of wheat** was exported to **Kenya and Sri Lanka from Gujarat**.

**Key Points**

**About GI certified Bhalia wheat:**
• The GI certified wheat has high protein content and is sweet in taste.
• The crop is grown mostly across the Bhal region of Gujarat, which includes Ahmedabad, Anand, Kheda, Bhavanagar, Surendranagar, Bharuch districts.

**Note:**
• The Bhalia wheat received Geographical Indication (GI) certification in July 2011.
• The registered proprietor of GI certification is Anand Agricultural University, Gujarat.

'itat e-dwar', an e-filing portal of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal

**Why in the News?**
Union Minister for Law & Justice, Communications and Electronics & IT, Ravi Shankar Prasad, launched the e-filing portal of **Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)**, ‘itat e-dwar’.

**Key Points**
- The ‘itat e-dwar’ portal will enhance accessibility, accountability and transparency in day to day working of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT).
- The newly developed e-Filing Portal would enable the parties to file their Appeals, Miscellaneous Applications, documents, paper books, etc., electronically.
- More than 18 crore cases are available in the **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)** and suggested that cases of ITAT should also be integrated in the NJDG.

**CBIC launches Compliance Information Portal (CIP)**

**Why in News**
- The **Central Board for Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC)** launched the Indian Customs Compliance Information Portal (CIP) for providing free access to information on all Customs procedures and regulatory compliance for nearly 12,000 Customs Tariff Items.

**Key Points**

**About Compliance Information Portal (CIP):**
- CIP is a facilitation tool developed by CBIC to empower business as well as any interested person with up-to-date information on the legal and procedural requirements of Customs and Partner Government Agencies (FSSAI, PQIS, AQIS, Drug Controller etc.) for carrying out imports and exports.

**About Central Board for Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC):**
- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (erstwhile Central Board of Excise & Customs) is a part of the Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.
- It deals with the tasks of formulation of policy concerning levy and collection of Customs, Central Excise duties, CGST and IGST and prevention of smuggling.

**Source:** PIB

**Combined Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) increases by 8.9 percent as compared to the Index of June 2020**

**Why in News**
- The **combined Index of Eight Core Industries** stood at 126.6 in June 2021, which increased by **8.9 percent** as compared to the Index of June 2020.
- The production of Coal, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity industries increased in June 2021 over the corresponding period of last year.

**Key Points**

**About Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI):**
- ICI measures combined and individual performance of production in selected eight core industries viz. **Coal, Natural Gas, Crude Oil, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Cement, Steel and Electricity**.
- The **Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 percent** of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

**The summary of the Index of Eight Core Industries:**
- **Coal:** Coal production increased by 7.4 percent in June, 2021 over June, 2020.
- **Crude Oil:** Crude Oil production declined by 1.8 percent in June, 2021 over June, 2020.
- **Natural Gas:** Natural Gas production increased by 20.6 percent in June, 2021 over June, 2020.
- **Refinery Products:** Petroleum Refinery production increased by 2.4 percent in June, 2021 over June, 2020.
- **Fertilizers:** Fertilizers production increased by 2.0 percent in June, 2021 over June, 2020.
- **Steel:** Steel production increased by 25.0 percent in June, 2021 over June, 2020.
- **Cement:** Cement production increased by 4.3 percent in June, 2021 over June, 2020.
- **Electricity:** Electricity generation increased by 7.2 percent in June, 2021 over June, 2020.

**About Index of Industrial Production (IIP):**
- IIP is an index for India which details the growth of various sectors in an economy such as electricity, mineral mining and manufacturing.
- The all India IIP is a composite indicator that measures the short-term changes in the volume of production of a basket of industrial products during a given period with respect to that in a chosen base period.
- It is compiled and published monthly by the National Statistics Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- The current base year is 2011-2012.

**Significance of IIP:**
- It is used by various government agencies such as the Ministry of Finance, the Reserve Bank of India, private firms and analysts.
- The data is also used to compile the Gross Value Added of the manufacturing sector in the Gross Domestic Product on a quarterly basis.

Source: PIB

**Digital payment solution ‘e-RUPI’**

**Why in News**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched digital payment solution ‘e-RUPI’.

**Key Points**

**About e-RUPI:**
- e-RUPI is a **cashless and contactless** instrument for digital payment.
- It is a **QR code or SMS string-based e-Voucher**, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries.
- The users of this seamless one-time payment mechanism will be able to redeem the voucher without a card, digital payments app or internet banking access, at the service provider.
- It connects the sponsors of the services with the beneficiaries and service providers in a digital manner without any physical interface.
- It has been **developed** by National Payments Corporation of India on its UPI platform, in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and National Health Authority.

**Uses:**
- It is expected to be a revolutionary initiative in the direction of ensuring a leak-proof delivery of welfare services.
- It can also be used for delivering services under schemes meant for providing drugs and nutritional support under Mother and Child welfare schemes, TB eradication programmes, drugs & diagnostics under schemes like Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, fertilizer subsidies etc.
- Even the private sector can leverage these digital vouchers as part of their employee welfare and corporate social responsibility programmes.

**Significance of e-RUPI:**
- The government is already working on developing a central bank digital currency and the launch of e-RUPI could potentially highlight the gaps in digital payments infrastructure that will be necessary for the success of the future digital currency.
Different from Virtual Currency:

- In effect, e-RUPI is backed by the existing Indian rupee as the underlying asset and specificity of its purpose makes it different to a virtual currency and puts it closer to a voucher-based payment system.

**Note:** Countries such as the US, Sweden, Hong Kong, Colombia, Chile, etc. are using voucher systems.

**Source:** PIB

### Cabinet approves DICGC (Amendment) Bill, 2021

#### Why in News

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

#### Key Points

**About DICGC (Amendment) Bill, 2021:**

**Insurance Cover:**

- The Bill provides account holders security of their money by allowing access to up to **Rs 5 lakh within 90 days** of a bank coming under a moratorium.
- Earlier, account holders had to wait for years till the liquidation or restructuring of a distressed lender to get their deposits that are insured against default.

**Note:** In 2020, the Finance Minister had increased its limit from 1 lakh to 5 lakh.

DICGC was formed because bank depositors faced problems while withdrawing their money from banks if the RBI imposed a moratorium.

**Coverage:**

- Under the latest amendment in the DICGC Bill, 98.3% of all deposits will be covered and in terms of deposit value, 50.9% of deposits will be covered. While the Global deposit value is only 80% of all deposit accounts and covers only 20-30% of the deposit value.

**About Deposit Insurance Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC):**

- It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India.
- It provides deposit insurance that works as a protection cover for bank deposit holders when the bank fails to pay its depositors.
- It protects depositors’ money kept in all commercial and foreign banks located in India; central, state, and urban co-operative banks; regional rural banks; and local banks, provided that the bank has opted for DICGC cover.
- The agency’s operations are performed as per the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961 and The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation General Regulations, 1961.

**Source:** The Hindu

### Cabinet approves 100% FDI in DTH services

- The Union Cabinet approved revised guidelines for Direct-to-Home (DTH) broadcasting services, allowing 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) as well as increasing the licence period to 20 years.
- Under the revised guidelines the licenses will be issued for a period of 20 years, compared to 10 years at the moment, and will be renewed for a 10-year period.

### ‘Positive Pay System’ for cheque transactions

- On January 1, 2021, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will introduce the ‘Positive Pay System’ for cheque transactions above Rs 50,000 in a bid to enhance safety and eliminate frauds.
Under this process, the issuer of the cheque submits electronically, through channels like SMS, mobile app, Internet banking and ATM, certain minimum details of that cheque (like date, name of the beneficiary, or payee and amount) to the drawee bank, details of which are cross-checked with the presented cheque by Cheque Truncation System (CTS).

India Post Payments Bank launches its digital payments’ services ‘DakPay’

- Department of Posts (DoP) and India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) unveiled a new digital payment app ‘DakPay’. The App is launched as part of its ongoing efforts to provide Digital Financial inclusion at the last mile across India.
- **About India Post Payments Bank:** IPPB has been established under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication with 100% equity owned by Government of India. It was launched on September 1, 2018.
- Recently Meghdoot award 2020 has been conferred by the Department of Posts to postal employees for their achievements in 2019-20.

Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) launches E-agricultural spot market platform

- BSE has launched an electronic spot platform for agricultural commodities -"BSE E-Agricultural Markets Ltd. (BEAM)" - through its subsidiary BSE Investments.
- The platform facilitates spot agricultural commodities transactions across value chain consisting of producers, intermediaries, ancillary services and consumers.
- **Note:** BSE Limited, formerly known as the Bombay Stock Exchange Ltd., is an Indian stock exchange located at Dalal Street, Mumbai. Established in 1875, it is Asia’s oldest stock exchange.

RBI to set up Automated Banknote Processing Centre in Jaipur

- With a view to effectively deal with increasing circulation of banknotes, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to set up an Automated Banknote Processing Centre (ABPC) in Jaipur for receipt, storage and dispatch of currency notes.
- **Note:** The volume of banknotes in circulation has increased three-fold from March 2001 to March 2019, and is expected to rise further in the years to come.

Re-appointment of Uday Kotak as MD & CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India approved re-appointment of Kotak Mahindra Bank’s founder Uday Kotak as managing director and chief executive officer of the bank for a period of three years with effect from January 1, 2021.
- The central bank has also approved re-appointment of Prakash Apte as part-time chairman and Dipak Gupta as joint managing director.
- **About Kotak Mahindra Bank:** Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Mumbai. It was founded in 2003.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of AYUSH decides to set up an AYUSH Export Promotion Council (AEPC)

- This decision was taken recently in a joint review of AYUSH trade and Industry by Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Shri Shripad Naik, Minister of AYUSH.
- **Note:** The entire AYUSH sector will work together to achieve price and quality competitiveness to boost AYUSH exports.
- AYUSH will figure appropriately in the “Brand India” activities being presently undertaken.

‘Toycathon 2021’ to promote manufacturing of indigenous toys
Union Minister of Education Ramesh Pokhariyal ‘Nishank’ and Union Minister of Women and Child Development Smriti Irani launched a virtual toy hackathon ‘Toycathon 2021’.

The Toycathon2021 is being organised to create awareness among school students about the rich cultural heritage of our country.

Note: The toys market is Rs 7 lakh crores in the world. In our country, 80 per cent of toys are imported.

First time in history, Union Budget 2021 to be paperless

Union Budget 2021, slated to be presented on February 1, is going to be completely paperless in the wake of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The Budget papers - the Union Budget and Economic Survey - will not get printed, soft copies will be provided.

Flipkart, NITI Aayog collaborate to enhance Women Entrepreneurship Platform

In an effort to enhance community experience for women entrepreneurs in India, e-commerce marketplace Flipkart and NITI Aayog have come together to launch the revamped Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP).

Note: The idea of the platform was first mooted by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant who announced the setting-up of a Women Entrepreneurship Platform at 8th Global Entrepreneurship Summit held in Hyderabad during 2017, with an overarching theme of ‘Women First, Prosperity for All.’

RBI proposes 4-tier structure for tighter regulation of NBFCs

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed a tighter regulatory framework for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) by creating a four-tier structure with a progressive increase in intensity of regulation.

The regulatory and supervisory framework of NBFCs should be based on a four-layered structure: NBFC-Base Layer, NBFC-Middle Layer, NBFC-Upper Layer, NBFC-Top Layer.

Note: Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 engaged in the business of loans and advances.

Cabinet approved Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Copra for 2021 season

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval for the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of copra for the 2021 season.

The MSP for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) of milling copra has been increased, by Rs.375/-, to Rs. 10335/- per quintal for 2021 season from Rs. 9960/- per quintal in 2020.

The MSP for ball copra has been increased, by Rs.300/-, to Rs. 10,600/- per quintal for 2021 season from Rs. 10300/- per quintal in 2020.

The approval is based on recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).

Note: India is number one in production and productivity of copra in the World. It is mainly grown in the 12 coastal states.

Government approves eight toy manufacturing clusters worth Rs 2,300 crore to boost India’s traditional toys industry

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) are looking to develop toy clusters under existing schemes such as the Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI).

The government has approved three clusters in Madhya Pradesh, two in Rajasthan, and one each in Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
• **Note:** The first virtual India Toy Fair-2021 will be held from February 27 to March 2, which will offer opportunities to buy toys from over 1,000 exhibitors across the country.
• Recently, Union Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari inaugurated 50 SFURTI (Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries) clusters in 18 States, which will support over 42,000 artisans in traditional crafts.

**China returns as top India’s trade partner**
• China regained its position as India’s top trade partner in 2020 because India was still dependent on the import of heavy machines, home appliances and telecom equipment.
• Two-way trade between India and China stood at $77.7 billion in 2020, according to provisional data from India’s commerce ministry.
• As a result, the bilateral trade gap with China was at almost $40 billion in 2020, making it India’s largest.
• **Note:** Total imports from China at $58.7 billion were more than India’s combined purchases from the U.S. and the U.A.E, which are its second- and third-largest trade partners, respectively.

**Amazon to set up its first device manufacturing line in India**
• Amazon is setting up its first device manufacturing line in India to make Fire TV sticks locally and has partnered with Cloud Network Technology, a subsidiary of Foxconn, to begin producing the device at its Chennai plant later this year.

**MCA21 Version 3.0 to be launched in Fiscal 2021-22**
• During the fiscal 2021-22, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) will launch data analytics driven MCA21 Version 3.0.
• MCA21 system is the first Mission Mode e-Governance project of the Government of India.
• MCA21 Version 3.0 Project is a technology-driven forward looking project, envisioned to strengthen enforcement, promote Ease of Doing Business, enhance user experience, facilitate seamless integration and data exchange among Regulators.
• **Note:** The key components of MCA21 to be launched during Fiscal Year 2021-22 are: e-Scrutiny, e-Adjudication, e-Consultation, Compliance Management System (CMS), MCA Lab.

**PM SVANidhi scheme: Zomato sign MoU to take street food vendors’ businesses online**
• The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Zomato for empowering street food vendors with new digital technology and to provide greater income-earning opportunities on the food delivery platform.
• **Note:** Recently, MoHUA has signed a MoU with Swiggy to take street food vendors online under the PM SVANidhi scheme.
• **About PM SVANidhi (Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor’s Atmanirbhar Nidhi) scheme:** It was launched on June 1, 2020, to help the street vendors resume their livelihood activities that were impacted by COVID-19.

**Economic Survey 2021**
• Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Economic Survey that details the state of the economy ahead of the government's budget for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2021.
• The Economic Survey 2020-2021, authored by a team led by chief economic adviser (CEA) Krishnamurthy V Subramanian, focused on the state of different sectors of the economy.
• The Economic Survey has been dedicated to all the COVID-19 warriors, who have really helped in upholding India.
• **Key highlights:** India’s GDP is estimated to contract by 7.7% in FY2020-21.

  The survey expects the Indian economy to grow by 11 percent during 2021-22 which is close to the growth forecast of 11.5 percent made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

  V-shaped economic recovery due to mega vaccination drive, robust recovery in the services sector and robust growth in consumption and investment.

**Union Budget 2021-22**

  The Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget 2021-22 in Parliament on 01 February, which is the first budget of this new decade and also a digital one in the backdrop of unprecedented COVID-19 crisis.

  Additionally, also on the path to fast-implementation are the 13 promises of Budget 2015-16, which were to materialize during the AmrutMahotsav of 2022, on the 75th year of our Independence.

  **The Budget proposals for 2021-22 rest on 6 pillars:**


  **The key highlights of the Union Budget 2021-22 are as follows:**

  * Total spend of around Rs 2 lakh crore on healthcare, Rs 35,000 crore for the Covid-19 vaccine, Rs 1.10 lakh crore outlay for railways. To impose Rs 2.5 per litre agri infra cess on petrol and Rs 4 on diesel.

  * The forthcoming Census could be India’s first digital Census, allocating Rs 3,768 crore for FY21.

  * Mega Investment Textiles Parks (MITRA), Mission Poshan 2.0, PM Aatmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana will be launched.

  * Government has increased the FDI limit from 49 to 74 per cent in Insurance Companies.

  * No change in the Income Tax Slabs. Senior citizens who are of 75 years of age and above, having an only pension and interest income will be exempted from filing their income tax return.

  * Set up of an asset reconstruction company and an asset management company to clean up non-performing assets in the banking sector.

  * A voluntary vehicle scrappage policy has been introduced.

**Note: 15th Finance Commission’s final report:** The 15th Finance Commission (Chairman: Mr N. K. Singh) was required to submit two reports. The first report, consisting of recommendations for the financial year 2020-21, was tabled in Parliament on February 1, 2020.

  The final report with recommendations for 2021-22 to 2025-26 was tabled along with Budget 2021-22.

**14 new Minor Forest Produce (MFP) items included under Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme to provide fair prices to tribal gatherers**

  * The government has decided to include 14 new minor forest produce items under the mechanism for marketing of minor forest produce through a minimum support price scheme to provide remunerative and fair prices to tribal gatherers of forest produces.

  * Newly included items are Tasar Cocoon, elephant apple dry, bamboo shoot, malkangani seed and wild dry mushroom among others.

  * About MFP (Minor Forest Produce): The Central government had introduced a minimum support price for a selected list of minor produce items through mechanism for marketing of Minor Forest Produce through Minimum Support Price and development of Value Chain of MFP Scheme in 2011.

NITI Aayog releases report ‘Investment Opportunities in India’s Healthcare Sector’
NITI Aayog released a report outlining the range of investment opportunities in various segments of India’s healthcare sector, including hospitals, medical devices and equipment, health insurance, telemedicine, home healthcare and medical value travel.

The report was released by NITI Aayog Member Dr VK Paul, CEO Amitabh Kant, and Additional Secretary Dr Rakesh Sarwal.

Government to launch 'Atmanirbhar Niveshak Mitra' portal for handholding and facilitation of domestic investors

- In order to further strengthen efforts to promote domestic investments, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is in the process of finalising the 'Atmanirbhar Niveshak Mitra' digital portal.
- The portal is in testing phase and the final version will be ready for launch by 15th May this year.

Some of the special features of the Atmanirbhar Niveshak Mitra portal include One-stop-shop to access all MSME portals; Information about the Approvals, Licenses, Clearances, Incentives & Schemes applicable to specific businesses across different sectors and Information on Manufacturing Clusters and Land Availability.

US becomes India's second biggest oil supplier

- The United States overtook Saudi Arabia as India's second biggest oil supplier in February 2021, as refiners boosted cheaper U.S. crude purchases to record levels to offset OPEC+ supply cuts.
- The trade data is released by Reuters.
- India's imports from the United States - the world's top producer - rose 48 percent to a record 545,300 barrels per day (bpd) in February 2021.
- Saudi Arabia, which has consistently been one of India's top two suppliers, slipped to No. 4 for the first time since at least January 2006.
- India is the world's third biggest oil importer and consumer, shipping in about 84% of its crude needs, and relies heavily on the Middle East.
- Note: Iraq is the India's first biggest oil supplier.

India's Foreign-exchange reserves (Forex reserves) have become the fourth largest in the world, surpassing Russia

- As per the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), India's foreign currency holdings, which dropped $4.3 billion to $580.3 billion on March 5, 2021, surpassed Russia's $580.1 billion.
- As of March 2021, International Monetary Fund (IMF) table, China has the largest Forex reserves followed by Japan and Switzerland.
- Foreign-exchange reserves: Foreign exchange reserves are cash and other reserve assets such as gold held by a central bank or other monetary authority that are primarily available to balance payments of the country, influence the foreign exchange rate of its currency, and to maintain confidence in financial markets.

Union Cabinet approves ‘Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi’ as ‘single non-lapsable reserve fund’

- The Union Cabinet approved the ‘Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi’ (PMSSN) as a ‘single non-lapsable reserve fund’ for share of Health from the proceeds of Health and Education Cess levied under Finance Act, 2007.
• The use of this fund will be utilized for the flagship schemes of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare namely: Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, Ayushman Bharat - Health and Wellness Centres, National Health Mission and Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana.
• Note: In the budget speech 2018, the Finance Minister while announcing Ayushman Bharat Scheme, also announced replacement of existing 3% Education Cess by 4% Health and Education Cess.

APEDA organizes first ever Virtual Trade Fair (VTF)

• In a first of its kind initiative for boosting export potential of India’s agricultural and processed food products during COVID19 pandemic, APEDA launched its first Virtual Trade Fair on 10th March 2021. The fair will conclude on March 12, 2021.
• The fair with a theme ‘India Rice and Agro Commodity’, will focus on showcasing the exports potential of various agricultural commodities.
• Facts about Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA):

NITI Aayog and RMI India releases a report ‘Mobilising Electric Vehicle Financing in India’

• It highlights the role of finance in India’s transition to electric vehicles (EVs) and analyses that the transition will require a cumulative capital investment of USD 266 billion (Rs 19.7 lakh crore) in EVs, charging infrastructure, and batteries over the next decade.
• The report also identifies a market size of USD 50 billion (Rs 3.7 lakh crore) for the financing of EVs in 2030.
• Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), an independent non-profit founded in 1982, transforms global energy use to create a clean, prosperous, and secure low-carbon future.

Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman attends 6th Annual Meeting of Board of Governors of New Development Bank

• Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs and India’s Governor in New Development Bank (NDB), Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman attended the 6th Annual Meeting of Board of Governors of New Development Bank on March 30, 2021.
• The meeting was also attended by Governors/Alternate Governors of Brazil, China, Russia and South Africa.
• This year's Annual Meeting theme was “New Development Paradigms: The Evolution of Infrastructure”.
• Note: Sitharaman mentioned that India is going to set up a new Development Financial Institutions (DFIs) with initial paid-up capital of around $3 billion with a lending target of $69 billion in next three years.
• About New Development Bank (NDB):
   Headquarters: Shanghai, China
   President: Marcos Prado Troyjo
   Founder: BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa).
   Founded: 15 July 2014
   First President: K. V. Kamath
Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman attends 2nd virtual G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting

- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman participated virtually in the 2nd G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting under the Italian Presidency on 07 April, 2021.
- They also discussed supporting the financing needs of the most vulnerable economies, the progress on the international taxation agenda, promoting greener transitions and the pandemic related financial regulation issues.
- For boosting support to the most vulnerable economies, the Finance Minister supported extending the Debt Service Suspension Initiative, by six months, till December 2021.
- **Facts about G20:**
  - **Formation:** 26 September 1999
  - **Members:** 20 (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and European Union)
  - **Note:** The G20 Summit is set to be hosted by Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.

Shri Piyush Goyal launches “DGFT Trade Facilitation App” for providing instant access to Exporters/Importers

- Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal launched DGFT Trade Facilitation App for promoting ease of doing business and providing quick access to information to importers/exporters.
- It has been developed by the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), as per the directions of the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).
- **Trade facilitation App is READY for Industry 4.0,** as it provides:
  - Real-time trade policy updates, notifications, application status alert, tracking help requests
  - Explore item-wise Export-Import policy & statistics, Track IEC Portfolio
  - AI based 24*7 assistance for trade queries
  - DGFT services made accessible to all
  - Your Trade Dashboard accessible anytime & anywhere

Piyush Goyal inaugurates e-SANTA, an electronic marketplace

- Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated e-SANTA, an electronic marketplace providing a platform to connect aqua farmers and the buyers.
- It will enable the farmers to get a better price and the exporters to directly purchase quality products from the farmers.
- The term e-SANTA was coined for the web portal, meaning **Electronic Solution for Augmenting NaCSA farmers’ Trade in Aquaculture.**
- **National Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture (NaCSA)** is an extension arm of Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- **e-SANTA will RAISE the lives & income of farmers by:**
  - Reducing Risk
  - Awareness of Products & Markets
RBI set up a committee headed by Sudarshan Sen to review ARCs working

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) set up a committee to undertake a comprehensive review of the working of asset reconstruction companies (ARCs) in the financial sector ecosystem and recommend suitable measures for enabling them to meet the growing requirements.
- The six-member committee will be headed by Sudarshan Sen, former Executive Director, RBI.
- The committee will submit its report within three months from the date of its first meeting.
- About Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC): It is a company incorporated under the Companies Act and registered with Reserve Bank of India under section 3 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. An Asset Reconstruction Company is a specialized financial institution that buys the NPAs or bad assets from banks and financial institutions.
- Facts about RBI:
  - Headquarters: Mumbai
  - Established: 1 April 1935
  - Governor: Shaktikanta Das (25th Governor)

Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) finalizes quality standards for 4 spices

- The Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) has finalised and recommended quality standards for 4 spices; cloves, oregano, basil, and ginger, during its fifth session held virtually from 20th - 29th April 2021.
- The committee forwarded these four new standards to the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) for adoption at final step 8, as full-fledged Codex standards.
- Note: Earlier, Ms Rita Teatia, IAS (retd.), Chairperson, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) virtually inaugurated the 5th edition of CCSCH on 20th April 2021.

- About CCSCH & CAC: To develop and expand worldwide standards for spices and culinary herbs, and to consult with other international organisations in the standards development process Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) was formed in 2013 with support of more than a hundred countries with India as the host country and Spices Board as the Secretariat for organising the sessions of the committee.
- Set up in 1963, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) is an intergovernmental body established jointly by the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), within the framework of the Joint Food Standards Programme to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade.

LIC becomes 3rd strongest and 10th most-valuable insurance brand globally

- State-owned insurance company Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has emerged as the 3rd strongest and the 10th most valuable insurance brand globally.
- According to a ‘Insurance 100 2021’, the annual report on the most valuable and strongest insurance brands by London-based consultancy firm Brand Finance, the total value of the
world's top 100 most valuable insurance brands dipped 6 percent from $462.4 billion in 2020 to $433.0 billion in 2021.

- Brand Finance's report stated that LIC's brand value increased 6.8 percent to $8.65 billion in 2021.

- Top valuable insurance brands:
  1st Position- Ping An Insurance, China
  2nd Position- China Life Insurance, China
  10th Position- Life Insurance Corporation of India

- Top strongest insurance brands:
  1st Position- Poste Italiane, Italy
  2nd Position- Mapfre, Spain
  3rd Position- Life Insurance Corporation of India

Fitch predicts India's GDP growth at 9.5%, S&P at 9.8% for FY22

- Fitch Ratings has estimated the GDP (Gross domestic product) of the Indian economy to grow 9.5 percent in 2021-22 (April 2021 to March 2022). Fitch in March 2021 had expected an 12.8% GDP growth forecast for FY22.
- S&P Global Ratings has lowered the GDP growth forecast of the Indian economy to 9.8 percent for the financial year 2021-22 (FY22). S&P in March 2021 had expected an 11% GDP growth forecast for India for FY22.

Oil and Gas PSUs sign MoUs for Construction and Redevelopment of Shri Badrinath Dham as a Spiritual Smart Hill Town

- Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between the Oil and Gas PSUs-Indian Oil, BPCL, HPCL, ONGC and GAIL, and Shri Badrinath Utthan Charitable Trust for Construction and Redevelopment of Shri Badrinath Dham, Uttarakhand as a Spiritual Smart Hill Town.
- As per the MoUs, the Oil & Gas PSUs will be contributing Rs. 99.60 crore in the first phase of the developmental activities, including river embankment work, building all-terrain vehicular path, building bridges, beautifying existing bridges, establishing gurukul facilities with accommodation, creating toilet and drinking water facilities, installing streetlights, mural paintings etc.
- Note: Badrinath is one of the Char Dham - a set of four pilgrimage sites in India. The other Dhams are Dwaraka, Puri and Rameswaram.

Indian economy projected to grow at 10.1% in 2022: United Nations

- The United Nations, in its mid-year update of the World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) which was first released in January 2021, projected that the Indian economy would grow at 10.1 percent in the calendar year 2022, nearly double the 5.9 percent growth forecast for the country in the January report.
- The mid-year update said that India will register a 7.5 percent growth rate in calendar year 2021.
- Global economy is projected to grow by 5.4% in 2021.

India received USD 83 billion in remittances in 2020: World Bank report

- India received USD 83 billion in remittances in 2020, a drop of just 0.2 percent from 2019, according to the ‘Resilience COVID-19 Crisis Through a Migration Lens’ report released by World Bank.
- In 2019, India had received USD 83.3 billion in remittances.
- Officially recorded remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries reached USD 540 billion in 2020, just 1.6 percent below the 2019 total of USD 548 billion.

**Top 3 Countries with Remittance Inflows in 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Remittance Inflow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>USD 83 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>USD 59.5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>USD 42.8 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Top 3 Countries with Remittance Outflows in 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Remittance Outflow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>USD 68 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>USD 43 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>USD 34.5 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Remittances outflow from India in 2020 was USD7 billion, against USD7.5 billion in 2019, according to the World Bank.

**Government of India’s SWAMIH completes first residential project**

- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman handed over possession to homebuyers as Government of India’s Special Window for Affordable & Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) completed its first residential project.
- The residential project - Rivali Park, located in suburban Mumbai, was the first housing project in India to have received funding under the SWAMIH Fund.
- Rivali Park Wintergreens is the first investment by the Fund and is also the first project to get completed.
- The project is Rivali Park Wintergreens developed by CCI Projects Pvt Ltd (CCIPPL), an associate company of Cable Corporation of India Ltd.
- About SWAMIH: The SWAMIH Fund was launched by Smt. Sitharaman in November 2019.
- The Fund so far has given its final approval to 72 projects that will complete 44,100 homes, while 132 projects have received preliminary approval, which will complete an additional 72,500 homes.
- The Fund is targeting to complete an aggregate of 1,16,600 homes.

**RBI to transfer Rs 99,122 crore as surplus to Central Government**

- The meeting of the Central Board of Directors of RBI was held under the Chairmanship of Governor Shaktikanta Das.
- The Board approved the transfer of 99,122 crore rupees as surplus to the Central Government for the accounting period of nine months ended March 31, 2021 (July 2020-March 2021).
- Note: The RBI had transferred Rs 57,128 crore to the government for the accounting year 2019-20.

**Long working hours can increase deaths from heart disease and stroke: WHO, ILO**
- Long working hours led to 745,000 deaths from stroke and ischemic heart disease in 2016, a 29 percent increase since 2000, according to the latest estimates by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) published in the Journal ‘Environment International’.
- This study is the first global analysis of the loss of life and health associated with working long hours.
Environment and Ecology

Sea Cucumber

Why in News
- The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has seizing two tonnes of sea cucumber, a banned marine species, in Tamil Nadu’s Mandapam.
- The teams were deployed in the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay areas to effectively cordon the likely escape by sea route.

Key Points
- Sea cucumbers are marine invertebrates commonly found in tropical regions.
- Sea cucumber helps keep up a balance the marine ecosystem.
- Sea cucumber in India is treated as an endangered species listed under schedule I of Wildlife Protection Act of 1972.

Note: The Lakshadweep Islands administration created the world’s first conservation area — 239 sq. km — for endangered sea cucumbers in 2020.

Source: PIB

Tamil Nadu’s Kovalam beach, Puducherry’s Eden get Blue Flag certification

Why in News
- The Kovalam beach in Tamil Nadu and Eden beach in Puducherry have been awarded the prestigious Blue Flag certification, an international eco-level tag.
- India now has 10 Blue Flag beaches.

Key Points
- Foundation for Environment Education (FEE) in Denmark which accords the globally recognized eco-label - Blue Flag certification, has also given re-certification for 8 nominated beaches Shivrajpur-Gujarat, Kappad-Kerala, Ghoghla-Diu, Kasarkod and Padubidri-Karnataka, Rushikonda- Andhra Pradesh, Golden-Odisha and Radhanagar- Andaman and Nicobar, which were awarded the Blue Flag certificate in 2020.
- India started its journey of sustainable development of coastal regions on World Environment Day in June 2018 by launching its beach cleaning campaign I-AM-SAVING-MY-BEACH simultaneously at 13 coastal states and thereafter implementing the ministry’s coveted program BEAMS (Beach Environment & Aesthetics Management Services).
- The Ministry is further committed to develop and deliver 100 more beaches under its Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) initiative in the ensuing 5 years of the Ministry’s vision agenda.

About Blue Flag certification:
- It is a globally recognised eco-label accorded on the basis of 33 stringent criteria in four major heads which are environmental education and information, bathing
water quality, environmental management and conservation and safety and services in the beaches.

- The Blue Flag label is accorded by the international jury composed of eminent members - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), Denmark-based NGO Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), UNESCO and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Source: PIB

Discovery of new species of Hybodont Shark

Why in News
- Researchers from the Geological Survey of India (GSI) and the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee have discovered a new extinct species of Hybodont Shark from the Jaisalmer Basin of Rajasthan.

World’s first ‘5-country biosphere reserve’ in ‘Amazon of Europe’

Why in News
- UNESCO designated Mura-Drava-Danube (MDD) as the world’s first ‘5-country biosphere reserve’.

Key Points
About Mura-Drava-Danube (MDD):
- The biosphere reserve covers 700 kilometres of the Mura, Drava and Danube rivers and stretches across Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary and Serbia.
- The total area of the reserve — a million hectares — in the so-called ‘Amazon of Europe’, makes it the largest riverine protected area on the continent.
- The new reserve “represents an important contribution to the European Green Deal and contributes to the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy in the Mura-Drava-Danube region.”

Biosphere Reserve:
- Biosphere reserves are sites established by countries and recognized under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program to promote sustainable development.
- There are 727 biosphere reserves in 131 countries, including 22 transboundary sites.

Biosphere Reserves in India:
- Presently, there are 18 Biosphere Reserves in India.
- Twelve of the eighteen biosphere reserves are a part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, based on the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme list.

Source: DTE
Climate change can force 216 million people to migrate within their own countries by 2050

Why in News
- The World Bank’s updated Groundswell report released recently finds Climate change can force some 216 million people in 6 world regions to move within their own countries by 2050.
- Hotspots of internal climate migration can emerge as early as 2030 and continue to spread and intensify by 2050.

Gross Environment Product (GEP) in Uttarakhand

Why in News
- The Uttarakhand government recently announced it will initiate valuation of its natural resources in the form of ‘Gross Environment Product’ (GEP).
- It is along the lines of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Key Points
About ‘Gross Environment Product’ (GEP):
- It is an assessment system to measure the ecological status of a region and is one of the components of green GDP.
- It is considered as the product and service value that the ecosystem provides for human welfare, economic and socially sustainable development.

Two Indian organisations win the UNDP Equator Prize 2021

Why in News
- Two Indian organisations bag the prestigious UNDP Equator Prize 2021, for their exceptional achievement in showcasing local, innovative, nature-based solutions for tackling biodiversity loss and climate change.

Key Points
- The two organizations from India out of the ten winners globally are— Aadhimalai Pazhangudiyinar Producer Company Limited and Snehakunja Trust.
- They will each receive a prize of US$10,000 and the opportunity to join a series of special virtual events associated with the UN General Assembly, the Nature for Life Hub and the UN Food Systems Summit later this year.

About Aadhimalai Pazhangudiyinar Producer Company Limited:
- This 1,700-member cooperative, managed and run entirely by Indigenous people from the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve in Southern India, has improved livelihoods across 147 villages by processing and marketing a diverse range of forest produce and crops.

About Snehakunja Trust:
- Snehakunja Trust has protected sensitive wetland and coastal ecosystems in the Western Ghats and the Karnataka coast for 45 years. Snehakunja Trust is currently piloting the first blue carbon project in India.

About Equator Prize:
- The Equator Prize, organized by the Equator Initiative within the United Nations Development Programme, is awarded biennially to recognize outstanding community efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
New Spider Species named ‘Icius Tukarami’ after 26/11 Martyr Tukaram Omble

Why in the News?
- Scientists have discovered two new species of jumping spiders in Maharashtra and named one of them as 'Icius Tukarami', after Tukaram Omble, the Mumbai Police Assistant Sub-Inspector who was killed during the 26/11 terror attacks in the city.
- The second species of the jumping spider was called Phintella cholkei.

New Frog Species 'Adi Cascade' discovered in Arunachal Pradesh

Why in News
- A team of biologists from Delhi University, Wildlife Institute of India and North Carolina Museum of Natural Science (USA) has discovered a new species of frog from the Adi hills of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The new species of Cascade Frog has been named Adi Cascade Frog (Amolops adicola) after the Adi hills, which are home to Adi tribes, an indigenous group of people from the Himalayan regions in the state.

Four more sites of India added to Ramsar list as wetlands

Why in News
- Four more wetlands from India get recognition from the Ramsar Secretariat as Ramsar sites.
- These sites are Sultanpur and Bhindawas from Haryana and Thol and Wadhwana from Gujarat.
- With this, the number of Ramsar sites in India is 46 and the surface area covered by these sites is now 1,083,322 hectares.

Key Points
About Ramsar Convention:
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the Convention was signed in 1971.
- Location: Ramsar, Iran
- Effective: 21 December 1975
- Signed: 2 February 1971
- Aim:
  - The aim of the Ramsar list is “to develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits”.

About New Ramsar Sites:
- Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary, the largest wetland in Haryana is a human-made freshwater wetland. Over 250 bird species use the sanctuary throughout the year as a resting and roosting site.
- Sultanpur National Park from Haryana supports more than 220 species of resident, winter migratory and local migratory waterbirds at critical stages of their life cycles.
- Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary from Gujarat lies on the Central Asian Flyway and more than 320 bird species can be found here.
- Wadhvana Wetland from Gujarat is internationally important for its birdlife as it provides wintering ground to migratory waterbirds, including over 80 species that migrate on the Central Asian Flyway.
New frog species in Western Ghats: “Minervarya Pentali”

Why in News

- A team of Delhi University researchers has discovered a new frog species in the Western Ghats and named it after former DU Vice-Chancellor and plant geneticist Deepak Pental.

India’s Global Himalayan Expedition wins UN award for efforts to fight climate change

- An Indian organisation that leverages tourism and technology to help remote community’s access solar energy has won a prestigious UN award for its efforts to combat climate change amid the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The recipients of the 2020 United Nations Global Climate Action Awards, bring focus to the best examples of what people across the globe are doing “to combat climate change in a year that has cast darkness upon so many.”
- According to a statement on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, GHE is the one of the world's first outfits using tourism and technology to bring solar energy to remote communities as recognised by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

Asan Conservation Reserve gets Ramsar site tag - a first for Uttrakhand

- Asan Conservation Reserve has become the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be included in the prestigious Ramsar sites list.
- Besides Asan, Kabartal Wetland from Bihar was the second new site to get included in this list.
- On the fresh inclusion, the Ramsar website stated that “India has named two new Wetlands of International Importance, bringing its total number of ‘Ramsar Sites’ to 39.”

Kaleshwaram irrigation project got environmental clearance 'ex post facto' in violation of law: NGT

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) held that environmental clearance was granted to the Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project in Telangana "ex post facto" in violation of legal requirement, and formed a committee to assess the extent of damage caused and identify the restoration measures.
- About Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project: It is a multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River in Kaleshwaram, Bhupalpally, Telangana, India. Currently the world's largest multi-stage lift irrigation project, its farthest upstream influence is at the confluence of the Pranhita and Godavari rivers.

India's first 5 Animal bridges to come up on Delhi-Mumbai Greenfield Expressway

- The Delhi-Mumbai expressway will have five animal bridges or animal overpasses with a combined length of over 2.5 km.
- The upcoming expressway project will have India's first animal bridges that will be designed keeping in mind not to disturb the environment and wildlife section that comes up on the way of over 1,200 km long expressway.
These bridges have been planned to abide by the concerns of not disturbing the wildlife movement on a section of Ranthambore Wildlife Corridor that comes on the way connecting Ranthambore and Mukundra (Darrah) wildlife sanctuaries in Rajasthan.

Note: Wildlife crossings or animal bridges are a practice in habitat conservation, allowing connections or reconnections between habitats, combating habitat fragmentation. And also assist in avoiding collisions between vehicles and animals.

Lonar Lake in Buldana district of Maharashtra and Sur Sarovar, also known as Keetham lake, in Agra, Uttar Pradesh declared as a wetland area under 'Ramsar Convention'

- India has 41 wetlands, the highest in South Asia, with two more added to the list of recognised sites of international importance under the treaty of Ramsar Convention.
- Note: Recently, Kabartal in Bihar’s Begusarai district was recognised as a wetland of international importance, the first such wetland in the State, under the Ramsar Convention.
- The Asan Conservation Reserve in Dehradun, the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be recognised by Ramsar convention, was added to the list in October this year.

US (United States) formally exited the Paris Climate Agreement

- The US is the only country to withdraw from the global pact.
- The US is the second leading producer of all carbon dioxide emissions globally, behind China.
- The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, dealing with greenhouse-gas-emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance.
  - Signatories: 195
  - Signed: 22 April 2015
  - Effective: 4 November 2016
  - Location: Paris, France

Super Typhoon Goni

- Super Typhoon Goni, the world's most powerful storm in four years, crashed through the Philippines, smashing buildings, toppling trees, and causing floods and mudslides.
- Note: A typhoon is a mature tropical cyclone that develops between 180° and 100°E in the Northern Hemisphere. This region is referred to as the Northwestern Pacific Basin, and is the most active tropical cyclone basin on Earth, accounting for almost one-third of the world's annual tropical cyclones.

Ladakh’s Tso Kar Wetland Complex now a Wetland of International Importance

- India has added Tso Kar Wetland Complex in Ladakh as its 42nd Ramsar site, which is a second one in the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh.
- The Tso Kar Basin is a high-altitude wetland complex, consisting of two principal waterbodies, Startsapuk Tso, a freshwater lake of about 438 hectares to the south, and Tso Kar itself, a hypersaline lake of 1800 hectares to the north, situated in the Changthang region of Ladakh, India.

New population of blue whales discovered in western Indian Ocean
Scientists have found evidence of a previously undiscovered population of blue whales living in the western Indian Ocean based on an analysis of sound recordings from the region.

In a recently published study in the journal Endangered Species Research, the scientists analysed recordings from the Arabian Sea coast of Oman, and as far south as Madagascar, and found a blue whale song that had never been described.

According to the researchers this population of blue whales was previously assumed to belong to the same that had been studied off Sri Lanka, ranging into the southcentral Indian Ocean.

Scientists discovered a new species of wild Sun Rose from the Eastern Ghats in India

- The name of the new species is *Portulaca laljii* which has been discovered from Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh.
- It has unique features such as a tuberous root, no hair in its leaf axils, a reddish pink flower, prolate-shaped fruits, and copper brown seeds without lustre.
- It is named after Lal Ji Singh. He was a well-known botanist from the Botanical Survey of India.
- This species has been included in the “Data Deficient” category of the IUCN Endangered Species List.

The ‘Status of Leopard in India 2018’ report

- The ‘Status of Leopard in India 2018’ report was released by Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar.
- India now has 12,852 leopards. More than 60 percent increase in population has been recorded over the previous estimate which was conducted in 2014.
- Note: The States of Madhya Pradesh (3,421), Karnataka (1,783) and Maharashtra (1,690) have recorded the highest leopard estimates.

Researchers discovered a new frog species

- The researchers from multiple India Institutions and one from France, has found a new species of burrowing frog and named it *Sphaerotheca Bengaluru*, outside its natural habitat in a barren tract of land near Rajankunte, outskirts of Bengaluru.
- The new species was described based on the morphological differences and molecular approach with known species of the burrowing frogs.
- Note: The new species is a part of the team’s effort in documenting the ‘Amphibians in the Deccan Plateau parts of Karnataka’.

Cyclonic Storm ‘Burevi’

- According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Cyclonic Storm Burevi is a currently active tropical cyclone which has made landfall in Sri Lanka and is threatening parts of southern India.
- Note: It is the fifth named cyclone in the 2020 North Indian Ocean cyclone season. The others are Cyclone Gati, Cyclone Nisarga, Cyclone Nivar and Cyclone Amphan.
- Cyclone Burevi is the third Cyclone to hit Tamil Nadu in two years after Cyclone Gaja in 2018 and Cyclone Nivar recently.

‘Blue tide’ spotted at Juhu beach
The blue tide phenomenon was observed in several stretches of Maharashtra coast - such as Juhu Beach. According to Coastal Conservation Foundation director Shaunak Modi, the 'blue tide' was spotted at Juhu Koliwada.

The ‘blue tide’ producing a fluorescent blue hue is a beautiful sight to behold. This phenomenon is called bioluminescence.

Note: Bioluminescence has been observed across the coastline of many beaches in the world such as Indonesia, the USA, the Maldives, Vietnam, Australia and many other countries.

This is a recurring phenomenon which is caused by bioluminescent plankton called Noctiluca scintillans, commonly known as sea sparkle. While smaller blooms may be harmless, slow-moving larger blooms may cause severe hypoxic conditions that result in fish die-offs in an area.

Bioluminescence is the production and emission of light by a living organism. According to the National Ocean Service, bioluminescence in the ocean is not as rare as you might think. “In fact, most types of animals, from bacteria to sharks, include some bioluminescent members.”

Banned catfish Thai Mangur

- A shocking incident came to light in Maharashtra, where almost thousands of tons of banned catfish, Thai Mangur are illegally being bred in over 125 artificial ponds in rural Thane.
- Thai Mangur has been banned by the National Green Tribunal in 2000 as they destroyed the local ecosystem and were considered harmful for human consumption too.
- About Thai Mangur: Ranging from Rs 100-150 per kg, Thai Mangur is easy and cheap to rear. The carnivorous species was introduced to India in the 1990s and it is originally from Africa and the Middle East.
- Artificial tanks are constructed in large farmlands by the local cultivators. It aggressively devours all organisms in any natural pond, thereby damaging the local ecosystem and biodiversity.
- The banned catfish species is a low-maintenance investment for cultivators as it can feed on anything and can even survive in hostile conditions, even staying alive outside water for a long time.

Cyclone Nivar

- Very Severe Cyclonic Storm Nivar was a tropical cyclone that brought severe impacts to portions of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh in late November of 2020. An area of low pressure was formed in the Bay of Bengal, off the coast of Tamil Nadu.
- The seventh depression and fourth named storm of the 2020 North Indian Ocean cyclone season, Nivar originated from a disturbance in the Intertropical Convergence Zone. The disturbance gradually organized and both the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) and the India Meteorological Department (IMD) reported that a tropical depression has formed. Nivar made landfall near Tamil Nadu’s Marakkanam and in Karaikal, Puducherry also.

India’s first pollinator park opens in Uttarakhand

- The Uttarakhand forest department dedicated the newly built Pollinator Park to the public, claiming it to be the country’s first such park, spread over 4 acres in Haldwani in Nainital district.
- The park has more than 40 pollinator species with displays on the mechanism of pollination of plant species by various species of butterflies, honeybees, birds, insects, moths, beetles, wasps, and small mammals.

Euphranta siruvani - New species of fruit fly from India named after Siruvani in Western Ghats

- Euphranta siruvani is a new species of fruit fly in the family Tephritidae. This species is reported from the Siruvani which is an ecological hot spot located in the Western Ghats of India.
This species has been collected from a non forest area near Siruvani in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu, India. This species is differentiated from other species of Euphranta by the presence of a 'V' shaped black band on the wing.

PCRA launches a month long mass awareness campaign ‘SAKSHAM’ to spread awareness about ‘Green and Clean Energy’

- With a view to create awareness among the consumers of fossil fuels, Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas launched a month long campaign ‘SAKSHAM’ (Sanrakshan Kshamata Mahotsav), highlighting the adverse health and environmental impacts of increasing carbon footprints.
- The campaign through various pan-India activities such as cyclothon, farmer workshops, seminars, painting competition, CNG vehicle driving contest, etc will spread awareness among masses about the advantages of using clean fuels.

Zoological Survey of India (ZSI): Sunderbans is home to 428 species of birds

- Indian Sunderbans is home to 428 species of birds, a recent publication “Birds of the Sunderban Biosphere Reserve” by ZSI.
- About Indian Sundarbans: The Sundarbans National Park is a national park, tiger reserve, and biosphere reserve in West Bengal, India.
- It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site inscribed in 1987, and it has been designated as a Ramsar site since 2019.
- It is considered as a World Network of Biosphere Reserve (Man and Biosphere Reserve) from 1989.
- Indian Sundarbans were considered endangered in a 2020 assessment under the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems framework.

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari approved a proposal to levy a “Green Tax” on old vehicles which are polluting the environment

- Some important principles to be followed while levying the Green Tax are: Transport vehicles older than 8 years could be charged Green Tax at the time of renewal of fitness certificate, at the rate of 10 to 25 % of road tax, Personal vehicles to be charged Green Tax at the time of renewal of Registration Certification after 15 years, Electric vehicles and alternate fuels like CNG, ethanol, LPG and vehicles used in farming, such as tractor, harvestor, tiller etc to be exempted.

Hyderabad gets recognition as ‘2020 Tree City of the World’

- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the Arbor Day Foundation have recognized Hyderabad as a ‘2020 Tree City of the World’.
- Hyderabad earned recognition in the Foundation’s second year of the programme along with 51 other cities globally and the only city in India to get this recognition so far.
- Most of the cities were from the US, UK, Canada, Australia among other countries.

New alpine plant species discovered in Arunachal Pradesh

- A new species of alpine plant in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang district has been discovered by a group of scientists of three institutes of the country.
- The discovery of the species was published in 'Biodiversitas: Journal of Biological Diversity'.
- The new species belongs to the family of Himalayan sunflower.
- It is named as 'Cremanthodium indicum' and the plant species, which generally flowers from July to August, is endemic to Penga-Teng Tso Lake of Tawang district.
Note: The alpine plant species is assessed as critically endangered, according to the IUCN guidelines.

Mandarin duck sighted after 118 years in Assam

- A colourful duck from eastern Asia spotted in Assam after 118 years has raised hopes for a wetland that was affected by a blowout and inferno at a natural gas well in May-June, 2020.
- The duck, whose primary habitat is in eastern China and southern Japan, had landed in Assam by accident too.
- Its scientific name is Aix galericulata.
- The mandarin duck is a perching duck species native to the East Palearctic. It is medium-sized, at 41–49 cm long with a 65–75 cm wingspan. It is closely related to the North American wood duck.

First highway with wildlife protection corridor

- According to Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, The Delhi-Saharanpur-Dehradun Economic corridor will be India's first highway where there will be a 12-kilometer long elevated corridor for protection of wildlife.
- The highway project is being developed between Delhi's Akshardham and Dehradun in four sections.
- The ministry has decided to execute the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway project under Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) mode.
- This highway project, once completed, will reduce the distance between the two cities from 235 km to 210 km, and travel time from the current 6.5 hours to just 2.5 hours.

Srivilliputhur Megamalai Tiger Reserve (SMTR) becomes the fifth tiger reserve in Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu is set to get its fifth tiger reserve spread over one lakh hectares of land under the Meghamalai Wildlife Sanctuary and Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has approved the new tiger reserve.
- The proposal states that the new tiger reserve will not only lead to wildlife protection of the country’s flagship species but will also result in the rejuvenation of the Vaigai River by protecting the river’s origins in these forests.
- Note: The first tiger reserve in Tamil Nadu – Kalakkad Mundanthurai – was formed around 1988-89, which was followed by Anamalai and Mudumalai in 2008 and 2009. The fourth reserve – Sathyamangalam – was created around 2013-14.
- This will be the 51st tiger reserve in the country.

South Korea plans to construct world’s largest offshore wind farm

- South Korea plans to build an 8.2 GW offshore wind farm in Jeonnam province by 2030.
- The offshore wind farm project is expected to boost South Korea's wind power capacity to 16.5 GW by 2030 from 1.67 GW now.
- Note: Currently, the world’s largest offshore wind farm is Hornsea 1 in Britain, which has 1.12 GM capacity.

Denmark to create world’s first energy island in the North Sea

- Denmark approved a plan to build the world's first energy island in the North Sea that will produce and store enough green energy to cover the electricity needs of 3 million European households.
- The energy island, which will cost around 210 billion Danish crowns ($33.9 billion) to build, is an important part of Denmark's legally binding target to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 70% by 2030 from 1990 levels, one of the world's most ambitious.
• Note: Denmark also has plans for an energy island in the Baltic Sea.

National Marine Turtle Action Plan launched

• The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has released ‘Marine Mega Fauna Stranding Guidelines’ and ‘National Marine Turtle Action Plan’.
• India has rich marine biodiversity along a vast coastline of over 7,500 km. India’s coastal waters and beaches provide foraging and nesting sites for a variety of marine species, including sea turtles.
• **Five species of sea turtles are known to inhabit Indian coastal waters and islands.** These are the Olive Ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea), Green (Chelonia mydas), Hawkshill (Eretmochelys imbricata), Loggerhead (Caretta caretta) and the Leatherback (Dermochelys coriacea) turtles. Except the Loggerhead, the remaining four species nest along the Indian coast.
• They are protected in Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Uttarakhand sets up first arboretum for Shivalik range

• A first of its kind arboretum conserving over 210 species of trees found in the Shivalik range of Himalayas was inaugurated in Uttarakhand's Nainital district.
• The arboretum was inaugurated by Ajay Singh Rawat, a noted environmentalist from Uttarakhand.
• The Shivalik Arboretum has over 210 tree and shrub species, making it one of the biggest arboretum in the state. Some of the trees preserved include Kafal, Buransh, Tejpat and Sanjeevani.
• **Note: Shivalik range or Outer Himalayas** spreads across states and union territories like Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and seven states in the country’s northeast.
Health News

Punjab becomes first state in country to introduce SOHUM (AABR)

Why in News
- Punjab Government introduced SOHUM-Automated Auditory Brainstem Response system (AABR) under Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Programme.
- Punjab is the first state in the country to introduce SOHUM (AABR).

Key Points
- This initiative will effectively screen hearing loss in newborn and young children.
- This device will certainly help in effective assessment and further management of hearing loss in a timely manner.

Note:
- In a developing country like India 5-6 per thousand children are born with this defect.
- Around 63 million people are suffering from hearing impairment and related diseases in India.

About SOHUM:
- It is an indigenously developed newborn hearing screening device developed by the School of International Biodesign start-up SOHUM Innovation Labs India Pvt. Ltd.
- It was developed under the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology.

Global Hunger Index 2020:
- India ranked 94 among 107 countries in the Global Hunger Index 2020 and is in the ‘serious’ hunger category.

Global Nutrition Report-2020:
- India is among 88 countries that are likely to miss global nutrition targets by 2025.

Arogya Dhara 2.0

Why in News
- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Mansukh Mandaviya launched Arogya Dhara 2.0 to mark the completion of 2 crore treatments under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

Key Points
- With the completion of more than 2 crore hospital admissions landmark, treatments worth approximately Rs 25,000 crore have been provided till date (18 August 2021) through a growing network of 23,000 public and private empaneled hospitals to patients across 33 States/UTs in the country since the launch of the scheme.

The following key initiatives were also launched:
- Adhikar Patra: to be issued to the beneficiaries during their hospital admissions for treatment under PMJAY scheme to make them aware about their rights.
- Abhinandan Patra: a ‘thank you note’ to be issued to the beneficiaries during their discharge after the treatment under PMJAY for availing the benefits of the scheme.
- Ayushman Mitra: Another key initiative launched which provides an opportunity to all citizens to contribute to the vision of Ayushman Bharat by helping eligible people to get their Ayushman Cards created and bring them under the ambit of the scheme.

About Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY):
- It is an ambitious scheme ensuring quality and affordable healthcare for the poor and underprivileged people.
- It has empowered all eligible beneficiaries with cashless and paperless healthcare services benefits of upto Rs 5 Lakhs per family per year.
• It was launched on 23 September 2018 at Ranchi, Jharkhand.

Note: Under the AB-PMJAY approximately 20.32 lakh COVID-19 tests and 7.08 lakh treatments were authorised from April 2020 to July 2021.

Source: PIB

112th Annual Day of National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)

Why in News
• Recently, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Mansukh Mandaviya presided over the 112th Annual Day celebrations of National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).

‘Ashwagandha’ for promoting recovery from COVID-19

Why in News
• India and the U.K. will conduct clinical trials of ‘Ashwagandha’ for promoting recovery from COVID-19.
• The All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Ayush, and the U.K.'s London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to conduct clinical trials of Ashwagandha.

Key Points
About Ashwagandha:
• Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera), commonly known as ‘Indian winter cherry’, is a traditional Indian herb that boosts energy, reduces stress and makes the immune system stronger.
• The successful completion of the trial could be a major breakthrough and give scientific validity to India’s traditional medicinal system.
• Combined with substantial literature on its pharmacological and immunomodulatory effects, the study suggests ‘Ashwagandha’ as a potential therapeutic candidate for alleviating the long-term symptoms of COVID-19.

Source: The Hindu

Biotech-PRIDE (Promotion of Research and Innovation through Data Exchange)

Why in News
• Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology has released “Biotech-PRIDE (Promotion of Research and Innovation through Data Exchange) Guidelines” and launched a website of Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC).

Key Points
About Biotech-PRIDE:
Need:
• With a large population of over 135 crore and heterogeneous character of the country, India needs its own exclusive database for Indian Research and Solutions.
• The indigenous database will have a huge enabling mechanism for exchange and adoption of data by young scientists and researchers for the benefit of Indian Citizens.
• Advances in DNA sequencing and other high-throughput technologies along with a steep drop in DNA sequencing cost have enabled government agencies to fund research towards generation of large volumes of biological data in various sectors of Biosciences.
• It will contribute to human health on agriculture, animal husbandry, fundamental research and thus will extend to societal benefits.

Guidelines:
• Initially, these Guidelines will be implemented through Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC) at the Regional Centre for Biotechnology supported by the Department of Biotechnology.
• Other existing datasets/ data centres will be bridged to this IBDC which will be called Bio-Grid.
• This Bio-Grid will be a National Repository for biological knowledge, information and data and will be responsible for enabling its exchange, developing measures for safety, standards and quality for datasets and establishing detailed modalities for accessing data.

Note: India ranks number 4 amongst the top 20 countries contributing biological databases.

Biotech Schemes and Policies:
• Genome India Project
• Biotech-KISAN Programme
• Atal Jai Anusandhan Biotech Mission - Undertaking Nationally Relevant Technology Innovation (UNaTI)
• DNA Technology Bill, 2019

Source: PIB

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi launches Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY SEHAT to extend coverage to all residents of Jammu & Kashmir

• Scheme will provide financial cover up to Rs 5 lakh per family on a floater basis; free and cashless treatment in any public and private empanelled hospital across the country.
• Right now about 6 lakh families of the state are getting the benefit of Ayushman Bharat Scheme. All 21 lakh families living in J & K will get the same benefit after the SEHAT scheme.
• Note: AB-PMJAY (Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana) is a flagship health scheme of the central government, which was launched in 2018, and provides a cover of up to Rs 500,000 per family every year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation.

The first and only indigenous Pneumonia vaccine launched by Serum Institute of India (SII)
• The product of the company is named the Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV).
• This vaccine is used for active immunisation against invasive disease and pneumonia caused by Streptococcus pneumonia in infants and has been developed by SII in collaboration with other partners like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
• Note: Serum Institute of India is also the pharma company that is testing and producing the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine candidate in India.

Indian Railways launches Hospital Management Information System (HMIS) trial project
• The trail project has been launched over South Central Railway.
• About HMIS: The HMIS in Railways has been developed by Indian Railways in coordination with RailTel Corporation Limited.
• Its objective is to provide a single window of clearance of hospital administration activity such as clinical, diagnostics, pharmacy, examinations, industrial health etc.

National Centre for Divyang Empowerment (NCDE) inaugurated in Hyderabad
Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy has inaugurated the National Centre for Divyang Empowerment at the CRPF Group Centre in Hakimpet near Hyderabad.

This is the first of its kind establishment to re-skill and rehabilitates the Divyang Warriors of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) who suffered life threatening injuries in line of duty.

NITI Aayog releases a white paper "Vision 2035 - Public Health Surveillance in India"

- The white paper lays out India’s vision 2035 for public health surveillance through the integration of the three-tiered public health system into Ayushman Bharat.
- Citizen-friendly public health surveillance system will ensure individual privacy, enabled with a client feedback mechanism. India aims to provide regional and global leadership in managing events that constitute a public health emergency of international concern.

India's first mRNA vaccine for Covid-19

- India's first indigenous mRNA vaccine has received approval from the Drug Controller General of India to initiate Phase I/II human clinical trial.
- The mRNA vaccine, HGCO19 has been developed by Gennova, a company based in Pune and supported with seed grant under the Ind-CEPI mission of Department of Biotechnology of Science and Technology Ministry.
- **Note:** The mRNA vaccines do not use the conventional model to produce immune response. Instead, mRNA vaccine carries the molecular instructions to make the protein in the body through a synthetic RNA of the virus.

India continues to make impressive gains in reduction of malaria burden: WHO

- According to the **World Malaria Report 2020** released by the World Health Organisation (WHO), India is the only high endemic country which has reported a decline of 17.6 percent in 2019 as compared to 2018. The Annual Parasitic Incidence reduced by 27.6 percent in 2018 compared to 2017.
- The percentage drop in the malaria cases was 71.8 percent and deaths were 73.9 percent between 2000 to 2019.
- **Note:** Malaria elimination efforts were initiated in the country in 2015 and were intensified after the launch of National Framework for Malaria Elimination in 2016 by the Health Ministry. The National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination was launched by the Health Ministry in July, 2017 which laid down strategies for the next five years.

Covishield and Covaxin are the first two Covid-19 vaccines to be approved in India

- Drugs Controller General of India (DGCI) has given approval for restricted use in emergency situations of vaccines- Covishield from Serum Institute of India (SII) based on the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine and Covaxin from Bharat Biotech.
- The decision of the DGCI came after the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) of Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) recommended their emergency use.
Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurates CEPI Centralized network lab at DBT-THSTI Faridabad

- The Minister for Science & Technology, Health & Family Welfare and Earth Sciences Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated one of the seven labs of the world called as the centralized network lab of Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) established at Translational Health Science & Technology Institute (THSTI), Faridabad.
- Note: CEPI is an innovative partnership between public, private, philanthropic, and civil organizations, launched at Davos in 2017, to develop vaccines to stop future epidemics.

Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI) Wave-1, India Report

- The National Programme for Health Care of Elderly, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has undertaken the Longitudinal Ageing Study of India, through International Institute for Population Sciences, (IIPS), Mumbai in collaboration with Harvard School of Public Health, University of Southern California, USA, Dte.GHS, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and National Institute on Ageing.
- It is India’s first and the world’s largest ever survey that provides a longitudinal database for designing policies and programmes for the older population in the broad domains of social, health, and economic well-being.

Over 1.2 lakh died due to air pollution in India in 2020: Greenpeace Report

- According to the report by Greenpeace, a global climate activist group, titled 'Greenpeace: Cost to Economy Due to Air Pollution Analysis 2021', around 1.2 lakh lives were lost due to air pollution in six Indian cities and that the economic losses on account of bad air amounted to over ₹2 lakh crore.
- According to the study, there were 54,000 air pollution-related deaths in Delhi, 25,000 in Mumbai, 12,000 in Bengaluru, 11,000 each in Hyderabad and Chennai and around 6,700 in Lucknow.
- Note: Globally, approximate 160,000 deaths have been attributed to PM2.5 air pollution in the five most populous cities (Delhi, Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Shanghai and Tokyo).

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and CSIR, India sign MoU to promote health research

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to support the development, conduct and promotion of health research in India.
Gates Foundation and CSIR will work together to identify opportunities to initiate scientific and technological collaborations.

Note: Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) is India’s premier S&T organization comprising 37 research laboratories focused on diverse scientific and industrial research areas.

Facts about the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation:
- Founded: 2000
- Headquarters: Washington, USA
- Founders: Melinda Gates, Bill Gates

India becomes 1st country in world to identify need for action for Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease
- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, launched the operational guidelines for Integration of NAFLD (Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease) with NPCDCS.
- About NPCDCS (National Programme for Prevention & Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke): In order to prevent and control major NCDs (Non-communicable diseases), the NPCDCS was launched in 2010.

Food regulator FSSAI notifies regulations to limit trans fat in food items
- Under the regulation notified on December 29 last year, FSSAI said it has limited industrial TFA (trans fatty acids) to not more than 3 per cent in all fats and oils by January 2021 and not more than 2 per cent by January 2022.
- The Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Second Amendment Regulations, 2021, has been notified.
- This regulation states that all food products in which edible oils and fats are used as an ingredient should not contain industrial trans fatty acids more than 2 per cent by mass of the total oils/fats present in the product, on and from January 1, 2022.
- Note: In 2018, the WHO called for elimination of industrially-produced trans fat from the food supply by 2023 and released an action package ‘REPLACE’ for the same.
- Facts about FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India): It has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- Founded: August 2011
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Agency executive: Rita Teaotia (Chairperson)
**Defense News**

3rd edition of Bilateral Maritime Exercise ‘Samudra Shakti’

**Why in News**
- Indian Navy and Indonesian Navy participated in the 3rd edition of Bilateral Maritime Exercise ‘Samudra Shakti’ at Sunda Strait, Indonesia from September 20 to 22, 2021.

**Key Points**
- **Indian Naval Ships Shivalik and Kadmatt** participated in the Exercise.
- The aim of the exercise is to strengthen the bilateral relationship, enhance mutual understanding and interoperability in maritime operations.

**Note:** In pursuance of India’s Act East Policy, Exercise ‘Samudra Shakti’ was conceived in 2018 as a bilateral IN-IDN exercise.

**Other Exercises with Indonesia:**
- **Military Exercise:** Garuda Shakti
- **Maritime Exercise:** IND-IDN CORPAT, IND-IDO BILAT

**Source:** PIB

AUKUS- a new trilateral security partnership for Indo-Pacific

**Why in News**
- The **US, UK and Australia** have announced the formation of AUKUS – a new trilateral security partnership for the Indo-Pacific region.
- It was announced in a joint address by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison and US President Joe Biden with a vision for a safer and more secure Indo-Pacific.

**Key Points**
- Under the AUKUS alliance, the 3 nations have agreed to enhance the development of joint capabilities and technology sharing, foster deeper integration of security and defence-related science, technology, industrial bases and supply chains.
- Under the first major initiative of AUKUS, Australia would build a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines with the help of the US and the UK, a capability aimed at promoting stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

**Other Groups:**
- ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand and the US)
- Quad (The US, India, Japan and Australia)
- Five Eyes (US, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand)

**Source:** TOI

15th Edition of Indo - Nepal Joint Military Training Exercise ‘Surya Kiran’

**Why in News**
• It will continue till 03 October 2021.

Key Points
• During this exercise, an Infantry Battalion from Indian Army and an equivalent strength from Nepali Army would be sharing their experiences gained during the conduct of various counter-insurgency operations over a prolonged period in their respective countries.
• Also, there would be a series of Expert Academic Discussions on various subjects such as Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, High Altitude Warfare, Jungle Warfare etc.
• The exercise is part of an initiative to develop inter-operability and sharing expertise between the two nations.
• Note: Last edition of Exercise Surya Kiran was conducted in Nepal in 2019.
Source: PIB

First satellite and nuclear missile tracking ship INS Dhruv
Why in News
• India has launched its first satellite and nuclear missile tracking ship INS Dhruv in Visakhapatnam.

Key Points
About INS Dhruv:
• INS Dhruv, with its anti-ballistic missile capabilities, will act as an early warning system for enemy missiles headed towards Indian cities and military establishments.
• It is India's first naval vessel that is capable of tracking nuclear missiles at a long range, which assumes a special significance with an increasing threat of nuclear ballistic warfare in the Indo-Pacific region.
• It was built by the Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. in collaboration with the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
Note: India now joins an elite list of countries that presently consists of only France, the US, the UK, Russia, and China, who possess and operate such vessels.
Source: Hindustan Times

India’s first Emergency Landing Facility for Indian Air Force in Barmer, Rajasthan
Why in News
• Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister and Nitin Gadkari, Minister for Road Transport and Highways jointly inaugurated Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) for the Indian Air Force at Satta-Gandhav stretch on NH-925A near Barmer, Rajasthan.
Key Points

- This is the first time that a National Highway has been used for emergency landing of aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- The NHAI has developed the 3 kilometre section as an ELF for the Indian Air Force.
- It is part of the newly-developed two-lane paved shoulder of Gagariya-Bakhasar & Satta-Gandhav Section having total length of 196.97 kilometres and costing Rs 765.52 crore under Bharatmala Pariyojana.
- The work commenced in July 2019 and was completed in January 2021.

Source: The Hindu

C-295MW transport aircraft for Indian Air Force

Why in News

- Cabinet Committee on Security approved the procurement of 56 C-295MW transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force (IAF) under the ‘Make in India’ initiative.
- It will be purchased from M/s Airbus Defence and Space S.A., Spain.

Key Points

About C-295MW aircraft:

- It is a transport aircraft of 5-10 Tonne capacity with contemporary technology that will replace the ageing Avro aircraft of IAF.

Project Execution:

- 16 aircraft will be delivered in flyaway condition from Spain within 48 months of signing of the contract and 40 aircraft will be manufactured in India by TATA Consortium within 10 years of signing of the contract.
- This is the first project of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India by a private company.
- During the process of manufacturing in India, it is expected that all the suppliers of TATA Consortium who will be involved in special processes will gain and maintain globally recognized National Aerospace and Defence Contractors Accreditation Program (NADCAP) accreditation.

Significance of the Deal:

- The project will give a boost to the aerospace ecosystem in India wherein several MSMEs spread over the country will be involved in manufacturing of parts of the aircraft.
- The programme will provide a major boost to the `Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan’ as it offers a unique opportunity for the Indian Private Sector.

Employment Generation:

- The programme will act as a catalyst in employment generation in the aerospace ecosystem of the country and is expected to generate 600 highly skilled jobs directly, over 3000 indirect jobs and an additional 3000 medium skill
employment opportunities with more than 42.5 lakh man hours of work within
the aerospace and defence sector of India.

Source: PIB

President’s Colour presented to Naval Aviation

Why in News

- Shri Ram Nath Kovind, President of India and the Supreme Commander of Indian Armed Forces, presented the President’s Colour to Indian Naval Aviation at INS Hansa, Goa.

Key Points

- Award of the President’s Colour to Indian Naval Aviation, is in recognition of the yeoman service rendered both during peace and combat.
- The Naval Aviation arm came into being with acquisition of the first Sealand aircraft on 13 Jan 1951 and commissioning of INS Garuda, at Kochi on 11 May 1953.
- Today, Naval Aviation boasts of nine Air Stations and three Naval Air Enclaves, along the Indian coastline and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- Over the past seven decades, it has transformed into a modern, technologically advanced and highly potent force, with more than 250 aircraft.

About President’s Colour:

- It is bestowed on a military unit, in recognition of exceptional service rendered to the Nation, both in peace and in war.
- The Indian Navy was the first Indian Armed Force, to receive the President’s Colour, from Dr Rajendra Prasad, the then President of India on 27 May 1951.

Source: PIB

‘AUSINDEX 21’- a bilateral maritime exercise between Australia and India

Why in News

- The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and Indian Navy (IN) conduct the 4th edition of bilateral exercise – ‘AUSINDEX ’in Australia from 06 to 10 September, 2021.

Key Points

- Indian Navy Task Group comprising IN Ships Shivalik and Kadmatt participated in the exercise.
- From Australia, Royal Australian Navy Anzac Class Frigate, HMAS Warramunga participated.
- The exercise will provide an opportunity for both Navies to further bolster interoperability, gain from best practices and develop a common understanding of procedures for Maritime Security Operations.
- The exercise is a true representation of Joint Guidance signed by the Chief of the Naval Staff, IN and Chief of Navy, RAN on 18 Aug 2021.

Source: PIB
• This important document is aligned to the '2020 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' between the two nations and aims to further consolidate shared commitment to regional and global security challenges promoting peace, security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

**Note:** Commenced in 2015 as a bilateral IN-RAN maritime exercise, AUSINDEX has grown in complexity over the years and the 3rd edition of the exercise, held in 2019 in the Bay of Bengal.

**Source:** PIB

### Karbi Anglong Agreement

#### Why in News
• A tripartite agreement ‘Karbi Anglong Agreement’ among five insurgent groups of Assam, the Centre and the State government was signed to end years of violence in the Karbi Anglong region.
• It was signed in the presence of Union Home Minister, Amit Shah.
• The Karbi Agreement is another milestone in Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of “Insurgency free prosperous North East”.

#### Key Points

**Highlights of the Karbi-Anglong Agreement:**
• The insurgent groups which signed the peace accord include Karbi Longri North Cachar Hills Liberation Front (KLNLF), People’s Democratic Council of Karbi Longri (PDCK), United People’s Liberation Army (UPLA), Karbi People’s Liberation Tigers (KPLT) and the Kuki Liberation Front (KLF).
• With this historic agreement, over 1000 armed cadres have abjured violence and joined the mainstream of society.
• A Special Development Package of Rs. 1000 crores over five years will be given by the Union Government and Assam Government to undertake specific projects for the development of Karbi areas.
• This Memorandum of Settlement will ensure greater devolution of autonomy to the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), protection of identity, language, culture, etc. of Karbi people and focused development of the Council area, without affecting the territorial and administrative integrity of Assam.
• The Assam government shall set up a Karbi Welfare Council for focused development of Karbi people living outside the KAAC area.

#### About Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC):
• It is an autonomous district council in the state of Assam for development and protection of tribals living in areas namely Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong district.
• The council is constituted under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India and administratively functions under the Government of Assam.

### Other Recent Peace Agreements of the Northeast:
- NLFT Tripura Agreement, 2019
- Bodo Peace Accord

Source: PIB

12th edition of DefExpo
Why in News
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani jointly reviewed the preparations of DefExpo-2022, at Kevadia, Gujarat.
- A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the Ministry of Defence and Gujarat Government for organising DefExpo-2022.
- The 12th edition of DefExpo will be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat between March 10 and 13, 2022.

Key Points
About DefExpo-2022:
- DefExpo is India’s flagship event showcasing the land, naval, air as well as homeland security systems.
- The aim is to build upon the vision to achieve ‘Aatmanirbharta’ in defence and reach USD 5 billion defence exports target by 2024.

Note: The previous edition (11th) of DefExpo was held at Uttar Pradesh capital Lucknow in February 2020.

Source: PIB

Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) 2021
Why in News
- The 28th edition of Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) was conducted from 02 to 04 Sep 2021.
- Owing to the ongoing pandemic-related constraints, this year’s SIMBEX was planned without any physical interactions as an ‘at-sea only’ exercise hosted by the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) in the southern fringes of the South China Sea.

Key Points
- The Indian Navy was represented by Guided Missile Destroyer INS Ranvijay with a ship borne helicopter, ASW Corvette INS Kiltan and Guided Missile Corvette INS Kora and one P8I Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

About Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX):
- SIMBEX is an annual bilateral naval exercise conducted by the Indian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).
- The exercise has been held annually since 1994.
Both navies have a representation in each other’s Maritime Information Fusion Centres and have also recently signed an agreement on mutual submarine rescue support and coordination.

Source: PIB

Indian Army to participate in Multilateral Exercise ZAPAD, 2021 in Russia

Why in News
• A 200 personnel contingent of the Indian Army will participate in **ZAPAD 2021**, a multi-nation military exercise being held at **Nizhniy, Russia** from 3rd to 16th September 2021.

Key Points
• ZAPAD 2021 is one of the theatre level exercises of the Russian Armed Forces and will focus primarily on operations against terrorists.
• The exercise aims to enhance military and strategic ties amongst the participating nations while they plan & execute this exercise.
• Over a dozen countries from Eurasian and South Asian Region will participate in this signature event.

Participating countries:
• In all, **17 countries** have been invited by Russia for the exercise.
• Of these **9 are Participating countries** which include Mongolia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Russia, India and Belarus.
• The other **8 countries are Observers** which include Pakistan, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Uzbekistan and Sri Lanka, the source added.

The **NAGA Battalion group (India)**, participating in the exercise will feature an all Arms combined task force.

Exercise between India and Russia:
• Indra: Joint Exercise (Army, Navy, Air Force)

Source: The Hindu

Indian Navy’s Maiden Exercise with Algerian Navy

Why in News
• As part of her ongoing goodwill visit to Europe and Africa, INS Tabar took part in a **Maritime Partnership Exercise** with Algerian Navy ship 'Ezzadjer' on 29 Aug 21.
• This naval exercise was conducted off the **Algerian coast**.

Key Points
• As part of the exercise, diverse activities including co-ordinated manoeuvring, communication procedures and steam past were undertaken between the Indian and Algerian warships.
- The exercise enabled the two navies to understand the concept of operations followed by each other, enhanced interoperability and opened the possibility of increasing interaction and collaboration between them in future.

Source: PIB

Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Vigraha'

Why in News
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh dedicated to the Nation, indigenously built Coast Guard Ship ‘Vigraha’ in Chennai.
- ICGS Vigraha is the last vessel in the series of 7 Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) built by L&T under a Ministry of Defence contract signed in 2015.
- Other OPVs are Vikram, Vijaya, Veera, Varaha, Varad and Vajra.

Key Points
About Vigraha:
- ICGS Vigraha will be based at Visakhapatnam and operate on India's Eastern Seaboard under the Operational and Administrative Control of the Commander, Coast Guard Region (East).
- The 98 meters OPV has been designed and built indigenously by M/s Larsen & Toubro Ship Building Ltd., and is fitted with advanced technology Radars, Navigation and Communication Equipment, Sensor and Machinery capable of operating in tropical sea conditions.
- The ship, on joining the Coast Guard Eastern fleet, will be deployed extensively for EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) surveillance and other duties as enshrined in the Coast Guard Charter, to safeguard the maritime interests of India.

Note: The Indian Coast Guard with this ship joining the fleet, will have 157 Ships and 66 Aircraft in its inventory.

Source: PIB

Army Sports Institute Stadium, Pune renamed after Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Neeraj Chopra

Why in News
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh renamed the Army Sports Institute Stadium of Army Sports Institute (ASI), Pune after Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Neeraj Chopra.

Key Points
About Neeraj Chopra:
- Neeraj Chopra is an Indian track and field athlete who competes in the javelin throw.
- As of August 2021, he is ranked second internationally by World Athletics.
- Chopra is the first track and field athlete to win a gold medal for India at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.
About Army Sports Institute (ASI), Pune:
- Established in 2001 under the Indian Army’s Mission Olympic programme, ASI is a multi-disciplinary sports training institute.
- The institute imparts training in seven fields: Archery, Athletics, Boxing, Diving, Wrestling, Fencing and Weightlifting.

Source: Indian Express

Exercise INDRA-2021
Why in News
- The 12th Edition of Indo-Russia joint military Exercise INDRA-2021 will be held at Volgograd, Russia from 01 to 13 August 2021.

Key Points
About INDRA-21:
- The armies of the two countries will conduct anti-terrorist exercises in compliance with the United Nations' decision on joint action against international terrorist groups.
- 250 personnel from both the nations will form part of the exercise.
- Exercise will strengthen mutual confidence and interoperability between the Indian & Russian Armies.

Note:
- The first Exercise INDRA was held in 2003.
- In 2020, the 11th edition of the Exercise was held in the Bay of Bengal.

Joint Military Exercises of India conducted with Foreign Countries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>AUSTRA HIND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>SAMPRITI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>HAND IN HAND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>SHAKTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>GARUDA SHAKTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>PRABAL DOSTYK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>KHANJAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>EKUVERIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>IMBEX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>SURYA KIRAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>MITRA SHAKTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>MAITREE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>AJEYA WARRIOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>YUDHABHAYAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VAJRA PRAHAR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise ‘Cutlass Express 2021’

**Why in News**
- **Indian Naval Ship Talwar** is participating in **Exercise Cutlass Express 2021**, being conducted from 26 July 2021 to 06 August 2021 along the **East Coast of Africa**.

**Key Points**

**About Exercise Cutlass Express 2021:**
- It is an annual maritime exercise conducted **to promote maritime security in East Africa and the Western Indian Ocean**.

**Participants:**

India, UK conduct naval exercise in Bay of Bengal

**Why in News**
- **Indian Navy** participated in a **bilateral Passage Exercise (PASSEX)** with the **United Kingdom’s Royal Navy** in the Bay of Bengal from 21 to 22 Jul, 2021.

**Key Points**
- The **bilateral Maritime Exercise** was designed to hone the ability of the two navies to operate together in the maritime domain.
- The maiden exercise between Indian Navy and the Royal Navy’s latest Aircraft Carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth included participation of Carrier Strike Group (CSG)-21 comprising Type 23 Frigates and an Astute-class submarine in addition to the other surface combatants.
- Indian Navy was represented by **IN Ships Satpura, Ranvir, Jyoti, Kavaratti, Kulish** and a submarine.

**Note:** **India Navy and US Navy** conducted a **Passage Exercise** from March 28-29, 2021 in the eastern Indian Ocean Region.

DRDO successfully flight-tests surface-to-air missile Akash-NG

**Why in News**
- Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested the New Generation Akash Missile (Akash-NG), a surface-to-air Missile from Integrated Test Range off the coast of Odisha.

**Key Points**
- The missile has been developed by Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories.
- During the test, the missile demonstrated high manoeuvrability required for neutralising fast and agile aerial threats.

Tri Nation Table Top Naval Exercise 'Shield'

**Why in News**
- A Tri Nation Table Top Anti-Narcotics & Maritime Search and Rescue exercise **(Exercise Shield)** between **Sri Lanka Navy**, **Maldives National Defence Force** and **Indian Navy** was conducted at WNC, Mumbai in virtual mode for the first time on 14 and 15 Jul 2021 with Indian Navy as the lead agency.
- The exercise was coordinated by Maritime Warfare Centre, Mumbai.
DRDO’s Short Span Bridging System-10 m inducted into Indian Army

Why in the News?
- The first production lot of **12 Short Span Bridging System (SSBS)-10 m**, designed and developed by **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**, has been inducted into Indian Army.

Key Points
- The **SSBS-10 m** plays a crucial role of bridging the gaps up to 9.5 m as a single span providing a 4 m wide, fully decked roadway, ensuring faster movement of the troops.
- Research & Development Establishment (Engrs) Pune, a premier engineering laboratory of DRDO, has designed and developed the system in association with M/s L&T Ltd.
- The 12 bridges are part of 102 SSBS-10 m from M/s L&T Ltd, which is the production agency.

DRDO successfully test fires enhanced Pinaka rocket

Why in the News?
- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully test fired extended range version of indigenously developed Pinaka rocket from a Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL) at Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.

Key Points
- 25 Enhanced Pinaka Rockets were launched in quick succession against targets at different ranges.
- The enhanced range version of Pinaka Rocket System can destroy targets at distances up to 45 kms.
- The rocket system has been developed jointly by **Pune based Armament Research and Development Establishment** and **High Energy Materials Research Laboratory** with manufacturing support from M/s Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur.

First Indigenous Aircraft Carrier: INS Vikrant

Why in the News?
- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh reviewed the progress of construction of the **first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC), INS Vikrant** built by M/s Cochin Shipyard Ltd., at Kochi.
- INS Vikrant would be commissioned in the first half of 2022, which would be the most potent sea-based asset.
- He recalled a recent approval accorded by the Defence Acquisition Council for Request for Proposal (RFP) of Project 75-I under the Strategic Partnership model, which will give further fillip to indigenous development of niche manufacturing technologies.

New Generation Agni-P Ballistic Missile

Why in the News?
- DRDO successfully flight tested a **New Generation Nuclear Capable Ballistic Missile Agni-P (Agni-Prime)** from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha, Balasore.

Key Points
- Agni-P is a new generation advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles.
- Agni-P was developed under the **Integrated Guided Missile Development Program**.
- It is a canisterised missile with range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 kms.
Exercise Sea Breeze 2021

Why in the News?
- Ukraine and the United States launched joint naval exercise ‘Sea Breeze 2021’ in the Black Sea in a show of Western cooperation with Ukraine.
- The exercise comes days after Russia-U.K. row over warships in disputed waters.

Maritime Partnership Exercise between Indian Navy and the Philippine Navy

Why in News
- Two ships of the Indian Navy, namely INS Ranvijay and INS Kora carried out a Maritime Partnership Exercise with BRP Antonio Luna of the Philippine Navy on 23 Aug 2021 in the West Philippine Sea.

Key Points
- India and The Philippines share a very robust defence and security partnership built over several years and spanning across all domains.
- Both navies remain committed to further strengthening bilateral collaboration in the maritime domain towards a collective aim of ensuring a stable, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

Source: PIB

Source: PIB

Exercise ‘Zair-Al-Bahr’ conducted between Indian Navy and Qatar Navy

Why in News
- The 2nd edition of bilateral maritime exercise ‘Zair-Al-Bahr’ between the Indian Navy and Qatar Emiri Naval Force (QENF) was conducted in August 2021 in the Persian Gulf.

Key Points
- The present edition of the exercise included a three day harbour phase followed by a two day sea phase.
- The sea phase comprised of tactical maritime exercises involving Surface Action, Anti-Piracy exercises, Air Defence, Maritime surveillance and Boarding operations.
- In the sea phase of the exercise, Indian Navy Stealth Frigate INS Trikand, QENF Missile Boats of Barzan and Damsah class, Fast-Attack Crafts of MRTP 34 class and Rafale Fighter Aircraft participated.
- The bilateral maritime exercise between two navies would further strengthen the maritime exchanges between the two countries and enhance maritime security in the region.

Source: indiannavy.nic.in

Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) 5.0

Why in News
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) 5.0.
- It was launched under Innovations for Defence Excellence - Defence Innovation Organisation (iDEX-DIO).

Key Points
- Thirty five Problem Statements – 13 from the Services and 22 from Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) – were unveiled under DISC 5.0.
- These are in areas such as Situational awareness, Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence, Aircraft-trainer, Non-lethal devices, 5G network, Under-water domain awareness, Drone SWARMS and Data Capturing.

About Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC):
Defence India Startup Challenge has been launched by the Ministry of Defence in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, aimed at supporting Startups/MSMEs/Innovators to create prototypes and/or commercialize products/solutions in the area of National Defence and Security.

**Background:**
- In the previous four editions of DISC, more than 80 startups, MSMEs and individual innovators have joined as winners in over 40 technological areas.
- The launch of DISC 5.0 by iDEX-DIO comes three years after the launch of DISC 1.0.

**About iDEX:**
- The iDEX initiative was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2018 to achieve self-reliance and foster innovation & technology development in defence and aerospace sectors.

**Note:** iDEX4fauji is a similar initiative that gives an opportunity to the service personnel to showcase their talent in these fields.

**Indigenisation of Defence Sector**
- Indigenisation is the capability of developing and producing defence equipment within the country.

**Initiatives:**
- First Negative Indigenisation
- Positive Indigenisation List
- New FDI Policy in Defence Sector
- Defence Industrial Corridors
- Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020

**Source:** PIB

---

**Exercise Konkan 2021**

**Why in News**
- A Naval Exercise “Exercise Konkan 2021” held between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy (Britain) in Portsmouth, United Kingdom.

**Key Points**
- INS Tabar from India and HMS Westminster from Britain participated in the bilateral Exercise Konkan 2021.
- It aims to enhance interoperability, synergy and cooperation between both the Navies.
- **Exercise Konkan** is held annually since 2004 between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Britain.
- The 2019 edition was held on the English Channel, United Kingdom.

**Other Exercise with UK:**
- Ajeya Warrior (Joint Military Exercises)
- Indradhanush (Joint Air Force Exercises)

**Source:** PIB

---

**Indian Navy takes part in US Navy-led SEACAT 2021 exercise in Singapore**

**Why in News**
- The Indian Navy demonstrated its maritime maneuvers in U.S. Navy-led 20th Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training (SEACAT) military exercise in Singapore.
- The military exercise also included navies of 20 other partner nations as well.

**Key Points**
- The maritime exercise aimed to foster enhanced cooperation between Southeast Asian countries by incorporating tactics, standardized training, and procedures to combat contingencies or illegal activities in the maritime domain.
In total, the exercise witnessed close to 400 personnel and 10 ships, including the U.S. Navy’s littoral combat ship Tulsa.

Note: SEACAT began in 2002 as “Southeast Asia Cooperation Against Terrorism”.

Source: AIR

India and Saudi Arabia begin their first naval exercise ‘Al-Mohed Al-Hindi 2021’

Why in News
- The harbour phase of this exercise began on August 09, 2021 while the sea-based drills began from August 11, 2021.

Key Points
- Indian Navy's guided-missile destroyer INS Kochi reached at the Jubail port, Saudi Arabia for this exercise.
- India and Saudi Arabia are conducting their first-ever naval exercise, in reflection of their growing defence and military cooperation.
- The exercise comprises a number of shore and sea-based drills between the two navies.

Source: The Hindu

ITBP inducts women officers in combat for first time

Why in News
- For the first time, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) inducted women officers in combat.
- Two women, Prakriti and Diksha, joined the ITBP as combatised officers after completing their training at the academy in Mussoorie.

Key Points
- The ITBP began recruiting women combat officers in its cadre from 2016 through a national-level examination conducted by the Union Public Service Commission.

About Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP):
- The Indo-Tibetan Border Police is India's primary border patrol organization for its border with China's Tibet Autonomous Region.
- It is one of the Central Armed Police Forces of India, raised on 24 October 1962, under the CRPF Act, in the wake of the Sino-Indian War of 1962.
- Director General: S S Deswal

Other Central Armed Police Forces:
- Assam Rifles (AR)
- Border Security Force (BSF)
- Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
- Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
- National Security Guard (NSG)
- Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)

Source: The Hindu

Indian Navy - United Arab Emirates Navy Bilateral Exercise ”Zayed Talwar 2021"

Why in News
- Indian Navy undertook bilateral exercise ‘Zayed Talwar 2021’ with UAE Navy on 07 August 2021 off the coast of Abu Dhabi.

Key Points
INS Kochi, with two integral Sea King MK 42B helicopters, deployed in the Persian Gulf, participated in the exercise.
UAE participated with UAES AL - Dhafra, a Baynunah class guided missile corvette and one AS – 565B Panther helicopter.

**Note:**
- The exercise also came a week after Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria’s visit to the UAE.
- In December 2020, General MM Naravane visited the UAE and Saudi Arabia in a first-ever visit by the head of the Indian Army to the two important Gulf countries.

Source: AIR

**Indian Navy gets first batch of women pilots for Maritime Reconnaissance missions**

- Lieutenant Shubhangi Swaroop, Lt Divya Sharma and Lt Shivangi graduated as fully operational Maritime Reconnaissance (MR) pilots on October 22.
- Indian Navy got its first batch of women pilots for Maritime Reconnaissance (MR) missions on Dornier aircraft. The pilots completed Dornier Operational Flying Training (DOFT) on October 20 at INS Garuda in Kerala's Kochi. They were operationalized by the Southern Naval Command (SNC).

**Anti-Tank Guided Missile Nag passes final trial**

- The long-awaited 3rd generation Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM), Nag, successfully completed its final user trial in Pokhran, Rajasthan and Nag will enter into the production phase.
- The missile is launched from the NAG missile carrier (NAMICA). The missile will be produced by Defence PSU Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), whereas Ordnance Factory, Medak will produce the NAMICA.
- **Note:** The Nag missile has been developed by DRDO to strike and neutralize highly fortified enemy tanks. It also has night strike capabilities. It has a minimum range of 500 meters and maximum range of 4 kilometers. Nag uses an imaging infra-red seeker to lock on to the target before launch.

**Australia to join Malabar Naval Exercise-2020 with India, US & Japan**

- In the 24th edition of Malabar exercise, Australia will join the Malabar naval exercise involving India, US and Japan.
- The exercise showcases the deep trust between four major Indo-Pacific democracies and their shared will to work together on common security interests in the maritime domain.

**INS Kavaratti to be commissioned into Indian Navy**
● The last of four indigenously built Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) stealth corvettes INS Kavaratti under Project 28 (Kamorta class) will be commissioned into the Indian Navy by Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Naravane, at Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam.

● INS Kavaratti has up to 90% indigenous content. The use of carbon composites to build it has been described as a ‘commendable feat achieved in Indian shipbuilding.’

● It has state-of-the-art weapons and a sensor that can detect and take action against hostile submarines. It also has a good endurance for long-range deployments.

● Note: ‘Project 28’ was approved in 2003. The other three warships under this project are INS Kamorta (commissioned in 2014), INS Kadmatt (2016) and INS Kiltan (2017).

India-Sri Lanka begin their 8th edition of annual Navy bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-20

● The 8th edition of the annual Indian Navy (IN) and Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-20 starts from October 19 to October 21, 2020, in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.

● Note: The interaction between the navies of both nations has grown in recent years. It is in agreement with India’s ‘neighbourhood first’ policy and PM Modi’s vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for all the Region).

● The previous edition of SLINEX was conducted off in Visakhapatnam, India in September 2019.

India successfully test-fires SANT Missile with ‘Lock-On after Launch’ & ‘Lock-On before Launch’ capabilities

● SANT missile (Stand-off Anti-Tank Guided Missile), the air to ground version, has been successfully tested, at the Integrated Test Range in Odisha’s Chandipur.

● Note: The SANT missile has been developed by DRDO’s research centre Imarat, in association with Indian Air force, and is an upgrade of Helina’s missile, which had a range of 7-8 km.

● The new missile has a range of 15-20 km and is equipped with a new nose-mounted active radar seeker, to help keep the launch platform at a safe distance, to evade defensive fire from the target area.

India conducts successful night trial of nuclear-capable Prithvi-2 missile

● India successfully conducted a night trial of the indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-2 missile as part of a user trial by the Army from a test range in Odisha.

● Note: The state-of-the-art surface-to-surface missile blasted off from launch complex 3 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur near Balasore.
The trial of the missile, which has a strike range of 350 km, was carried out from a mobile launcher. The Prithvi-2 missile is capable of carrying 500-1,000 kg of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines.

India to Deliver Kilo Class Submarine INS Sindhuvir to Myanmar Navy

- This will be the first submarine of the neighboring country. The step is in accordance with India's vision of SAGAR and also in line with India's commitment to building capacities and self-reliance in the neighboring countries.
- **Note:** SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) is India's policy of maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean region. It was unveiled in 2015.

DRDO test-fires Nirbhay Cruise Missile

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation launched the 800-km range Nirbhay cruise missile from Odisha’s test facility into the Bay of Bengal.
- **Note:** Nirbhay is a subsonic missile, flying at a speed of 0.7 Mach, with sea-skimming and terrain-hugging capability that helps the missile stay under the enemy radar to avoid detection. The missile’s launch is powered by a solid rocket booster developed by DRDO’s Advanced Systems Laboratory.

India's DRDO successfully tests indigenous combat drone Rustom-II

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) tested the Rustom-2 medium altitude long endurance indigenous prototype drone. It achieved 8 hours off lying at an altitude of 16,000 feet at Chitradurga in Karnataka.
- **Note:** Rustom-2 is capable of carrying different combinations of payloads, which includes electronic intelligence systems, situational awareness systems and also synthetic aperture radar.

DRDO successfully flight tests SMART (Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo)

- Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo was successfully flight tested from Wheeler Island off the coast of Odisha.
- **Note:** SMART is a missile assisted release of lightweight Anti-Submarine Torpedo System for Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) operations far beyond Torpedo range. The launch and demonstration are significant in establishing Anti-Submarine warfare capabilities.

India-Bangladesh Naval Forces to Hold Exercise Bongosagar

- The 2nd edition of India-Bangladesh Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar begins on October 3 and will end on October 5 in the Bay of Bengal.
Note: This edition of the joint naval exercise between Bangladesh and India will include surface warfare drills, seamanship evolutions and helicopter operations.

The exercise Bongosagar is aimed at developing interoperability and joint operational skills through the conduct of maritime exercises and operations.

The Exercise Bongosagar will be followed by the 3rd edition of IN-BN Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT). This joint exercise will take place in the Northern Bay of Bengal from October 4-5. India and Bangladesh’s navy will patrol along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) during the CORPAT exercise.

India test-fires new version of nuclear-capable 'Shaurya' Missile

India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear-capable hypersonic missile 'Shaurya' with a strike range of around 1,000 kilometres. 'Shaurya', which is the land variant of India's K-15 missile, is capable of carrying payloads of 200 kg to 1000 kg and has a strike range of 700 km to 1000 km.

The surface-to-surface tactical missile was blasted off from a canister strapped to the ground launcher from launch complex 4 of ITR (Integrated Test Range) in the APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha by DRDO.

According to DRDO, Shaurya is one of the top 10 missiles in the world with its high-performance navigation and guidance systems, sophisticated control technologies, efficient propulsion systems and canisters launch.

Varunastra: The heavy weight torpedo delivered to Indian Navy

India’s Defence Research and Development (DRDO) chairman and Department of Defence R&D secretary G Satheesh Reddy has flagged off the first Varunastra heavyweight torpedo (HWT) production unit.

Varunastra is a heavy weight, electrically propelled anti-submarine torpedo. It can be launched from ships that can fire heavyweight torpedoes to engage quiet submarines in deep and shallow waters.

First Production unit of Heavy Weight Torpedo, Varunastra, is being produced by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) Vishakhapatnam for Indian Navy.

BDL is also the production agency for quick reaction surface-to-air missile (QRSAM) and Astra air-to-air missile system.

India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20


Indian Navy ships including destroyer Rana with integral Chetak helicopter and indigenously built corvettes Kamorta and Karmuk participated in the 2020 edition of SIMBEX.
Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20

- Indian Navy Ships including indigenously built ASW corvette *Kamorta* and missile corvette *Karmuk* have participated in the 2nd edition of India, Singapore, and Thailand Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20, from 21 to 22 November in the Andaman Sea.
- The 2020 edition of the exercise is hosted by the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).
- The SITMEX series of exercises are conducted to enhance mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices between the Indian Navy (IN), Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), and Royal Thai Navy (RTN).
- The two days of maritime drills witnessed the three navies participate in a variety of exercises including naval maneuvers, surface warfare exercises, and weapon firings.
- **Note:** The **first edition** of SITMEX, hosted by the Indian Navy, was conducted off Port Blair in September 2019.

Indo-Thai Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT)

- The 30th edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy was conducted from 18 – 20 November 2020.
- Indian Naval Ship (INS) *Karmuk*, an indigenously built Missile Corvette and His Majesty’s Thailand Ship (HTMS) *Kraburi*, a Chao Phraya Class Frigate along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both the navies participated in the CORPAT.
- **Note:** To reinforce maritime links, the two navies have been carrying out CORPAT along their International Maritime Boundary Line twice a year since 2005, with the aim of keeping this vital part of the Indian Ocean safe and secure for commercial shipping and international trade.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh unveils Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Missile model in DRDO Bhawan

- ‘Mission Shakti’ was country’s first ever ASAT missile test successfully conducted on 27th March 2019. This was a highly complex mission, conducted at extremely high speed with remarkable precision.
- The successful conduct of Mission Shakti made India the fourth nation in the world with the capability to defend its assets in outer space.

Tri-service exercise ‘Bull Strike’ conducted at Nicobar Islands

- The armed forces conducted a joint tri-service exercise ‘Bull Strike’ at the Teressa Island in the Nicobar group of islands located close to the strategic Strait of Malacca.
- The exercise was conducted by the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) from November 3 to 5 involving the three Services components of ANC, elements of the Army’s Parachute Brigade, Navy commandos MARCOS and Special Forces.
Two-Day Joint Coastal Security Exercise 'Sagar Kavach'

- A two-day joint coastal security exercise, "Sagar Kavach" was launched at Paradip Coast from 5 to 6 November.
- The exercise is being carried out by a joint effort of the state of Odisha and West Bengal governments. More than 10 such departments, including the Indian Navy, the Indian Coast Guard, the Odisha Police, the local fishermen, the forest department, and the port marine department, have joined the joint exercise.

The Bangladesh and US Navies launched the ‘Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Bangladesh-2020’

- The exercise demonstrates US’s continuing commitment to work with the Bangladesh military to address shared maritime security concerns in the region and strengthen partnership to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Indian Army develops messaging application ‘Secure Application for Internet (SAI)’

- Indian Army has developed a simple messaging application named the Secure Application for Internet (SAI). The application supports end to end secure voice, text and video calling services for Android platforms over the internet. The model is similar to applications like Telegram, Whatsapp, SAMVAD and GIMS and utilises end to end encryption messaging protocol.
- **Note:** The indigenous messaging application has been vetted by CERT-in empanelled auditor and Army Cyber Group and the process for filing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) hosting the infrastructure on NIC and working on iOS platform for the app is currently in progress.

Enhanced version of PINAKA rocket system successfully flight tested

- Enhanced PINAKA rocket, developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has been successfully flight tested from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- Development of Enhanced Pinaka system was taken up to achieve longer range performance compared to earlier design with reduced length.
- **Note:** A total of six rockets were launched in quick succession and the tests met complete mission objectives. Enhanced version of the Pinaka rocket would replace the existing Pinaka Mk-I rockets.
Successful maiden launch of MRSAM
- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) achieved a major milestone with the maiden launch of Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM), Army Version from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, off the Coast of Odisha.
- MRSAM Army weapon system comprises of Command post, Multi-Function Radar and Mobile Launcher system.
- Note: Army version of MRSAM was developed jointly by DRDO, India and IAI, Israel.

Indian & Vietnamese Navy conducts PASSEX- 2020 in South China Sea
- Indian and Vietnamese Navy conducted the two-day naval passage exercise PASSEX in the South China Sea as part of efforts to boost maritime cooperation between the two countries.
- Note: Indian Naval Ship Kiltan, carrying humanitarian assistance, reached Vietnam's Nha Rong Port in Ho Chi Minh City to deliver 15 tonnes of relief material for flood-affected people under Mission Sagar-III.
- This mission of INS Kiltan was part of India’s Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries during the ongoing pandemic.

Cabinet approves export of Akash Missile System and creates a committee for faster approval of exports
- Akash is country’s important missile with over 96 percent indigenization.
- Akash is a Surface to Air Missile with a range of 25 Kms. The missile was inducted in 2014 in IAF and in 2015 in Indian Army.
- The export version of Akash will be different from System currently deployed with Indian Armed Forces.
- To provide faster approvals for export of such platforms, a committee comprising of Raksha Mantri, External Affairs Minister and National Security Advisor has been created.

India’s first Maritime Theatre Command (MTC) to be launched in 2021
- The country’s first MTC will have full operational control over the western and eastern naval fleets, maritime strike fighter jets and transport aircraft, two amphibious infantry brigades, and coastal patrol vessels.
- The MTC will be the first new “geographical” theatre command to be created as part of the biggest-ever military restructuring plan.
- Note: The MTC will look after the 7,516-km long coastline, the entire Indian Ocean Region and the 1,382 islands.

35th edition of IND-INDO CORPAT
- The 35th edition of India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Indonesian Navy has been conducted from 17 to 18 December 2020.
- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kulish, an indigenously built missile corvette along with P8I Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) undertook coordinated patrol with Indonesian Naval Ship KRI Cut Nyak Dien, a Kapitan Pattimura class corvette and a MPA of the Indonesian Navy.
Launch of 2nd Project 17A Ship ‘Himgiri’

- ‘Himgiri’, the first of the three Project 17A ships being built at M/s Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE), Kolkata was launched.
- **P17A ships are the first gas turbine propulsion and largest combat platforms ever built at GRSE.**
- **Note:** Under the Project 17A program, a total of seven ships, four at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and three ships at GRSE are being built with enhanced stealth features, advanced indigenous weapon and sensor fit along with several other improvements.

Passage Exercise (PASSEX) between Russian Federation Navy and Indian Navy in Eastern Indian Ocean Region from 4 to 5 December

- The exercise involved participation of Russian Federation Navy guided missile cruiser Varyag, large anti-submarine ship Admiral Panteleyev and medium ocean tanker Pechenga. Indian Navy has been represented by indigenously constructed guided missile frigate Shivalik and anti-submarine corvette Kadmatt along with integral helicopters.
- **Note:** The two navies have built a robust relationship through regular exercises such as INDRA Navy conducted biennially, with the last edition held in the Northern Indian Ocean Region from 4 to 5 September 2020.

Lieutenant General Rajeev Chaudhry assumes charge as Director General Border Roads (DGBR)

- Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry assumed the charge as 27th Director General of the Border Roads Organization on 01 December 2020.
- **Note:** He replaces Lieutenant General Harpal Singh who has been appointed as a new Engineer-in-Chief of Indian Army.

Maiden flight trial of SAHAYAK-NG, Air Droppable Container

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) along with Indian Navy conducted the successful maiden test trial of ‘SAHAYAK-NG’ India’s first indigenously designed and developed Air Dropped Container from IL 38SD aircraft (Indian Navy) off the coast of Goa.
- The trial was conducted by Indian Navy to enhance its operational logistics capabilities and provide critical engineering stores to ships.
- Two DRDO laboratories i.e. NSTL, Visakhapatnam and ADRDE, Agra were involved in the development of SAHAYAK-NG container along the industry partner M/s Avantel for GPS integration.
- **Note:** SAHAYAK-NG is an advanced version of SAHAYAK Mk I.

Myanmar Navy inducts Indian submarine INS Sindhuvir
Myanmar formally commissioned INS Sindhuvir into its Navy. India had delivered it to Myanmar in October 2020.

The Myanmar Navy named the Indian ship UMS Minye Theinkhathu.

It is the first submarine in the Myanmar Navy's arsenal. The former Soviet-era submarine was in operation in the Indian Navy since 1988.

**Note:** India and Myanmar share a long 725-kilometre maritime boundary along the Bay of Bengal.

**BEL signs contract with Indian Navy for Initial supply of indigenously developed Laser Dazzlers**

- Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has signed a contract with Indian Navy for initially supply 20 Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation Dazlers (Laser Dazzlers).
- The **Laser Dazzler** is used as a non-lethal method for warning and stopping suspicious vehicles/boats/aircrafts/UAVs/pirates etc. from approaching secured areas during both day and night.

**Note:** Ministry of Defence has signed contract with Bharat Electronics Limited for procurement of 10 Lynx U2 Fire Control systems for frontline warships of Indian Navy under Buy (Indian) category.

**Sea Vigil-21: Indian Navy starts second edition of coastal defence exercise**

- The second edition of the coastal defence exercise ‘Sea Vigil-21’ has been started on January 12 and will continue till January 13, 2021.
- The exercise aims at assessing India’s preparedness in the domain of coastal defence and maritime security.
- The exercise by the Indian Navy will be undertaken along the entire 7,516 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India.

**Note:** The inaugural edition of the exercise was conducted in January 2019. This is a biennial exercise.

**Cabinet approves Procurement of 83 Light Combat Aircrafts (LCA) ‘Tejas’ from HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited) for Indian Air Force**

- The Cabinet has approved procurement of 73 LCA Tejas Mk-1A fighter aircrafts and 10 LCA Tejas Mk-1 Trainer aircrafts at the cost of Rs. 45,696 Crore along with Design and Development of Infrastructure sanctions worth Rs.1,202 Crore from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.
- It is the first “Buy (Indian-Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured)” category procurement of combat aircrafts with an indigenous content of 50% which will progressively reach 60% by the end of the programme.

**India’s first indigenously developed 9mm Machine Pistol**
India’s first indigenous 9mm Machine Pistol has been jointly developed by DRDO and Indian Army.

The Machine Pistol fires the in-service 9mm ammunition and sports an upper receiver made from aircraft grade Aluminium and lower receiver from carbon fibre. 3D Printing process has been used in designing and prototyping of various parts including trigger components.

The weapon is aptly named “Asmi” meaning “Pride”, “Self-Respect” & “Hard Work”.

**DRDO hands over Motor Bike Ambulance Rakshita to CRPF**

- Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), Delhi-based DRDO laboratory, handed over Rakshita, a bike-based casualty transport emergency vehicle to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).
- The bike ambulance will help in overcoming the problems faced by Indian security forces and emergency health care providers.

**Five day Indo-French Air exercise ‘Ex Desert Knight-21’ begins in Jodhpur**

- Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force are conducting a bilateral Air exercise, Ex Desert Knight-21 in Jodhpur (20-24 January).
- The French side will participate with Rafale, Airbus A-330 Multi-Role Tanker Transport, A-400M Tactical Transport aircraft. The Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft participating in the exercise will include Rafale, Mirage 2000, Sukhoi-30 MKI among other aircraft.
- **Note:** Defence exercises between India and France are Garuda (Air), Varuna (Naval) and Shakti (Army)

**BSF launches operation ‘Sard Hawa’ at Rajasthan border**

- Border Security Force (BSF) on January 21 launched operation ‘Sard Hawa’ at the western international border of Rajasthan, under which vigil will be beefed-up to check the instances of infiltration due to the dense fog in the area.
- This operation will continue till January 27 with an aim that there is no intrusion.
- Significantly, BSF runs Operation "Garam Hawa" in summer season and operation "Sard Hawa" during the winter season as a routine exercise.

**Joint Military Exercise in Andaman Sea**

- Towards enhancing joint operational readiness, Indian Armed Forces conducted a large-scale conjoint military training exercise “KAVACH” along with “AMPHEX-21” in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
- The exercise was conducted under the aegis of Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) with participation of Eastern Naval Command (ENC) and Army Southern Command (SC) involving assets of Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard.
Successful user trials of DRDO-developed Anti-Tank Guided Missile Systems ‘Helina’ and ‘Dhruvastra’
  - Joint User Trials for Helina (Army Version) and Dhruvastra (Air Force Version) Missile Systems have been carried out from Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) platform in desert ranges.
  - The missile systems have been designed and developed indigenously by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
  - **Note:** The Helina and Dhruvastra are third generation, Lock on Before Launch (LOBL) fire and forget Anti-Tank Guided Missiles that can engage targets both in direct hit mode as well as top attack mode.

Indian Navy Ship Pralaya arrives in Abu Dhabi, UAE to participate in NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21
  - Indian Naval Ship Pralaya arrived at Abu Dhabi, UAE to participate in the NAVDEX 21 (Naval Defence Exhibition) and IDEX 21 (International Defence Exhibition), scheduled from 20 to 25 February 2021.
  - INS Pralaya, the second ship of the indigenously built Prabal Class Missile Vessels, was commissioned in the Indian Navy on 18 December 2002.
  - **Note:** Towards enhancing interactions between the two navies, the inaugural edition of Indian Navy – UAE Navy bilateral exercise GULF STAR - 1 was conducted in March 2018.
  - The next edition of the exercise is likely to be conducted in 2021.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurates DRDO Skill Development Centre for Fire Safety Training
  - Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has inaugurated Skill Development Centre (SDC) for Fire Safety Training of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) at Pilkhuwa in Uttar Pradesh.
  - **The first of its kind in India,** SDC has been created by Delhi based DRDO laboratory Centre for Fire, Explosive and Environment Safety (CFEES).
  - It will provide fire prevention and fire-fighting training to Defence Fire Service Personnel and combatants from the Armed Forces.

Successful launches of VL-SRSAM missile system
  - Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO) conducted two successful launches of Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM).
  - The launches were carried out from a static vertical launcher from Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
Indigenously designed and developed by DRDO for Indian Navy, VL-SRSAM is meant for neutralizing various aerial threats at close ranges including sea-skimming targets.

**Indian Navy undertaking mega Exercise ‘TROPEX 21’ in the Indian Ocean Region**
- Indian Navy's largest war game, the biennial "Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise" (TROPEX) 21, which commenced in early January is currently underway with participation of all operational units of Indian Navy including ships, submarines, aircraft as well as units of the Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard.
- The exercise will culminate by the third week of February.
- TROPEX is being progressed over distinct phases:
  - **3 Phases of the Exercise:**
    - **Phase I:** India's largest coastal defence drill "Sea Vigil" exercise from January 12-13
    - **Phase II:** Tri-Service Joint Amphibious Exercise “AMPHEX-21” from January 21-25.
    - **Phase III:** "The weapon workup phase, which concluded recently.

**India joins "Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021"**
- India has joined Iran and Russia in a two-day navy exercise dubbed "Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021" in the northern part of the Indian Ocean.
- Forces and vessels from the navy divisions of both the Iranian army and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) participated in the drill alongside several vessels from the Russian navy.
- **Note:** This is the second such joint Russia-Iran exercise since 2019, when the two nations plus China held a four-day exercise.

**Indo-US joint military exercise 'Yudh Abhyas' begins in Rajasthan**
- Around 250 soldiers from each side will participate in the exercise from February 8-21 at Mahajan field firing range.
- **Note:** The previous version of the joint exercise was held at Seattle in the United States.
- Earlier in January 2021, a five-day exercise was also organized in Rajasthan between the Air Forces of India and France.
- In the end of 2020, India conducted Malabar Naval Exercise with US, Japan and Australia.
First women team inducted into CRPF's CoBRA commando unit

- Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) inducted 34 women commandos in its anti-Naxal Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) unit which will undergo training and then will be sent to Naxal hit areas.
- According to the CRPF, on the occasion of the 88th all-women battalion Raising Day, these women commandos have been inducted along with the introduction of all Mahila brass band.
- **Facts about COBRA:**
  - **Founded:** 2008
  - **Agency executive:** Anand Prakash Maheshwari, Director General
  - **Primary governing body:** Central Reserve Police Force

Asia’s biggest Aero show ‘Aero India 2021’ begins at Bengaluru in Karnataka

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the three-day (03-05 February 2021) mega event that is taking place for the first time in a hybrid mode due to Covid Pandemic. The 13th edition of Aero India show will see participants in both physical and virtual mode.
- India will host **Indian Ocean Region Defence Ministers’ Conclave** on February 04, 2021 during Aero India 2021.
- **Note:** Bengaluru has hosted all 13 editions of the show.
- Aero India is a biennial air show and aviation exhibition.
- It is organised by the Defence Exhibition Organisation, Ministry of Defence. The first edition of the air show was held in 1996.

India conducts first-ever Joint Patrol in Madagascar EEZ

- In a first, the navies of India and Madagascar undertook joint patrolling of Madagascar’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and also conducted a **Passage Exercise (PASSEX)** on 24 Mar 2021.
- **Indian Navy**’s **INS Shardul** and Malagasy Naval Ship Trozona undertook Joint Patrol of Madagascar’s Exclusive Economic Zone and participated in PASSEX.
- Indian Naval Ship Shardul had arrived at port of Antsiranana, Madagascar on 21 March 2021 for Overseas Deployment of a training squadron headed by Captain Aftab Ahmed Khan.
- **Facts about Madagascar:**
  - **Capital:** Antananarivo
  - **President:** Andry Rajoelina
  - **Currency:** Malagasy ariary

India Navy participates with US Navy in PASSEX in Eastern Indian Ocean Region

- India Navy and US Navy conducted a 2 day Passage Exercise from March 28-29, 2021 in the eastern Indian Ocean Region, reflecting the growing congruence in their defence and military partnership.
The Indian Navy deployed its warship Shivalik and long-range maritime patrol aircraft P8I in the 'PASSEX' exercise while the US Navy was represented by the USS Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group.

Note: The 11th edition of Indo-US Joint Special Forces Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR 2021 was conducted at Special Forces Training School located at Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh in March 2021.

Recently America’s Secretary of Defense, General Lloyd Austin visited India.

Operation Sankalp 2021: Indian Navy undertakes Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with Royal Bahrain Naval Force

- Indian Navy on March 17, 2021 undertook Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with Royal Bahrain Naval Force in the Persian Gulf under Operation Sankalp.
- Enhancing interoperability & strengthening bilateral Maritime cooperation, Reassuring Diaspora & merchant shipping Indian Navy Ship INS Talwar undertook Passage Exercise with Royal Bahrain Naval Force Corvette Al Muharraq in the Persian Gulf.
- Note: Maritime Security Operations was initiated in the Gulf region on June 19, 2019, in the aftermath of the attacks on merchant ships in the Gulf of Oman.

Facts about Bahrain:
Crown Prince & Prime Minister: Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa
Capital: Manama
Currency: Bahraini Dinar

India, Pakistan, China to participate in SCO joint anti-terrorism exercise

- India, Pakistan, China and other members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will hold a joint anti-terrorism exercise in 2021.
- The decision to hold the joint exercise "Pabbi-Antiterror-2021" was announced during the 36th meeting of the Council of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
- Note: The next meeting of the Council of the RATS SCO is scheduled to be held in September in Uzbekistan.
- RATS, headquartered in Tashkent, is a permanent organ of the SCO which serves to promote cooperation of member states against terrorism, separatism and extremism.

‘Vajra’ commissioned to the Indian Coast Guard

- Indian Coast Guard Ship ‘Vajra’ was commissioned by General Bipin Rawat, Chief of Defence Staff at Kattupalli in Chennai.
- This is the sixth in the series of seven Offshore Patrol Vessels constructed by M/s Larsen & Toubro Ltd.
Vajra will be based under the Operational and Administrative Control of Coast Guard District (Tuticorin) and will be deployed extensively for surveillance in exclusive economic zones in the Indian Coastal region.

**Indian Army to procure Mobile Integrated Network Terminal (MINT) systems**
- The Indian Army is in the process of procuring Mobile Integrated Network Terminal (MINT) systems under **Make II Category of DAP 2020**.
- The system is envisaged as a lightweight, portable, state of art integrated communication solution with satellite backhaul and wireless access system to support voice, video and data.
- Development of MINT systems will enhance the operational communication capability of the field army in consonance to the self-reliance vision of “Aatmanirbhar Bharat” for Defence production.

**India-Uzbekistan joint military exercise “DUSTLIK II” commenced in Chaubatia, Uttarakhand**
- This is the second edition (March 10-19, 2021) of the annual bilateral joint exercise of both armies.
- 45 Soldiers each from Uzbekistan and the Indian Army are participating in the exercise.
- In the exercise, the troops of the two countries will share the war techniques, introducing high-tech battle skills.
- **Note:** The first edition of the exercise was held in Uzbekistan in Nov 2019.

**‘INS Karanj’, third Scorpene-class Submarine commissioned at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai**
- Indian Navy’s third stealth Scorpene-class Submarine INS Karanj has been commissioned at the Naval Dockyard Mumbai through a formal commissioning ceremony.
- **Note:** With INS Karanj, three of the six superior and advanced indigenous submarines based on the Scorpene-class under Project 75 are now functional.
- **INS Kalvari** was commissioned in 2017 and **INS Khanderi** was commissioned in 2019. While **INS Vela** is undergoing sea trials, **INS Vagir** was launched last year and the sixth one, **INS Vagsheer**, is under construction.
- Six Scorpene-class submarines are being built in India by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai, under collaboration with M/s Naval Group, France.

**Indian Air Force (IAF) participation in Exercise Desert Flag-VI**
- Ex Desert Flag is an annual multi-national large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the United Arab Emirates Air Force.
- The exercise is scheduled from 03 March to 27 March 2021 at Al-Dhafra airbase, UAE.
• **Note:** The Indian Air Force is participating for the first time in Exercise Desert Flag-VI along with air forces of United Arab Emirates, United States of America, France, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Bahrain.

**IAF gifts 1971 war helicopter to Bangladesh, gets F-86 fighter as return gift**

- Commemorating 50 years of defeating Pakistan in the 1971 war, Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief RKS Bhadauria gifted a legacy Alouette III helicopter to Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) and got a legacy F-86 Sabre aircraft as a return gift from Dhaka.
- Bangladesh's Defense Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) has inducted RKS Bhadauria into the 'Mirpur Hall of Fame'.
- Bhadoria took part in the 18th Air Staff Course from this college in Mirpur in 1997-98.

**DRDO lab develops light weight Bullet Proof Jacket**

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) lab Defence Materials and Stores Research and Development Establishment (DMSRDE), Kanpur has developed light weight Bullet Proof Jacket (BPJ) weighing 9.0 kilogrammes, meeting the qualitative requirements of Indian Army.
- The Front Hard Armour Panel (FHAP) jacket was tested at Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), Chandigarh and met relevant BIS standards.

**Indian Army joins Multinational Military Exercise ‘SHANTIR OGROSHENA’ 2021 in Bangladesh**

- Multinational Military Exercise SHANTIR OGROSHENA 2021 (Front Runner of Peace) commenced on 04 April 2021 at Bangabandhu Senanibas, Bangladesh to commemorate the birth centenary of Bangladesh's ‘Father of the Nation’ Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and mark glorious 50 years of liberation.
- Indian Army contingent of 30 personnel are participating along with contingent of the Royal Bhutan Army, Sri Lankan Army and Bangladesh Army from 04 Apr to 12 Apr 2021.
- Military observers from the USA, UK, Turkey, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Singapore will also be in attendance throughout the exercise.
- The theme of the exercise is “Robust Peace Keeping Operations”.

**India joins Multi-Lateral Maritime Exercise ‘La Perouse’**

- **India and three other Quad member nations** joined France in a three-day (05 to 07 Apr 2021) mega naval exercise in the eastern Indian Ocean.
- Indian Navy Ships INS Satpura and INS Kiltan along with P8I Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft participated, for the first time; in multi-lateral maritime exercise La Pérouse.
- The Indian Navy ships and aircraft participated with ships and aircraft of French Navy, Royal Australian Navy, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force and United States Navy.
Note: The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD, also known as the Quad) is an informal strategic dialogue between the United States, Japan, Australia and India.

8th India- Kyrgyz Joint Special Forces Exercise `Khanjar`

- The special forces of India and Kyrgyzstan have started a two-week military exercise in Bishkek with a focus on counter-terror drills.
- The exercise named, ‘Khanjar’, was inaugurated 16 April, 2021 at the Special Forces Brigade of National Guards of Kyrgyz Republic in Bishkek.
- It is the eighth edition of the India-Kyrgyz Joint Special Forces Exercise.
- The two-week long exercise focuses on high-altitude, mountains and counter-extremism.
- Note: The exercise ‘Khanjar’ has been held annually between India and Kyrgyzstan since 2011.

Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise ‘VARUNA-2021’


Project DANTAK completes 60 years in Bhutan

- Project DANTAK is commemorating its Diamond Jubilee in Bhutan.
- It may be recalled that over 1,200 DANTAK personnel laid down their lives while constructing important infrastructure in Bhutan.
- Project DANTAK was established on April 24, 1961 as a result of the visionary leadership of His Majesty the Third King and then Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru.

NATO launches Multinational Military Exercise ‘DEFENDER-Europe 21’ in Albania

- NATO has launched Multinational Military Exercise ‘DEFENDER-Europe 21’ in Albania with thousands of military forces from the United States and other countries in the first such large-scale drills since World War II in the Western Balkans.
- NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) is an international alliance that consists of 30 member states from North America and Europe. It was established at the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949.

Indian Army launches first Green Solar Energy Harnessing Plant in Sikkim

- The Indian Army launched the first Green Solar Energy Harnessing Plant in North Sikkim to harness renewable energy for its troops.
The Green Solar Energy plant with a capacity of 56 KVA, at an altitude of 16,000 ft, will use vanadium-based battery technology.

The project has been accomplished in collaboration with IIT, Mumbai.

A team of faculty from IIT, Mumbai, led by Prof Prakash Ghosh and troops, finished the project.

**Note:** In January 2021, Vanadium was discovered in Arunachal Pradesh. This was the first discovery of Vanadium in India.

India consumes 4% of global vanadium production in the world.

Vanadium is a hard, silver-grey metallic element. Vanadium is found in over 60 different minerals including vanadinite, carnotite, roscoelite and patronite.

Vanadium can be used to make steel alloys, for use in space vehicles, nuclear reactors and aircraft carriers, etc.
Awards and Honors

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2021 Updates:

Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina conferred with SDG Progress Award
Why in News
• Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been conferred with SDG Progress award for Bangladesh’s steady progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

National Florence Nightingale Award 2020 to Brigadier S V Saraswati
Why in News
• Deputy Director General of Military Nursing Service (MNS) Brig S V Saraswati has been bestowed with the National Florence Nightingale Award 2020.
• President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the award for her immense contribution to the MNS as nurse administrator.

‘Super 30’ founder Anand Kumar conferred with Swami Brahmanand Award 2021
Why in News
• Anand Kumar, Mathematician was conferred with the Swami Brahmanand Award 2021 for his contribution in the field of education through his 'Super 30' initiative.

Sahitya Akademi Fellowship 2021
Why in News
• The Sahitya Akademi announced Sahitya Akademi Fellowship 2021 for eight writers, including eminent English author Ruskin Bond and Hindi writer Vinod Kumar Shukla.

Key Points
• The others who received the Fellowship are Sirshendu Mukhopadhyay (Bengali), M Leelavathy (Malayalam), Dr. Bhalchandra Nemade (Marathi), Dr Tejwant Singh Gill (Punjabi), Swami Rambhadracharya (Sanskrit), Indira Parthasarthy (Tamil).

Kaushalacharya Awards 2021
• Union Education Minister and Skill Development Minister Dharmendra Pradhan presented Kaushalacharya Awards 2021 to 41 skill trainers for their exemplary contribution to the skill ecosystem.
• These 41 trainers are from several initiatives and training programmes of Skill India— Directorate General of Training (DGT), Apprenticeship, Pradhan
Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) and Entrepreneurship.

Source: PIB

Earthshot Prize 2021
Why in News
• Two Indian Projects have been selected to get the first ever Earthshot Prize 2021.

Key Points
• Vinisha Umashankar, a 14-year-old Tamil Nadu schoolgirl’s solar-powered ironing cart project and Vidyut Mohan (Co-founder of Takachar), a Delhi entrepreneur’s agricultural waste recycling concept were named among 15 finalists for the first-ever Earthshot Prize 2021.

About Earthshot Prize:
• It is a prize awarded annually from 2021 to 2030, to five winners each year whose solutions substantially help the environment.

Source: Indian Express

UNESCO Literacy Prize awarded to NIOS
Why in News
• The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) of India won the prestigious UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize 2021 for Innovation in Education.

Key Points
• NIOS won this award for enabling education of persons with disabilities through technology-enabled inclusive learning materials, with a specific focus on Indian Sign language-based content.

• Every year, the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes focus on a specific theme. This year, the spotlight was on inclusive distance and digital literacy learning.

• Along with NIOS, this year's UNESCO International Literacy Prizes were awarded to five other outstanding literacy programmes from Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Guatemala, Mexico, and South Africa.

Source: India Today

Hyderabad-based ICRISAT wins Africa Food Prize 2021
Why in News
• Hyderabad-based International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) has been awarded the Africa Food Prize 2021 for improving food security in sub-Saharan Africa.

Key Points
• Africa Food Prize 2021 was awarded at the Africa Forum for Green Revolution 2021 Summit in Nairobi, Kenya.

INSPIRE Awards - MANAK
Why in News
• The 8th National Level Exhibition and Project Competition (NLEPC) for the INSPIRE Awards – MANAK (Million Minds Augmenting National Aspiration and Knowledge), has commenced.
• It is showcasing the innovative ideas from 581 students representing various States and UTs of the country.

Key Points
About The INSPIRE Awards - MANAK scheme:
• The INSPIRE Awards - MANAK scheme is aligned with the ‘Start-up India’.
• It aims to motivate students in the age group of 10-15 years and studying in classes 6 to 10 to become future innovators and critical thinkers.

Behler Turtle Conservation Award 2021
Why in News
• Indian biologist Dr. Shailendra Singh has been awarded the Behler Turtle Conservation Award 2021 for bringing three critically endangered turtle conservation species again from the brink of extinction.
• There are 29 species of freshwater turtles and tortoises in India.

Key Points
• These critically endangered turtles are being conserved as part of TSA India’s analysis, conservation breeding and training programme in numerous elements of the nation.
• The Northern River Terrapin (Batagur baska) is being conserved on the Sunderbans; the Crimson-crowned Roofed Turtle (Batagur kachuga) at Chambal; and the Black Softshell Turtle (Nilssonia nigricans) at completely different temples in Assam.

About Behler Turtle Conservation Award:
• It was established in 2006 to recognise excellent achievements, contributions and management excellence in worldwide turtle conservation and biology.

Source: The Hindu

Ramon Magsaysay Award 2021 Winners
Why in News
• Recently, the 63rd Ramon Magsaysay Award 2021 was announced.

Key Points
List of Ramon Magsaysay Award 2021 Awardees:
• Dr. Firdausi Qadri, Bangladesh (Affordable Vaccine Champion)
• Roberto Ballon, Philippines (Fisherman, Community Environmentalist)
• Steven Muncy, Southeast Asia (Humanitarian, Peace Builder)
• Muhammad Amjad Saqib, Pakistan (Poverty Alleviation Visionary)
• Watchdoc, Indonesia (Media Truth Crusaders)

About Ramon Magsaysay Award:
• It was established in April 1957 and is regarded as the Asian version of the Nobel Prize.
• The award is named after Ramon Magsaysay, the third president of the Republic of the Philippines after World War II.
• The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation gives the prize to Asian individuals achieving excellence in their respective fields.
• The Award is presented in a formal ceremony in Manila, Philippines on August 31st each year.

Source: The Hindu

POWERGRID wins the global ATD BEST Award 2021
Why in News
• Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a Maharatna CPSU under Ministry of Power, Government of India has been awarded the coveted “Association for Talent Development (ATD) 2021 BEST Award”.
• It secured 8th rank among the 71 organizations from around the globe.

Source: PIB

Shibaji Banerjee to be conferred with Mohun Bagan Ratna 2021 posthumously
• Former goalkeeper of the Indian Football team, Late Shibaji Banerjee will be conferred with Mohun Bagan Ratna 2021 posthumously.
• During his 8 years long professional career, Banerjee won 4 Calcutta Football League, 5 Durand Cup, 5 IFA Shield, 4 Federation Cup and 2 Rovers Cup titles.

Kajal Chakraborty wins Norman Borlaug National Award 2020
Why in News
• Kajal Chakraborty, Principal Scientist at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has won the Norman Borlaug National Award for Excellence in Agricultural Research instituted by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
• The award was presented during the 93rd Foundation Day of ICAR.

Cannes Film Festival 2021
• The 74th Cannes Film Festival was held in Cannes, France.
• American director & Screenwriter Spike Lee was the Jury President of Cannes Film Festival 2021

The list of main winners:
• Palme d'Or: Julia Ducournau for "Titane" (France)
• Grand Prix: Ashgar Farhadi for "A Hero" (Iran) and Juho Kuosmanen for "Compartment No.6" (Finland)
• **Best director**: Leos Carax for "Annette" (France)
• **Best actor**: Caleb Landry Jones for "Nitram" (US)
• **Best actress**: Renate Reinsve for "Worst Person in the World" (Norway)
• **Jury prize**: Nadav Lapid for "Ahed's Knee" (Israel) and Apichatpong Weerasethakul for "Memoria" (Thailand)
• **Best screenplay**: Hamaguchi Ryusuke and Takamasa Oe for "Drive My Car" (Japan)

**Note:** Mumbai-based filmmaker Payal Kapadia won the L’Oeil d’Or: Le Prix du documentaire, an award for best documentary, at the Cannes Film Festival for her film *A Night of Knowing Nothing*.

---

**Odia poet Dr. Rajendra Kishore Panda chosen for 2020 Kuvempu award**

**Why in the News?**
- Odia poet Dr. Rajendra Kishore Panda has been selected for the Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar 2020.

**About Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar:**
- Founded in 1992, Rashtrakavi Kuvempu Trust instituted this national annual literary award in 2013 in the name of Kuvempu to recognise litterateurs who had contributed in any language recognised by the Constitution of India.
- The award carries a cash award of ₹5 lakh, a silver medal and a citation.

---

**Nashik’s Community Radio Station bags the National Award**

**Why in the News?**
- Radio Vishwas, a Community Radio Station in Nashik, Maharashtra has bagged two awards at the 8th edition of the National Community Radio Awards instituted by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- Radio Vishwas 90.8 won the first prize in the “Sustainability Model Awards” category and the Second prize in the “Thematic Awards” category for its radio program 'Education for All' in the times of COVID-19.

---

**P. Sainath awarded 2021 Japan’s Fukuoka Grand Prize**

**Why in the News?**
- Noted journalist P. Sainath has been selected as one of the three recipients of the Fukuoka Prize for 2021.
- Mr. Sainath received the ‘Grand Prize’ of the Fukuoka Prize while Prof. Mio Kishimoto and Thai writer and filmmaker Prabda Yoon received the Academic Prize and the Arts and Culture Prize respectively.

---

**Deepika Kumari reclaims world no.1 ranking after hat-trick of gold medals**

- Star Indian archer Deepika Kumari regained the number one position in the global rankings following her hat-trick of gold medals at the Archery World Cup Stage 3 in Paris.
- **Gold in all 3 recurve events:** Women’s individual, team and mixed pair events.
- She has 9 gold, 12 silver and 7 bronze medals in the World Cup.
Congressional Gold Medal
Why in News
- Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney from New York has reintroduced legislation in the US House of Representatives to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal to Mahatma Gandhi for his contributions made through his methods of non-violence.
- If given the award, Gandhi would become the first Indian to receive the Congressional Gold Medal.

Key Points
About Congressional Gold Medal:
- It is the highest civilian award in the United States.
- The first recipients of the medal were participants of the American Revolution, the War of 1812 and the Mexican War.

Source: Indian Express

Rajiv Gandhi Award for excellence in IT
Why in News
- The government of Maharashtra announced the Rajiv Gandhi Award for Excellence in Information Technology (IT).

Key Points
- The award will be given to institutions and companies for outstanding performance in the information technology sector, the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
- This year, the award will be announced on August 20 and the award will be given before October 30.
- From next year, the distribution of the award will be given on August 20.
- Maharashtra IT Corporation Limited (MAHA-IT), the state government enterprise, has been appointed the nodal agency to propose the award.

Note: Recently the central government has renamed the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award as the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.

Source: Indian Express

Skytrax World Airport Awards 2021
Why in News
- 4 Indian airports — Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bengaluru — found a place in the world’s 100 best airports by UK-based airline and airport review consultancy Skytrax.
- Doha Hamad International Airport has been ranked at 1st.

Key Points
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Airport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Doha Hamad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tokyo Haneda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Singapore Changi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Hyderabad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Mumbai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Bengaluru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Delhi Airport (Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi) has retained its title as the Best Airport in India for the past three years.
• The Delhi airport increased its overall ranking, going from 50th place in 2020 to 45th place in the ‘World's Top 50 Airports' league for 2021.
• The Skytrax World Airport Awards are considered the quality benchmark for airport service providers across the globe. Under the survey, around 550 airports across the world are judged.

Source: TOI

Prof. C.R. Rao Centenary Gold Medal award winners announced

Why in News
• Renowned economist Jagdish Bhagwati and C Rangarajan have been conferred with the inaugural Prof C. R. Rao Centenary Gold Medal.

Key Points
• Bhagwati is professor of economics, law and international relations at Columbia University while C Rangarajan is the former chairman of the Economic Advisory Council of the Prime Minister and former governor of the Reserve Bank of India.

About Prof. C.R. Rao Centenary Gold Medal award:
• The Indian Econometric Society Trust has instituted the award to commemorate the contributions of its professor CR Rao.
• The award will be presented once in two years to an Indian or Indian-origin scholar for her or his lifetime contributions to the fields of theoretical and applied aspects of quantitative economics, and official statistics.
• C R Rao is an Indian-American mathematician and statistician. He received Padma Vibhushan (2001) by the Government of India.

Source: ET

SII chairman Cyrus Poonawalla named recipient of Lokmanya Tilak National Award 2021

Why in News
• Cyrus Poonawalla, who is the founder-chairperson of the Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII), has been named as a recipient of the prestigious Lokmanya Tilak National Award for 2021.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Given To</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Swachh Bharat Awards 2020</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>Under the Samudayik Shouchalaya Abhiyan, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh were awarded as the best performing states whereas Prayagraj and Bareilly got it for being the best performing districts. Under the Gandagi Mukth Bharat Mission, Haryana and Telangana were awarded the top slot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Nobel Prize 2020 in medicine</td>
<td>Americans Harvey J. Alter and Charles M. Rice and British scientist Michael Houghton</td>
<td>for the discovery of the Hepatitis C virus The Prize Money of 1,118,000 USD for the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>PMGSY (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana)</td>
<td>Medicine also comes with a gold medal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   | Mandi district, Himachal Pradesh | PMGSY is a nationwide plan in India to provide good all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages.  
○ **Launch year:** 2000  
○ **Sector:** Rural development  
○ **Ministry:** Ministry of Rural Development |
<p>| 4. | The Nobel Prize 2020 in Literature | “For her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal”. |
|   | American poet Louise Gluck |   |
| 5. | The Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020 | &quot;For the development of a method for genome editing.&quot; CRISPR/Cas9 genetic scissors |
|   | Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna |   |
| 6. | Nobel Peace Prize 2020 | The World Food Programme (WFP) was awarded the prize for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict. |
|   | United Nations (UN) World Food Programme |   |
| 7. | Entry for 93rd Academy Awards | Malayalam film Jallikattu, directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery, has been selected as India’s official entry for the Best International Feature Film category for the 93rd Academy Awards. |
|   | Jallikattu |   |
| 8. | International Emmy Awards 2020 | Best Drama Series at the Netflix web series |
|   | Delhi Crime |   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Winner/Recipient</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar</td>
<td>Naseeruddin Shah</td>
<td>The Sangit Kala Kendra's 'Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar' and the 'Kalakiran Puraskar' were instituted in 1996</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 10 | Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award                                  | Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’                                                                   | **Vatayan International Awards** are presented by the Vatayan-UK organization in London to honor poets, writers, and artists for their works in the respective fields.  
**Note:** Pokhriyal has earlier received several awards in the field of literature and administration including the Sahitya Bharati Award by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Sahitya Gaurav Samman by Former President APJ Abdul Kalam, among others. |
| 11 | Booker prize 2020                                                   | Scottish writer Douglas Stuart                                                                   | Scottish writer Douglas Stuart, 44, has won the 2020 Booker Prize for fiction with his debut novel Shuggie Bain, which described a boy growing up in Glasgow in the 1980s with a mother battling addiction. He won the 50,000 Pound prize. |
| 12 | Lilavati Award-2020                                                 | AICTE’s Innovative education program to empower women                                             | Union Minister of Education Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal, “Nishank” launched Lilavati Award-2020: AICTE’s Innovative education program to empower women.                                                           |
| 13 | International Children’s Peace Prize                               | Bangladeshi teen Sadat Rahman                                                                    | The award was given away by the Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai during a ceremony in the Netherlands.  
He has created the anti-cyber bullying app ‘Cyber Teens’ to help teenagers who are sufferers of cyber bullying.                                                                                         |
<p>| 14 | 2020 Emmett Leahy Award                                             | Dr. Dinesh Katre                                                                                  | Dr. Katre, Senior Director and Head of Human-Centered Design &amp; Computing Group at the Centre for Development of Advance Computing                                                                 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Award Recipient</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>The Business Leader of the Year awards</td>
<td>Team TRIFED (Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation of India)</td>
<td>Team TRIFED (Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation of India) won a collective award of Excellence in PSU – for investment in start-ups in the Organisational Award Category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(CDAC) has won the prestigious 2020 Emmett Leahy Award. <strong>Note: Emmett Leahy Award</strong>, which was constituted in 1967 in the USA, honours a pioneer in the field of information and records management and recognizes the outstanding contributions that have a major impact on this profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>US announces anti-corruption award</td>
<td>Social activist Anjali Bhardwaj</td>
<td>India’s Anjali Bhardwaj was among 12 anti-corruption activists from around the world named by US secretary of state Antony Blinken as the first recipients of the new ‘<strong>International Anti-corruption Champions Award</strong>’. Bhardwaj established a foundation by the name of <strong>Stark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS)</strong> that encouraged citizens with a mandate of promoting accountability in the public and government institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td><strong>Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2021</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards</strong> were introduced by the Government of India in 1969 to commemorate the Father of the Indian Cinema Dadasaheb Phalke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Best Actress</td>
<td>Deepika Padukone (Chhapaak)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Best Actor</td>
<td>Akshay Kumar (Laxmii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Best Film</td>
<td>Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>21. Women Excellence Award 2021</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Shobhna Kapoor, Dr. Antara Banerjee, Dr. Sonu Gandhi and Dr. Ritu Gupta.</td>
<td>The award given by the <strong>Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)</strong>, a Statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) supporting basic research in the frontier areas of science and engineering, was launched in the year 2013. It is a one-time award given to women scientists below 40 years of age.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>22. Rotterdam film festival 2021</strong></td>
<td>Tamil film Koozhalangal</td>
<td>Koozhalangal (Pebbles) became the first Tamil film to win the coveted Tiger Award at the 50th Rotterdam Film Festival 2021.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>23. Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award 2020</strong></td>
<td>Theodore Baskaran</td>
<td>Sanctuary Nature Foundation honours conservation hero S Theodore Baskaran with Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award 2020 for his role in wildlife conservation and his continuing legacy of writings in Tamil and English to the conservation discourse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>24. Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020</strong></td>
<td>WCCB</td>
<td>The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has received the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020 awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>25. ICC Men’s Player of the Month award</strong></td>
<td>Rishabh Pant</td>
<td>for January 2021 Shabnim Ismail was named the ICC Women’s Player of the Month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>26. Miss India World 2020</strong></td>
<td>Manasa Varanasi</td>
<td>Manasa Varanasi, an engineer from Telangana, emerged as the winner of VLCC Femina Miss India World 2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>27. Maharashtra Bhushan Award</strong></td>
<td>Asha Bhosle</td>
<td>Asha Bhosle was also honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>28. International Ranger Award</strong></td>
<td>Mahinder Giri, Range Officer</td>
<td>Mahinder Giri, range officer of Rajaji Tiger Reserve became the only ranger from Asia to win the prestigious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Saraswati Samman 2020</td>
<td>Dr Sharankumar Limbale</td>
<td>International Ranger Award for his contribution towards conservation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. 11th CII National HR Excellence Award 2020-21</td>
<td>NTPC</td>
<td>NTPC Ltd, a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Power has been conferred the prestigious ‘Role Model’ award at the 11th CII National HR Excellence Award 2020-21.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Gandhi Peace Prize</td>
<td>(Late) His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman</td>
<td>It is an annual award instituted by Government of India since 1995, the 125th Birth Anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi. The award carries an amount of Rs. 1 crore, a citation, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Vyas Samman – 2020</td>
<td>Prof. Sharad Pagare</td>
<td>1. Hindi writer Prof. Sharad Pagare to be conferred with Well known Hindi writer Prof. Sharad Pagare will be conferred with the prestigious Vyas Samman - 2020 for his novel 'Patliputru Ki Samragi.'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award</td>
<td>Shri Narendra Modi</td>
<td>CERAWeek was founded in 1983 by Dr. Daniel Yergin. It has been organized in Houston every year since 1983 and is considered the world’s premier annual energy platform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Recipient(s)</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>“King Bhumibol World Soil Day - 2020 Award” of FAO</td>
<td>ICAR</td>
<td>Suchitra Durai, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Thailand received the prestigious “King Bhumibol World Soil Day - 2020 Award” of FAO on the behalf of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>FIAF Award 2021</td>
<td>Amitabh Bachchan</td>
<td>Megastar Amitabh Bachchan will be honoured with an award by the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Chhattisgarh Veerni Award</td>
<td>Dutee Chand</td>
<td>Dutee Chand, the Jakarta Asian Games silver-medallist in 100 and 200 metres, will receive Chhattisgarh Veerni Award.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>BAFTA Awards 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td>The 74th British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) were held on 10 and 11 April 2021 at the Royal Albert Hall in London, honouring the best national and foreign films of 2020 and early 2021.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Recipient(s)</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best film</td>
<td>Nomadland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding British film</td>
<td>Promising Young Woman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading actress</td>
<td>Frances McDormand (Nomadland)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading actor</td>
<td>Anthony Hopkins (The Father)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Chloé Zhao (Nomadland)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Receives second highest civilian French honour</td>
<td>Oscar-winning producer Guneet Monga</td>
<td>Oscar-winning producer Guneet Monga, known for films like &quot;The Lunchbox&quot; and &quot;Masaan&quot;, was awarded with ‘Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters’ 2021, the second highest civilian French honour by French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Dria.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. ‘Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021’</td>
<td>Rumana Sinha Sehgal</td>
<td>Her work has been recognised in the fields of developing innovative and functional ‘green’ products by recycling varied materials and creative use of non-biodegradable materials. She was also crowned the ‘Mrs Universe Successful 2018’.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. 'Wild Innovator Award'</td>
<td>Krithi Karanth</td>
<td>Krithi Karanth becomes first Indian woman to get 'Wild Innovator Award' Dr Krithi K Karanth, Chief Conservation Scientist at Bengaluru-based Centre for Wildlife Studies (CWS), has been chosen as the first Indian and Asian woman for the 2021 'WILD Innovator Award'.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. “Order of the Rising Sun”</td>
<td>Shyamala Ganesh</td>
<td>Shyamala Ganesh, a Bengaluru-based Japanese teacher, was recently awarded the “Order of the Rising Sun” by the Japanese government.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Laureus World Sports Awards 2021</td>
<td>Japan's Naomi Osaka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. “Green Urja Award”</td>
<td>IREDA</td>
<td>Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA) has been conferred with “Green Urja Award” for being the Leading Public Institution in Financing Institution for Renewable Energy this year by Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Sheikh Zayed Book Award</td>
<td>Dr. Tahera Qutbuddin</td>
<td>Dr. Tahera Qutbuddin becomes first Indian to win Sheikh Zayed Book Award. Mumbai-born professor won the honour for her book 'Arabic Oration: Art and Function', which was published by Brill Academic Publishers of Leiden in 2019.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### About Sheikh Zayed Book Award:
The Sheikh Zayed Book Award is a literary award begun in the UAE. The first award was in 2007. The award is considered to be the Nobel Prize of the Arab world.

### 48. World Food Prize

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Dr. Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted, a global nutrition expert of Indian descent has won the prestigious 2021 World Food Prize for her groundbreaking research in developing holistic, nutrition-sensitive approaches to aquaculture and food systems. About the World Food Prize: It was created by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Norman Borlaug in 1986 to recognize scientists and others who have improved the quality and availability of food.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 49. Miss Universe 2020 title

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Miss Universe 2020 was the 69th edition of the Miss Universe competition. The competition was held on May 16, 2021 at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel &amp; Casino in Hollywood, Florida, United States.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 50. Whitley Awards 2021

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Nagaland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Whitley Awards is also known as the Green Oscar. The award recognises Phom’s efforts at establishing a ‘Biodiversity Peace Corridor’ in Nagaland. The Whitley Awards are conferred to individuals from the Global South by UK-based charity the Whitley Fund for Nature (WFN).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 51. UNESCO World Heritage Sites

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Presently, there are 38 World Heritage Sites located in India. India has the sixth largest number of sites in the world. Among these 38 UNESCO Heritage sites of India, the list includes 30 cultural sites, 7 natural sites, and 1 mixed site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Kareem Abdul-Jabbar social justice champion award created by NBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Eni International Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Spain's Princess of Asturias Award 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A book titled ‘Human Rights and Terrorism in India’ by Subramanian Swamy

Why in News
- A book titled ‘Human Rights and Terrorism in India’ authored by Rajya Sabha member Subramanian Swamy, has been released.

The book “Gita Govinda: Jaydeva’s Divine Odyssey” and program 'Bujurgon ki Baat–Desh Ke Saath'

Why in News
- Union Minister of Culture Gangapuram Kishan Reddy launched the book “Gita Govinda: Jaydeva’s Divine Odyssey” written by Padma Shri Dr. Utpal K. Banerjee and program 'Bujurgon ki Baat–Desh Ke Saath' in New Delhi.

Former RBI Governor Bimal Jalan’s book titled “The India Story”
- Former RBI Governor Bimal Jalan’s book “The India Story: An Epic Journey of Democracy and Development” focuses on India’s economic history and aims to provide lessons for the future of India’s political economy.
- The book is published by Rupa Publications India.

K J Alphons’s book 'Accelerating India: 7 Years of Modi Government'
- Former Union Minister, K J Alphons has presented his book ‘Accelerating India: 7 Years of Modi Government’ to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The Prime Minister said that he has made a commendable effort to encapsulate facets of India’s reform journey in his work, ‘Accelerating India.’

Note:
- Recently, Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu released this book at Upa-Rashtrapatni Nivas.
- K J Alphons was the editor of this book. 28 eminent authors contributed 25 essays in this book on various sectors of Indian governance.

Source: PIB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Fact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A bouquet of flowers</td>
<td>Dr Krishna Saksena</td>
<td>The book has been designed to allow the readers to travel their own journey and arrive at their own very personal realization and be inspired by it. Launched by Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Promised Land</td>
<td>a memoir by Barack Obama</td>
<td>It was published on November 17, 2020. It is the first of a planned two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volumes that Obama has written following his tenure as President of the United States from 2009 to 2017. Note: Barack Obama was the 44th president of the United States, elected in November 2008 and holding office for two terms. He is the recipient of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majhi Bhint</td>
<td>Rajendra Darda</td>
<td>Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari released the book &quot;Majhi Bhint&quot; authored by former Maharashtra Minister of Education Rajendra Darda at Raj Bhavan. The book is a compilation of Darda's selected Facebook posts pertaining to a range of issues written over the last four years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boskiyana</td>
<td></td>
<td>This book has been published by Radhakrishna Prakashan. It portrays the life of Gulzar through his films, poetry, philosophies, lifestyle, likes and dislikes. The book is edited and compiled by Yashwant Vyas. 'Boskiyana' is the name of the house of Gulzar in Mumbai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Am No Messiah</td>
<td>Sonu Sood</td>
<td>Titled I Am No Messiah, it will be published by Penguin Random House and written with journalist and author Meena K Iyer. About the Book: Sonu Sood will narrate stories of the miseries and atrocities that were faced by the people during the lockdown which in return made him more dedicated to helping them. In the autobiography, the actor will also share his experience of how his perception towards life changed after he encountered people amid the lockdown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Best Day Is Today!</td>
<td>Anupam Kher</td>
<td>Kher shared his experiences during the coronavirus-induced countrywide lockdown in this book. Note: Kher’s previous two books are &quot;Lessons Life Taught Me Unknowingly&quot; published last year and another is “The Best Thing About You is You!”, which released in 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thavaasmi: Life and Skills through the lens of Ramayana</td>
<td>Author Shri Rallabandi Srirama Chakradhar and co-</td>
<td>It presents the story of Ramayana as a dialogue between a father and daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pandemonium: The Great Indian Banking Tragedy</td>
<td>Tamal Bandyopadhyay</td>
<td>It was released on November 09, 2020. This book reveals the inside story behind a spate of banking scandals and provides an understanding of the challenges and economic potential of India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh Mizoram</td>
<td>P.S. Sreedharan Pillai</td>
<td>Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu released a book of English poems by Mizoram Governor P.S. Sreedharan Pillai, titled. Pillai’s poems highlight Mizoram’s pristine natural beauty. He has written 125 books in Malayalam and English on a variety of topics including politics, social and legal issues and poetry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| In Pursuit of Justice: An Autobiography                              | Late Justice Rajindar Sachar                                            | Sachar’s Autobiography was launched posthumously by his family in association with The Indian Society of International Law and The Indian Law Institute.  
Note: Late Rajindar Sachar, most remembered for the Sachar Committee report of 2006 which documented the social and economic condition of Muslims in India. |
<p>| The Shaurya Unbound                                                  | Neetu, DIG CRPF, and BM Dinakaran, DIG CRPF                           | The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has launched this book commemorating the valor of its brave soldiers, including Constable Kamlesh Kumari, who was martyred in the 2001 Parliament attack. Released by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. |
| 40 years with Abdul Kalam-Untold Stories                            | Dr Sivathanu Pillai                                                    | Book is based on the life of the Former President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam. Dr Sivathanu Pillai is the author of this book. He received Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awards. Released by Vice President Shri M Venkaiah Naidu. |
| Pioneer of Humanity: Maharshi Arvind                                 | Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank                      | Shri Arvind was a person fully devoted to Indian culture, Indian values, Indian nationalism and Indian philosophy. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author/idea giver</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modi India Calling – 2021</td>
<td>The idea of this book was given by senior BJP leader Vijay Jolly.</td>
<td>A coffee table book filled with over hundreds of photographs of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from his 107 overseas and bilateral visits was released on the 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. The idea of this book was given by senior BJP leader Vijay Jolly. It was released by Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manohar Parrikar- Off the Record</td>
<td>Shri Waman Subha Prabhu</td>
<td>The book is a collection of memories of Shri Waman Prabhu who happened to be with late Parrikar during the journey of his life. In this book the author endeavored to narrate the multi-faceted personality of late Mr. Manohar Parrikar who served as Chief Minister of Goa. Released by Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maveric Messiah</td>
<td>Ramesh Kandula</td>
<td>The book was authored by senior journalist, Ramesh Kandula. A political biography on Themuri Taraka Rama Rao, popularly known as NTR, was an Indian actor, producer, director, film editor and politician who served as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh for seven years over three terms. Released by Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rashtra Pratham - 82 varshon ki Swarnim Gatha</td>
<td></td>
<td>This book depicts the dignified history of CRPF, its entire journey, challenges, successes and dedication. Note: CRPF celebrated its first-ever Veterans Day. The third Friday of February will be celebrated every year as the Veterans Day of the force. Released by Home Minister Amit Shah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASOCA: A Sutra</td>
<td>Irwin Allan Sealy</td>
<td>The novel will be presented as an imagined memoir of Ashoka The Great. It will be published by Penguin Random House India. Note: Allan has won the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize, Best First Book, Europe and South Asia, the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1991, the Crossword Book Award and the Padma Shri by the President of India in 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lost Soul</td>
<td>Olga Tokarczuk</td>
<td>Olga Tokarczuk translates The Lost Soul, from Polish to English and merged with illustrations to produce a picture book. First published in Poland in 2017 as Zgubiona dusza. The illustrations were done by Joanna Concejo and translated by Antonia Lloyd-Jones. It is published by Seven Stories Press. Note: Tokarczuk was awarded the 2018 Man Booker International Prize for novel 'Flights'. She was awarded the 2018 Nobel Prize in Literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories I Must Tell: The Emotional Journey of an Actor</td>
<td>Kabir Bedi</td>
<td>Veteran actor Kabir Bedi will tell the story of his life in his memoir which will be published this April. This is the story of a middle-class boy from Delhi who met with extraordinary successes. The book is published by Westland Publications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfinished</td>
<td>Priyanka Chopra</td>
<td>The former Miss World, Actor-producer Priyanka Chopra Jonas officially turned author with the release of her first book, &quot;Unfinished: A Memoir&quot;. The end result is a book, published by the Michael Joseph imprint, which covers her dual-continent 20-year-long career as an actor and producer and her work as a Unicef Goodwill Ambassador.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Many a Happy Accident: Recollections of a Life</td>
<td>Hamid Ansari</td>
<td>The book is published by Rupa Publications. Note: Mohammad Hamid Ansari was the vice president of India and chairman of the Rajya Sabha for two consecutive terms from 2007 to 2017.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Little Book of Encouragement</td>
<td>Dalai Lama</td>
<td>Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama shares quotes and words of wisdom to deal with the new realities of the panic-stricken world along with how to combat rising extremism, polarity and climate change besides his views on Tibet in his new book. &quot;The Little Book of Encouragement&quot;, which has 130 quotes, is edited by Renuka Singh and published by Penguin Random House. Note: Dalai Lama is a title given by the Tibetan people to the foremost spiritual leader of the Gelug or &quot;Yellow Hat&quot; school of Tibetan Buddhism, the newest of the classical schools of Tibetan Buddhism. The 14th and current Dalai Lama is Tenzin Gyatso, who lives as a refugee in India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India’s Power Elite: Caste, Class and Cultural Revolution</td>
<td>Sanjaya Baru</td>
<td>Sanjaya Baru released a book titled, 'India’s Power Elite: Caste, Class and Cultural Revolution' in April 2021 by Penguin Random House India. Note: He has earlier written a memoir 'The Accidental Prime Minister' which was on former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle Ready for 21st Century</td>
<td></td>
<td>A book titled “Battle Ready for 21st Century” co-edited by Lt Gen AK Singh, Distinguished Fellow CLAWS and Brig Narender Kumar, Visiting Fellow CLAWS was released by Gen Bipin Rawat, CDS and Gen Deepak Kapoor, Former Chief of the Army Staff at Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) on 17 March 2021. The authors with hands-on experience and domain specialisation have endeavoured to define and suggest the ways and means necessary to secure India from emerging security challenges on land, air, sea, space,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Green Queens of India – A nation’s pride</td>
<td>On International Women's Day, Union Minister for Forest, Environment and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar launched an e-book on women forest officials. This e-book titled &quot;The Green Queens of India - A nation’s pride&quot; is based on the lives of women forest officials. This book is a compilation of her life experiences which have been prepared by many women officers together.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Volumes of Manuscript with commentaries by 21 scholars on Srimad Bhagavadgita</td>
<td>The Manuscript, published by Dharmarth Trust, is written with an extraordinary variety of Indian calligraphy ranging from Shankar Bhashya to Bhasanuvada. Dr Karan Singh who is the Chairman Trustee of Dharmarth Trust, Jammu and Kashmir also highlighted the importance of Gita and its message. Released by PM Modi.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Frontier Gandhi: My Life and Struggle</td>
<td>First published in Pashto in 1983, the autobiography of freedom fighter Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, fondly known as Frontier Gandhi, is now out in English, announced by publishing house Roli Books. The book is translated by former Pakistani civil servant and author Imitiaz Ahmad Sahibzada. This is the “first time” that Khan’s autobiography is available in English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-book version of Swami Chidbhavanandaji’s Bhagavad Gita</td>
<td>This e-book would deepen the connection between the eternal Gita and the glorious Tamil culture. Note: Swami Chidbhavanandaji was the founder of Sri Ramakrishna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapovanam Ashram at Thirupparaithurai, Tiruchirapalli, Tamil Nadu. Swamiji has authored 186 books and all genres of literary composition. His scholarly work on the Gita is one of the most extensive books on the subject. Launched by PM Modi.</td>
<td>Tapovanam Ashram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suparipalana</td>
<td>Dr Shailendra Joshi</td>
<td>The Vice President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu released the book Suparipalana, the Telugu translation of Echo T Calling: Towards People-Centric Governance, written by former Telangana Chief Secretary, Dr Shailendra Joshi. The translator of the book is Annavarapu Brahmaiah and the publisher is Maruthi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manohar Parrikar: Brilliant Mind, Simple Life</td>
<td>Nitin Gokhale</td>
<td>This book is as much a personal tribute by the author to Manohar Parrikar, as an honest attempt to capture the persona of Parrikar the man, the politician and patriot. Manohar Parrikar was India's first IIT-qualified Chief Minister. He served as the Chief Minister of Goa and Defence Minister of India. Nitin Gokhale, one of South Asia's leading Strategic Analysts, is a renowned author, media trainer and founder of a specialised defence related website BharatShakti.in and Strategic News International. The book is published by Bloomsbury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hindi version of Odisha Itihaas</td>
<td>Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab</td>
<td>The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi released the hindi translation of the book Odisha Itihaas written by Utkal Keshari Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab. The book, available in Odia and English so far, has been translated into Hindi by Shri. Shankarlal Purohit. About the Author: Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab was a notable figure in the Indian Independence Movement. He also served as Chief Minister of Odisha from 1946 to 1950 and from 1956 to 1961.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe</td>
<td>Suresh Raina &amp; Bharat Sundaresan</td>
<td>Suresh Raina has penned his memoir 'Believe: What Life and Cricket Taught'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me' along with cricket writer Bharat Sundaresan.</td>
<td></td>
<td>The book was published by Penguin Random House India. In this book, Suresh Raina takes us through the challenges he faced as a young cricketer. Suresh Raina is one of India’s most successful international cricketers. Raina was part of the World Cup-winning team in 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Living Mountain: A Fable for Our Times</td>
<td>Amitav Ghosh</td>
<td>It is a fable for the current times: a cautionary tale of how humans have systematically exploited nature, leading to an environmental collapse. HarperCollins Publishers India will publish The Living Mountain as a special standalone edition in January 2022 under its prestigious Fourth Estate imprint. Amitav Ghosh is an Indian writer and the winner of the 54th Jnanpith award, best known for his work in English fiction. He was awarded the Padma Shri by the Indian government in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another Dozen Stories</td>
<td>Satyajit Ray</td>
<td>‘Another Dozen Stories’ by Satyajit Ray is translated from Bengali to English by Indrani Majumdar and it was released on May 2, 2021, the 100 birth anniversary of Satyajit Ray, one of the greatest filmmakers. Aimed for kids aged nine years and above, the book is a collection of 12 magical, bizarre and spooky stories. Actress Sharmila Tagore has penned the foreword of the book. The book was published by Penguin India. Note: Another book by Satyajit Ray will also be released by Penguin India. Titled ‘3 Rays: Stories from Satyajit Ray’, the book is a collection of Satyajit Ray’s previously unpublished autobiographical writings, stories, poems, illustrations, fiction, and non-fiction works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Time Favourites For Children</td>
<td>Ruskin Bond</td>
<td>Veteran author, Ruskin Bond, released the book ‘All Time Favourites For Children’ on his 87th birthday on May 19, 2021. It is published under the Puffin imprint of Penguin Books. It is Classic Collection of 25+ most-loved, great stories by famous award-winning author (Illustrated, must-read fiction short stories for kids). Ruskin Bond is an Indian author of British descent. He was awarded the Sahitya Academy Award in 1992. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1999 and the Padma Bhushan in 2014.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India and Asian Geopolitics: The Past, Present</td>
<td>Shivshankar Menon</td>
<td>A book titled ‘India and Asian Geopolitics: The Past, Present’, authored by Shivshankar Menon, has been released. Key Points Shivshankar Menon is an Indian diplomat, who served as National Security Adviser of India under Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh. He had previously served as the Foreign Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. In the book, he addresses the changes in India’s foreign policy: since independence to the present day, and the many challenges faced as the nation seeks to find its way in the increasingly complex world of Asian geopolitics. The book is published by Penguin Random House India.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Important Days

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2021 Updates:

September 23, International Day of Sign Languages
Why in News
  • The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has proclaimed 23 September as the International Day of Sign Languages (IDSL) in order to raise awareness of the importance of sign language.

Key Points
  • The 2021 theme, declared by the World Federation of the Deaf, is “We Sign For Human Rights”.

September 21, International Day of Peace
Why in News
  • Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September.

Key Points
  • The 2021 theme for the International Day of Peace is “Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world”.

September 16, International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
Why in News
  • September 16 was designated by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) as the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer.

Key Points
  • The theme for 2021 is ‘Montreal Protocol – keeping us, our food and vaccines cool’.
  • The ozone layer, a fragile shield of gas, protects the Earth from the harmful portion of the rays of the sun, thus helping preserve life on the planet.

September 15, International Day of Democracy
Why in News
  • The International Day of Democracy is celebrated around the world on 15 September each year.

September 15, Engineer’s Day
Why in News
  • India celebrates Engineer's Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of the greatest Indian Engineer, Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya, on September 15 every year.
September 14, Hindi Diwas
Why in News
- Hindi Diwas or National Hindi Day is celebrated every year on the 14th of September, to commemorate the adoption of Hindi in Devanagari script as one of the official languages in different Hindi speaking states of India.

September 08, International Literacy Day
Why in News
- **International Literacy Day (ILD) 2021** is an international observance, celebrated each year on 8 September.

  **Key Points**
  - The theme of ILD 2021 is “Literacy for a human-centred recovery: Narrowing the digital divide”.

July 29, International Tiger Day
Why in News
- **International Tiger Day** or **Global Tiger Day** is an annual celebration to raise awareness for tiger conservation, held annually on 29 July.

July 28, World Hepatitis Day 2021
Why in News
- World Hepatitis Day is observed each year on 28 July to raise awareness of viral hepatitis.

  **Key Points**
  - This year’s theme is “Hepatitis can’t wait”, conveying the urgency of efforts needed to eliminate hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030.

July 23, National Broadcasting Day
Why in News
- In India, “National Broadcasting Day” is celebrated on 23rd July every year to make people aware of the importance of radio.

July 18, Nelson Mandela International Day
Why in News
- Nelson Mandela International Day is an annual international day in honour of Nelson Mandela, celebrated each year on 18 July, Mandela's birthday.

  **Key Points**
  - The theme for 2021 is “One Hand Can Feed Another”.

July 17, World Day for International Justice
Why in News
- World Day for International Justice is an international day celebrated throughout the world on July 17 as part of an effort to recognize the emerging system of international criminal justice.

  **Key Points**
  - The theme for 2021 is “A Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy.”
July 01, National Doctors' Day
• The National Doctors' Day is celebrated on July 1 all across India to honour the legendary physician and the second Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy. He was born on July 1, 1882 and died on the same date in 1962.
• The National Doctors' Day was first observed in 1991.

August 19, World Humanitarian Day
Why in News
• August 19 is observed as World Humanitarian Day (WHD) every year in honour of all humanitarians.
• On this day, people also remember those who lost their lives working for humanitarian causes.
• According to the United Nations official website, the theme for this year is, ‘theHumanRace’.

August 12, International Youth Day
• International Youth Day is celebrated every year on 12 August to focus on youth issues and bring them to the attention of the international community.

Key Points:
• The theme of 2021 is "Transforming Food System: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health".

August 1, Muslim Women's Rights Day
Why in discussion?
• The Union Ministry of Minorities announced that Muslim Women's Rights Day is observed on August 1 to celebrate the enactment of the law against triple talaq across the country.

August 12, International Youth Day
Why in News
• Every year, International Youth Day is observed on August 12 to focus on youth issues and bring them to the attention of the international community.

Key Points:
• The theme for 2021 is “Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health”.
• In 1999, the United Nations decided to commemorate International Youth Day every year on August 12.
• It was based on a recommendation made by the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in Lisbon.

Note: National Youth Day, also known as Vivekananda Jayanti, is celebrated on 12 January, being the birthday of Swami Vivekananda.

Source: un.org

August 1, Muslim Women’s Rights Day
Why in News

- The Union Ministry of Minority Affairs announced that Muslim Women's Rights Day is observed across the nation on August 1 to celebrate the enactment of the law against triple talaq.

Key Points

- The central government enacted the law on August 1, 2019, that has made the practice of instant triple talaq a criminal offence.
- The legislation, which outlaws instant triple talaq, sets forth three years jail for violations and also make the violator liable to pay a fine.

History:

- The Supreme Court in August 2017 declared the practice of triple talaq or a form of divorce based on the husband pronouncing divorce thrice in quick succession as 'unconstitutional'.
- In December 2017, citing the Supreme Court judgment and cases of triple talaq in India, the government introduced the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill in Parliament.
- The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha but was stalled by the opposition in the Rajya Sabha.
- The bill was reintroduced and passed by both the Houses of Parliament in July 2019. Consequently, the bill received assent from President Ram Nath Kovind.

Note: Egypt was the first country to ban triple talaq back in 1929 followed by Pakistan, Sudan (1956), Malaysia (1969), Bangladesh (1972), Iraq (1959), Syria (1953). UAE, Morocco, Cyprus, Iran, Jordan, Brunei, Algeria, Qatar had banned it several years ago.

Source: HT
to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-10 October</td>
<td>World Space Week 2020</td>
<td>By resolution of 6 December 1999, the General Assembly proclaimed World Space Week, to celebrate the contributions of space science and technology to the welfare of the human condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 8</td>
<td>Indian Air Force Day 2020</td>
<td>The Indian Air Force, also known as Bhartiya Vayu Sena, was officially established by the British Empire, as India was under the rule of Britishers at that time. The Indian Air Force (IAF) is the air arm of the three Indian armed forces, and their primary mission was to secure the Indian airspace and conduct aerial activities during the times of conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10</td>
<td>World Migratory Bird Day 2020</td>
<td>“Birds Connect Our World.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10</td>
<td>World Mental Health Day 2020</td>
<td>“Mental Health for All”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>International Day for Disaster Reduction 2020</td>
<td>The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as a health issue associated with thoughts, behavior, emotions, and relationship with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2020</td>
<td>The United Nations General Assembly has designated October 13th as the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction to promote a global culture of disaster risk reduction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2020</td>
<td>“Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2020</td>
<td>In 1992, the United Nations (UN) declared to dedicate October 17 as International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>World Statistics Day 2020</td>
<td>“Connecting the world with data we can trust.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>World Statistics Day 2020</td>
<td>World Statistics Day is an international day to celebrate statistics which is created by the United Nations Statistical Commission. It was first celebrated on 20 October 2010. The day is celebrated every five years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>World Snow Leopard's Day 2020</td>
<td>International Snow Leopard Day is observed on to raise awareness on protection of endangered snow leopards. This started from October 23, 2013, when political leaders from</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12 countries endorsed the on the conservation of snow leopards’. These are distributed across 12 countries in central Asia and are usually found in high, rugged mountain landscapes. Government of India has been conserving snow leopard and its habitat through the Project Snow Leopard (PSL). The PSL was launched in 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 24</td>
<td>World Polio Day 2020</td>
<td>World Polio Day was established by Rotary International over a decade ago to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop the vaccine against the disease. In the last three decades, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), led by national governments and the WHO, has been monitoring the disease situation globally. Note: As per the WHO, since 1980, the cases of wild poliovirus have decreased by over 99.9 per cent as a result of vaccination efforts made around the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 24</td>
<td>World Development Information Day 2020</td>
<td>“Information and Communications Technologies: New Solutions to Development Challenges” The General Assembly in 1972 established World Development Information Day to draw the attention of the world to development problems and the need to strengthen international cooperation to solve them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 24</td>
<td>United Nations Day 2020</td>
<td>UN day is observed on October 24, every year since 1948. Note: India elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, will serve as the president of the powerful 15-nation UN body for the month of August, 2021.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas) 2020</td>
<td>This year National Unity Day is celebrated to commemorate 145th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhai Patel. It was introduced by the Government of India in 2014.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| November 5 | World Tsunami Awareness Day 2020           | In December 2015, the UN General Assembly designated 5
<p>| November 7 | National Cancer Awareness Day 2020 | In 2014, Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan had first announced the National Cancer Awareness Day with an aim to create awareness on early detection and educate people against living a cancer-causing lifestyle. |
| November 11 | National Education Day 2020 | The birth anniversary of India’s first Education Minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is celebrated across the nation as National Education Day on November 11. |
| November 14 | World Diabetes Day 2020 | “The Nurse and Diabetes”. World Diabetes Day (WDD) was created in 1991 by IDF (International Diabetes Federation) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in response to growing concerns about the escalating health threat posed by diabetes. |
| November 19 | World Toilet Day 2020 | “Sustainable sanitation and climate change”. |
| 15-21 November | National Newborn Week 2020 | ‘Quality, Equity, Dignity for every newborn at every health facility and everywhere’. In 2014, India became the first country to launch the India Newborn Action Plan (INAP), in alignment with the Global Every Newborn Action Plan towards eliminating preventable deaths of new-borns and stillbirths. |
| November 21 | World Fisheries Day 2020 | The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India celebrated the ‘World Fisheries Day’. World Fisheries Day started in 1997 where “World Forum of Fish Harvesters &amp; Fish Workers” met at New Delhi leading to formation of |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>World AIDS Day 2020</td>
<td>“World Fisheries Forum” with representatives from 18 countries and signed a declaration advocating for a global mandate of sustainable fishing practices and policies. World AIDS Day was first observed in 1988.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>Indian Navy Day 2020</td>
<td>Indian Navy Day is celebrated every year on December 4 to commemorate the attack on the Karachi harbour during the India-Pakistan war in 1971. On this day, the Indian Navy's attack on Karachi harbour contributed to the ultimate victory of the Indian Armed Forces over Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>Armed Forces Flag Day 2020</td>
<td>The Armed Forces Flag Day or the Flag Day is a day dedicated towards collection of funds from people of India for the welfare of the Indian Armed Forces personnel. It has been observed annually in India on December 7 since 1949.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 10</td>
<td>Human Rights Day 2020</td>
<td>Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December — the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 14</td>
<td>National Energy conservation day 2020</td>
<td>Energy conservation day is celebrated on December 14 every year since 1991 to focus on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promotes efforts towards saving energy resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 16</td>
<td>Vijay Diwas 2020</td>
<td>Vijay Diwas is commemorated every 16th December in India, to remember Indian military’s victory over Pakistan in Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 for the liberation of Bangladesh from Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 20</td>
<td>International Human Solidarity Day 2020</td>
<td>The General Assembly, on 20 December 2002, established the World Solidarity Fund, which was set up in February 2003 as a trust fund of the United Nations Development Programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 23</td>
<td>Kisan Diwas 2020</td>
<td>Kisan Diwas or National Farmers' Day is observed on December 23, the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, the fifth prime minister of India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 24</td>
<td>National Consumer Day 2020</td>
<td>On July 20th, 2020, the new Consumer Protection Act, 2019 came into force in India, replacing the previous enactment of 1986. World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on March 15 every year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 25</td>
<td>Good Governance Day 2020</td>
<td>This Day is observed in India annually on 25 December, the birth anniversary of former-Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. It was established in 2014.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 4</td>
<td>World Braille Day 2021</td>
<td>World Braille Day is celebrated every year on January 4 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Louis Braille who was the inventor of Braille for persons with visual disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 10</td>
<td>World Hindi Day 2021</td>
<td>Every year on Jan 10, World Hindi Day is marked to commemorate the anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference that took place in 1975 in Nagpur, Maharashtra. The then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, had inaugurated the conference. The World Hindi Day was observed for the first time in 2006. <strong>Note</strong>: National Hindi Divas is celebrated annually on September 14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 12</td>
<td>National Youth Day 2021</td>
<td>National Youth Day is celebrated on 12 January being the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. In 1984 the Government of India declared this day as National Youth Day and since 1985 the event is celebrated in India every year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 23</td>
<td>Parakram Diwas 2021</td>
<td>Government has decided to constitute a High Level Committee headed by Shri Amit Shah, Union Home Minister to commemorate the 125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 24</td>
<td>National Girl Child Day 2021</td>
<td>It was started by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Government of India in 2008, with the purpose to spread awareness among people about all the inequalities girls face in the Indian society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>National Tourism Day 2021</td>
<td>Every year on 25 January National Tourism Day is celebrated in India to raise awareness and educate people about the importance of tourism and the role it plays in the Indian economy. <strong>Note:</strong> The World Tourism Day is celebrated on 27 September.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>National Voters Day 2021</td>
<td>‘Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed’ The National Voters’ Day has been celebrated on January 25 every year since 2011, all across the country to mark the foundation day of Election Commission of India, i.e. 25th January 1950.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 24</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh Diwas 2021</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh Diwas is observed as the foundation day of this state. It was on this very same day in 1950, Uttar Pradesh had got itself renamed. Earlier the state was known as United Provinces. On May 2017, it was announced by the UP state government that the 24th January will be celebrated as Uttar Pradesh day (Uttar Pradesh Diwas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>Indian Army Day 2021</td>
<td>Army Day is celebrated on 15 January every year in India, in recognition of Field Marshal Kodandera M. Cariappa taking over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India, on 15 January 1949.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>Republic Day of India 2021</td>
<td>Republic Day of India is celebrated on January 26 to mark the day when the Constitution of India came into effect. The Constitution of India, which was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949, came into effect on January 26, 1950.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31</td>
<td>World Leprosy Day 2021</td>
<td>World Leprosy Day is celebrated on the last Sunday of January every year all over the world to increase knowledge about it and propagate the need and importance of eradicating the disease. This year World Leprosy Day took place on 31 January.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>Martyrs’ Day (Shaheed Diwas) 2021</td>
<td>Every year, Shaheed Diwas or Martyrs’ Day is observed on 30 January in India. This day marks the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. On January 30, 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by Nathuram Godse in Birla House.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>World Wetlands Day 2021</td>
<td>2 February each year is World Wetlands Day to raise global awareness about the vital role of wetlands for people and our planet. This day also marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 4</td>
<td>World Cancer Day 2021</td>
<td>‘I Am and I Will.’ World Cancer Day was originated at the first World Summit against Cancer in 2000. It was held in Paris and was founded by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 20</td>
<td>World Day of Social Justice 2021</td>
<td>The United Nations General Assembly has decided to observe 20 February annually, approved on 26 November 2007 and starting in 2009, as the World Day of Social Justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>International Mother Language Day 2021</td>
<td>“Fostering multilingualism for inclusion in education and society.” The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day was the initiative of Bangladesh. It was approved at the 1999 UNESCO General Conference and has been observed throughout the world since 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>World NGO Day 2021</td>
<td>The first World NGO Day was observed by the United Nations in 2014, although it was officially recognised and declared in 2010 by 12 member nations of IX Baltic Sea NGO Forum of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>National Science Day 2021</td>
<td>‘Future of Science and Technology and Innovation: Impact on Education Skills and Work’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>World Hearing Day 2021</td>
<td>‘Hearing Care for All’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 4</td>
<td>National Safety Day 2021</td>
<td>‘Sadak Suraksha (Road Safety).’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Janaushadhi Diwas 2021</td>
<td>“Jan Aushadhi – Seva bhi, Rozgar bhi”. About Janaushadhi Diwas”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>World Consumer Rights Day 2021</td>
<td>‘Tackle Plastic Pollution’. World Consumer Rights Day is an annual occasion dedicated to highlighting the power of consumers and their rights for a fair, safe and sustainable marketplace for everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>National Vaccination Day 2021</td>
<td>India observes National Vaccination Day also known as National Immunization Day every year on March 16. It was first celebrated at the time when the National Pulse Polio vaccination drive was launched, in 1995.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>World Sparrow Day 2021</td>
<td>The first World Sparrow Day was celebrated in 2010 in different parts of the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>International Day of Happiness 2021</td>
<td>“Happiness for All, Forever.” The International Day of Happiness was established by the United Nations General Assembly on 28 June 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>World Water Day 2021</td>
<td>‘Valuing Water’ The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution by which 22 March of each year was declared World Day for Water, to be observed starting in 1993.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>World Meteorological Day 2021</td>
<td>“The Ocean, our climate and weather.” The day is observed as the foundation day of the World Meteorological Organization which was established on 23rd March 1950.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>World Autism Awareness Day 2021</td>
<td>The United Nations General Assembly unanimously declared 2 April as World Autism Awareness Day to highlight the need to help</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| April 5 | National Maritime Day 2021 | The National Maritime Day was first celebrated on April 5, 1964. |
| April 7 | World Health Day 2021 | Building a Fairer and Healthier World for Everyone. In 1948, the WHO held the First World Health Assembly. The Assembly decided to celebrate 7 April of each year, with effect from 1950, as the World Health Day. |
| April 10 | World Homeopathy Day 2021 | The day is observed on the occasion of the birth anniversary of German physician Dr Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homoeopathy. He was born in Paris on April 10, 1755. |
| April 21 | National Civil Services Day 2021 | The National civil services day is observed on April 21. It consists of (IAS) Indian Administrative services, (IPS) Indian Police services, (IFS) Indian Foreign services along with central Group A and group B services. On April 21, 1947, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, the Home Member of Parliament inaugurated the All India Services. |
| April 22 | World Earth Day 2021 | ‘Restore Our Earth’. World Earth Day is an annual event on April 22 to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First held on April 22, 1970, it now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by EARTHDAY.ORG (formerly Earth Day Network). |
| April 26 | World Intellectual Property Day 2021 | IP and SMEs: Taking your Ideas to Market. In 2000, WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation)’s member states designated April 26 the day on which the WIPO Convention came into force in 1970 as World IP Day with the aim of increasing general understanding of IP. |
| April 28 | World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2021 | ‘Anticipate, prepare and respond to crises: Invest now in resilient occupational. The World Day for Safety and Health at Work will focus on strategies to strengthen national occupational safety and health |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Ayushman Bharat Diwas 2021</td>
<td>Ayushman Bharat Diwas is celebrated across the country every year on the 30th of April. The day is significant to help provide and promote affordable medical facilities in the country. The scheme is called Ayushman Bharat Yojana and is also known as Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY). The day included a special scheme that was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the year 2018. The Scheme has various benefits with a cover of 5 lakh rupees per family to be given per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>International Labour Day 2021</td>
<td>Labour Day has its origins in the labour union movement in the United States in the 19th Century. In 1889, the Marxist International Socialist Congress adopted a resolution for a great international demonstration in which they demanded that the workers should not be made to work for more than 8 hours a day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>World Press Freedom Day 2021</td>
<td>“Information as a Public Good” The United Nations General Assembly declared May 3 to be World Press Freedom Day or just World Press Day, observed to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press and remind governments of their duty to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression enshrined under Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and marking the anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration, a statement of free press principles put together by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>World Athletics Day 2021</td>
<td>This day was introduced by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) as a social responsibility project 'Athletic for a better World'. This day was introduced by the then President of IAAF Primo Nebiolo in the year 1996.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>World Migratory Bird Day 2021 Sing, Fly, Soar – Like a bird!</td>
<td>World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) is an annual awareness-raising campaign highlighting the need for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>World Red Cross Day 2021</td>
<td>Together we are #unstoppable! World Red Cross Day is also known as World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day. The first Red Cross Day was celebrated on May 8, 1948.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>World Thalassaemia Day 2021</td>
<td>“Addressing Health Inequalities Across the Global Thalassaemia Community”. World Thalassemia Day is observed on May 8 every year, to mark attention towards Thalassemia, a blood disorder characterized by abnormal formation of haemoglobin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>National Technology Day 2021</td>
<td>“Science and Technology for a Sustainable Future”. On May 11, 1998, India successfully fired an Operation Shakti missile at the Indian Army’s Pokhran Test Range in Rajasthan. This made India the sixth country to join the nuclear club of nations. Based on these immense breakthrough achievements by the engineers, scientists and technicians of the country, Atal Bihari Vajpayee announced May 11 as National Technology Day in 1999.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| May 12 | International Nurses Day 2021              | Nurses: A Voice to Lead – A vision for future healthcare. International Nurses Day (IND) is an international day observed around the world on 12 May (the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth) of each year, to
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Mark the contributions that nurses make to society.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>International Day of Families 2021</td>
<td>&quot;Families and New Technologies&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The International Day for Biological Diversity (or World Biodiversity Day) is a United Nations–sanctioned international day for the promotion of biodiversity issues. It is currently held on May 22.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2021</td>
<td>&quot;Accelerating Digital Transformation in challenging times&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) has been celebrated annually every 17 May since 1969 to mark the founding of ITU (International Telecommunication Union) and the signing of the first International Telegraph Convention in 1865.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-23 May</td>
<td>UN Global Road Safety Week (UNGRSW) 2021</td>
<td>‘Streets for Life #Love30’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The first UN Global Road Safety Week was celebrated in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Anti-Terrorism Day 2021</td>
<td>Anti-Terrorism Day is observed every year on May 21, the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development 2021</td>
<td>In 2001, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and in December 2002, the UN General Assembly declared 21 May to be the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>International Day for Biological Diversity 2021</td>
<td>“We are part of the solution”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The International Day for Biological Diversity (or World Biodiversity Day) is a United Nations–sanctioned international day for the promotion of biodiversity issues. It is currently held on May 22.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 29</td>
<td>International Day of UN Peacekeepers 2021</td>
<td>“The road to a lasting peace: Leveraging the power of youth for peace and security.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers was established by the General Assembly in 2002.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>World No Tobacco Day 2021</td>
<td>“Commit to quit.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>World No Tobacco Day is observed on May 31 every year to highlight the risk of tobacco.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Science and Technology News

ISRO to Launch Venus Mission In 2025

- Indian Space Research Organization will launch the Venus mission in 2025 with the participation of French space agency CNES.
- ISRO has selected The VIRAL (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gases Linker) instrument co-developed with the Russian's & France space agency.
- Note: Venus is the second planet from the Sun. It is the hottest planet in the Solar System. It is also called Earth's "sister planet" because of their similar size, mass, proximity to the Sun, and bulk composition. Venus has no moons and no rings. The atmosphere consists mainly of carbon dioxide 96.5% and 3.5% nitrogen with traces of other gases, most notably sulfur dioxide. The surface temperature of the planet is about 900 degrees Fahrenheit (465 degrees Celsius).

Indian start-up AgniKul Cosmos rocket to be test-launched from US facility

- AgniKul Cosmos Private Limited (It is an Indian aerospace start-up) is a Chennai-based start-up incubated at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras.

World’s first asteroid mining robot into space will be launched by China in last 2020

- The main aims of the mission will be to know the asteroid mining robot’s capabilities and to find out how well it can extract and identify valuable resources.
- The robot has been named ‘asteroid mining robot’ launched into space by a Chinese Long March series rocket.
- Objective: The robot will not be engaging in any mining work but it will be testing the technologies and to verify and demonstrate multiple functions such as stimulated small celestial body capture, spacecraft orbital manoeuvre, intelligent spacecraft identification, and control.

India becomes 4th nation to get IMO nod for navigation satellite system

- India has become the fourth country in the world to have its independent regional navigation satellite system recognised by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) as a part of the World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS).
- The other three countries that have its navigation systems recognised by the IMO are the US, Russia and China.
- The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) was designed to provide accurate position information services to assist in the navigation of ships in Indian Ocean waters.

India’s Artificial Intelligence supercomputer Param Siddhi has achieved 63rd rank among top 500 most powerful non-distributed computer systems in the world

- According to the Ministry of Science and Technology, the AI (Artificial Intelligence) system will strengthen application development of packages in areas such as advanced materials, computational chemistry and astrophysics.
Indian astronomers collaborated with Nobel laureate, Andrea Ghez on Thirty Meter Telescope Project

- 2020 Physics Nobel Laureate Prof. Andrea Ghez had worked closely with Indian astronomers on the design of back-end instruments and possible science prospects of the Thirty Meter Telescope project being installed at Maunakea in Hawaii, which can revolutionized the understanding of the universe and the enigmas in it.
- The Thirty-meter telescope (TMT) project is an international partnership between CalTech, Universities of California, Canada, Japan, China, and India.

Virgin Hyperloop completes first passenger ride successfully

- In the Nevada desert, Virgin Hyperloop tested human travel in a hyperloop pod for the first time.
- The Richard Branson's Virgin Hyperloop has successfully trialed its first journey with two humans sitting in a pod across an airless tube at nearly a speed of 160 kilometers per hour.
- **Note:** The hyperloop is a high-tech way of transportation. This technology aims to make the transport faster than conventional methods but without being a burden on the environment.

India’s latest Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 launched successfully by ISRO

- India’s workhorse rocket PSLV-C49 has successfully launched India’s latest Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 and placed into its intended orbit.
- Nine satellites, including four each from the US and Luxembourg and one from Lithuania, have been launched in the Mission.
- The successful PSLV mission has resulted in increased capacity for the user agencies of the nation in viewing the surface of the earth seamlessly for agriculture, forestry and disaster management applications.
- **Note:** Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 will form part of a family of such payloads that will enhance the capacity of the nation to view the earth from above in a seamless fashion irrespective of the weather or atmospheric conditions.

Niti Ayog launches made-in India cloud storage service, DigiBoxx

- DigiBoxx is India’s first homegrown Digital Asset Management Platform where we can store and collaborate with your digital assets, like raw files, photographs, sensitive collateral, etc.
- This is a made-in India service that will store and encrypt data within the country. It is available on the web and Android as of now with iOS support arriving soon.
- Like Google Drive and Apple's iCloud service, DigiBoxx will enable individuals and enterprises to store, manage, collaborate, organise and share all their data online.

Mobile Application “Swachhata Abhiyan”

- Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot launched a Mobile Application “Swachhata Abhiyan”.
- This mobile application has been developed to identify and geotag the data of insanitary latrines and manual scavengers so that the insanitary latrines can be replaced with sanitary latrines and rehabilitate all the manual scavengers to provide dignity of life to them.
***Note:*** “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013” mandates survey of insanitary latrines, their demolition and construction of sanitary latrines in their place.

**IMD launches country’s highest Meteorological Centre in Leh**
- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) will now provide specialised weather forecasts for traffic movement on highways, agriculture, and defence personnel from its Ladakh centre. Located at 3,500 metres above sea level in Leh, it will be the highest Meteorological Centre (MC) in India.
- It will provide short range (3 days) medium range (12 days) and long range (one month) forecast for the two districts Leh and Kargil of the Union Territory.
- **Note:** After Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh, the Leh centre is the second Meteorological Centre located in the Himalayas.

**India’s first Lithium refinery in Gujarat**
- India’s first Lithium refinery which will process Lithium ore to produce battery-grade material will be set up in Gujarat.
- Manikaran Power Limited, one of the country’s largest power trading and renewable energy company will be investing over Rs 1,000 crore to set up this refinery.
- **Note:** Lithium is a rare element not usually found in India. The company will be importing Lithium ore from Australia and will be processing it here.

**INCOIS launches web based Digital Ocean app**
- INCOIS (Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), has launched a web-based application Digital Ocean to share information on marine data and forecast services.
- It is a first of its kind platform for ocean data management and contributes to the Digital India program.

**India’s first Centre of Excellence for Skill Development in Power Sector**
- Skill India has established the first Centre of Excellence for Skill Development in the Power Sector in the campus of National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurugram, Haryana.
- The Centre of Excellence is an outcome of collaboration between the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, along with the Ministry of National Education and Youth, Government of France and Schneider Electric.
- The Centre of Excellence will focus on creating a pool of highly skilled trainers and assessors for further training to increase employability of candidates in the field of Electricity, Automation and Solar Energy Sectors.

**Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurates India International Science Festival (IISF) 2020**
- 6th IISF 2020 is being organized jointly by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Earth Sciences, Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in association with Vijnana Bharati (Vibha) from December 22 - 25, 2020.
- The theme is ‘Science for Self-Reliant India and Global Welfare’.
- It aims to celebrate the achievements of India's scientific and technological advancements with students and innovators.
ISRO sets up dedicated control centre ‘NETRA’ for Space Situational Awareness (SSA)

- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has set up a dedicated Control Centre 'NETRA' (NEtwork for space object TRacking and Analysis) at ISTRAC campus at Peenya, Bengaluru to monitor, track and protect India’s space assets.
- Directorate of Space Situational Awareness and Management (DSSAM) has been established at ISRO to enhance Space Situational Awareness.
- Note: Only America, Russia and Europe have similar established capabilities in place to track space objects and share collision warnings.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates the advanced Hypersonic Wind Tunnel test facility in Hyderabad

- The state-of-the-art facility is a pressure vacuum driven enclosed free jet facility with nozzle exit of one-meter diameter.
- The project is an indigenous development and an outcome of synergistic partnership with Indian industries.
- Note: With this India has become the third country to have such a huge facility in size and capability after America and Russia.

ISRO successfully launches CMS-01 Communication Satellite on board PSLV-C50 Rocket

- CMS-01 is the 42nd communication satellite of the space agency and it is envisaged for providing services in Extended-C Band of the frequency spectrum covering India, Andaman and Nicobar, and Lakshadweep islands.
- Note: The satellite is going to function as a replacement for communication satellite GSAT-12 which was launched 11 years ago. CMS-01 will have a lifespan of over seven years, according to ISRO.

Cabinet approves setting up of public Wi-Fi networks

- The Cabinet approved setting up of public Wi-Fi networks under ‘PM-WANI’ (Prime Minister’s Wi-Fi Access Network Interface) to provide public Wi-Fi service through Public Data Offices without levy of any License Fee.
- "The scheme would enable small shopkeepers to provide Wi-Fi service. This will boost incomes as well as ensure youth gets seamless internet connectivity. It will also strengthen our Digital India mission.

BARC develops eye cancer therapy for treatment of ocular tumours

- Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Mumbai develops eye cancer therapy in the form of the first indigenous Ruthenium 106 Plaque for treatment of Ocular Tumors.
- The handling of plaque is very convenient for the Surgeon, and it has been acknowledged to be at par with the international standards.
- Note: Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) is developing Bullet Proof Jackets for security personnel and in the Agricultural sector, radiation techniques to extend shelf life of vegetable and food products are being applied.

Indian Oil launches first remote monitoring system for oil refineries

- Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the country's largest fuel retailer, announced it has launched the country’s first remote monitoring system for oil refineries' turbines.
- The project, located in Hyderabad, was inaugurated by oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan.
The Remote Monitoring & Operation Centre for Tracking of Indian Oil’s Refinery Gas Turbines was implemented by BHEL-GE Gas Turbine Services (BGGTS), a joint venture of BHEL and General Electric.

This analysis will help in detection and diagnosis of emerging issues relating to gas turbines.

Skyroot Aerospace becomes first Indian company to test-fire solid-fueled rocket engine ‘Kalam-5’

• Indian Space startup, Skyroot Aerospace, has proven the crucial propulsion technology of their maiden rocket Vikram-1, with the latest test-firing of an engine. Vikram-1 rocket is powered by four engines - three solid-fuel stages and one Liquid-fuel stage that the firm has designed and developed.
• In August 2020, the company had tested its liquid-fueled engine and now has proven the technology of the solid-fueled engine (Kalam-5), by successfully test-firing a miniature version.
• Kalam-5 is the first of five Kalam series of solid rocket motors.

Khadi Prakritik Paint

• Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari launched an innovative new paint – India’s first cow dung paint - developed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).
• The eco-friendly, non-toxic paint, called “Khadi Prakritik Paint” is a first-of-its-kind product, with anti-fungal, anti-bacterial properties.
• It is available in two forms – distemper paint and plastic emulsion paint.
• Note: The project was conceptualized by Chairman KVIC in March 2020, and later developed by Kumarappa National Handmade Paper Institute, Jaipur (a KVIC unit).

ISRO to adopt 100 Atal Tinkering Labs to promote education

• Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will adopt one hundred Atal Tinkering Labs across the country to promote education in the field of Space Education and Space Technology related innovations for school students.
• To foster entrepreneurship and innovation, Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog has established over seven thousand Atal Tinkering Labs across the country.

Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan dedicates coastal research vessel ‘Sagar Anveshika’ to Nation at Chennai Port Trust

• Sagar Anveshika will enable scientists to conduct various oceanographic research missions.
• Marine scientists can travel six kilometers below the sea and stay for more than 16 hours and can conduct research activities.
• Note: NIOT (National Institute of Ocean Technology) already has Research Vessels- Sagar Kanya, Sagar Sampada, Sagar Nidhi, Sagar Manjusha & Sagar Tara.

India’s first indigenously designed & developed ‘Driverless Metro Car.’

• Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, unveiled state-of-the-art ‘Driverless Metro Car’ for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA).
• Indigenously designed & developed state-of-the-art Driverless Metro trains are being manufactured at BEML Bangalore Complex.
• MMRDA project has 63 percent indigenous content which will enhance to 75 percent in next two to three years.
• Shri Rajnath Singh also launched the Aerospace Assembly Hangar, situated within BEML’s Bangalore Complex, and unveiled the first indigenously manufactured Tatra Cabin by BEML.

Elon Musk’s SpaceX creates new world record; launches 143 satellites on single rocket
The 143 satellites launched include commercial and government CubeSats, microsats and 10 Starlink satellites.

With these satellites, SpaceX aims to provide near-global broadband internet coverage all over the world by 2021.

The launch vehicle for the SpaceX record-breaking flight was the Falcon 9 rocket.

Note: SpaceX has beaten the Indian space agency ISRO's record of deploying 104 satellites in a single launch in February 2017.

New ant species discovered from Kerala named after JNCASR researcher, evolutionary biologist Prof. Amitabh Joshi

Two new species of a rare ant genus have been discovered in India. The species of the ant genus *Ooceraea* found in Kerala and Tamil Nadu add to the diversity of this rare genus. They differ from others of the same genus on the basis of the number of antennal segments.

One of them found in the Periyar Tiger Reserve of Kerala, has been named *Ooceraea joshii*, in honour of Prof. Amitabh Joshi, a distinguished evolutionary biologist from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India.

The other, named *Ooceraea decamera*, was discovered from Alagarkoil in Madurai.

CSIR-CMERI unveils the first-ever ‘Aqua Rejuvenation Plant’ which facilitates an Organic Farming Model through treated Waste Water

CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute, Durgapur unveiled the first-ever Waste Water Treatment Technology Model which purifies Waste Water for Irrigation/Farming purposes.

Prof. (Dr.) Harish Hirani, Director, CSIR-CMERI inaugurated the ‘Aqua Rejuv’ at CSIR-CMERI colony in Durgapur (West Bengal).

*Aqua Rejuvenation Plant* (ARP) is an Integrated Waste Water Rejuvenation Model which has Six-Stage purification profile for comprehensive treatment of Waste Water, based upon diverse purification parameters.

American space agency NASA lands its rover ‘Perseverance’ on Mars successfully

The American space agency NASA successfully landed its fifth rover ‘Perseverance’ on Mars in a deep crater near the planet's equator called Jezero.

It will attempt to collect around 30 rock and soil samples, to be eventually sent back to Earth sometime in the 2030s for lab analysis.

TIFAC unveils two new initiatives of Technology —SAKSHAM and a Seaweed Mission

Two new initiatives of Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC):

(i) SAKSHAM (Shramik Shakti Manch)- a dynamic job portal for mapping the skills of Shramiks vis-à-vis requirements of MSMEs to directly connect Shramiks with MSMEs and facilitate placement of 10 lakh blue-collar jobs and (ii) Seaweed Mission for commercial farming of seaweeds and its processing for value addition towards boosting national economy were launched on the occasion of the 34th Foundation Day celebrations.

ISRO tests satellites developed by private sector for the first time

Two satellites by Indian startups—SpaceKidz India and Pixxel (incorporated as Sygyzy)—were tested at the UR Rao Satellite Centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in Bengaluru.

Earlier ISRO had only provided launch facilities to private firms at a cost.
Jammu and Kashmir to get 1st impact-based flood forecasting system
- Jammu and Kashmir is likely to get the country’s first impact-based flood forecasting system in collaboration with the UK space agency, enabling the prediction of the impact impending floods may have on people's lives including, houses, crops, livestock, and transport routes, thereby helping in mitigating several of these challenges.
- **Note:** A recent report has put India among the 10 most disaster prone countries in the world and ranked floods as one of the greatest climate-related hazards.
- J&K falls in seismic zone IV and V, making it prone to quakes as well.

MapmyIndia ties up with ISRO to build an alternative to Google Maps
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has entered into an agreement with MapmyIndia to develop mapping and other location-based services in India, which MapmyIndia suggested could become an alternative to widely-used Google maps and similar products.
- **About MapmyIndia:** It is an Indian technology company that builds digital map data, telematics services, location-based SaaS and GIS AI services. The company was founded in 1992 and is headquartered at New Delhi.

Stardust 1.0, the first rocket to run on biofuel
- Recently, Stardust 1.0 was launched from Loring Commerce Centre in Maine, US, a former military base, becoming the first commercial space launch powered by biofuel, which is non-toxic for the environment as opposed to traditionally used rocket fuels.
- **About Stardust 1.0:** It is a launch vehicle suited for student and budget payloads. The rocket is 20 feet tall and has a mass of roughly 250 kg. The rocket can carry a maximum payload mass of 8 kg and during its first launch carried three payloads.
- The rocket is manufactured by bluShift, an aerospace company based in Maine.

India's first geothermal power project to be established at Puga village of eastern Ladakh
- India's first ever geothermal power project, known as Geothermal Field Development Project is planned to commission by the end of 2022.
- The tripartite MoU was signed between ONGC Energy, LAHDC, Leh and the Power Department of UT Ladakh.
- The project will work in different stages. In the first phase of the pilot project, one megawatt (MW) power generation capacity will be generated.
- **Note:** Puga has been identified as the hotspot of geothermal energy in the country by the scientists. Puga is a place where it is uncovered with a potential of more than 100 mw of geothermal energies.

Odisha's Balasore to get Country's first Thunderstorm Research Testbed
- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) is all set to establish the country’s first thunderstorm research testbed at Balasore.
- The objective of setting up the thunderstorm testbed is to minimalise human fatalities and loss of property due to lightning strikes.
- The thunderstorm testbed will be established in collaboration between the Ministry of Earth Sciences, IMD, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- **Note:** IMD Director-General Dr Mrutyunjay Mohapatra also revealed that a first-of-its-kind monsoon testbed is also being planned near Bhopal.

Square Kilometre Array Observatory launched
• Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO) Council held its maiden meeting and approved the establishment of the world’s largest radio telescope.
• SKAO is a new intergovernmental organisation dedicated to radio astronomy and is headquartered in the UK.
• The Square Kilometre Array Observatory Council aims to build and operate two radio telescope networks, which would be the largest and most complex ones ever conceived.
• With these two networks, the intergovernmental organisation hopes to answer some of the fundamental questions regarding the universe. The two networks will be based in South Africa and Australia.
• Around 16 countries are currently a part of the project either at a government or national-coordination level or as observers.
• India is participating in the Square Kilometre Array Observatory at a national-coordination level, led by the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research.

India’s first CNG Tractor
• India’s first-ever diesel Tractor, converted to CNG (Compressed Natural Gas), will be formally launched by the union minister for Road Transport and Highways, Sh. Nitin Gadkari.
• The conversion, carried out jointly by Rawmatt Techno Solutions & Tomasetto Achille India, will help farmers increase their income, by lowering costs, and help to create job opportunities in rural India.
• Important benefits of conversion to CNG are:
  • It is a Clean Fuel as it has the lowest content of carbon and other pollutants.
  • It is part of Waste to Wealth as stubble (Parali) can be used as a raw material for producing Bio-CNG which will help the farmers to earn money by selling it to the Bio-CNG production units in their locality

Visual intelligence tool TEJAS, e-Auction India, 'Work from AnyWhere' portal launched on silver jubilee of NICSI
• On the occasion of silver jubilee of National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICSI), a public sector enterprise under National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has launched visual intelligence tool TEJAS, e-Auction India, ‘Work from AnyWhere’ and NIC products portfolio.

Maithri Aquatech sets up the 'World's First Mobile Water from Air Kiosk and Water Knowledge Centre' in the smart city Visakhapatnam
• This initiative is supported by GVMC (Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation) and project SEWAH (Sustainable Enterprises for Water and Health) - an alliance between USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and SWN (Safe Water Network).
• The kiosk will provide clean, mineral-enriched potable water harvested from the air by making use of Maithri Aquatech's own MEGHDOOT solution as a source to generate water with no dependency on scarce groundwater as well as surface water resources.
• Maithri Aquatech is a Hyderabad-based company. The company has developed an innovative solution called MEGHDOOT which can generate water by harvesting the moisture in the air.

Russia launches 38 foreign satellites from 18 countries
• Russian space agency ‘Roscosmos’ successfully launched 38 foreign satellites from a Soyuz 2.1a carrier rocket from Baikonur cosmodrome, Kazakhstan.
• The rocket will place in orbit 38 satellites from 18 countries, including South Korea, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Italy and Brazil.
• Among them is the **Challenge-1, the first satellite made completely in Tunisia**, which was created by the Telnet telecommunications group.
• **Note:** Recently, India’s PSLV-C51 launched Brazil's Amazonia-1, 18 other satellites.

**Facts about Russia:**
- **President:** Vladimir Putin
- **Capital:** Moscow
- **Currency:** Russian Ruble

**World’s most powerful supercomputer ‘Fugaku’**
- The world's most powerful supercomputer ‘**Fugaku**’ is now ready to use.
- Fugaku, the machine was created by Japanese scientific research institute RIKEN in collaboration with multinational IT developer Fujitsu.
• **Note:** In June 2020, Fugaku was deemed the world's most powerful supercomputer in the **TOP500 supercomputer speed rankings**, overtaking IBM's Summit.

**Facts about Japan:**
- **Prime Minister:** Yoshihide Suga
- **Capital:** Tokyo
- **Currency:** Japanese yen

**Google launches the “Women Will” web platform**
- Google launched the “Women Will” web platform for women entrepreneurs on International Women's Day.
- This platform aims to support 1 million women in rural areas of the country to pursue their ambitions and improve their livelihoods through entrepreneurship.
- Google will work initially with **2,000 ‘Internet Saathi’** to help other women turn entrepreneurs.
- **Internet Saathi** is a programme to improve digital literacy among women in rural areas in India. The programme is a joint initiative of Google India, Intel and Tata Trusts.

**ISRO develops radar (SAR) for joint earth observation satellite mission with NASA**
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has completed the development of a **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** capable of producing extremely high-resolution images for a joint earth observation satellite mission with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).
- **NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR)** is a joint collaboration for a dual-frequency L and S-band SAR for earth observation.
- **NISAR** will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet’s surface less than a centimetre across.
• **Note:** The mission is targeted to launch in early 2022 from ISRO’s Sriharikota spaceport in Andhra Pradesh’s Nellore district.

**India’s PSLV-C51 launches Brazil's Amazonia-1, 18 other satellites**
- India's Polar rocket successfully launched Amazonia-1 of Brazil and 18 other satellites from the launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, in the first mission of the year for space agency ISRO.
• The 18 co-passenger satellites placed in the orbit are - four from ISRO's Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (three UNITY Sats from consortium of three Indian academic institutes and the SD-SAT from Chennai-based Space Kidz India-SKI, which is engraved with a picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi) and 14 from NSIL.
• SKI's Satish Dhawan Satellite (SD-SAT) also carried Bhagavad Gita in a Secured Digital card format.
• Note: PSLV-C51 is the first dedicated commercial mission of NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), ISRO's commercial arm.

Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurates the three-day Global Bio India 2021

• The Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the second edition of Global Bio-India-2021 (1st to 3rd March 2021).
• The theme for this year is “Transforming lives” with the tag line “Biosciences to Bio-economy”.
• The event will showcase the strength and opportunities of the India’s biotechnology sector at national level and to the global community.
• Harsh Vardhan unveiled the “National Biotech Strategy” and also inaugurated the Virtual Exhibition of Global Bio-India.
• Note: The Government of India is playing a transformative and catalytic role in building a USD 150 billion bio-economy by 2025.

Russia launches first Arctic-monitoring satellite "Arktika-M"

• Russia's space corporation Roscosmos has successfully launched its first satellite "Arktika-M" to monitor the Arctic’s climate and environment.
• A Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket with the "Arktika-M" satellite on board blasted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.
• The Arktika-M will provide round-the-clock continuous monitoring of the northern territory of Russia and the seas of the Arctic Ocean.

Swachhta Saarthi Fellowships launched by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser

• The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India under its “Waste to Wealth” Mission launched the “Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship.”
• The fellowship is an initiative to empower young innovators who are engaged in community work of waste management/awareness campaigns/waste surveys/studies, etc. as Swachhta Saarthis.
• Note: ‘Waste to Wealth’ Mission, is one of the nine national missions of the Prime Minister’s Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC).

3rd phase of Indian Beamline Project for materials research in Japan initiated

• The 3rd phase of the Indian Beamline Project, a facility for materials research set up under India-Japan Scientific and Technological Cooperation, was initiated on March 23, 2021, with special focus on industrial application research.
• The phase would increase the number of young researchers from India to be trained in advanced X-ray techniques of material research.
**About Indian Beamline:** The Indian Beamline has been constructed and maintained by Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics (SINP), Kolkata and Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bangalore; in Japanese synchrotron light source Photon Factory (PF) of High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK), with support from Nano Mission, Department of Science and Technology.

**Supreme Court's first AI-driven research portal 'SUPACE' launched by CJI Bobde**

- Chief Justice of India S A Bobde launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) portal, Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court's Efficiency (SUPACE).
- It is a tool that collects relevant facts and laws and makes them available to a judge. SUPACE, designed to make research easier for judges, thereby easing their workload.
- **Note:** Justice L Nageshwara Rao is the current chairman of the Supreme Court's Artificial Intelligence Committee.
- Chief Justice of India (CJI) S A Bobde was the first-ever chairman of the Artificial Intelligence Committee.

**Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal launched NanoSniffer, the world’s first Microsensor-based Explosive Trace Detector (ETD)**

- The Nanosniffer has been developed by NanoSniff Technologies which is an IIT Bombay incubated startup.
- It is being marketed by Vehant Technologies, IIT Delhi incubated startup.
- The core technology of NanoSniffer is protected by patents in the U.S. & Europe.
- **About NanoSniffer:** The completely indigenous device ETD - NanoSniffer can detect explosives in less than 10 seconds and it also identifies and categorizes explosives into different classes.
- It detects all classes of military, conventional and homemade explosives.

**Scientists discover the farthest Gamma-ray emitting galaxy**

- Astronomers have discovered a new active galaxy identified as the farthest gamma-ray emitting galaxy.
- This active galaxy called the Narrow-Line Seyfert 1 (NLS1) galaxy, which is about 31 billion light-years away.

**NASA's Ingenuity helicopter makes history with successful flight on Planet Mars**

- As per the U.S. space agency NASA, the miniature robot helicopter Ingenuity performed a successful take-off and landing on Mars.
- **This is the first powered, controlled flight** by an aircraft over the surface of another planet.
- Ingenuity helicopter weighs 4 pounds i.e. 1.8 kg. It also has a battery, heater and sensor. It has a solar panel at the top, which charges the battery.
- **About NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration):** It is an independent agency of the U.S. Federal Government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and space research.
  - **Founded:** 1 October 1958
  - **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C., United States
NASA's Perseverance rover on Mars makes oxygen from planet's carbon dioxide atmosphere

- It is the second successful technology demonstration on the mission, which flew a mini-helicopter earlier.
- The generation of oxygen was performed by a toaster-sized unit in the rover called Moxie - the Mars Oxygen In-Situ Resource Utilization Experiment.
- It made 5 grams of the gas - equivalent to what an astronaut at Mars would need to breathe for roughly 10 minutes.
- NASA is planning that future human missions would take scaled-up versions of Moxie with them to the Red Planet rather than try to carry all the oxygen needed to sustain them.
- Mars' atmosphere is dominated by carbon dioxide. The expectation is that it can produce up to 10 grams of O₂ per hour.

China's first Mars Rover named 'Zhurong'

- China has named its first Mars rover ‘Zhurong’ after the traditional fire god.
- China launched its Mars probe - Tianwen-1 on July 23, 2020. The spacecraft, consisting of an orbiter, a lander and a rover, entered the parking orbit of Mars on February 24, 2021.
- The Tianwen-1 aims to map the morphology and geological structure, investigate surface soil characteristics and water-ice distribution, analyze the surface material composition, measure the ionosphere and the characteristics of the Martian climate and environment at the surface and perceive the physical fields.
- **Note:** China would become the third country after the former Soviet Union and the United States to put a robot rover on Mars.

DRDO conducts maiden trial of Python-5 Air to Air Missile

- Tejas, India’s indigenous Light Combat Aircraft, added the 5th generation Python-5 Air-to-Air Missile (AAM) in its air-to-air weapons capability on April 27, 2021.
- Trials were also aimed to validate enhanced capability of already integrated Derby Beyond Visual Range (BVR) AAM on Tejas.
- The missiles were fired from Tejas aircraft of Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) flown by Indian Air Force (IAF) Test pilots belonging to National Flight Test Centre (NFTC).

Telecom Department gives go-ahead for 5G Technology and Spectrum Trials

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Government of India, approved, permissions to Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) for conducting trials for use and applications of 5G technology.
- The applicants TSPs include Bharti Airtel Ltd., Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd., Vodafone Idea Ltd. and MTNL.
- These TSPs have tied up with original equipment manufacturers and technology providers which are Ericsson, Nokia, Samsung and C-DOT.
The experimental spectrum is being given in various bands which include the mid-band (3.2 GHz to 3.67 GHz), millimeter wave band (24.25 GHz to 28.5 GHz) and in the Sub-Gigahertz band (700 GHz).

The TSPs are encouraged to conduct trials using **5Gi technology** in addition to the already known 5G Technology.

**ISRO develops 3 cost-effective ventilators, oxygen concentrator**

- The Indian Space Research Organisation’s Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) has developed three different types of ventilators and an oxygen concentrator.
- “Based on designs, features and specifications, the names are Prana, VaU and Svasta. All three are user-friendly, fully automated and with touch-screen specifications, meeting all safety standards.
- Prana is meant to deliver respiratory gas to the patient by automated compression of an Ambu bag, Svasta is designed to work without electric power, and the VaU is a low-cost ventilator equivalent to commercially available high-end ventilators.

**SpaceX will launch DOGE-1 Satellite to the Moon in 2022**

- SpaceX will launch a satellite DOGE-1 to the Moon in 2022 funded entirely with the cryptocurrency ‘Dogecoin’.
- Canadian company Geometric Energy Corporation will lead the lunar mission.
- The satellite, dubbed DOGE-1, will be launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket in the first quarter of 2022.
- The “DOGE-1 Mission to the Moon” will be "the first-ever commercial lunar payload in history paid entirely with" Dogecoin.
- **About Dogecoin:** It is a cryptocurrency created by software engineers Billy Markus and Jackson Palmer. It was introduced on December 6, 2013.
- **About Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX):** It is an American aerospace manufacturer and space transportation services company headquartered in Hawthorne, California. SpaceX was founded in 2002 by Elon Musk.

**Iran unveils its most powerful supercomputer ‘Simorgh’**

- Iran has unveiled its most powerful supercomputer ‘Simorgh’ developed domestically by Tehran’s Amirkabir University of Technology (AUT).
- The supercomputer, named Simorgh after a mythical Persian bird, has a performance capacity of 0.56 petaflops at the moment and will reach one petaflops in two months.
- **Note:** Work on the next supercomputer ‘Maryam’ has already started, and it will have 100 times the capacity of ‘Simorgh’.
Index Ranking, Report

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2021 Updates:

3rd State Food Safety Index: FSSAI

Why in News

- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mansukh Mandaviya released the 3rd State Food Safety Index (SFSI).
- He also flagged off 19 Mobile Food Testing Vans (Food Safety on Wheels) to supplement the food safety ecosystem across the country taking the total number of such mobile testing vans to 109.

Key Points

Rankings of States:

- The Union Minister felicitated 9 leading States/UTs based on the ranking for the year 2020-21 for their impressive performance.
- Among the larger states, Gujarat was the top ranking state, followed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- Among the smaller states, Goa stood first followed by Meghalaya and Manipur.
- Among UTs, Jammu & Kashmir, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and New Delhi secured top ranks.

About State Food Safety Index:

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has developed State Food Safety Index to measure the performance of states on 5 significant parameters of Food Safety.
- Parameters: Human Resources and Institutional Data, Compliance, Food Testing – Infrastructure and Surveillance, Training & Capacity Building and Consumer Empowerment
- The Index is a dynamic quantitative and qualitative benchmarking model that provides an objective framework for evaluating food safety across all States/UTs.
- The first State Food Safety Index (for 2018-19) was announced on the first-ever World Food Safety Day on 7th June 2019.

Related Initiatives:

- Eat Right India Movement
- Eat Right Research Awards and Grants
- Eat Right Station Certification

Source: PIB

Global Innovation Index 2021

Why in News
• India has climbed 2 spots and has been ranked 46th in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2021 rankings.
• India has been on a rising trajectory, over the past several years in the Global Innovation Index, from a rank of 81 in 2015 to 46 in 2021.

Key Points
Global Performance:
• Rank 1: Switzerland
• Rank 2: Sweden
• Rank 3: U.S.
• Rank 46: India

India’s Performance:

World Bank discontinues ‘Ease of Doing Business’ report
Why in News
• The World Bank Group has decided to discontinue the ‘Ease of Doing Business’ report.
• The World Bank has now said that a new approach will be worked out to assess countries’ business and investment climates.

Key Points
• In August 2020, World Bank paused the publication of the Doing Business report following a number of irregularities were reported regarding changes to the data.
• The international financial institution later confirmed that the changes were inconsistent with the Doing Business methodology.

About Ease of Doing Business Report:
• The Ease of Doing Business Report was introduced in 2003 to provide an assessment of objective measures of business regulations and their enforcement across 190 economies.

India’s Performance:
• In 2014, India was at 142nd position on the Ease of Doing Business Index and made significant improvements after the government launched an ambitious program of regulatory reforms.
• India moved to 63rd position on World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business Ranking 2020.

Other World Bank’s major report:
• World Development Report
• Human Capital Index

Source: The Hindu

THE World University Rankings 2022
Why in News
The Times Higher Education (THE) released World University Rankings 2022.

Key Points

Global Ranking:
- The University of Oxford, UK tops the ranking for the sixth consecutive year.
- Colleges from the United States continue to dominate the top 20 ranks, with California Institute of Technology, Harvard University and Stanford University taking the second, third and the fourth spot respectively.

India’s Ranking:
- Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru is the country’s top performing institute, but is ranked in the 301-350 bracket.
- It is followed by IIT Ropar and JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research. Both are in the 351-400 bracket.
- Overall, India is home to 35 of the world’s top 1,000 universities.

About THE World University Rankings 2022:
- The THE World University Rankings 2022 include more than 1,600 universities across 99 countries and territories, making them the largest and most diverse university rankings to date.
- The table is based on 13 carefully calibrated performance indicators that measure an institution’s performance across four areas: teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook.

About Times Higher Education (THE):
- Times Higher Education, formerly The Times Higher Education Supplement, is a magazine reporting specifically on news and issues related to higher education.

Related India’s Initiatives:
- National Education Policy, 2020
- Institutions of Eminence (IoE) Scheme
- Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana
- Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT)

Source: Indian Express

BGCI launches the State of the World's Trees Report 2021

Why in News
- Almost a third of the world’s tree species are at risk of extinction, while hundreds are on the brink of being wiped out.

Key Points
- According to the State of the World’s Trees report 17,500 tree species – some 30% of the total – are at risk of extinction, while 440 species have fewer than 50 individuals left in the wild.
Among the most at-risk trees are species including magnolias and dipterocarps – which are commonly found in Southeast Asian rainforests. Oak trees, maple trees and ebonies also face threats.

Thousands of varieties of trees in the world’s top 6 countries for tree-species diversity are at risk of extinction. The greatest single number is in Brazil. The other 5 countries are Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Colombia and Venezuela.

The top three threats facing tree species are crop production, timber logging and livestock farming, while climate change and extreme weather are emerging threats.

**Need of saving Trees:**

- Trees help support the natural ecosystem and are considered vital for combating global warming and climate change.
- They store 50% of the world’s terrestrial carbon and provide a buffer from extreme weather, such hurricanes and tsunamis.

**India’s Related Initiatives:**

- National Mission for a Green India
- Nagar Van (Urban Forest) Scheme
- Sankalp Parva
- National Afforestation Programme
- Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act

**Source: Indian Express**

Weather disasters killed 2 million in last 50 years, UN Agency

**Why in News**


- **WMO (World Meteorological Organization)** is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for promoting international cooperation on atmospheric science, climatology, hydrology and geophysics.

**Key Points**

**Findings of the Report:**

- The number of disasters has increased by a factor of five over the 50 year period, driven by climate change, more extreme weather and improved reporting.
- Due to improved early warnings and disaster management, the number of deaths decreased almost three-fold from 1970 to 2019.
- From 1970 to 2019, weather, climate and water hazards accounted for 50% of all disasters, 45% of all reported deaths and 74% of all reported economic losses.
- More than 91% of these deaths occurred in developing countries.
- During the 50 year period, US$ 202 million dollars in damage occurred on average every day. Economic losses have increased sevenfold from the 1970s to the 2010s.
Storms were the most prevalent cause of damage, resulting in the largest economic losses around the globe.

**Failure of Sendai Framework:**
- The failure to reduce disaster losses as set out in the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction adopted by UN Member States in 2015* is putting at risk the ability of developing countries to eradicate poverty and to achieve other important SDGs (*Sustainable Development Goals*).

**India’s Recent Initiatives:**
- National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP)
- Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)
- National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)

**Source:** public.wmo.int

---

**The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children’s Climate Risk Index, UNICEF Report**

**Why in News**
- UNICEF in collaboration with *Fridays for Future (FFF)* has launched the report named ‘*The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children’s Climate Risk Index’ 2021.*
- The report is the first comprehensive analysis of climate risk from a child’s perspective.

**Key Points About Children’s Climate Risk Index (CCRI):**
- It ranks countries based on children’s exposure to climate and environmental shocks, such as cyclones and heat waves, as well as their vulnerability to those shocks, based on their access to essential services.
- The report finds approximately 1 billion children – nearly half the world's 2.2 billion children – live in one of the 33 countries classified as “extremely high-risk”.
- These children face a deadly combination of exposure to multiple climate and environmental shocks with a high vulnerability due to inadequate essential services, such as water and sanitation, healthcare and education.

**CCRI Rank:**
- *Rank 1: Central African Republic*
- *Rank 2: Chad, Nigeria*
- *Rank 26: India*

**Recommendations:**
- *Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions*
- *Increase investment in climate adaptation and resilience*
- *Provide Climate Education*
- *Ensure Pandemic Recovery is Inclusive*
India ranks 9th in global agricultural exporters in 2019: WTO Report

Why in News

- In 2019, India ranked 9th with a share of 3.1% in global agricultural exports as per a report by World Trade Organization (WTO) on the trends in world agricultural trade in the past 25 years (from 1995).

Key Points

- India has entered the top 10 list of the countries exporting agricultural produce in the year 2019 with a sizable share in the export of rice, cotton, soya beans and meat.
- The USA, which topped the list in 1995, was overtaken by the European Union (EU) in 2019.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Share of Global Agriculture Exports in 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>European Union (EU)</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Why in News


Key Points

- Unemployment Rate (UR): UR fell to 4.8% in 2019-20. In 2018-19, it stood at 5.8% and 6.1% in 2017-18.
- Worker Population Ratio (WPR): WPR improved to 38.2% in 2019-20 (35.3%:2018-19 and 34.7%:2017-18).

About Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS):

- The National Statistical Office (NSO) launched the PLFS in April 2017.
- The first annual report (July 2017-June 2018) was released in May 2019 and the second (July 2018-June 2019) in June 2020.

United Nation’s Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation 2021

Why in News

- India has scored 90.32% in United Nation’s Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific's (UNESCAP) latest Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation.
- The Survey hailed this as a remarkable jump from 78.49% in 2019.
- India has achieved a 100% score for the Transparency index and 66% in the “Women in trade” component.

State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021 report

Why in News
State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021 report presents the first global assessment of food insecurity and malnutrition for 2020 and offers some indication of what hunger might look like by 2030 in a scenario further complicated by the enduring effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report is an annual flagship report jointly prepared by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development), UNICEF, WFP (World Food Programme) and WHO (World Health Organization).

United District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2019-20 Report

Why in the News?
- As per the UDISE+ report 2019-20, Gross Enrolment Ratio at all levels of school education has improved in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19.
- Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) has improved at all levels of school education.

India ranked 10th in Global Cybersecurity Index 2020

Why in the News?
- India ranked 10th in the 4th edition of the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2020, a significant jump of 37 places from its previous GCI rank in 2018.

Key Points
- **Rank 1**: US
- **Rank 2**: UK, Saudi Arabia
- **Rank 3**: Estonia
- **Rank 10**: India

Note: India has also secured the 4th position in the Asia Pacific region, underlining its commitment to cybersecurity.

World Drug Report 2021: UNODC

Why in the News?
- Every year, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) issues the World Drug Report, full of key statistics and factual data obtained through official sources.

Detailed Project reports of LiDAR survey of forest areas

Why in the News?
- Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar released the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of LiDAR based survey of forest areas in 10 states.
- The 10 states are Bihar, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, and Tripura.

About LiDAR:
- LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) is a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges (variable distances) to the Earth.
- A lidar instrument principally consists of a laser, a scanner, and a specialized GPS receiver.
New Appointments

La Ganesan appointed as new Governor of Manipur
- President Ram Nath Kovind appointed Senior BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) leader La Ganesan as the new Governor of Manipur.
- Ganesan became the 17th Governor of the state.
- The post of the governor had fallen vacant after the retirement of Najma Heptulla earlier August 2021.

Facts about Manipur:
- Chief Minister: N. Biren Singh
- Capital: Imphal

Source: The Hindu

Dhriti Banerjee becomes 1st woman director in 100 years of Zoological Survey of India history

Why in News
- The appointments committee of the Cabinet approved the proposal for appointment of Dr Dhriti Banerjee, Scientist E, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) as director.
- She has become the first woman to be appointed as director of the 105-year-old ZSI.

Key Points
- She has been co-ordinator of ZSI’s Digital Sequence Information Project since 2012.

About Zoological Survey of India (ZSI):
- ZSI was founded on 1 July 1916. It works under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.
- It is headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal.

Source: TOI

Chairperson of the NCW, Rekha Sharma gets nominated for another term of 3 years

Why in News
- In pursuance of Section 3 of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 (20 of 1990), Central Government hereby nominated Smt. Rekha Sharma, as Chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW), for another term of 3 years w.e.f. 07.08.2021.

Key Points
- Rekha Sharma assumed the charge of NCW chairperson on August 7, 2018.
- She has been associated with the Commission as a member since August, 2015 and held the additional charge as the chairperson from September 29, 2017 before becoming its regular chief.
About National Commission for Women (NCW):
- It is the statutory body of the Government of India, generally concerned with advising the government on all policy matters affecting women.
- It was established on 31 January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian Constitution, as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act.

Source: PIB

A report on “Hunger Hotspots”: FAO-WEP

Why in News
- Recently, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Program (WEP) released a report on “Hunger Hotspots” between August and November 2021.
- The 2021 Global Food Crises Report released in May 2021 had already warned of acute food insecurity.

Key Points
Hunger Hotspots:
- The five countries (Ethiopia, Madagascar, South Sudan, northern Nigeria and Yemen) are among 23 countries where acute food insecurity will worsen from August through November, 2021.
- Madagascar and Ethiopia are the world's newest top hunger hotspots.

About Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):
- It is a specific agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger and improve food security and nutrition.
- **Formation:** 16 October 1945
- **Headquarters:** Rome, Italy

About World Food Program (WEP):
- WEP is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations.
- **Formation:** 19 December 1961
- **Headquarters:** Rome, Italy
- The World Food Programme was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020.

Source: DTE

Deepak Das takes charge as new Controller General of Accounts

Why in News
- Deepak Das took charge as the new Controller General of Accounts (CGA).
- Mr. Das is the 25th officer to hold the position of CGA.

Key Points
- Deepak Das is appointed by the Government of India as the Controller General of Accounts, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, with effect from August 1, 2021.
- He is a 1986-batch Indian Civil Accounts Service officer.
Prior to assuming charge of CGA, he served as the Principal Chief Controller of Accounts in the Central Board of Direct Taxes.

Source: PIB

Pushkar Singh Dhami sworn in as new Uttarakhand Chief Minister

Why in the News?
- Pushkar Singh Dhami was sworn in as the 11th Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, along with an 11-member cabinet.

Key Points
- Pushkar Singh Dhami is Uttarakhand's third chief minister in nearly four months.
- Dhami succeeds Tirath Singh Rawat, who resigned recently after nearly four months in office. Tirath Singh Rawat replaced Trivendra Singh Rawat in March 2021.
- Dhami is an MLA from the Khatima assembly constituency in the hill state's Udham Singh Nagar district.

Tenure of Attorney General K.K. Venugopal extended by a year

Why in the News?
- The central government has extended the tenure of Attorney General (AG) for India K.K. Venugopal by a year.
- Venugopal will continue on the constitutional post till 30 June 2022.
- With this extension, Venugopal will complete 5 years as AG next year. Venugopal, who will turn 90 on 6th September this year, is the oldest person to serve on this post.

Praveen Sinha appointed as Special Director of CBI

Why in the News?
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has appointed CBI Additional Director Praveen Sinha as the Special Director of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

India emerges as second in Global Manufacturing Risk Index 2021: Cushman & Wakefield Report

Why in News
- According to Cushman & Wakefield’s Global Manufacturing Risk Index 2021, India has emerged as a global manufacturing hub and effectively surpassed the United States to become the world’s second most desired manufacturing destination.
- China remains at number one position.
- The US is in third position.

Key Points:
About Global Manufacturing Risk Index:
- Cushman & Wakefield’s Global Manufacturing Risk Index 2021 assesses the most advantageous locations for global manufacturing among 47 countries in Europe, the Americas and Asia Pacific.

Parameters:
The rankings are determined based on 4 key parameters, including the country’s capability to restart manufacturing, business environment (availability of talent/labour, access to markets), operating costs, and the risks (political, economic and environmental).

**Factors Responsible for Improvement in India’s Ranking:**
- In regards to manufacturing, often compared to its Asian rival, India has a huge population, which means a younger workforce with innovative capabilities that has the potential to fuel the country’s manufacturing sector.
- The government of India is actively bringing reforms to boost the Indian economy: Accounting as the lowest in Southeast Asia, Reduced corporate tax from 30% to 25%, Rules regarding land acquisition have been subsequently relaxed over the years, Income tax, GST, and other custom reliefs provided for favorable business conditions.

**Recent Initiatives to Improve Manufacturing Sector in India:**
- Make in India
- Skill India
- National Infrastructure Pipeline
- Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises
- A Scheme for Promoting Innovation, Rural Industry & Entrepreneurship (ASPIRE)
- Industrial corridors
- Prime Minister’s Employment Generation programme

Source: Indian Express

12 Indian companies make it to 2021 Hurun Global 500 list; Wipro, HCL, Asian Paints new entrants

**Why in News**
- 12 Indian companies made it to the list of the top-500 valued companies this year against 11 in the year-ago period, the 2021 Hurun Global 500 list shows.

**Key Points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Company Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Microsoft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Reliance Industries (India)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd topped the list of Indian companies with a market capitalization of $188 billion.
- Apple is the most valuable company in the world.

**Quality of Life for Elderly Index**

**Why in News**
- Dr Bibek Debroy, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) released the Quality of Life for Elderly Index.
- The Index has been created by the Institute for Competitiveness.

**Pillars & Sub-Pillars of the Index:**
- **Four pillars:** Financial Well-being, Social Well-being, Health System and Income Security
- **Eight sub-pillars:** Economic Empowerment, Educational Attainment & Employment, Social Status, Physical Security, Basic Health, Psychological Well being, Social Security and Enabling Environment

**Key Highlights:**
- The Health System pillar observes the highest national average, 66.97 at an all-India level, followed by 62.34 in Social Well-being.
Financial Well-being observes a score of 44.7, which is lowered by the low performance of 21 States across the Education Attainment & Employment pillar, which showcases scope for improvement.

States have performed particularly worse in the Income Security pillar because over half of the States have a score below the national average, i.e., 33.03 in Income Security, which is the lowest across all pillars.

**Major Findings:**
- **Rajasthan** and **Himachal Pradesh** are top-scoring regions in Aged and Relatively Aged States, respectively.
- **Chandigarh** and **Mizoram** are top-scoring regions in Union Territory and North-East States category.
- The **Aged States** refer to States with an elderly population of more than 5 million, whereas **Relatively Aged States** refer to States with an Elderly population of less than 5 million.

**India ranked 122nd in Global Youth Development Index 2020**

**Why in News**
- India is ranked 122nd in the Global Youth Development Index 2020, which measures the status of young people in 181 countries around the world.
- **Singapore** got first rank.
- The **Commonwealth Secretariat, London** released its triennial rankings of youth development of 181 countries, with 156 of them recording at least slight improvements in their scores.

**Key Points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Slovenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indore becomes India’s first "Water Plus" city**

**Why in News**
- **Indore, Madhya Pradesh**, the country's cleanest city, has been declared the first SBM "Water Plus" certified city of India under the Swachh Survekshan 2021.

**Key Points**
- A **Water Plus city certificate** is provided to a city for maintaining cleanliness in rivers and drains under its administration.
- **About Swachh Survekshan:** It was introduced by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** in 2016 as a competitive framework to encourage cities to improve the status of urban sanitation while encouraging large scale citizen participation.
- It is an annual survey of cleanliness and sanitation in cities and towns across India launched as part of the **Swachh Bharat Mission**.

**Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM):**
- It is a country-wide campaign initiated by the Government of India in 2014 to eliminate **open defecation** and improve **solid waste management**.
• Phase 1 of the SBM lasted till October 2019. Phase 2 is being implemented between 2020-21 and 2024-25.
• The mission was split into two: rural and urban.
Source: TOI

2021 Fortune Global 500
• 7 Indian companies have found a place in the 2021 Fortune Global 500 list.
• Mukesh Ambani’s Reliance Industries Ltd is the highest-ranked Indian company on the list in terms of revenue. It is placed at 155th spot globally.
• Walmart claimed the top spot for the 8th consecutive year, and for the 16th time since 1995.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Companies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Walmart (US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>State Grid (China)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Amazon (US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155</td>
<td>Reliance Industries (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>State Bank of India (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212</td>
<td>Indian Oil Corporation (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243</td>
<td>Oil &amp; Natural Gas Corporation (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>348</td>
<td>Rajesh Exports (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>357</td>
<td>Tata Motors (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>394</td>
<td>Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (India)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
• Fortune Global 500 companies generated revenues totaling more than one-third of the world's GDP.
• The Fortune Global 500, also known as Global 500, is an annual ranking of the top 500 corporations worldwide as measured by revenue. The list is compiled and published annually by Fortune magazine.
Source: Business Standard

IPCC 6th Assessment Report - The Physical Science Basis
Why in News
• The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the first of three installments of the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) titled "Climate Change 2021: the Physical Science Basis".
• The first installment is from Working Group I and it discusses the physical science of climate change.
• Reports from Working Groups II (Impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability) and III (Mitigation of climate change) will follow in 2022.
• The report specifically warns that the 1.5-degree-Celsius threshold is likely to be exceeded before 2040.

Key Points
• The report provides the latest assessment of scientific knowledge about the warming of the planet and projections for future warming and assesses its impacts on the climate system.
• The average surface temperature of the Earth will cross 1.5 °C over pre-industrial levels in the next 20 years (By 2040) and 2°C by the middle of the century without sharp reduction of emissions.

Carbon dioxide (CO2) Concentrations:
They are the highest in at least two million years. Humans have emitted 2,400 billion tonnes of CO2 since the late 1800s.

**Impact of Global Warming:**
- Sea-level rise has tripled compared with 1901-1971.
- Coastal areas will see continued sea-level rise throughout the 21st century, resulting in coastal erosion and more frequent and severe flooding in low-lying areas.
- Every additional 0.5 °C of warming will increase hot extremes, extreme precipitation and drought.
- Global Warming will have a serious impact on mountain ranges across the world, including the Himalayas.

**Indian Sub-continent Specific Findings:**
- Heat waves and humid heat stress will be more intense and frequent during the 21st century over South Asia.
- Changes in monsoon precipitation are also expected, with both annual and summer monsoon precipitation projected to increase.
- The sea surface temperature over Indian Ocean is likely to increase by 1 to 2 °C when there is 1.5°C to 2°C global warming.

**About Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC):**
- It is an intergovernmental body of the United Nations.
- It was established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and was later endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly.

**Assessment reports**
- The IPCC has published 5 comprehensive assessment reports reviewing the latest climate science.

*Source: Indian Express*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index/Report</th>
<th>Released by</th>
<th>India’s Rank</th>
<th>First Rank</th>
<th>Related Fact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World’s Best Employer 2020</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NTPC Limited, formerly known as National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, is an Indian Public Sector Undertaking, engaged in the business of generation of electricity and allied activities. It is a company incorporated under the Companies Act 1956 and is promoted by the Government of India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Hunger Index 2020</td>
<td>Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td>As per the report, 14 % of India’s population is undernourished. Country recorded a child stunting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| State of Global Air (SoGA) 2020 Report | US-based Health Effects Institute | Indians have the highest exposure to hazardous PM 2.5 particulate matter and the third-highest exposure to ozone. It is the State of Global Air 2020 Report for 2019 by the US-based Health Effects Institute. The findings are based on the latest Global Burden of Disease study published in The Lancet. India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal among top 10 countries with highest PM 2.5 exposure; India leads the tally. In 2019, air pollution caused 6.67 million deaths globally, with India accounting for 1.67 million of these. 476,000 newborns worldwide died in 2019. Rates of undernutrition are high in India, with a rate of 37.4%. Stunted children are those who have a “low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition”. At present, India lags behind Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia among others on the Global Hunger Index. Only 13 out of 107 countries, including Rwanda, Liberia, Afghanistan and Chad among others have fared worse than India. Note: The Global Hunger Index is an annual report, jointly published by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at the global, country and regional levels.

Indians have the highest exposure to hazardous PM 2.5 particulate matter and the third-highest exposure to ozone. It is the State of Global Air 2020 Report for 2019 by the US-based Health Effects Institute. The findings are based on the latest Global Burden of Disease study published in The Lancet. India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal among top 10 countries with highest PM 2.5 exposure; India leads the tally. In 2019, air pollution caused 6.67 million deaths globally, with India accounting for 1.67 million of these. 476,000 newborns worldwide died in 2019.
| **Anemia Mukt Bharat (AMB) Index 2020** | **Government of India** | **The information came to light during the 8th Governing Body Meeting of the State Health Society of the National Health Mission (NHM) in Chandigarh. Haryana was ranked at the top slot (1st) with an AMB Index of 46.7 among 29 states in the country. West Bengal got 2nd, Orissa got 3rd and Uttar Pradesh got 29th rank. Note: Anemia Mukt Bharat, an initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and UNICEF, has been launched to reduce the prevalence of Anemia all over India.** |
| **44th OECD International Migration Outlook 2020 Report** | **The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** | **2** | **China** | **As per the report, India ranked second in terms of the “total” inflow of new migrants to OECD countries during the year 2018 as well as in the number of Indians obtaining citizenship of these countries. China continued to retain the top position as the largest source country. Romania got third position. Note: Migration from India to OECD countries climbed significantly by 10% and hit 3.3 lakh and it accounted for about 5% of the overall migration to OECD countries.** |
| **Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report 2020** | **World Bank** | | | **As per the report, The COVID-19 pandemic is estimated to push an additional 88 million to** |
115 million people into extreme poverty this year (2020), with the total rising to as many as 150 million by next year (2021), depending on the severity of the economic contraction. Extreme poverty, defined as living on less than $1.90 a day, is likely to affect between 9.1% and 9.4% of the world’s population in 2020. The new poor being added will be mainly from countries that already have high poverty rates. The significant numbers will be seen in middle-income countries. India belongs to the category of lower-middle-income country.

<p>| Stanford University’s list of top 2 percent scientists | In the list of 1,59,683 persons, 1,492 Indians have found a place, with a majority of them being from IITs and IISc and other top institutes. This database includes the top 2 percent of scientists of the world from different fields on the basis of standardized citation indications. The results were published in PLoS Biology recently and they have been classified into 22 scientific fields and 176 sub-fields in the report. There are 16 Scientists from Indian who are ranked 30 or higher in the world. In the field of Nuclear &amp; Particle Physics, there are two Indians: Ashoke Sen (ranked 13) and T. Padmanabhan (ranked 24). |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of the Education Report for India 2020</th>
<th>UNESCO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are two Indian in the field of Inorganic and Nuclear Chemistry: Prof. Gautam Desiraju (ranked 2) and CNR Rao (ranked 3). Biotechnology has two names: Dr. Ashok Pandey (ranked 8) and Dr. S Venkata Mohan (rank 29). The remaining 10 Indians are distributed as one each in different subjects, defined by a somewhat subjective classification.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Freedom Index (HFI) 2020</th>
<th>American think tank Cato Institute and Fraser Institute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India was placed at the 111th spot out of 162 countries. New Zealand, Switzerland and Hong Kong bagged the first three spots. Note: The Human Freedom Index 2020, a worldwide ranking of civil, economic and personal freedom, published by American think tank Cato Institute.</td>
<td>111 New Zealand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Urban Quality of Life Index 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIT-Bombay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IIT-Bombay, recently released Urban Quality of Life Index, wherein the institution compared the life quality in various cities all over India on the basis of some common denominations. Some important ranks are: Mumbai provides the highest quality of life in the country, closely followed by Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata. Bihar's capital city Patna, on the other hand, has been ranked at the lowest position. For the gender parity index, Chennai got the top rank and has shown the least gender discrimination and differences and Patna remains the worst performing city.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Human Development Index (HDI) 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>India dropped two spots to 131 among 189 countries in the 2020 human development index, according to a report released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Norway topped the index, followed by Ireland and Switzerland. The life expectancy of Indians at birth in 2019 was 69.7 years. Note: India had ranked 129th in the index of 2019. Human Development Index is the measure of a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Kotak Wealth Hurun India list: Wealthiest women in 2020              | Kotak Wealth Management       | India's top 3 wealthiest women 2020:  
1. Roshni Nadar Malhotra (HCL Technologies)  
2. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (Biocon)  
3. Leena Gandhi Tewari (USV)  
Note: Kotak Wealth Management, a division of Kotak Mahindra Bank (Kotak) and Hurun India has announced its 2020 list of India's 100 richest women. |
| Fortune India-500                                                    | Fortune India                  | Top 3 companies on the 2020 Fortune India-500 list:  
1. Reliance Industries  
2. Indian Oil Corporation  
3. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation  
Note: Fortune India-500 list was published by Fortune India, which is part of the Kolkata-based RP Sanjiv Goenka Group. |
| Global Terrorism Index 2020                                           | 8                             | Afghanistan  
1st rank- Afghanistan  
2nd rank- Iraq  
3rd rank- Nigeria  
8th rank- India  
Note: The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) is a report published annually by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP). The GTI is based on data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) which is collected by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland. It covers 163 countries. |
| Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2021 | Not-for-profit organisations Germanwatch and NewClimate Institute (Germany) together with the Climate Action Network (CAN International). | 10 | None achieved 1-3 rank 4th rank- Sweden 5th rank- UK 10th rank- India While China is ranked 33rd, US 61st and Russia 52nd. Note: CCPI is prepared after assessing the performances of 57 countries and the European Union. These 57 countries and the European Union collectively are responsible for about 90 percent of the global GHG emissions. The Climate Change Performance Index is developed by not-for-profit organisations Germanwatch and NewClimate Institute (Germany) together with the Climate Action Network (CAN International). |
| India's Amul is now world's 8th largest milk processor | Amul, a brand of dairy cooperative major Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMF), is ranked 8th in the list of top 20 global dairy processors report 2020 released by the International Farm Comparison Network (IFCN). Note: US's ‘Dairy Farmers of America’ topped the global list of dairy processors. |
| digital payment index | RBI | The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constructed a composite Digital Payments Index (DPI) to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country. |
The RBI-DPI has been constructed with March 2018 as the base period. The DPI for March 2019 and March 2020 work out to 153.47 and 207.84 respectively, indicating appreciable growth.

**Note:** The RBI-DPI comprises five broad parameters that enable the measurement of deepening and expansion of digital payments in the country over different time periods.

These parameters include Payment Enablers (weight 25%), Payment Infrastructure – Demand-side factors (10%), Payment Infrastructure – Supply-side factors (15%), Payment Performance (45%) and Consumer Centricity (5%).

<p>| Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) report of 146 National Park and Wildlife Sanctuaries | Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar | At present, India has a network of 903 Protected Areas covering about five percent of the total geographic area of the country. 70 percent of the global tiger population, 70 percent of Asiatic lions and more than 60 percent of leopard’s population in country, is a certificate of India’s thriving biodiversity. The Minister also announced that from this year onwards ten best National Parks, five Coastal and Marine parks and top five Zoos in the country will be ranked and awarded every year. Javadekar also launched the Management |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Henley Passport Index 2021</th>
<th>85</th>
<th>Japan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henley Passport Index 2021 has revealed the list of the world’s most powerful passports and India has been ranked 85th on it. India’s passport got a visa-free score of 58, which means Indian passport holders can visit 58 countries without prior visa. First rank - Japan (191), Second rank - Singapore (190) Iraq and Afghanistan are the countries with the worst passport with score 28 and 26 respectively.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Migration 2020 Highlights</th>
<th>Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India has the largest diaspora population in the world with 18 million people from the country living outside their homeland in 2020. India's large diaspora is distributed across the United Arab Emirates (3.5 million), the United States of America (2.7 million) and Saudi Arabia (2.5 million). Other countries hosting large numbers of Indian migrants included Australia, Canada, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar and the United Kingdom. Other countries with a large diaspora population included Mexico and Russia (11 million each), China (10 million).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The US remained by far the largest country of destination of international migrants with 51 million migrants in 2020, equal to 18 percent of the world's total. Germany hosted the second largest number of migrants worldwide at around 16 million.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hurun’s 500 most valuable companies across the world</th>
<th>Total 11 private Indian firms have made it to the list of 500 most valuable companies across the world, and the country is ranked 10th on the chart. Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries ranked 54th, Tata Consultancy Services’ ranking 73rd globally and making it the second most valuable Indian firm. The list of 500 is led by consumer technology major Apple and is followed by Microsoft and Amazon. Note: The Hurun Global 500 List recognizes the world’s top 500 non-state-owned companies, which are ranked according to their market capitalization or valuations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India Innovation Index-2020</td>
<td>The index demonstrates the government's continued commitment towards transforming the country into an innovation-driven economy. In the India Innovation Index-2020, the States and Union Territories have been divided into 17 Major States, 10 North-East and Hill States and 9 Union Territories and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Firepower Nations Index (2021) – Military Strength Ranking</td>
<td>4 U.S.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Climate Risk Index 2021</td>
<td>Germanwatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME magazine's list of 100 emerging leaders</td>
<td>TIME magazine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Global Climate Risk Index 2021, released by Germanwatch - an NGO based in Bonn, Germany, analyses to what extent countries and regions have been affected by impacts of weather-related loss events. The most recent data available for 2019 and from 2000 to 2019 were taken into account. The countries and territories affected most in 2019 were Mozambique, Zimbabwe as well as the Bahamas. For the period from 2000 to 2019 Puerto Rico, Myanmar and Haiti rank highest. India ranks seventh among countries most affected in 2019 by climate change.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020 Democracy Index’s global ranking</th>
<th>Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)</th>
<th>53</th>
<th>Norway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India slipped two places to 53rd position in the 2020 Democracy Index’s global ranking as India was ranked 51st in the 2019 Democracy Index. Norway topped The EIU’s latest Democracy Index report titled “Democracy in sickness and in health?” with Iceland, Sweden, New Zealand and Canada making up the top five. Out of 167 countries, the Democracy Index classifies 23 countries as full democracies, 52 as flawed democracies, 35 as hybrid regimes and 57 as authoritarian regimes. India has been classified as a 'flawed democracy' along with countries such as the U.S., France, Belgium and Brazil.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>India Energy Outlook 2021</th>
<th>International Energy Agency (IEA)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India will make up the biggest share of energy demand growth at 25% over the next two decades, as it overtakes the European Union as the world’s third-biggest energy consumer by 2030. India’s energy consumption is expected to nearly double as the nation’s gross domestic product expands to an estimated $8.6 trillion by 2040 under its current national policy scenario.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corruption Perception Index 2020</th>
<th>Transparency Internationa (TI)</th>
<th>86</th>
<th>New Zealand and Denmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India’s rank is 86 out of 180 nations with a score of 40 released by</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
India’s rank has slipped six places in 2020 as India was ranked at 80th position out of 180 countries in 2019. New Zealand and Denmark were ranked at first position with scores of 88. Somalia and South Sudan were ranked lowest at 179th position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>India has ranked 86th in a coronavirus performance index comprising 98 countries, according to the performance index compiled by the Sydney-based Lowy Institute. Top three countries are New Zealand, Vietnam, Taiwan respectively and Brazil was ranked at the bottom in the list. The study measured a number of key indicators, including confirmed cases, deaths, cases per million people and deaths per million people.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reliance Jio ranked fifth strongest brand globally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani’s four-year-old telecom venture Reliance Jio has been ranked the fifth strongest brand globally. Jio has entered the ranking for the first time and claimed fifth position with a BSI score of 91.7 out of 100 and the elite AAA+ brand strength rating. According to the Brand Finance’s Global 500, 2021, Chinese mobile app WeChat was at the top position.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Worst Year on Record 2020</strong></th>
<th><strong>World Tourism Organization</strong></th>
<th>Global tourism suffered its worst year on record in 2020, with international arrivals dropping by 74 percent according to the latest data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Destinations worldwide welcomed 1 billion fewer international arrivals in 2020 than in the previous year (2019), due to an unprecedented fall in demand and widespread travel restrictions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index</strong></td>
<td>Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies in partnership with Roche &amp; EUI</td>
<td>10 Singapore India ranked 10th out of 11 Asia Pacific countries in a newly-launched health index to measure the progress towards personalised healthcare. Singapore ranked 1st, Taiwan 2nd and Japan 3rd in the index. Note: The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) report 'Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index’, developed by the Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies in partnership with Roche, measures the readiness of 11 health systems across the region — Australia, China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and New Zealand — in adopting personalised healthcare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>India Justice Report (IJR) 2020</strong></td>
<td>Tata Trusts in collaboration with Centre for Social Justice, Common Cause, Commonwealth Human Rights</td>
<td>In the second edition of the India Justice Report (IJR) 2020, Maharashtra has retained the top spot on delivering justice to people among 18 large and medium sized states,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative, DAKSH, TISS–Prayas, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, and How India Lives.</td>
<td>followed by Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Punjab and Kerala. Only 29% of Judges in High Courts across the country are women. Bihar, Uttarakhand, Tripura and Meghalaya have no woman judges in their High Courts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHDCCI International Economic Resilience (IER) Rank</td>
<td>PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Development Report 2021: Data for Better Lives</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Intellectual Property Index 2021</td>
<td>US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020 World Air Quality Report</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QS World University Rankings by Subject 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
100 of the world - IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Madras, IIT Kharagpur, IISc Bangalore, IIT Guwahati, IIM Bangalore, IIM Ahmedabad, JNU, Anna University, University of Delhi, and O.P Jindal University.

Amongst these top 100 ranked institutions, IIT Madras has been ranked 30th in the world for Petroleum Engineering, IIT Bombay has been ranked 41st and IIT Kharagpur has been ranked 44th in the world for Minerals and Mining Engineering, and the University of Delhi has been ranked 50th in the world for Development Studies.

Note: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA has continued to remain in the top position.

Food Waste Index Report 2021

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and partner organisation WRAP

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and partner organisation WRAP released the Food Waste Index Report 2021. The report estimates that around 931 million tonnes of food waste was generated in 2019, 61 percent of which came from households, 26 percent from food service and 13 percent from retail. On a global per capita-level, 121 kgs of consumer-level food is wasted each year, with 74 kgs of this happening in households.
In India, the household food waste estimate is 50 kg per capita per year, or 68,760,163 tonnes a year. Estimates suggest 8-10 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions are associated with food that is not consumed.

| Economic Freedom Index 2021 | US think-tank, The Heritage Foundation | 121 | Singapore | India came in around the middle of the pack among Asia-Pacific countries ranking 26th out of 40 countries. Economic Freedom Index 2021 was published by US think-tank, The Heritage Foundation. 184 countries were covered in the study this time and the period of study is July 2019 to June 2020. Note: The Heritage Foundation decided to exclude Hong Kong from its rankings for the first time ever. |

| Hurun Global Rich List 2021 |  |  |  | Reliance Industries chairman & managing director and the country's richest man Mukesh Ambani has acquired the eighth spot in the 10th edition of Hurun Global Rich List 2021. 1st rank: Elon Musk ($197 billion-Tesla) 2nd rank: Jeff Bezos ($189 billion-Amazon) 3rd rank: Bernard Arnault ($114 billion-LVMH) 8th rank: Mukesh Ambani ($83 billion-Reliance) India now has 209 billionaires, of which 177 live in India. Note: In the Hurun Global Rich List 2020, Mukesh Ambani was ranked 9th. |
NITI Aayog released a report outlining the range of investment opportunities in various segments of India's healthcare sector, including hospitals, medical devices and equipment, health insurance, telemedicine, home healthcare and medical value travel. The report was released by NITI Aayog Member Dr VK Paul, CEO Amitabh Kant, and Additional Secretary Dr Rakesh Sarwal.

India's healthcare industry has been growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate of around 22% since 2016. At this rate, it is expected to reach USD 372 billion in 2022. As per estimates by the National Skill Development Corporation, healthcare can generate 27 lakh additional jobs in India between 2017-22.

### Global Gender Gap Report 2021

Indias ranking on the 15th edition, WEF (World Economic Forum)’s Global Gender Gap Report 2021 dropped 28 places to 140, amongst 156 nations, making it the third-worst performer in South Asia, way behind Bangladesh and Nepal.

1 rank: Iceland  
2 rank: Finland  
3 rank: Norway  
140 rank: India  
Afghanistan was at the last position of 156. In South Asia, Bangladesh was the top performer with a global ranking of
65, followed by Nepal at 106.


|--------------------------|-----------------------------|

In this special edition of GWEC’s 16th annual flagship report ahead of the crucial COP26 conference in November 2021, the Global Wind Report 2021 highlights wind powers role.

2020 was the best year in history for the global wind industry with 93 GW of new capacity installed. Today, there is now 743 GW of wind power capacity worldwide, helping to avoid over 1.1 billion tonnes of CO2 globally.

India is the world’s fourth-largest onshore wind market by cumulative installations with nearly 38 GW of capacity. The government has set an ambitious target of 175 GW of installed renewable energy capacity by 2022, which calls for current wind capacity to nearly double within the next two years, totaling 60 GW of onshore wind and 5 GW of offshore wind.
### Inclusive Internet Index 2021
**Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Inclusive Internet Index by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) in collaboration with Facebook, benchmarks countries on the internet's availability, affordability, relevance and the readiness of people to use it.

Now in its fifth year, the Index covers 120 countries, representing 96% of the world's population and 98% of global GDP.

1st Rank: Sweden
2nd Rank: United States
3rd Rank: Spain
49th Rank: India

Note: India is tied with Thailand in 49th place this year.

### Henley Passport Index: Q2 2021 Global Ranking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Henley Passport Index 2021 has revealed the list of the world's most powerful passports and India has been ranked 84th on it.

India's passport got a visa-free score of 58, which means Indian passport holders can visit 58 countries without prior visa.

1st rank- Japan (visa-free score 193)
2nd rank- Singapore (192)
3rd rank- Germany & South Korea (191)

Iraq and Afghanistan are the countries with the worst passport with visa-free score 28 and 26 respectively.

### World Press Freedom Index 2021
**Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

India has been placed at 142nd among 180 countries and remains one of the world's most
dangerous countries for journalists.
1 rank: Norway
2 rank: Finland
3 rank: Denmark
142 rank: India
180 rank: Eritrea
Note: The latest index released ranks 180 countries.
The report noted that only 12 of the Index's 180 countries (7%) can claim to offer a favourable environment for journalism.

About Press Freedom Index: It is an annual ranking of countries compiled and published by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) since 2002 based upon the organization's own assessment of the countries' press freedom records in the previous year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Energy Transition Index 2021</td>
<td>World Economic</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forum (WEF)</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

India has been ranked at the 87th position among 115 countries in the Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2021 that tracks nations on the current performance of their energy systems across various aspects.
The report from the World Economic Forum (WEF) released and prepared in collaboration with Accenture.
Rank 1: Sweden
Rank 2: Norway
Rank 3: Denmark
Rank 87: India
India has targeted improvements through subsidy reforms and rapidly scaling energy
access, with a strong political commitment and regulatory environment for the energy transition. The index benchmarks 115 countries on the current performance of their energy systems across three dimensions-economic development and growth, environmental sustainability and energy security.

| State of World Population Report, 2021: ‘My Body is My Own’ | United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) | UNFPA has launched the report State of World Population Report 2021: ‘My Body is My Own’ - Claiming the right to autonomy and self-determination. For the first time, a United Nations report focuses on bodily autonomy - the power and agency to make choices about your body without fear of violence or having someone else decide for you. Nearly half the women from 57 developing countries do not have the right to decide regarding their bodies including using contraception, seeking health care, or even on their sexuality. Note: In India, according to National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-4 (2015-2016), only about 12% of currently married women (15-49 years of age) independently make decisions about their own healthcare, while 63% decide in consultation with their spouse. For a quarter of women (23%), it is the spouse that mainly takes decisions about healthcare. |
The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute released its Trends in world Military Expenditure, 2020 report. According to the report, India was the third largest military spender in the world in 2020, behind only the US and China. The US accounted for 39 percent of the money spent on the military globally, China accounted for 13 percent, and India accounted for 3.7 percent of the globe's share.

The military expenditure of India has grown by 2.1% and that of China has grown by 1.9%. The military Expenditure of the US has grown by 4.4%.

Global military expenditure rose to $1981 billion in 2020, an increase of 2.6 percent from 2019.

India has been ranked 49th in the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) 2021 among 104 countries in terms of government capabilities and outcomes. India's index score stood at 0.516.

Rank 1: Finland
Rank 2: Switzerland
Rank 3: Singapore
Rank 49: India

The Chandler Institute of Governance, headquartered in Singapore, releases the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI).
The CGGI is the index of effective governance in the world. It ranks 104 countries in terms of their government capabilities and outcomes. The CGGI focuses on seven pillars: Leadership and Foresight, Robust Laws and Policies, Strong Institutions, Financial Stewardship, Attractive Marketplace, Global Influence and Reputation and Helping People Rise.

| Fortune’s list of the world's 50 ‘Greatest Leaders’ 2021. | New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Arden topped the Fortune's list of the world's 50 ‘Greatest Leaders’ 2021. CEO of Serum Institute of India, Adar Poonawalla is the only Indian among the top 10 names on the list. He is placed in the 10th spot. |
## Important Military Exercises in 2020-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Partner Nation</th>
<th>Exercise Name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The United Arab Emirates, United States of America, France, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Bahrain</td>
<td>Ex Desert Flag-VI</td>
<td>- It was conducted at Al-Dhafra airbase, UAE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>India and United States-2021</td>
<td>Yudh Abhayas</td>
<td>- Suratgarh, Rajasthan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Naval Exercise between India, US, Japan and Australia</td>
<td>Malabar Exercises</td>
<td>- It was conducted in the Bay of Bengal and Northern Arabian sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Indian Army &amp; Bangladesh Army</td>
<td>Sampriti IX</td>
<td>- Conducted in Umroi, Meghalaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>India and the United Kingdom</td>
<td>Ajeya Warrior-2020</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>IndSpaceEx</td>
<td>- India's first-ever simulated space warfare exercise. It was held last week of July 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>40 countries</td>
<td>MILAN 2020</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Indian Air force and Royal Air force of Oman</td>
<td>Exercise Eastern Bridge</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Indian Army:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Partner Nation</th>
<th>Exercise name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Ex Hand in Hand</td>
<td>The annual joint training exercise, 7th edition held in Oct 2018, it was suspended in 2017 because of Doklam Plateau standoff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Ex Surya Kiran</td>
<td>Conducted biannually (every six months), alternatively in India and Nepal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Exercise Name</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Ex Sampriti</td>
<td>It is aimed to strengthen and broaden the aspects of interoperability and cooperation between the Indian and Bangladesh Armies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Ex Mitra Shakti</td>
<td>Its inception was in 2012 in response to China’s efforts to strengthen its influence in the Indian Ocean region &amp; Southeast Asia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Ex Yudh Abhyas</td>
<td>Annual combat exercise started in 2004, 14th edition held in Uttarakhand in 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Ex Vajra Prahar</td>
<td>Conducted between Special Forces of both countries to deal with operations for counter-terrorism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>IMBAX-2017</td>
<td>It is aimed at strengthening closer relations with armies of the neighboring countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Ex HARIMAUS SHAKTI</td>
<td>It is a 1st bilateral military training exercise between India and Malaysia in May 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>VINBAX-2018</td>
<td>First military exercise between the two countries, to carry out training for Peacekeeping Operations under United Nations (UN) mandate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>AL NAGAH</td>
<td>It is a joint military exercise first conducted in 2015. It is aimed at interoperability &amp; weapons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>DHARMA GUARDIAN</td>
<td>First joint military exercise between India and Japan, conducted in 2018 in Mizoram.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>EX MAITREE</td>
<td>It was targeted at evolving drills &amp; procedures involved in counter-terrorist operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Ex AJEYA WARRIOR</td>
<td>The biennial military exercise started in 2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>Ex NOMADIC ELEPHANT</td>
<td>Annual bilateral military exercise started in 2006. Designed to strengthen the partnership between the armies of India &amp; Mongolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Seychelles</td>
<td>Ex LAMITIYE</td>
<td>The 8th edition of this biennial military exercise conducted in May 2018 at Mahe island in Seychelles Archipelago.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. **Singapore** | **Ex BOLD KURUKSHETRA** | A bilateral armed exercise conducted at the BABINA Field Firing Range (BFFR) in Central India between the Singapore Army and the Indian Army (IA).

24. **Kyrgyzstan** | **Ex KHANJAR** | It is an exercise between Special Forces of India and Kyrgyzstan.

**Indian Navy:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Partner Nation</th>
<th>Exercise name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>SLINEX</td>
<td>SLINEX exercise started in 2005 was previously held biennially; from 2018 onwards it has been converted into the annual event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>INDRA NAVY</td>
<td>Started in 2003, 4th edition took place in 2018 in the Bay of Bengal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>KONKAN</td>
<td>Started in 2004, to build interoperability and share best practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>VARUNA</td>
<td>It started in 1983 between the navies of India &amp; France. These exercises was later named as Varuna in 2001.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>NASEEM-AL-BAHR</td>
<td>Biennial bilateral exercise between the two navies, started in 1993. Literally means “sea breeze”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Sahyog HOP TAC</td>
<td>First India Vietnam Coast Guard Exercise, held in 2018 in the Bay of Bengal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>SIMBEX</td>
<td>It is an annual exercise between the Navies of Singapore &amp; India since 1994. It stands for Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>IMCOR</td>
<td>Indo-Myanmar Coordinated Patrol (IMCOR), held annually since 2013.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indian Air Force:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Partner Nation</th>
<th>Exercise name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Ex GARUDA</td>
<td>This is an important aspect of the Indo-French bilateral military cooperation, which is a cornerstone of the strategic partnership between France and India, established in 1998.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Operations between the IAF and Partner Air Forces:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Exercise Name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>Ex EASTERN BRIDGE</td>
<td>Conducted between the IAF and RAFO (Royal Air Force of Oman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Ex AVIAINDRA-18</td>
<td>Started in 2014, conducted biannually. The exercise is targeted towards anti-terrorist operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>SIAM BHARAT</td>
<td>Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) exercise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>Ex DESERT EAGLE</td>
<td>A bilateral air combat exercise provides exposure towards mission planning and execution in a simulated high threat combat environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Ex RED FLAG</td>
<td>It is 2-week aerial combat exercise organized by the Indian Air Force. It offers air combat training to military pilots from the USA and its allies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Multilateral Exercises:

They are those exercises which consist of more than one military partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Exercise Name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>RIMPAC</td>
<td>It is the world’s largest maritime exercise. It was first conducted in 1971 and is held biannually near Honolulu, Hawaii (USA). The Exercise is overlooked by the US Navy’s Pacific fleet. The recent 2018 edition saw 26 countries participating which included India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>MALABAR</td>
<td>An annual trilateral naval exercise involving the United States, Japan, and India as permanent partners. It originally began in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between India and the US. Later in 2015, Japan became a permanent partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>MILEX-18</td>
<td>First joint military exercise between BIMSTEC countries, conducted in Pune, Maharashtra. All member BIMSTEC countries, except Thailand and Nepal, took an active part in this exercise. The main aim is to promote practices in areas of counter-terrorism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>PEACE MISSION</td>
<td>A Counter Terror Military Exercise, held in Russia in September 2018, under the framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). For the first time, arch-rivals India and Pakistan took part in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Samvedna-2018</td>
<td>The first multilateral Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise of Indian Air Force (IAF) in association with South Asian Region nations, was held off the coast of Kerala.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Ex COBRA GOLD</td>
<td>It is the largest Asia-Pacific military exercise held in Thailand every year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>KAKADU</td>
<td>Started in 1993, it is a multilateral regional maritime engagement exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Navy. It derives its name from the Kakadu National Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>ARF DiR Ex</td>
<td>It stands for ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiR Ex). It is aimed at organizing a large-scale disaster relief exercise. It was 1st held in 2009, &amp; takes place biannually. It is co-hosted by one ASEAN member states and one non-ASEAN ARF member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Ex KOMODO</td>
<td>A biennial multilateral Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise, conducted for the first time by the Indonesian Navy in April 2014 at Batam, Indonesia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Obituaries

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2021 Updates:

Akhara Parishad’s President, Narendra Giri passes away

Why in News

- Mahant Narendra Giri, president of the Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad, passed away.

Key Points

- Narendra Giri was elected president of the all-powerful Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad, the apex decision-making body of the 13 recognised Hindu monastic orders of the country in 2014 for five years.
- He was re-elected to the post at a meeting of the Akhara Parishad held in Haridwar in October 2019.

Source: HT

Noted litterateur Manorama Mohapatra passes away

- Eminent litterateur, social worker and former editor of Odia daily 'The Samaja' Manorama Mohapatra passed away at 87.
- Mohapatra has more than 40 books and novels to her credit.
- She was honoured with Sahitya Akademi Award in 1984, Soviet Nehru Award in 1988, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar Samman in 1991, Utkal Sahitya Samaj Award, Gangadhar Meher Samman, Sarala Award and Sucharita Award etc.
- For her immense contribution to the field of literature, she was appointed as secretary of Utkal Sahitya Samaj from 1982 to 1990 and President of Odisha Sahitya Akademi in 1991, the first woman to hold this post, till 1994.

Source: Indian Express

Former Union Minister Oscar Fernandes passes away

- Former Union Minister and member of Rajya Sabha Oscar Fernandes passed away.
- He was an Indian politician, a senior Indian National Congress leader and was the Union Cabinet Minister for Transport, Road and Highways and Labour and Employment in the UPA government.
- He represented Udupi constituency in the Lok Sabha 5 times and was elected to the Rajya Sabha 4 times.

Source: The Hindu

J B Mohapatra appointed CBDT chairman
The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of J B Mohapatra, as chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).

He has been holding the additional charge of CBDT chairman since May 31, 2021 after the extended tenure of incumbent P C Mody had ended.

Mohapatra, a 1985-batch Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax) officer, is currently the member in the board that frames the policy for the Income Tax department.

Source: The Hindu

Former Rajya Sabha MP and senior journalist Chandan Mitra passes away

Former Rajya Sabha MP and senior journalist Chandan Mitra passed away at 65.

Mitra was a nominated member of the Rajya Sabha from August 2003 to 2009.

In June 2010, BJP got him elected to the upper house from Madhya Pradesh. His term ended in 2016.

In July 2018, Mitra, Editor and Managing Director of The Pioneer, resigned from the BJP and joined the Trinamool Congress (TMC).

Source: Indian Express

Veteran Actress Jayanthi passes away

Veteran actress Abhinaya Sharade Jayanthi, was known for her work in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada movies, passed away.

Jayanthi acted in more than 500 films in Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Hindi.

She had received 7 Karnataka State Film Awards and 2 Filmfare Awards.

She won the Padmabhushan Dr. B. Saroja Devi National Award, 2017.

Legendary badminton player Nandu Natekar passes away

Legendary badminton player Nandu Natekar became the first Indian player to win an international event when he won the Sallenger International in Malaysia in 1956.

Natekar won over 100 national and international titles.

He was conferred with the prestigious Arjuna Award in 1961.

He won 12 out of the 16 singles matches and 8 out of 16 in doubles as part of the Indian team at the Thomas Cup between 1951 and 1963.

Kerala’s oldest learner Bhageerathi Amma dies at 107

Kerala’s oldest learner, Bhageerathi Amma who passed a state literacy mission examination at the age of 105, passed away.

Bhageerathi was awarded the Centre’s Nari Shakti Puraskar in 2020 for her contribution towards women empowerment.

National Award-winning actor Surekha Sikri passes away

Surekha Sikri worked in theatre, films and television.
• She received the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actress thrice, including Tamas (1988), Mammo (1995) and Badhaai Ho (2018).
• She won the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1989.

Pulitzer Prize winning Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui passes away
• Pulitzer Prize winning Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui was killed in a Taliban attack in Afghanistan while covering the conflict between the Afghan armed forces and the Taliban.
• He was an Indian photo-journalist based in Mumbai, who used to head the national Reuters Multimedia team.
• He received the Pulitzer Prize in 2018, as part of the Reuters team, for documenting the Rohingya Refugee Crisis.

Legendary actor Dilip Kumar passes away
• Legendary actor Dilip Kumar, who was popularly known as the tragedy king of Bollywood, passed away at 98.

Key Points
• Dilip Kumar, real name Yusuf Khan, appeared in Indian cinema's most iconic and landmark films, including Mughal-e-Azam, Naya Daur, Devdas, Ram Aur Shyam, Andaz, Ganga Jamuna and Madhumati.
• He was the first actor to win the Filmfare Award for Best Actor in 1954 and won it a total of 8 times.

Editor of world’s only Sanskrit daily KV Sampath Kumar passes away
• KV Sampath Kumar, 64, editor of Sudharma, reckoned to be the country's and the world's only Sanskrit daily (newspaper), passed away.
• Sampath Kumar had taken over the mantle from his father Pandit K.N. Varadaraja Iyengar, who had founded Sudharma in 1970.
• He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2020.

Film Producer Pradeep Guha passes away
• Film Producer and well-known media personality Pradeep Guha passed away.
• Pradeep Guha had produced Hrithik Roshan and Karisma Kapoor-starrer "Fiza" as well as 2008 film "Phir Kabhi".
• He worked with the Times Group for almost 30 years and served as the president in the company. He also worked as Zee Entertainment’s CEO.

Source: Indian Express

Legendary athletics coach O.M. Nambiar passes away
• O.M. Nambiar, the man who transformed a village girl P.T. Usha into Asia's golden girl, passed away.
• He was one of the three recipients of the first Dronacharya Award in 1985.
• Nambiar was honoured with the Padma Shri Award in 2021.

Source: The Hindu

Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh passes away
- Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and Rajasthan Governor Kalyan Singh passed away at 89.
- Kalyan Singh, a BJP leader, was the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh when the Babri mosque demolition in Ayodhya took place in 1992.

Source: TOI

Padma Shri awardee Dogri writer Padma Sachdev passes away
- Noted author and Padma Shri awardee **Padma Sachdev**, the first modern woman poet of **Dogri language**, passed away.
- She authored many books in Dogri and Hindi, and her poetry collections, including ‘Meri Kavita Mere Geet’, won her the **Sahitya Akademi Award** in 1971.
- She received the **Padma Shri** award in 2001 and was awarded the **Kabir Samman** for poetry for 2007-08 by the Madhya Pradesh government.

Source: Indian Express

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>About</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Former Attorney General Soli Sorabjee</td>
<td>Sorabjee occupied the highest office of the attorney general of India twice — first from 1989-90 and then from 1998-2004. He was awarded with Padma Vibhushan. From 1998-2004, he was also the Chairman of the UN sub-committee on the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV journalist Rohit Sardana</td>
<td>Television journalist Rohit Sardana, who was an executive editor and TV news anchor with the Aaj Tak channel of the India Today Group, passed away. Sardana was a recipient of the 2018 Ganesh Vidyarthi Puraskar Award.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitar Maestro Pandit Debu Chaudhuri</td>
<td>Pandit Devabrata (Debu) Chaudhuri performed across the world for over six decades, winning several honours, including the Padmabhushan, the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution in the field of music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran music composer Vanraj Bhatia</td>
<td>The 93-year-old Padma Shri awardee, who scored the music for Shyam Benegal classics like ‘Ankur’ and ‘Bhumika’ and TV series ‘Yatra’ and ‘Bharat Ek Khoj’, passed away. Among the awards he won the National Award for Best Music for Govind Nihalani’s TV series ‘Tamas’ and also the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. He received India’s fourth-highest civilian honour, the Padma Shri in 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympian and former India hockey coach MK Kaushik</td>
<td>Maharaj Krishan Kaushik was a member of the India national field hockey team and coach of the Indian hockey team. He was a member of the team when it won the gold medal at the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. In 1998, he received the Arjuna Award. For his coaching contribution to Indian hockey he received the Dronacharya Award in 2002.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Indian Medical Association chief Dr KK Aggarwal</td>
<td>Former national president of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) and Padma Shree awardee Dr KK Aggarwal died.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dr Aggarwal</strong></td>
<td>Dr Aggarwal was awarded Padma Shree in 2010. He was also awarded the Dr BC Roy award in 2005. He was currently president of the Heart Care Foundation of India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tamil writer Ki Rajanarayanan</strong></td>
<td>Fondly called as KiRa, he was admired as a folklorist and father of Karisal (black soil land) Literature. He was a recipient of Sahitya Academy award for his novel ’Gopalapurathu Makkal’ in the year 1991. He also served as a member of Sahitya Akademi General Council and advisory board from 1998 to 2002.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematician Padma Bhushan Prof. M S Narasimhan</strong></td>
<td>Distinguished passes away Prof. M S Narasimhan contributions were in the areas of Algebraic Geometry, Differential Geometry, Representation Theory of Lie groups and Partial Differential Equations. He was the only Indian to be awarded with the King Faisal International Prize for Science &amp; First Chair of National Board for Higher Mathematics. He was the founding-Chairman of the National Board of Higher Mathematics of the Government of India. He is a recipient of the Srinivasa Ramanujan Medal of INSA (1988).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Times Group chairperson Indu Jain</strong></td>
<td>Indu Jain has been described as a lifelong spiritual seeker, pioneering philanthropist, distinguished patron of the arts, and passionate proponent of women's rights. She became the chairperson of the Times Group in 1999. She was the founder president of FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), established in 1983 to promote entrepreneurship and professional excellence among women in India. She received the Padma Bhushan in 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noted environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna</strong></td>
<td>Environmentalist and Chipko Movement pioneer Sunderlal Bahuguna passed away at 94. He was awarded Padma Vibhushan in 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>India's first Dronacharya awardee coach OP Bhardwaj</strong></td>
<td>In 1985, he was awarded the Dronacharya Award, India's highest award in the field of coaching of sports and athletics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eminent Historian Yogesh Praveen</strong></td>
<td>He was awarded Padma Shri in 2019. Apart from books he also published poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Radiologist Dr. Kakarla Subba Rao</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Kakarla Subba Rao was a radiologist who served as the first director of Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad. For his contributions to the field of medicine, Rao was conferred Padma Shri in 2000. It is also widely known that he had returned to India from the USA following a request by the then Chief Minister, Shri N T Rama Rao and served the motherland with dedication. Dr. Rao was the founder president of Telugu Association of North America (TANA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noted Hindi litterateur Narendra Kohli</strong></td>
<td>Noted Hindi litterateur Narendra Kohli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noted Bengali poet Shankha Ghosh</strong></td>
<td>Shankha Ghosh, Bengali poet and litterateur, passed away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Contributions/Achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghosh</td>
<td>Contributed significantly to Bengali and Indian literature. Shankha Ghosh had won the Sahitya Akademi Award, Padma Bhushan, and the prestigious Jnanpith Award.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI)</td>
<td>After his stint at the RBI, Narasimham joined the International Monetary Fund where he served as Executive Director and later at the World Bank. He also served as the Finance Secretary in 1982. Narasimham is considered as the father of banking reforms. He headed two committees in 1991 and 1997 that had critical influence on the country's banking sector. He was honoured with Padma Vibhushan in 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maulana Wahiduddin Khan</td>
<td>He was a renowned Islamic scholar and peace activist, passed away. The 96-year-old scholar, who was honoured with the Padma Bhushan in 2000, was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in January 2021. Khan wrote over 200 books on several aspects of Islam and established the Islamic Centre in New Delhi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odia and English author Manoj Das</td>
<td>Das was awarded Padma Shri in 2001 and Padma Bhushan in 2020 for his contributions in the field of literature and education. He received the first Sri Aurobindo Puraskar for his research on the lesser-known facts of India’s freedom struggle led by Aurobindo. He was also honoured with the Sahitya Akademi Award fellowship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noted journalist and author Anil Dharker</td>
<td>Anil Dharker was the founder and director of the Mumbai International Literary Festival. Dharker had been a columnist and writer, a member of the advisory committee of the film certification board and more. He was a columnist for The Indian Express newspaper and has authored ‘The Romance of Salt’, a book on Mahatma Gandhi’s Dandi March.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer-Director Sagar Sarhadi</td>
<td>Sagar Sarhadi gained recognition in the film industry by writing and co-writing blockbuster films like Kabhi Kabhie, Sawala, Silsila, Karmayogi, Zindagi, Inkaar, Noorie, Faasle, Anubhav, Deewana and Kaho Na Pyaar Hai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathakali maestro Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair</td>
<td>Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair, also known as Guru Chemancheri was a noted Indian Kathakali actor. The Government of India awarded him the fourth highest civilian honor, Padma Shri in 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padma Bhushan awardee Laxman Pai</td>
<td>The former principal of the Goa College of Art had several laurels under his name including Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri, Nehru Award, and Lalit Kala Akademi Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzanian President John Magufuli</td>
<td>Magufuli won the October 2015 presidential election and was sworn in on 5 November 2015; he was re-elected in 2020. Note: According to the constitution of the African country, Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan will be sworn in as the new president and will serve in the post for the remaining tenure of Magufuli. She will be Tanzania's first female president.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indian athlete Ishar Singh Deol</strong></td>
<td>Deol had won many medals for the country and the state since 1951 and was awarded the Dhyan Chand National Award in 2009 for his lifelong contribution towards sports. Deol was General Secretary of the Punjab Athletes Association for 30 consecutive years and Vice President of the Athletic Federation of India and a member of the Selection Committee for many years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brahma Kumaris' chief Dadi Hriday Mohini</strong></td>
<td>Dadi Gulzaar aka Hridaya Mohini was the Administrative head of Prajapita Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malayalam poet Vishnunarayanan Namboothiri</strong></td>
<td>Namboothiri, 81, one of the widely acclaimed poets of contemporary Malayalam literature, was awarded the Padma Shri in 2014. He was also a recipient of several literary honours, including the Kerala Sahitya Akademi award.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>India tennis legend Akhtar Ali</strong></td>
<td>Akhtar played eight Davis Cup ties between 1958 and 1964 and also captained the Indian team. Akhtar was conferred the Arjuna Award in 2000 for his lifetime contribution to tennis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oscar-winning actress Cloris Leachman</strong></td>
<td>Cloris Leachman was known as one of Hollywood’s most prolific performers having won an Academy Award, a Golden Globe, and eight Primetime Emmy Awards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paul J. Crutzen, Nobel laureate</strong></td>
<td>He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995 for his work on atmospheric chemistry and specifically for his efforts in studying the formation and decomposition of atmospheric ozone. In addition to studying the ozone layer and climate change, he popularized the term Anthropocene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Olympic bronze and World Cup winning hockey player Michael Kindo</strong></td>
<td>He played three Men’s Hockey World Cup in 1971, 1973 and 1975 where India bagged bronze, silver and gold medals respectively. He also represented in the 1972 Olympic Games where India secured a bronze medal. Kindo received the Arjuna Award in 1972.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Senior Telugu journalist Turlapati Kutumba Rao</strong></td>
<td>Veteran journalist and Padma Shri awardee Turlapati Kutumba Rao died in Vijayawada. Rao is known for his contribution to Telugu journalism with 4,000 biographies and 16,000 public speeches which won him a place in the world records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eminent social worker Padma Shri D Prakash Rao</strong></td>
<td>Rao was conferred with the prestigious Padma Shri award in 2019 by the Government of India for his contribution towards boosting the value of education among slum and orphan kids in Cuttack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Renowned writer Ved Mehta</strong></td>
<td>Indian-American novelist Ved Mehta, who overcame blindness and became widely known as the 20th-century writer most responsible for introducing American readers to India. He was the MacArthur Prize fellow and member of the British Royal Society of Literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Padma Vibhushan awardee</strong></td>
<td>Legendary Indian classical musician was awarded the Padma Shri in 1991, followed by Padma Bhusan in 2006 and Padma Vibhushan in 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veteran Actor and Director</strong></td>
<td>The 51st edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), Goa has conferred Shri Biswajit Chatterjee, veteran actor, producer, director and singer of Hindi and Bengali cinema, with the Indian Personality of the Year Award.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biswajit Chatterjee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>World renowned oncologist Dr. V Shanta</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Shanta was the Chairperson of Adyar Cancer Centre, Chennai. Dr. Shanta's contribution to the field of oncology, had earned her the Magsaysay, Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan awards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veteran Singer Narendra Chanchal</strong></td>
<td>Chanchal was known for his religious songs and bhajans. He won the Filmfare Award for Best Male Singer for Bobby.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chanchal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malayalam poet Sugathakumari</strong></td>
<td>Sugathakumari, the Malayalam poet who had also been a committed environmentalist and women’s rights activist. She was awarded India’s fourth-highest civilian award, Padma Shri, in 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eminent dance scholar and critic Sunil Kothari</strong></td>
<td>He was a member of the International Dance Council of UNESCO and a recipient of the Emeritus Fellowship of the Department of Culture, Government of India. He was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1995 and the Padma Shri in 2001.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Karnataka's renowned Sanskrit scholar and Kannada poet Bannanje Govindacharya</strong></td>
<td>Conferred with the Padma Shri in 2009, Govindacharya was widely known for his translation of and commentaries on the complete texts of Sri Madhvacharya, a philosopher and theologian of the 13th century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aerospace scientist Roddam Narasimha</strong></td>
<td>Eminent aerospace scientist and Padma Vibhushan awardee Roddam Narasimha who served at the prestigious Indian Institute of Science (IISc) died at 87.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noted Hindi poet and journalist Manglesh Dabral</strong></td>
<td>Dabral was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2000 for his poetry collection 'Ham Jo Dekhte Hain'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Former CBI Director Ashwani Kumar</strong></td>
<td>He was the former Governor of Manipur and Nagaland. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the premier investigating agency of India under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions. Syeda Anwara Taimur, Assam's only woman Chief Minister, died. She passes at the age of 84 due to cardiac arrest. She was the first Muslim woman Chief Minister of any state in independent India.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sports

Raja Rithvik becomes India’s 70th Chess Grandmaster
Why in News
• R Raja Rithvik from Telangana has become India’s 70th Chess Grandmaster (GM), achieving his third and final norm at a recent event in Hungary.

Key Points
• Rithvik, who earned his first GM norm in 2019, achieved his second and third norms in less than a month.

Note:
• Viswanathan Anand became the 1st GM from India in 1988.
• Pune’s Harshit Raja became India’s 69th GM in August 2021

Source: The Hindu

MS Dhoni’s appointment as Team India mentor for T20 World Cup 2021
Why in News
• BCCI has appointed MS Dhoni as the mentor of the Indian national team for the T20 World Cup 2021.

Key Points

Lasith Malinga announces retirement from all forms of cricket
Why in News
• Sri Lanka fast bowler Lasith Malinga announced his retirement from all forms of cricket, ending a decorated 16-year international career that began in 2004.

Key Points
• Malinga had already ended his Test and ODI career, and by announcing his decision to step away from T20 cricket, he marked his retirement from all forms.
• Malinga played 30 Tests, 226 ODIs and 84 T20Is for Sri Lanka in which he picked 546 wickets (101 in Tests, 338 in ODIs and 107 in T20Is) across formats.

Source: India Today

US Open Tennis Championships 2021
• The 2021 US Open was the 141st edition of the tournament and took place in New York City, New York, United States.
• It was the fourth and final Grand Slam event of the year (2021).
• List of winners:
Winner - Daniil Medvedev (Russia)
Runner-up - Novak Djokovic (Serbia)
Winner - Emma Raducanu (Britain)
Runner-up - Leylah Fernandez (Canada)
Winner - Rajeev Ram (America), Joe Salisbury (Britain)
Runner-up - Bruno Soares (Brazil), Jamie Murray (Britain)
Winner - Samantha Stosur (Australia), Zhang Shuai (China)
Runner-up - Coco Gauff (America), Caty McNally (America)
Winner - Desirae Krawczyk (America), Joe Salisbury (Britain)
Runner-up - Giuliana Olmos (Mexico), Marcelo Arevalo (El Salvador)

Source: The Hindu

Tokyo 2020 Paralympics Games
- Place: Tokyo, Japan (24 August- 5 September 2021)
- 16th Paralympics Mascot: Someity
India at Tokyo Paralympics:
- India’s flag bearers in the opening ceremony- Tek Chand (Shot-putter)
- India’s flag bearers in the closing ceremony- Avani Lekhara (Shooter)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Bronze</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

India’s performance:
- **Avani Lekhara** won the Gold Medal in Shooting. She became the **first Indian woman to win a Gold medal at the Paralympics Games**. She is only the Indian to **win multiple medals in a single edition** of the Games (1 Gold, 1 Bronze in Shooting in Tokyo 2020 Paralympics Games).
- Sumit Antil won the Gold medal in Javelin throw.
- Pramod Bhagat won the Gold Medal in Badminton.
- Manish Narwal won the Gold Medal in Shooting.
- Krishna Nagar won the Gold Medal in Badminton.

Source: olympics.com

Brisbane to host 2032 Olympics
Why in News
• President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Thomas Bach announced Brisbane, Australia as the 2032 Summer Olympics host city during the 138th IOC Session in Tokyo, Japan.

Key Points
• Brisbane becomes the 3rd Australian city to get the Olympics Games after Melbourne in 1956 and Sydney in 2000.


WAKO India Kickboxing Federation gets government recognition as National Sports Federation

Why in the News?
• The Ministry of Youth affairs & Sports has decided to grant recognition to WAKO India Kickboxing Federation as National Sports Federation (NSF) for promotion and development of the Kickboxing sport in India.

Key Points
• WAKO India Kickboxing Federation is affiliated to World Association of Kickboxing Organizations (WAKO), which is the International Federation for the sport of Kickboxing.
• The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board at its meeting in June 2021 has approved the recommendation for WAKO to become a fully recognized member of the Olympic family of sport.
• WAKO has been provisionally recognized as a member of the IOC since 30 November 2018.
• Note: The full recognition of WAKO will be finally decided by the IOC Session in Tokyo in July 2021.

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award renamed after Major Dhyan Chand

Why in News
• The Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, the highest sporting honour of India, has been renamed Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.
• The renaming recognises the ultimate hockey hero and legend of the sport, Dhyan Chand.

Key Points
About Khel Ratna Award:
• The Khel Ratna award is the highest sporting honour in the nation.
• Launched in 1991-92, the award comprises a medallion, a certificate, and a cash prize of ₹ 25 lakh.
• The first recipient of the Khel Ratna was chess legend Viswanathan Anand.

Tokyo Olympics 2020
• Place: Tokyo, Japan (23 July to 8 August 2021)
• 32nd Summer Olympic Mascot: MIRAITOWA
• Olympic Laurel award 2020- Bangladesh’s Muhammad Yunus

Note:
• Olympic debuts in 2020- karate, sport climbing, surfing, and skateboarding
• The 2020 Games are the fourth Olympic Games to be held in Japan, following the Tokyo 1964 (Summer), Sapporo 1972 (Winter), and Nagano 1998 (Winter) games.

India at Tokyo Olympic:
India’s flag bearers in the Opening Ceremony - Mary Kom (Boxing) and Manpreet Singh (Hockey)

India’s flag bearers in the Closing Ceremony - Bajrang Punia (Wrestling)

Medals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Bronze</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

India’s Performance:
- **Neeraj Chopra** (Javelin Throw) won the **Gold Medal**.
  He created history by becoming the second Indian to win an individual gold medal in Olympics after shooter Abhinav Bindra.
  He is the first Indian in over 120 years, and the first athlete from independent India, to win an Olympic medal in a track-and-field discipline.
- **Saikhom Mirabai Chanu** (Indian Weightlifter) won the **Silver Medal** in Women’s 49 kg.
- **Ravi Kumar Dahiya** (Wrestler) won the **Silver Medal** in men’s freestyle 57 kg category.
- **PV Sindhu** (Badminton) won the **Bronze Medal**.
  PV Sindhu becomes the first Indian woman to win two individual medals at the Olympics. She won silver at the Rio Olympics in 2016.
- **Lovlina Borgohain** (Boxer) won the **Bronze Medal** in the welterweight 69 kilogram category.
- **Bajrang Punia** (Wrestler) won the **Bronze Medal** in men’s freestyle 65 kg category.
- **Indian Men’s Hockey Team** won the **Bronze Medal**.
  India men’s hockey team created history to win their first Olympic medal since 1980.

Facts about the International Olympic Committee (IOC):
- **Headquarters**: Lausanne, Switzerland
- **President**: Thomas Bach
- **Founded**: 23 June 1894

Source: olympics.com

Kolkata to host 130th edition of Durand Cup

Why in News
- The **130th Edition of Durand Cup Football Tournament** is scheduled to be held at Kolkata from 5th of September to 3rd of October this year.
- It is being organised with the support of the All India Football Federation, IFA (West Bengal) and the Government of West Bengal.

Key Points
- 16 teams from across the country will participate in the tournament.

About Durand Cup:
- It is the world’s third oldest and Asia’s oldest football tournament.
- It was first held in 1888, at Dagshai, Himachal Pradesh.

Source: TOI

AFI to celebrate August 7 as National Javelin Throw Day
• The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) has announced that August 7 each year would be celebrated as National Javelin Throw Day.
• The day will commemorate Indian athlete (Javelin Throw) Neeraj Chopra’s feat of winning the country’s first athletics gold medal in the Olympic Games in Tokyo 2020.

Note: The AFI started National Open Javelin Throw Championships in 2018 and its third edition is scheduled in October this year.

Source: The Hindu

1. Gurpreet, Sanju declared winners of AIFF Player of the Year Awards (2019-20)
• Indian football team goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu is the winner in Men’s Footballer. Indian football team midfielder Sanju is the winner in Women’s Footballer.
• Note: the All India Football Federation is the governing body of association football in India. Formed in 1937, the federation was one of the founding members of the Asian Football confederation, the overseer of football in Asia. The AIFF sanctions and runs all competitive football tournaments and leagues at a national level, namely the Indian Super League, I-League and Super Cup.

2. Foundation Stone of ‘Centre for Disability Sports at Gwalior’ to be Laid on 26 September 2020
• The foundation stone of ‘Centre for Disability Sports at Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh’ will be laid at a function organized by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment through video conferencing on 26 September 2020.
• At present no training facilities are available in the country for sports person with disabilities. The proposed Centre will make available the specialized training facilities for Persons with Disabilities.

3. 2020 Italian Open (Tennis)
• Winners List:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Name of the Sportsperson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Single</td>
<td>Novak Djokovic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Single</td>
<td>Simona Halep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Double</td>
<td>Marcel Granollers and Horacio Zeballos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Double</td>
<td>Hsieh Su-Wei and Barbora Strýcová</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Sports Ministry identified sports facilities in eight states to be upgraded to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence:
   - 8 states that have been approved for setting up of KISCEs are Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Telangana, Manipur, Karnataka, Kerala and Odisha.
   - It aims to upgrade with an effort to identify and groom Olympic level talent.

5. Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister lay foundation stones for various sports facilities in Leh:
   - Their existing centres will be upgraded into Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE).

The six centres’ include:

1. Assam – State Sports Academy, Sarjusajai Sports Complex, Guwahati
2. Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu - New Sports Complex, Silvassa
3. Maharashtra - Sree Shiv Chhatrapati Shivaji Sports Complex, Balewadi, Pune
4. Madhya Pradesh - MP Academy, Bhopal
5. Meghalaya - JNS Complex Shillong
6. Sikkim - Paljor Stadium, Gangtok

6. US Open Tennis Tournament 2020:

Japan’s Naomi Osaka wins US Open title

- Japan’s Naomi Osaka defeated Victoria Azarenka of Belarus to clinch the Women’s Singles title in the 2020 US Open Tennis tournament.
- She is now the first Asian player to win three Grand Slam singles titles. The victory has moved up Osaka to number 3 in the world rankings.

Dominic Thiem wins US Open Men’s Tennis

- Austria’s Dominic Thiem defeated Alexander Zverev to win the men’s singles title.

7. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister lays foundation stone online of Arun Jaitley Memorial Sports Complex:
   - Paying tributes to the Late Finance Minister of India, Arun Jaitley, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh lays foundation stone of a multipurpose sports complex at Hiranagar, Jammu.

8. World online Chess tournament
India’s GM P. Iniyan won the 48th annual world open chess tournament (online) recently.

- Usually held in Philadelphia, the USA, the tournament was conducted online following classical time control.
- Coming after his win over World no. 2 Fabiano Caruana [on Aug. 4] in online blitz, this victory will be a big boost for the 17-year-old from Erode.
- The event was held with three rounds each day for three days. A total of 122 participants from 16 countries — India, USA, UK, Russia, Spain, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Poland, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Israel, Bangladesh, Mexico, Peru and Cuba — participated.

9. **Olympic Flame**

- The Olympic flame is on display in Tokyo, near the new Japan Olympic Museum, and will be on display for at least the next two months.
- The flame arrived in Japan from Greece in March and has been largely hidden away in Tokyo since the Olympics were postponed until next year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Yoshiro Mori, the president of the Tokyo Olympic organizing committee, and Yasuhiro Yamashita, the president of the Japanese Olympic Committee unveiled the flame.

**Portuguese Grand Prix 2020**

- British **Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)** won the **Portuguese Grand Prix 2020** Formula One F1 held at Algarve International Circuit, Portugal.
- Finland **Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes)** got second position and Netherland **Max Verstappen (Red Bull)** got third position.

**Cologne Tennis Tournament 2020 (bett1HULKS Championship)**

- **Singles**
  - Winner: Alexander Zverev
  - Runner-Up: Diego Schwartzman
- **Doubles**
  - Winner: Raven Klaasen, Ben McLachlan
  - Runner-Up: Kevin Krawietz, Andreas Mies

**DANISA Denmark Open 2020**

- **Location:** Odense Sports Park
- The **Denmark Open**, or formerly known as **Danish Open**, is an annual badminton tournament held in Denmark and organized by Danmarks Badminton Forbund.
- **List of winners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men's singles</th>
<th>Women's singles</th>
<th>Men's doubles</th>
<th>Women's doubles</th>
<th>Mixed doubles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anders Antonsen</td>
<td>Nozomi Okuhara</td>
<td>Marcus Ellis, Chris Langridge</td>
<td>Yuki Fukushima, Sayaka Hirota</td>
<td>Mark Lamsfuss, Isabel Herttrich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Runner-up</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasmus Gemke</td>
<td>Carolina Marin</td>
<td>Vladimir Ivanov, Ivan Sozonov</td>
<td>Mayu Mastsumoto, Wakana, Nagahara</td>
<td>Chris Adcock, Gabrielle Adcock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sheikh Russel International Air Rifle Championship 2020**

- Bangladesh Shooting Sport Federation (BSSF) organized the championship.
- **Winners List:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medal</th>
<th>Men’s Event</th>
<th>Women’s Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gold</strong></td>
<td>Naoya Okada (Japan)</td>
<td>Elavenil Valarivan (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Silver</strong></td>
<td>Shahu Tushar Mane (India)</td>
<td>Shiori Hirata (Japan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bronze</strong></td>
<td>Baki Abdullah Hel (Bangladesh)</td>
<td>Vidya Toyyiba (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rafael Nadal wins French Open Men's Singles Final 2020
Rafael Nadal Defeats Novak Djokovic to win 13th French Open Men's Singles Final. He has won the Wimbledon twice, Australian Open once and the US Open four times.

**Polish teenager Iga Swiatek becomes the new French Open Champion**

- In Tennis, Polish teenager Iga Swiatek has become the new French Open Champion.
- She beats the American Australian Open winner Sofia Kenin in the Women Singles final.

**New Zealand's Greg Barclay Elected ICC Chairman**

- New Zealand’s Greg Barclay was elected as the new independent chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC). He succeeds India’s Shashank Manohar who stepped down in July 2020 and will replace Imran Khwaja, who is currently the interim chairman.
- Note: Barclay, an Auckland-based commercial lawyer, has been a director of New Zealand Cricket (NZC) since 2012 and is currently NZC’s representative on the board of the International Cricket Council.

**ATP Finals 2020**

(Men's tennis tournament - London, Great Britain, November 15 - November 22)

- **Singles**

  **Winner:** Daniil Medvedev

  **Runner-Up:** Dominic Thiem

- **Doubles**

  **Winner:** Wesley Koolhof, Nikola Mektic

  **Runner-Up:** Jurgen Melzer, Edouard Roger-Vasselin

**Djokovic honoured with 2020 year-end No. 1 Trophy**

- Novak Djokovic was honoured at the Nitto ATP Finals, receiving his ATP Tour No. 1 trophy from ATP Chairman Andrea Gaudenzi for finishing as the year-end No. 1 in the FedEx ATP Rankings for sixth time.
- The Serbian finishes as World No. 1 for the sixth time in the past 10 years (also in 2011-12, 14-15 and 18).
- Before this, only American Pete Sampras, who ended six straight years at the pinnacle of men’s professional tennis between 1993 and 1998.

**F1 Turkish Grand Prix 2020**
British **Lewis Hamilton** *(Mercedes)* won the Turkish Grand Prix 2020 at Istanbul Park.
Sergio Perez *(Racing Point)* got second position and Sebastian Vettel *(Ferrari)* got third position.

**2020 Masters Tournament**

- **Dustin Johnson** won the 84th Masters Tournament with a record-shattering performance at the Masters golf tournament Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia.
- He was ahead of Australia’s Cameron Smith and Sungjae Im of South Korea.

**Dishang 2020 ITTF (International Table Tennis Federation) Women’s World Cup**

- World No.1 Table Tennis player Chen Meng defeated Chinese compatriot Sun Yingsha to bag her first ITTF Women's World Cup title in Weihai, China.

**13th IPL (Indian Premier League) 2020**

- **Winner:** Mumbai Indians
- **Runner Up:** Delhi Capitals
- **Orange Cap:** KL Rahul *(Kings XI Punjab)*
- **Purple Cap:** Kagiso Rabada *(Delhi Capitals)*
- **Player of the series:** Jofra Archer *(Rajasthan Royals)*
- **Venue:** United Arab Emirates
- **Number of teams:** 8 (Chennai Super Kings, Delhi Capitals, Kings XI Punjab, Kolkata Knight Riders, Mumbai Indians, Rajasthan Royals, Royal Challengers Bangalore, Sunrisers Hyderabad)
- This is the fifth IPL title for the Mumbai Indians

**2020 Women's T20 Challenge**

- **Winner:** Trailblazers
- **Runner Up:** Supernovas
- **Player of the series:** Radha Yadav *(Supernovas)*
- **Venue:** Sharjah Cricket Stadium in the United Arab Emirates.
- **Number of teams:** 3 (Supernovas, Trailblazers and Velocity)

**Rolex Paris Masters: Paris, France, November 02 – 08, 2020**

**Singles**

- **Winner:** Daniil Medvedev
- **Runner-Up:** Alexander Zverev
Doubles

- Winner: Felix Auger-Aliassime, Hubert Hurkacz
- Runner-Up: Mate Pavic, Bruno Soares

Gyanendro Ningomban elected as Hockey India president

- Manipur’s Gyanendro Ningombam was elected unopposed as the President of Hockey India while former President Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad is back in the Hockey India Executive Board after being Elected Unopposed for the Senior Vice President post.
- Gyanendro becomes the first President from the north east India to spearhead Hockey India. He was Senior Vice President of Hockey India, Senior Vice President of Manipur Hockey, and also Chief Executive Officer of Manipur Hockey.
- **About Hockey India:** It is recognized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. of India as the sole body responsible towards promoting Hockey in India.
- Founded: 20 May 2009
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Affiliation: International Hockey Federation (FIH)

Rafael Nadal becomes fourth man to win 1,000 ATP Tour matches

- Spaniard Rafael Nadal defeated his countryman Feliciano Lopez in the first round of the Rolex Paris Masters to achieve what was his 1000th victory.
- Note: Nadal joins Jimmy Connors (1,274), Roger Federer (1,242) and Ivan Lendl (1,068) in the elusive 1,000 wins club.

Astana Open-2020, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan

Singles

- Winner: John Millman
- Runner-Up: Adrian Mannarino

Doubles

- Winner: Sander Gille, Joran Vliegen
- Runner-Up: Max Purcell, Luke Saville

Jio as title sponsor of Women's T20 Challenge 2020

- Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced Reliance Jio as the title sponsor of the Women's T20 Challenge 2020. This is the first time a sponsor is partnering with the BCCI exclusively for the women's counterpart to the IPL.
Note: The women's T20 challenge is scheduled to run from November 4-9 in Sharjah.
  ○ BCCI president: Sourav Ganguly
  ○ Reliance Foundation's Founder and Chairperson: Nita Ambani

Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2020

- British Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) won the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2020 Formula 1 in Imola, Italy.
- Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes) got second position and Daniel Ricciardo (Renault) got third position.

Alexis Vastine International Boxing Tournament

- Amit Panghal (52kg), also an Asian Games champion besides being Commonwealth Games silver-medallist, won a gold medal.
- Sanjeet (91kg), a former India Open gold-medallist, won a gold medal.
- Ashish Kumar (75 Kg), Asian silver-winner, won a gold medal.
- Kavinder Singh Bisht (57kg), Asian silver-medallist, won a silver medal.

Ritu Phogat wins third straight MMA title at ONE Championship Inside the Matrix Event

- Phogat defeated Cambodia's Nou Srey Pov with a technical knockout.

Adille Sumariwalla elected as Athletics Federation of India (AFI) president

- Adille Sumariwalla was elected as the AFI president for the third time.
- Former athlete Anju Bobby George was elected as the senior vice-president.

List of winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men's singles</th>
<th>Women's singles</th>
<th>Men's doubles</th>
<th>Women's doubles</th>
<th>Mixed doubles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Saar Lor Lux Open 2020 (Germany)
The Sports Ministry approves inclusion of four indigenous sports in Khelo India Youth Games 2021

- The games include Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta and Mallakhamba.
- **Kalaripayattu** has its origin from Kerala and has practitioners all over the world.
- **Mallakhamba** has been well-known across India and Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have been the hotspots of this sport.
- **Gatka** originates from Punjab and this traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors is used both as self-defense as well as a sport.
- **Thang-Ta** is Manipur’s martial art.

Cologne Boxing World Cup 2020

- Indian boxers bagged nine medals including three gold, two silver and four bronze at the Cologne Boxing World Cup in Germany.
- Amit Panghal won gold in men's category while Manisha Moun and Simranjit Kaur won gold in Women's category.

**Note:** India finished 2nd in the overall medal list and Germany topped the list with 16 medals.

Formal recognition of Yogasana as a competitive sport

- The Ministry of AYUSH and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports announced the formal recognition of Yogasana as a competitive sport.
- Yogasana is an integral and important component of Yoga, which is psycho-physical in nature and popular across the globe for its efficacy in fitness and general wellness.
- **Note:** The sports discipline of Yogasana is likely to have 51 medals in 4 events & 7 categories.

AIFF announces candidature to host AFC Asian Cup 2027
The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has formally announced its candidature to host the AFC Asian Cup 2027 and deliver a brighter future together for football in India and across Asia.

Note: In addition to the FIFA U-17 World Cup in 2017, India is also due to host the FIFA U-17 Women’s World Cup and the AFC Women’s Asian Cup in 2022.

Yash Vardhan wins Gold in Air Rifle at 6th IOSC
- 17-year-old Junior Asian champion, Yash Vardhan of India won the 10m air rifle event at the 6th edition of the International Online Shooting Championship (IOSC).
- Note: The IOSC organised by former Indian shooter Shimon Sharif saw participation of shooters from around 20 different countries.

Doha to host 2030 Asian Games, Riyadh in 2034
- The Olympic Council of Asia announced that Doha, Qatar will host the 2030 Asian Games while Riyadh, Saudi Arabia will host the 2034 edition.
- Note: Qatar will also host the 2022 FIFA World Cup.
- China will host the 2022 Asian Games.

Government to start 1000 Khelo India small centres to encourage sports culture in country
- Addressing the 10th Global Sports Summit, TURF 2020, The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju, announced that the government will be starting 1000 Khelo India centres all over the country to help retired sportspersons get employment and to encourage the sports culture in the country.
- Note: FICCI in association with Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), Government of India, organized International Conference on Business of Sports & Fitness 10th TURF 2020, the virtual edition on 8-9 December.

Breakdancing gets Olympic status to debut at Paris in 2024
- Note: Three sports (skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing) will make their Olympic debuts at the Tokyo Games which were postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic by one year to open on July 23, 2021.

F1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2020
- Max Verstappen (Red Bull) won the F1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2020.
- Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes) got second position and Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) got third position.

Ankita Raina wins ITF doubles title in Dubai
- Indian tennis player Ankita Raina won her third doubles title, clinching the Al Habtoor challenge with Ekaterine Gorgodze.
- The unseeded Indo-Georgian pair won against Aliona Bolsova Zadoinov from Spain and Slovakian Kaja Juvan in the final event.
Kuldeep Handoo appointed as ‘Fit India Movement’ Ambassador

First Dronacharya Awardee from Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in 2020, Wushu Coach of Team India, Kuldeep Handoo has been appointed as the Ambassador of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s ‘Fit India Movement’.

Sakhir Grand Prix 2020

- Jehan Daruvala creates history, becomes first Indian to win a Formula 2 race
- Yuki Tsunoda got second position and Daniel Ticktum got third position.

Parthiv Patel announces retirement from all forms of Cricket

- Wicketkeeper-batsman Patel, made his international debut in 2002 at the age of 17 in an away Test series against England
- He last wore Indian jersey in 2018 during a Test match against South Africa in Johannesburg.

Mondo Duplantis and Yulimar Rojas win ‘2020 World Athlete of the Year’

- Swedish pole vaulter Mondo Duplantis and Venezuelan triple jumper Yulimar Rojas are the 2020 Male and Female World Athletes of the Year.
- They are their countries' first recipients of the prestigious athletics award announced during the virtual World Athletics Awards.

Delhi Half Marathon 2020 (16th edition)

- Men’s winner: Amedework Walelegn (Ethiopia)
- Women’s winner: Yalemzerf Yehualaw (Ethiopia)
- India’s Avinash Sable, who qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in 3000m steeplechase, emerged winner among Indian elite runners.
- Note: Airtel Delhi Half Marathon (ADHM) is an annual half marathon foot-race held in New Delhi, India. Established in 2005, it is both an elite runner and mass participation event.

Madhu Sharma was appointed as Joint Secretary of Amateur Baseball Federation of India.

- Treasurer of Baseball Association of Bihar Ms. Madhu Sharma appointed as Joint Secretary of Amateur Baseball Federation of India.

F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2020

- British Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) won the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2020 held at Bahrain International Circuit.
- Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing) got second position and Alexander Albon (Red Bull Racing) got third position.
Leon Mendonca becomes India’s 67th Chess Grandmaster

- Goa’s 14-year-old Leon Mendonca has become India’s 67th chess Grandmaster by winning the third and final norm at a tournament in Italy.
- Mendonca is the second GM from the coastal state.
- The first GM from Goa is Ivana Maria Furtado, she achieved it in 2011.
- Chennai player G Akash, had in July, become the country’s 66th Grandmaster.

Claire Polosak becomes first female match official in men's Test match

- Australia's Claire Polosak became the first female match official in a men's Test match when she took up the fourth umpire's role in the third Test between India and Australia.
- **Note:** The 32-year-old from New South Wales had, earlier, already earned the distinction of being the first woman on-field umpire in a men's ODI match during ICC's Division 2 league between Namibia and Oman played at the Windhoek in 2019.

In UT Ladakh, Khelo India Ice Hockey Tournament organised at Chiktan in Kargil district

- Alongwith 11 teams from different villages of Chiktan, for the first time two Women Teams of Chiktan also participated in the Khelo India Games.
- Shakar Chiktan SDM, Kacho Ásgar Ali khan inaugurated the tournament.

Jigmet Dolma from India secured fourth position in the Dhaka Marathon 2021

- Jigmet Dolma is an SPO of Ladakh police.
- In the full marathon, among the SAARC and local runners, Bahadur Singh of India became the champion in the men's category and Pushpa Bhandari of Nepal became the champion in the women's category.
- In the marathon, Hicham Lakohi of Morocco came first in the elite competition of the marathon in men’s category while Angela Jim Asunde from Kenya won the women's category in the same event.

First ever Ice climbing festival celebrated in Nubra valley

- In Leh, the first ever Ice climbing festival was celebrated in Nubra valley.
- To promote winter tourism in Nubra valley, Nubra Adventure Club, with the help of Social activist Dr. Nordan Otzer, has organized the seven day Ice Climbing festival.

In Ladakh, a 13-day Khelo India Zanskar Winter Sport & Youth festival 2021 began from 18th January

- A series of snow based activities are scheduled for next 13 days in the Snow bound, picturesque remote Zanskar.
The first ever Zanskar winter festival would definitely open a new arena in Ladakh for adventure and Nature loving tourists and a boost for local Youth to hone up their skills in winter sports to represent India.

Team India creates history; clinches test series against Australia 2-1
- India becomes the first Asian team to win at the Gabba.
- India created history by defeating Australia by three wickets in the fourth and final Test at the Gabba in Brisbane and retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.
- **Note:** Recent series between India and Australia
  - **T20 International series:** India won the 3-match series 2-1
  - **One Day International series:** Australia won the 3-match series 2-1

Yonex Thailand Open badminton tournament 2021
- **Location:** BANGKOK, THAILAND
- It was the first badminton tournament of 2021 by Badminton World Federation (BWF).
- **List of winners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men's singles</th>
<th>Women's singles</th>
<th>Men's doubles</th>
<th>Women's doubles</th>
<th>Mixed doubles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viktor Axelsen</td>
<td>Carolina Marin</td>
<td>Lee Yang, Wang Chi-Lin</td>
<td>Greysia Polii, Apriyani Rahayu</td>
<td>Dechapol Puavaranukroh, Sapsiree Taerattanachai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runner-up-</td>
<td>Runner-up-</td>
<td>Runner-up-</td>
<td>Runner-up-</td>
<td><strong>Runner-up-</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angus Long</td>
<td>Tzu-Ying</td>
<td>Goh V Shem, Tan Wee Kiong</td>
<td>Jongkolphan Kititharakul, Rawinda Prajogai</td>
<td>Praveen Jordan, Melati Daeva Oktavianti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IPL Auction 2021: Chris Morris becomes most expensive player in auction history**
- South-African all-rounder Chris Morris became the costliest player in the history of Indian Premier League (IPL) auction when Rajasthan Royals snapped him up for Rs 16.25 crore.
- **Note:** Earlier, Yuvraj Singh was the costliest-ever buy in auction history as he was bought for Rs 16 crore by Delhi Daredevils in IPL 2015.

**Kings XI Punjab renamed as 'Punjab Kings'**
• Kings XI Punjab has been renamed as 'Punjab Kings' as a part of the franchise's rebranding strategy ahead of the IPL 2021 auction in Chennai.
• The Punjab side has been a part of the Indian Premier League since its inaugural season in 2008, and is co-owned by Bollywood actor Preity Zinta, along with businessman Ness Wadia, Mohit Burman and Karn Paul.

Australian Open 2021
• **Location:** Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (8–21 February 2021)
• **List of winners:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men's singles</th>
<th>Women's singles</th>
<th>Men's doubles</th>
<th>Women's doubles</th>
<th>Mixed doubles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winner- Novak Djokovic (Serbia)</td>
<td>Winner- Naomi Osaka (Japan)</td>
<td>Winner- Ivan Dodig (Croatia), Filip Polasek (Slovakia)</td>
<td>Winner- Elise Mertens (Belgium), Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus)</td>
<td>Winner- Barbora Krejcikova (Czech Republic), Rajeev Ram (America)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Runner-up- Daniil Medvedev (Russia)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up- Jennifer Brady (America)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up- Rajeev Ram (America), Joe Salisbury (UK)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up- Barbora Krejcikova (Czech Republic), Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up- Samantha Stosur (Australia), Matthew Ebden (Australia)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Note:** Novak Djokovic (Serbia) has won his ninth Australian Open title. He has now won 18 Grand Slam men's singles titles.
- **Naomi Osaka (Japan)** has now won two Australian Open and the two US Open.

Karnataka to host second Khelo India University Games in 2021
• Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has announced that the second Khelo India University Games (KIUG) will be hosted by Karnataka in 2021.
• The Games will be held in Bengaluru’s Jain University and other venues in the state, in partnership with the Association of Indian Universities (AIU).
• **Note:** In the second edition of the games, **Yogasana and Mallakhamb** have been added.
• The **first edition of University games** was held in Bhubaneswar in 2020.

India’s women’s contingent finishes at top in 30th ‘Adriatic Pearl’ tournament in Budva, Montenegro
• In Boxing, Arundhati Choudhary, Naorem Babyrojisana Chanu, Alfiya Pathan, Vinka and T Sanamacha Chanu won gold medals, with **five gold, three silver and two bronze medals.**
India’s women’s contingent thus finished top at the tournament. Uzbekistan (2 gold) and Czech Republic (1 gold) ended at second and third position respectively.

Vinka received the best women’s boxer of the tournament award.

With two medals in the men’s category, the 19-member Indian team concluded its campaign with an overall second position (12 medals) with Uzbekistan first and Ukraine third.

Naman Ojha announces retirement from all forms of Cricket

- India wicketkeeper-batsman Naman Ojha has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket on February 15, 2021.
- He made his first-class debut for Madhya Pradesh in 2000-01.
- He holds the record for the most dismissals by a wicketkeeper in the Ranji Trophy, featured in one Test, one ODI and two T20 Internationals.

Japan Olympics Minister Hashimoto to accept role as head of Tokyo 2020

- Japanese Olympics Minister Seiko Hashimoto, a woman who has competed in seven Olympic Games, intends to accept the job of Head of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee.
- Former chairman of the committee Yoshiro Mori had resigned from the post last week over indecent remarks on women.
- Note: Originally scheduled to take place between 24 July and 9 August 2020, the Olympic Games are now rescheduled for 23 July to 8 August 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Joe Root becomes first batsman to score 200 in 100th Test

- England skipper Joe Root became the first cricketer to notch up a double century in his 100th Test, touching the milestone on the second day of the first Test against India, at the M.A. Chidambaram stadium in Chennai.
- Note: Former Pakistan skipper Inzamam ul Haq, who hit 184 against India in Bengaluru in 2005, held the previous best score in the 100th Test.

Drass Red wins 13th CEC Cup Ice Hockey Championship

- In Kargil Ladakh, Drass Red has won the 13th CEC Cup Ice Hockey Championship beating Hockey Club Chiktan team in the Final match.
- The 1st Women CEC Ice Hockey Cup 2021 was lifted by Shakar Chiktan Team defeating Wakha Mulbekh Team.
- Note: 32 Men teams and 5 Women Teams participated in the tournament which was organized by the District Youth Services & Sports.

Ishant Sharma becomes 3rd Indian pacer to take 300 Test wickets
• Fast bowler Ishant Sharma became the 6th Indian and the 3rd pacer from the country to take 300 wickets in Test cricket.
• Note: Besides Kumble (619) and Kapil (434), Ravichandran Ashwin (377 before this game), Harbhajan Singh (417), and Zaheer Khan (311) are the other bowlers from the country who have reached the landmark.

Tamil Nadu beat Baroda to lift Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy
• In Cricket, Tamil Nadu lifted the coveted Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy after defeating Baroda by seven wickets in the final at the Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad.
• This was Tamil Nadu’s second Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy triumph, after winning their first title way back in 2006-07.
• Baroda had won the title twice in the past (in 2011-12 and 2013-14).

No Ranji Trophy for first time in 87 years
• For the first time in 87 years, the BCCI decided that it won't be conducting country's premier first-class domestic tournament Ranji Trophy 2020-21.
• The cricket body decided to conduct the Vijay Hazare Trophy, instead of having a truncated Ranji Trophy. BCCI has also decided to host the U-19 National One Day tournament for the Vinoo Mankad Trophy and the Women's national 50-over tournament.
• About Ranji Trophy: The first edition of the Ranji Trophy was held in 1934 and it was the only national cricket championship that was played even during the World War 2.

India top medals tally at first Asian Online Shooting Championship
• India's 24-member shooting contingent topped the medals tally in the first Asian Online Shooting Championship.
• The squad won four out of the eight gold medals on offer, besides two silver and five bronze medals, for a total of 11 podium finishes.
• India's gold winners were Saurabh Chaudhary in the men's 10m air pistol, Divyansh Singh Panwar in the men's 10m air rifle, Kynan Chenai in men's trap and Rajeshwari Kumari in women's trap.
• Note: The two-day competition was organised by the Kuwait Shooting Federation and saw 274 shooters from 22 Asian countries take part.

Indian Cricketer Ashok Dinda announces retirement from all forms of cricket
• Fast bowler, Dinda, who has 420 first-class wickets in his bag, has also played 13 ODIs and nine T20s for India, taking 12 and 17 wickets respectively.
• Dinda made his T20 international Debut for India in December 2009 against Sri Lanka and his ODI debut against Zimbabwe in May 2010.
India vs England Cricket Series 2021  
(One Day International series)  
- India won the 3-match series 2-1.  
- **Player of the series:** Jonny Bairstow (England)  
- **Note:** Virat Kohli-led side has now won all the series' in this England's tour of India. India claimed the Test series 3-1 and then won the five-match T20I series by 3-2.  
- Virat Kohli became the 3rd Indian Captain to lead Indian side in 200 International matches. (Mohammad Azharuddin-221 matches, MS Dhoni-332 matches)

Al Ain World Shooting Para Sport World Cup 2021  
- (Al Ain, United Arab Emirates: 15 - 25 March 2021)  
- **India finishes 3rd place** in the medals table in the Al Ain 2021 World Shooting Para Sport World Cup.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Medals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>11 Medals (5 Gold 5 Silver 1 Bronze)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>5 Medals (3 Gold 2 Silver)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>7 Medals (2 Gold 1 Silver 4 Bronze)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Note:** India's Singhraj and Manish Narwal won gold in World Shooting Para Sport World Cup 2021.

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup 2021  
(Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Ranges, New Delhi: 18-29 March 2021)  
- India tops the medals tally with 15 gold, 9 silver & 6 bronze in ISSF Shooting World Cup 2021.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Bronze</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Note:** India’s Yashaswini Deswal won the first gold medal for India in the Women's 10 Meter Air Pistol final of the ISSF World Cup 2021.
F1 Bahrain Grand Prix 2021
- **British Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)** won the F1 Bahrain Grand Prix 2021 held at Bahrain International Circuit, Sakhir, Bahrain.
- Max Verstappen (Red Bull) got second position and Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes) got third position.
- **Note:** This was Hamilton’s 96th career Formula 1 victory.

India vs England cricket (2021)
- **T20 International series**
- India won the 5-match series 3-2
- Player of the Series: Virat Kohli

Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia wins All England Badminton Championships 2021 Men's title; Nozomi Okuhara clinches Women's title
- Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia has won the men's single title as he defeated Denmark's Viktor Axelsen in the finals.
- Japan's Nozomi Okuhara has won the women’s single title as she defeated Thailand’s Pornpawee Chochuwong in the finals.

Shreyas Iyer signs up with Lancashire for Royal London Cup 2021
- English county Lancashire announced the overseas signing of India batsman Shreyas Iyer for the 2021 Royal London Cup.
- The top-order batsman is regarded as one of the most attacking and fluent stroke players in Indian cricket and he has played in 21 ODIs and 29 T20 Internationals for his country.
- **Note:** The first Indian to join the club was wicketkeeper-batsman Farokh Engineer who joined the club in 1968.
- After Engineer retired, four other Indian — Murali Kartik, Dinesh Mongia, VVS Laxman, and Sourav Ganguly — have represented the club.

Vijay Hazare Trophy 2021 (20 February to 14 March 2021)
- **Final:** Mumbai vs Uttar Pradesh
- Mumbai won **Vijay Hazare Trophy 2021 title.**
- This is Mumbai’s fourth Hazare title.
- **Note:** Mumbai captain Prithvi Shaw became the first cricketer to score 800 runs in a single edition of Vijay Hazare Trophy.

Virat Kohli becomes first cricketer to score 3,000 runs in T-20 International
- India’s Captain Virat Kohli has become the first-ever batsman to score 3,000 runs in T-20 International (T20I).
• Kohli achieved the milestone during the second T20I against England at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.
• He now has 3,001 runs from 87 T20I matches.
• Note: New Zealand's Martin Guptill comes second in the list with 2,839 runs in 99 matches.
• India's Rohit Sharma comes third in the list with 2,773 runs in 108 matches.

Thomas Bach re-elected as IOC president
• Olympic champion Thomas Bach has been re-elected for an additional four-year term as President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
• Facts about the International Olympic Committee (IOC):
  Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland
  President: Thomas Bach
  Founded: 23 June 1894

Bhavani Devi becomes first Indian fencer to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics 2021 Games
• Tamil Nadu's Bhavani Devi, 8-time national champion, secured a spot for the Tokyo Olympics at the World Cup in Hungary.
• Bhavani Devi qualifies through the Adjusted Official Ranking (AOR) Method.

Mithali Raj becomes first Indian woman cricketer to score 10,000 international runs
• Mithali reached the milestone in the ongoing third One-day International match against South Africa in Lucknow.
• Note: Mithali is now the second international cricketer to score 10,000 runs.
• England's Charlotte Edwards is the only other woman cricketer who has achieved this feat.

ISL (Indian Super League) 2020-21: Mumbai City FC wins title
• Mumbai City lifted their first-ever Hero Indian Super League (ISL) trophy after beating last season’s winners ATK Mohun Bagan 2-1 in the final at the Fatorda Stadium in Margao.
• Note: In February 2021, Mumbai City FC won the ISL League Winners Shield.

India to host Asian Boxing Championships 2021
The International Boxing Association announced that Asian Boxing Championships 2021 will be hosted by New Delhi, India from May 21-31.
• It will be the first boxing tournament in Asia to be held in 2021.
• Facts about the International Boxing Association (AIBA):
  Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland
  President: Umar Kremlev
  Founded: 1946
India vs England Test Series 2021

- India won the 4-Test match series 3-1
- **Player of the series:** Ravichandran Ashwin.
- **Note:** India also qualified for the World Test Championship final.
- With this win, India will meet New Zealand in the final of the ICC World Test Championship which is scheduled to start from June 18 at Lord’s Cricket Ground.

Wrestler Bajrang Punia regains world number one ranking

- Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia has regained world number one ranking after clinching a second successive gold medal at the **Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series** in Rome.
- Punia defeated Tulga Tumur Ochir from Mongolia in the 65kg freestyle event final in Rome.
- Bajrang Punia was ranked at the second spot in the world rankings before the beginning of the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series.
- **Note:** In 2020, the Indian wrestler had defeated USA's Jordan Oliver in the final to clinch the gold medal at the tournament.
- Punia had reserved his place in the Tokyo Olympic Games in September 2019 after clinching bronze at the World Championships.

PV Sindhu wins silver medal at BWF Swiss Open Super 300, 2021

- Indian Shuttler PV Sindhu won silver medal in the BWF Swiss Open Super 300 (Yonex Swiss Open 2021) at Basel, Switzerland.
- She was defeated by Carolina Marin (Spain) in the final of the Women's Singles Title

Note: Viktor Axelsen (Denmark) won Men’s Singles Title in the BWF Swiss Open Super 300.

Vinesh Phogat wins her 2nd gold in Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series event

- **Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat** won her second gold medal in the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series event and reclaimed the **top rank** in the 53-kg category in Rome.
- Vinesh defeated Canada's Diana Mary Helen Weicker.
- **Note:** Recently, Vinesh had won a gold medal in the women's 53-kg category at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine.
- Vinesh Phogat is the only Indian woman wrestler who has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics.

Ravichandran Ashwin declared ICC Men’s Player of the Month for February 2021

- India's off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin was named the **ICC Men’s Player of the Month** for February for his stellar show against England in a four-match Test series.
- England's Tammy Beaumont was adjudged the **ICC Women's Player of the Month**.
- **Note:** Rishabh Pant won the ICC Men’s Player of the Month award for January 2021.
Chess player Koneru Humpy wins BBC ISWOTY award for 2020

- Chess player Koneru Humpy from Andhra Pradesh has won the **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year award (ISWOTY)** for 2020.
- Humpy is the **World Rapid Chess champion** having won the title in December 2019.
- She received the **Arjuna Award in 2003** and **Padma Shri in 2007**.
- **Note:** the **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year** initiative was launched in 2019 to celebrate female achievements in sport and highlight the issues and challenges faced by women in India.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi delivered the inaugural address at 2nd Khelo India National Winter Games 2021 at Gulmarg

- In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the second edition of Khelo India Winter Games (February 26 – March 02, 2021) begins at Gulmarg.
- ‘Khelo India Winter Games’ has been **organised by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs And Sports** in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council and the Winter Games Association of J&K.
- The games include snowshoe race, ice skating, ice hockey, skiing, nordic skiing, snowboarding, ski mountaineering and ice stock.

Yusuf Pathan announces retirement from all formats of cricket

- He played 57 ODIs and 22 T20Is for India between 2007 and 2012.
- Pathan was part of the 2007 T20 World Cup as well as the 2011 ODI World Cup, both of which were won by the Indian team.

Vinay Kumar announces retirement from all formats of cricket

- Kumar, a pace bowler who has represented India in all formats.
- He played 1 Test, 31 ODIs and 9 T20Is for India between 2010 and 2013.

Indian men's skeet team wins bronze in ISSF World Cup

- The Indian trio of Mairaj Ahmed Khan, Angad Vir Singh Bajwa and Gurjoat Khangura won the bronze medal in men’s skeet team event at the International Shooting Sport Federation tournament (ISSF) Shotgun World Cup in Cairo, Egypt.
- The Indians defeated the Kazakhstan team of David Pochivalov, Eduard Yechshenko and Alexandr Mukhamediyev.

Vinesh Phogat wins Gold in Ukraine wrestling event

- Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat has won the gold medal in the women's 53-kg category at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine.
• Vinesh Phogat defeated world number seven Vanesa Kaladzinskaya of Belarus in the finals to win the gold medal.
• Note: Vinesh Phogat is the only Indian woman wrestler who has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics.

Odisha to host Indian Women's League

• The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has announced that Odisha will host the 2020-2021 Hero Indian Women's League. The dates for the tournament will be announced soon.
• About the Indian Women's League: It is the top division women's professional football league in India.
• The first season of the league was organized in Cuttack in October 2016.
• The league is run by the All India Football Federation.
• Facts about the All India Football Federation (AIFF):

Headquarters location: New Delhi

Founded: 23 June 1937

President: Praful Patel

• Note: India is scheduled to host the AFC Women's Asian Cup in 2022 which will be followed by the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022.

Sports Ministry restores recognition of Gymnastics Federation of India after 10 years

• Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has decided to restore the recognition of the Gymnastics Federation of India (GFI) as a National Sports Federation (NSF).
• The recognition has been granted till December 31, 2021.
• Note: The GFI was de-recognised by the ministry in 2011 because of infighting in the body.

J&K tops medals tally at Khelo India Winter National Games in Gulmarg

• Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir topped the medals tally in the second edition of Khelo India Winter National Games.
• J&K won 11 gold, 18 silver and 5 bronze medals.
• The five-day mega sports event which began on 26th of February, concluded in Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.
• Note: The event was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
• The event was organised by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council and the Winter Games Association of Jammu and Kashmir.

Indian shuttlers Varun Kapur, Malvika Bansod win Uganda International titles
- Indian shuttlers Varun Kapur and Malvika Bansod won the men's and women's singles titles respectively at the 2021 Uganda International Badminton Tournament in Kampala.
- Varun defeated Sankar Muthusamy in men’s singles and Malvika defeated Anupama Upadhyaya in the women’s singles.

F1 Bahrain Grand Prix 2021

- **British Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) won the** F1 Bahrain Grand Prix 2021 held at Bahrain International Circuit, Sakhir, Bahrain.
- Max Verstappen (Red Bull) got second position and Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes) got third position.
- **Note:** This was Hamilton’s 96th career Formula 1 victory.

Hubert Hurkacz wins Men's singles title in Miami Open Tennis Championships 2021; Ashleigh Barty wins Women's singles title

- **Poland's Hubert Hurkacz** has won the men's singles title as he defeated Italy's Jannik Sinner at Miami Gardens, Florida, United States.
- **Australia's Ashleigh Barty** has won the women’s singles title in the finals as she defeated Canada’s Bianca Andreescu.

2023 Men's Boxing World Championships to be held in Uzbekistan's capital Tashkent

- The city of Tashkent is awarded the 2023 AIBA Men's boxing World Boxing Championships after the successful bid presentation by the Boxing Federation of Uzbekistan.
- **Note:** International Boxing Association announced that Asian Boxing Championships 2021 will be hosted by New Delhi, India from May 21-31.
- **Facts about the International Boxing Association (AIBA):**
  - Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland
  - President: Umar Kremlev

FIFA suspends Pakistan, Chad football associations

- FIFA Council suspended the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) with immediate effect due to third-party interference, which constitutes a serious violation of the FIFA Statutes.
- FIFA Council decided to suspend the Chadian Football Association (FTFA) with immediate effect due to government interference.
- **Note:** Qatar will host the 2022 FIFA World Cup.
- **Facts about FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association):**
  - Founded: 21 May 1904
  - Headquarters: Zürich, Switzerland
  - Membership: 211 national associations
  - President: Gianni Infantino
Founded: 1946

Sports Minister inaugurates Khelo India State Centre of Excellence for Rowing discipline at Water Sports Academy in Srinagar

- Union Minister for Sports & Youth Affairs Shri Kiren Rijiju inaugurated Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE) for Rowing discipline at the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council Water Sports Academy in Srinagar on 10th April 2021.
- This is one of the two KISCEs from Jammu & Kashmir itself, with the Maulana Azad Stadium for Fencing discipline in Jammu being the other.
- Note: There are currently 24 KISCEs across 23 States and Union Territories and each of them focuses on Olympics sports discipline.

Nethra Kumanan becomes first Indian woman sailor to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics

- Four sailors created history from India by qualifying for this year’s Tokyo Olympics. Vishnu Saravanan and the pair of Ganapathy Chengappa and Varun Thakkar made the cut during the ongoing Asian Qualifiers in Oman.
- The 23-year-old from Chennai, Nethra Kumanan, became the first Indian woman sailor to qualify in the laser radial event in the Mussanah Open Championship in Oman.
- Note: North Korea will not participate in the Tokyo Olympics to protect its athletes amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Kane Williamson wins Sir Richard Hadlee Medal for fourth time

- New Zealand's captain Kane Williamson was adjudged 'International Test Player of the Year' along with winner of the prestigious Sir Richard Hadlee Medal for the fourth time in last six years at the New Zealand Cricket Awards for the 2020-21 season.
- Amelia Kerr and Devon Conway claimed double honours during the 2020-21 awards season.
- Devon Conway won the men’s ODI and T20 Player of the Year awards.
- Amelia Kerr won the Women’s T20 Player of the Year and Women’s Dream11 Super Smash Player of the Year awards.

Virat Kohli named Wisden Almanack's ODI cricketer of the 2010s

- To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first One-Day International, five ODI cricketers of the decade have been named in the 2021 edition of the Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, the reference book, often described as the Bible of Cricket.
- One cricketer has been named for each of the decades between 1971 and 2021.
- List of Winners:
  - India captain Virat Kohli was named Wisden Almanack’s ODI cricketer of the 2010s.
  - Former Indian cricketer Kapil Dev was named the ODI Cricketer of the 1980s.
• Legendary Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar was named the ODI Cricketer of the 1990s.
• England all-rounder Ben Stokes was declared the 'Cricketer of the Year' for a second successive time.
• Australia women cricketer Beth Mooney was awarded the leading women cricketer in the World.
• West Indies all-rounder Kieron Pollard was named the leading T20I cricketer in the world.
• Jason Holder, Mohammad Rizwan, Dom Sibley, Zak Crawley, and Darren Stevens were named Wisden Cricketers of the Year.

Asian Wrestling Championships 2021

• (Almaty, Kazakhstan: April 13-18, 2021)
• India finishes 3rd place in the medals table in the 34th edition of the Senior Asian Wrestling Championships 2021.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Medals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>17 Medals (7 Gold, 5 Silver, 5 Bronze)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>17 Medals (7 Gold, 5 Silver, 5 Bronze)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>14 Medals (5 Gold, 3 Silver, 6 Bronze)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emilia Romagna F1 Grand Prix 2021

• Max Verstappen (Red Bull) won the Emilia Romagna F1 Grand Prix 2021 held at Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari Circuit in Imola, Italy.
• Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) got second position and Lando Norris (Mclaren) got third position.

Tamil Nadu teenager Arjun Kalyan becomes India's 68th Chess GrandMaster (GM)

• Arjun Kalyan became India’s 68th Grandmaster. The 18-year-old from Chennai crossed the 2500 ELO mark after scoring a win over Dragan Kosic in the 5th round of the ongoing GM Round Robin “Rujna Zora-3” in Serbia.
• Note: Viswanathan Anand became the 1st Grandmaster from India in 1988.
• Leon Mendonca from Goa became India’s 67th Grandmaster in 2020.

2021 AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships

• The 2021 AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships were held in Kielce, Poland.
• India topped the medal table with eight gold and three bronze medals.
• Medal table
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Bronze</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Note:** Gitika (48kg), Naorem Babyrojisana Chanu (51kg), Poonam (57kg), Vinka (60kg), Arundhati Choudhary (69kg), T Sanamacha Chanu (75kg) and Alfiya Pathan (+81kg) clinched gold medals as India finished at the No. 1 position in the women’s section with seven gold medals.
- India’s Sachin won the men’s 56kg gold medal.

**Rafael Nadal wins 12th Barcelona Open Title 2021**

- Spain’s Rafael Nadal won the 12th Barcelona Open Title 2021. He defeated Greece’s Stefanos Tsitsipas.
- Rafael Nadal secured his first title of the year 2021 and 87th of his career.

**F1 Portuguese Grand Prix 2021**

- **British Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) won the F1** Portuguese Grand Prix 2021 held at Algarve International Circuit in Portimao, Portugal.
- **Max Verstappen** (Red Bull) got second position and **Valtteri Bottas** (Mercedes) got third position.
- **Note:** This was Hamilton’s 97th career Formula 1 victory.

**Mark Selby becomes World Snooker Champion for 4th time**

- In Snooker, English professional player Mark Selby has become the World Snooker Champion for the 4th time.
- Selby won the Championship defeating Shaun Murphy by 18-15 victory at Crucible Theatre, England.
- Selby won the Championship title in 2014, 2016, 2017 also.

**Sri Lanka Thisara Perera announces retirement from international cricket**

- Sri Lanka all-rounder and former captain, Thisara Perera announced his retirement from international cricket.
- Thisara Perera, who made his international debut in 2009, has featured in 6 Tests, 166 ODIs and 84 T20Is in his 12-year-long international career.
- Perera has hit 2,338 runs and picked up 135 wickets in ODI cricket while he managed 51 wickets and 1204 runs in T20I cricket.
- Thisara Perea was also part of Sri Lanka's 2014 T20 World Cup-winning team.
F1 Spanish Grand Prix 2021

- **British Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)** won the F1 Spanish Grand Prix 2021 held at Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, Spain.
- **Max Verstappen** (Red Bull) got second position and **Valtteri Bottas** (Mercedes) got third position.
- **Note:** Lewis Hamilton claimed the 100th pole position of his career in Spanish Grand Prix 2021.

2021 Madrid Open (Tennis)

- The 2021 Madrid Open was held at the Park Manzanares in Madrid, Spain from 30 April – 9 May 2021. It was the 19th edition of the event on the ATP Tour and 20th on the WTA Tour.

  - **List of winners:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men's singles</th>
<th>Women's singles</th>
<th>Men's doubles</th>
<th>Women's doubles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Winner-</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Zverev</td>
<td>Aryna Sabalenka</td>
<td>Horacio Zeballos</td>
<td>Barbora Krejcikova</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Germany)</td>
<td>(Belarus)</td>
<td>(Argentina), Marcel</td>
<td>(Czech Republic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Runner-up-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up-</strong></td>
<td><strong>Runner-up-</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matteo Berrettini</td>
<td>Ashleigh Barty</td>
<td>Nikola Mektic (Croatia)</td>
<td>Gabriela Dabrowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Italy)</td>
<td>(Australia)</td>
<td>, Mate Pavic (Croatia)</td>
<td>(Canada), Demi Schuurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Netherlands)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2021 Italian Open (Tennis)

- The 2021 Italian Open (Tennis) was held in Rome, Italy from 08 May – 16 May 2021. It was the 78th edition of the Italian Open.
- **List of winners:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men's singles</th>
<th>Women's singles</th>
<th>Men's doubles</th>
<th>Women's doubles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winner- Rafael Nadal (Spain)</th>
<th>Winner- Iga Swiatek (Poland)</th>
<th>Winner- Nikola Mektic (Croatia), Mate Pavic (Croatia)</th>
<th>Winner- Sharon Fichman (Canada), Giuliana Olmos (Mexico)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Runner-up- Novak Djokovic (Serbia)</td>
<td>Runner-up- Karolina Pliskova (Czech Republic)</td>
<td>Runner-up- Rajeev Ram (America), Joe Salisbury (Britain)</td>
<td>Runner-up- Kristina Mladenovic (France), Marketa Vondrousova (Czech Republic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Note:** This was Rafael Nadal’s 10th Italian Open title.

**Manchester City wins 2020-21 Premier League Title**

- In the English Premier League, Manchester City was crowned Premier League champions for the third time in four seasons after defeating Manchester United.
- Manchester City has now won three Premier League titles and eight major trophies under Guardiola, who last year signed a new two-year contract to remain at the club until 2023.
- **About Premier League:** It, often referred to as the English Premier League (The Football Association Premier League Limited), is the top level of the English football league system.

**2022 FIFA under-17 Women’s World Cup to be held in India**

- The 2022 FIFA under-17 Women’s World Cup will be held in India from October 11 to 30, 2022.
- India was set to host the 2021 U-17 Women’s World Cup before it was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Council also approved dates for the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup Costa Rica 2022 (10-28 August 2022), as well as the FIFA Arab Cup 2021, taking place between 19 and 25 June 2021.
- **Facts about FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association):**
  - Founded: 21 May 1904
  - Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland
  - Membership: 211 national associations
  - President: Gianni Infantino