

Weekly Current Affairs 1st October 2021 – 8th October 2021 साप्ताहिक करंट अफेयर्स 1-8 अक्टूबर 2021

Important News: State

Alibaug white onion and Palghar's famed Wada Kolam rice get GI tag

- The famed white onion of Alibag in Maharashtra's Raigad district was given the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**, for its unique sweet taste, no-tears factor, as well as its medicinal properties.
- **Wada Kolam**, also known as Zini or Jhini rice, is a traditional variety grown in **Wada in Palghar district of Maharashtra**, with the grain being off white in colour.

Note:

- Recently, Kerala's Kuttiaattoor mango and Edayur chilli got GI tag.
- Chinnor rice produced in Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh got GI tag.

Source: TOI

World's largest Khadi National Flag unveiled in Leh

Why in News

- The **world's largest Khadi National Flag** was installed in **Leh, Ladakh** on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's 152nd birth anniversary.

Key Points

- It was inaugurated by **Ladakh Lieutenant Governor RK Mathur**.
- The tricolor, which is 225-feet long and 150-feet wide, weighs around 1,000 kg.
- The flag is made by Khadi Dyers and Printers based in Mumbai which is affiliated to the **Khadi Village and Industries Commission (KVIC)**.

Source: India Today

Kangana Ranaut named brand ambassador of Uttar Pradesh's 'One District One Product' Scheme

Why in News

- The Uttar Pradesh government named Indian actress **Kangana Ranaut** as the brand ambassador of its ambitious '**One District-One Product**' programme.

Key Points

- The Uttar Pradesh government has launched the 'One District-One Product (ODOP)' programme with the aim to create product-specific traditional industrial hubs across 75 districts of the state.

Source: Indian Express

Important News: India

‘Azadi@75 – New Urban India: Transforming Urban Landscape’ Conference-cum-Expo in Lucknow

Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated ‘Azadi@75 – New Urban India: Transforming Urban Landscape’ Conference-cum-Expo in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

Key Points

- The Prime Minister digitally handed over keys of **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U)** houses to 75,000 beneficiaries in 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh.
- He inaugurated/laid the foundation stone of 75 Urban Development Projects of Uttar Pradesh under **Smart Cities Mission and AMRUT**.
- He flagged off 75 buses under **FAME-II** for seven cities including Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi, Prayagraj, Gorakhpur, Jhansi and Ghaziabad
- He released a Coffee Table Book encompassing 75 projects implemented under various Flagship Missions of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

About the Conference-cum-Expo

- The Conference-cum-Expo has been organised by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) from 5th to 7th October 2021 as part of ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’.
- It is themed on transforming urban landscape with specific focus on the transformative changes brought about in Uttar Pradesh.

Source: PIB

ICMR’s drone-based vaccine delivery model: i-Drone

Why in News

- **Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare** launched ICMR’s **Drone Response and Outreach in North East (i-Drone)**.
- This is for the first time that a "Make in India" drone has been used in South Asia to transport COVID-19 vaccine.

Key Points

About i-Drone:

- This i-Drone has been designed to overcome challenges by deploying Unmanned Aerial vehicles (UAV) / drones to remote areas and hard to reach terrains.
- Currently, the drone based delivery project has been granted permission for implementation in Manipur and Nagaland, as well as union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Island.

- **ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research)** conducted an initial study in collaboration with **Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur** to test the capacity of drones to carry and transfer vaccines safely.

Other Projects Using Drones:

- The **International Crops Research Institute** was permitted to deploy drones for agricultural research activities.
- Telangana government has launched '**Medicine from the Sky**' initiative.

Source: PIB

Jal Jeevan Mission App and Rashtriya Jal Jeevan Kosh

Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** launched the **Jal Jeevan Mission App** and **Rashtriya Jal Jeevan Kosh** under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

Key Points

About Jal Jeevan Mission App:

- The Jal Jeevan Mission App has been launched to improve awareness among stakeholders and for greater transparency and accountability of schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

About Rashtriya Jal Jeevan Kosh:

- In Rashtriya Jal Jeevan Kosh, any individual, institution, corporation, or philanthropist, be it in India or abroad, can contribute to help provide tap water connection in every rural household, school, Anganwadi centre, ashram shala, and other public institutions.

About Jal Jeevan Mission:

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

Note:

- Since the launch of Jal Jeevan Mission in 2019, 5 crore households have been connected with water connections.
- Today, water is reaching every household in about 1.25 lakh villages in about 80 districts of the country.
- In the Aspirational districts the number of tap connections have increased from 31 lakh to 1.16 crore.

Source: newsonair

Wetlands of India Portal

Why in News

- The **Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav** has launched a web portal – '**Wetlands of India Portal**'.

Key Points

- The portal is a single point access to all information relating to wetlands in India.

- The portal has been developed under a Technical Cooperation project “Wetlands Management for Biodiversity and Climate Protection” (Wetlands Project) of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.
- The project is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) under the International Climate Initiative (IKI).

Source: PIB

Trans- Himalayan region becoming one of the promising astronomical sites globally **Why in News**

- The **Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO)** located at **Hanle** near Leh in Ladakh is becoming one of the promising observatory sites globally according to a recent study.

Key Points

- The Hanle site is as dry as Atacama Desert in Chile and much drier than Devasthal and has around 270 clear nights in a year and is also one of the emerging sites for infrared and sub-mm optical astronomy.
- This is because water vapour absorbs electromagnetic signals and reduces their strength.

Need:

- Astronomers are constantly searching for ideal locations around the world to build their next big telescope based on local meteorological data collected over many years.

Other Promising Sites:

- Devasthal in Nainital
- Merak observatories in Ladakh
- Ali Observatory in the Tibet Autonomous Region in China
- South African Large Telescope in South Africa
- National Astronomical Observatory in Mexico
- University of Tokyo Atacama Observatory
- Paranal in Chile

Source: PIB

PM Modi launches Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 and AMRUT 2.0

Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** launched **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0)** and **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation 2.0 (AMRUT 2.0)**.

Key Points

- SBM-U 2.0 and AMRUT 2.0 have been designed to realize the aspiration to make all cities ‘Garbage Free’ and ‘Water Secure’.

- These flagship Missions will help contribute towards achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals 2030.**

About Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0):

- It envisions to make all cities 'Garbage Free' and ensure grey and black water management in all cities other than those covered under AMRUT, make all urban local bodies as ODF+ and those with a population of less than 1 lakh as ODF++, thereby achieving the vision of safe sanitation in urban areas.
- The **outlay of SBM-U 2.0** is around **₹1.41 lakh crore.**

About Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation 2.0 (AMRUT 2.0):

- It aims to provide 100% coverage of water supply to all households in around 4,700 urban local bodies by providing about 2.68 crore tap connections and 100% coverage of sewerage and septage in 500 AMRUT cities by providing around 2.64 crore sewers/ septage connections, which will benefit more than 10.5 crore people in urban areas.
- AMRUT 2.0 will adopt the principles of circular economy and promote conservation and rejuvenation of surface and groundwater bodies.
- '**Pey Jal Survekshan**' will be conducted to promote progressive competition among cities.
- The **outlay of AMRUT 2.0** is around **₹2.87 lakh crore.**

Note: Recently, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stones of **Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) Jaipur** in Rajasthan.

Source: PIB

People's Plan Campaign 2021 and Vibrant Gram Sabha Dashboard

Why in News

- **Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Giriraj Singh** launched **People's Plan Campaign 2021- Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas** and **Vibrant Gram Sabha Dashboard.**
- He also released a booklet on People Plan Campaign-2021 for preparation of plans for FY 2022-23 and the 10th issue of Gramoday Sankalp Magazine.

Key Points

- People's Plan Campaign is being rolled-out in all the States from 2nd October 2021.
- There are 31.65 lakh elected Panchayat representatives across the country in which 14.53 lakh are women.
- 2.56 lakh Panchayats uploaded their **Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDPs)** on GPDP portal in 2020.
- A **Vibrant Gram Sabha Dashboard** will help in increasing maximum participation through the meeting of Gram Sabha/Gram Panchayat.

- The Panchayat Development Plan aims to strengthen the role of elected representatives of Panchayats and SHG Women under DAY-NRLM in effective Gram Sabha.

Source: PIB

COVID-19 Relief

Why in News

The **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)** has recommended the payment of **₹50,000 each as ex gratia assistance** to the next kin of those who died of COVID-19.

Key Points

- It includes those who succumbed to the virus while involved in relief operations and preparedness activities.
- The Centre has approved release of the 2nd installment of its share of the **State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)** amounting to Rs 7,274.40 crore, in advance, to 23 states.
- 5 states have already been released in advance of the 2nd installment amounting to Rs 1,599.20 crore.
- The money would be provided by the States from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).

Source: The Hindu

India Export Initiative and IndiaXports 2021 Portal

Why in News

- **Union Minister for MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) Narayan Rane** inaugurated the **India Export Initiative and IndiaXports 2021 Portal of India SME (Small and Medium Enterprises) Forum.**

Key Points

- This initiative features an Info Portal which serves as a knowledge base for exports by Indian MSMEs with the required information related to export potential for all the 456 tariff lines along with the potential markets as well as trends in exports, export procedures and lots more.

Note: With more than 63 million MSMEs spread across the geographical expanse of India, MSMEs have been contributing nearly 40% of overall India's exports, contributing to approx. 6.11% of the country's manufacturing GDP & 24.63% of the GDP from services sector.

Source: PIB

India's first aerial seeding campaign 'Hara Bhara'

Why in News

- **Hara Bhara, India's first aerial seeding campaign in Telangana** using the **Seedcopter drone** was launched.

Key points

- The 'Seedcopter' developed by **Marut Drones** is an aerial seeding solution for rapid and scalable reforestation.
- The project uses drones to disperse seed balls over thin, barren, and empty forest lands to turn them into lush green abodes of trees.

Related Indian Initiatives:

- National Afforestation Programme
- National Mission for Green India
- National Action Programme to Combat Desertification
- CAMPA Funds

Source: **The Hindu**

Chacha Chaudhary declared Mascot for Namami Gange Programme

Why in News

- At the 37th Executive Committee meeting of the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), Chacha Chaudhary was declared as the mascot of the Namami Gange Programme.

Key Points

- NMCG has tied-up with Diamond Toons to develop and distribute comics, e-comics and animated videos.
- The total estimated budget for the project is Rs. 2.26 Cr.

About Chacha Chaudhary:

- Chacha Chaudhary is an Indian comic book character, created by cartoonist Pran Kumar Sharma in 1971.

About Namami Gange Programme:

- It is an Integrated Conservation Mission, approved as 'Flagship Programme' by the Union Government in June 2014 to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga.

Source: **India Today**

DigiSaksham - a digital skills programme

Why in News

- **Minister for Labour and Employment, Bhupender Yadav** launched **DigiSaksham - a digital skills programme** to enhance the employability of youth by imparting digital skills.
- DigiSaksham programme is the joint initiative of the **Ministry of Labour and Employment** and **Microsoft India**.
- This joint initiative is an extension of the Government's ongoing programs **to support the youth from rural and semi-urban areas**.

Key Points

About DigiSaksham programme:

- Free of cost training in digital skills including basic skills as well as advanced computing, will be provided to more than **3 lakh youths in the first year**.
- The Jobseekers can access the training through **National Career Service (NCS) Portal**.
- The initiative gives priority to the job-seekers of semi urban areas belonging to disadvantaged communities, including those who have lost their jobs due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- There will be basically **three types of training** viz. Digital Skills – Self paced learning, VILT mode training (Virtual Instructor led) and ILT mode training (Instructor led).
- It will be implemented in the field by **Aga Khan Rural Support Programme India (AKRSP-I)**.

Other Initiatives for Youth Employment:

- Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana
- MGNREGA
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0
- National Career Service
- Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme
- Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana

Source: PIB

Senior Able Citizens for Re Employment in Dignity (SACRED) Portal

Why in News

- The portal '**Senior Able Citizens for Re Employment in Dignity (SACRED)**' has been developed by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.

Key Points

- The aim is to devise ways to ensure Senior Citizens live healthy, happy, empowered, dignified and self-reliant life.
- An IT portal to be developed to bring the employment seeker senior citizens and employment providers on one platform.
- Rs. 10 Cr would be provided for funding for the platform development along with maintenance grant of Rs. 2 Cr per year for 5 years.

Need:

- There has been a steady rise in the population of senior citizens in India.
- The number of elderly persons increased from 1.98 crore in 1951 to 7.6 crore in 2001 and 10.38 crore in 2011.
- As per the **Report of the Technical Group on Population Projections for India and States (2011-2036)** submitted to National Commission on Population, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare the population of senior citizens in India is projected as details given below: -

2011		2021		2026		2031		2036	
Population	%								
10.38	8.66	13.76	10.1	16.28	11.4	19.34	13.1	22.74	14.9

Note: More than 50% senior citizens are found active as per the **Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI), report 2020.**

Other Recent Initiatives:

- Elder Line (the first Pan-India toll-free helpline number (14567) for Senior Citizens)
- Seniorcare Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE) Portal (one-stop access of elderly care products and services by credible start-ups)

Source: PIB

Important News: World

Seychelles' Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB) programme launched in partnership with India

Why in News

- **Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB)** launched its programme in Seychelles on 4th October, 2021.
- TIWB is a joint initiative of the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and the **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**.
- **India** was chosen as the **Partner Administration** and has provided Tax Expert for this programme.

Key Points

- The focus of the programme will be on Transfer Pricing cases of tourism and financial services sectors.

Note: It is the 6th TIWB programme which India has supported by providing Tax Expert.

About Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB):

- TIWB was launched in July 2015 to strengthen developing countries' auditing capacity and multinationals' compliance worldwide.
- TIWB deploys qualified experts in developing countries across Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean to help build tax capacity in the areas of audit and criminal tax investigations.

Source: PIB

Pandora Papers Leak

Why in News

- The **International Consortium of International Journalists (ICIJ)** has come out with what is claimed to be a 2.94 terabyte data trove that exposes the offshore secrets of wealthy elites from more than 200 countries and territories.
- Pandora Papers are **11.9 million leaked files** from 14 global corporate services firms.
- There are at least **380 persons of Indian nationality** in the Pandora Papers including 60 prominent individuals and companies.

Key Points

- The investigation is based on a leak of confidential records of 14 offshore service providers that give professional services to wealthy individuals and corporations seeking to incorporate shell companies, trusts, foundations and other entities in low or no-tax jurisdictions.
- Further, the **Government of India** has directed that, investigations in cases of Pandora Papers leaks appearing in the media under the name 'PANDORA PAPERS' will be monitored through the Multi Agency Group, **headed by the Chairman, CBDT.**
- Earlier similar such leaks- **Panama Papers** and **Paradise Papers.**

Government's Initiatives:

Legislative Action:

- Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002
- The Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015
- The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016
- The Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017
- The Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018

Source: Indian Express

Landsat 9

Why in News

- **NASA** has launched an Earth observation satellite '**Landsat 9**' from Space Launch Complex-3E at Vandenberg Space Force Base on an Atlas V 401 launch vehicle.
- Landsat-9 is part of a joint mission by **NASA** and the **US Geological Survey.**

Key Points

- Landsat-9 is an advanced satellite, ninth in the series, which will monitor key natural and economic resources from orbit.
- Currently, NASA is operating the Landsat-7 and Landsat-8.

Note: NASA first launched Landsat in 1972 under the name of Earth Resources Technology Satellite (ERTS) which captured eight million images of the planet.

Source: India Today

Supreme Court introduces FASTER system

- In a big fillip to the fundamental rights of life, dignity and personal liberty, the Supreme Court of India has introduced “**Fast and Secured Transmission of Electronic Records**” (FASTER) system.
- It is proposed that the **e-authenticated copies** of the record of proceedings/orders, digitally signed by the authorised officer may be transmitted through this system.

Source: The Hindu

Important News: Ecology & Environment

Heli-Borne Survey for Ground Water Management in Arid Regions

Why in News

- The **Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** and **Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh** jointly inaugurated the **Heli-Borne Survey for Ground Water Management in Arid Regions**.

Key Points

- The **Central Ground Water Board, Ministry of Jal Shakti** and **CSIR-NGRI (National Geophysical Research Institute), Hyderabad** have signed agreement for use of advanced Heli-Borne geophysical survey and other scientific studies in parts of the States of **Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh** covering an area of 3.88 lac sq. km under the **Aquifer Mapping Programme**.
- The Heli-Borne Survey aims to conduct High resolution aquifer mapping using heliborne geophysical studies.

Outcome: The expected outcome includes selecting suitable sites for groundwater withdrawal and water conservation through artificial or managed aquifer recharge.

Phases:

- This survey will be carried out in **two phases**.
- Work for **Phase 1** has been sanctioned for 1.01 Lakh Sq.km in **Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat**.
- An area of 2.87 Lakh Sq.km will be covered under **Phase 2**.

Source: PIB

International Conference to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Protocol on Environmental Protection (Madrid protocol) of the Antarctic Treaty

Why in News

- **Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh** addressed the **International Conference to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Protocol on Environmental Protection (Madrid protocol) of the Antarctic Treaty.**
- The Conference was hosted by Spain.

Key Points

About Protocol on Environmental Protection (Madrid protocol):

- India signed the Antarctic Treaty on 19th August 1983 and soon thereafter received consultative status on 12th September 1983.
- The Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty was signed in Madrid on October 4, 1991.
- The Madrid Protocol was signed by India which came into force on 14th January, 1998.

Note: India has two active research stations; **Maitri** (commissioned in 1989) at Schirmacher Hills, and **Bharati** (commissioned in 2012) at Larsemann Hills in Antarctica.

- With **Himadri station** in Ny-Alesund, Svalbard, Arctic, India now belongs to the elite group of nations that have multiple research stations within the Polar Regions.

Source: PIB

Important News: Economy

Amazon's Astro Robot

Why in News

- Recently, Amazon launched a **home robot named 'Astro'**.
- However, civil society has highlighted the concerns of privacy issues of 24x7 surveillance.

Key Points

About Astro:

- The robot has cartoony-eyes on a tablet-like touchscreen and comes equipped with a periscope camera and microphone.
- Astro is basically a combination of the Echo Show and sophisticated Ring security camera integrated into one single device.
- The home robot is designed to take up tasks such as home monitoring, setting up routines and reminders, and can play music and TV shows while rolling around the house.

Issues Related to Privacy:

- Civil society is worried that the amount of data Amazon gets to fetch with the Astro, giving the company easy access to the household.

- There are concerns of stealing or hacking of the device.
- Due to this, the perpetrator can get access to the digital map that the robot creates of someone's home.

Source: Indian Express

SBI, Indian Navy launch NAV-eCash Card

Why in News

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** and **Indian Navy** launched SBI's **NAV-eCash Card** onboard the country's largest naval aircraft carrier **INS Vikramaditya**.

Key Points

- The Card will obviate the difficulties faced by personnel onboard in handling physical cash during deployment of the ship at high seas.
- The infrastructure at naval ships inhibits traditional payment solutions particularly when the ship is in high sea where there is no connectivity.
- NAV-eCash Card, with its dual-chip technology, will facilitate both online as well as offline transactions

Source: ET

NTPC REL signs first Green Term Loan agreement

Why in News

- **NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd (REL)** a 100 percent subsidiary of NTPC Ltd, has signed its **first Green Term Loan agreement** of Rs. 500 crores at a very competitive rate with a period of 15 years with **Bank of India**.

Key Points

- The Loan will be used for its 470 MW Solar Projects in Rajasthan & 200 MW Solar Project in Gujarat.
- A green loan is a type of loan instrument that enables borrowers to finance projects that have an environmental impact.

Source: ET

Defence

Union Minister of Home Affairs Amit Shah flags-off an All India Car Rally of NSG, 'Sudarshan Bharat Parikrama'

Why in News

- **Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah** flagged-off an **All India Car Rally of National Security Guard (NSG) 'Sudarshan Bharat Parikrama'**, from the historic Red Fort in Delhi on the occasion of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' organized as part of celebrations of 75th anniversary of the country's Independence.

- He also flagged-in the All India **Cycle Rallies** of the **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)**.

Key Points

- During its **7,500 kms long journey**, the NSG's car rally, which was flagged-off, will pass through important and historical places associated with the Freedom Movement and Freedom Fighters of the country and end on 30th October, 2021 at the Police Memorial in New Delhi.
- NSG's car rally will pass through **18 cities in 12 states** of the nation.

Source: ET

5th edition of Japan- India Maritime Bilateral Exercise 'JIMEX 2021'

Why in News

- The **5th edition of Japan- India Maritime Bilateral Exercise 'JIMEX 2021'**, between the **Indian Navy** and the **Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force**, commenced in the **Arabian Sea**.
- The exercise is being conducted from 06 to 08 October 2021.

Key Points

- JIMEX-2021 aims to develop common understanding of operational procedures and enhance inter-operability through conduct of a multitude of advanced exercises, across the entire spectrum of maritime operations.

Note:

- The JIMEX exercises commenced in January 2012 with special focus on maritime security cooperation.
- The last edition of JIMEX was conducted in September 2020.

Source: TOI

Russia successfully test-fires Zirkon hypersonic cruise missile from nuclear submarine for first time

Why in News

- According to the **Russian Defence Ministry, Russia** successfully test fired a Zirkon hypersonic cruise missile from a **nuclear submarine 'Severodvinsk'** for the first time.

Key Points

- The **Severodvinsk nuclear submarine** performed two launches of the Zircon cruise missile at mock targets in the Barents Sea.
- It first test-fired Zircon from the surface and then launched another missile from a submerged position in the White Sea.
- The Zircon missile would be capable of flying at nine times the speed of sound and have a range of 1,000 kilometres.

Source: newsonair

Exercise 'Mitra Shakti 2021'

Why in News

- The **8th edition of India-Sri Lanka bilateral Joint Military Exercise 'Mitra Shakti 2021'** commenced at the **Combat Training School Ampara in Sri Lanka**.
- The two week long exercise is being conducted from 4 to 15 October 2021.

Key Points

- The Indian Army contingent of 120 personnel of Infantry Battalion Group and a similar strength from a Battalion of the Sri Lankan Army are participating in the bilateral exercise.
- The aim of the exercise is to promote close relations between Armies of both countries and enhance inter-operability and sharing best practices in counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations.

Note: The 7th Edition of Exercise Mitra Shakti was conducted at Foreign Training Node, Pune, Maharashtra in 2019.

Source: The Hindu

New Appointments

E. R. Sheikh assumes charge as first Director General of the Ordnance Directorate

Why in News

- **E.R. Sheikh** assumed charge as first **Director General of the Ordnance Directorate (Co-ordination and Services)**.
- It is the successor organization of **Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)**.

Key Points

- E.R. Sheik was General Manager of the Ordnance Factory, Itarsi earlier.
- He is also the recipient of the **Ayudh Ratna Award, 2020**.

About Ordnance Factory Board (OFB):

- Ordnance Factory Board, consisting of the Indian Ordnance Factories, was an organisation, under the control of the department of defence production, Ministry of Defence, Government of India.
- Now this has been changed to **7 Defence Public Sector Units (DPSUs)** that are fully controlled and owned by the Ministry of Defence, Government of India

Source: PIB

Japan's Parliament elects Fumio Kishida as new prime minister

Why in News

- Japan's parliament elected former foreign minister Fumio Kishida as the new prime minister.

Key Points

- Fumio Kishida replaces Yoshihide Suga, who resigned with his Cabinet earlier.
- He has also presided over the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 29 September 2021.

Source: The Hindu

GC Murmu becomes external auditor of IAEA

Why in News

- **India's Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) GC Murmu** has been selected as the next external auditor of the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** for a six-year term.

Key Points

- GC Murmu assumed office as the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India on August 8, 2020.
- He also served as the **first Lt Governor** of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

About International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA):

- It is an international organization that seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.
- It was established as an autonomous organisation on 29 July 1957.
- Its headquarters is in Vienna, Austria.

Source: India Today

Ranks and Indices

India ranks 90th in Henley Passport Index 2021

- **Henley Passport Index 2021** has revealed the list of the world's most powerful passports and **India has been ranked 90th on it.**
- **India's passport got a visa-free score of 58**, which means Indian passport holders can visit 58 countries without a prior visa.
- India shares the rank with Tajikistan and Burkina Faso.

1st rank- Japan, Singapore (visa-free score 192)

2nd rank- Germany, South Korea (190)

3rd rank- Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain (189)

- **Iraq and Afghanistan** are the countries with the worst passports with visa-free score 28 and 26 respectively.

Note: India was ranked 85th in the January 2021's index', 84th in 2020 and 82nd in 2019.

Source: Indian Express

IIFL Wealth Hurun India Rich List 2021

- **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) Chairman Mukesh Ambani** continues to be **India's richest man** for the 10th straight year with a net worth of Rs 7,18,000 crore, according to the IIFL Wealth Hurun India Rich List 2021.
- **RIL** became the first company to cross \$200 billion market capitalisation.
- **RIL** has become the 57th most valuable firm in the world according to the **Hurun Global 500 Most Valuable Companies 2021**.

Top 3 Hurun India Rich List 2021:

1. Mukesh Ambani (Reliance Industries): ₹7,18,000 crore net worth
 2. Gautam Adani (Adani Group): ₹5,05,900 crore net worth
 3. Shiv Nadar (HCL): ₹2,36,600 crore net worth
- The Hurun Rich List indicated that India has a total of 237 billionaires, compared to 58 last year.
 - The report also suggested that the chemicals and software sectors added the largest number of new billionaires on the list while pharma remains at the top spot with 130 entrants on the rich list.

Source: India Today

Reports

NITI Aayog launches 'The State Nutrition Profiles' Report

Why in News

- **NITI Aayog**, in a joint effort with International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Indian Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS), UNICEF and Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) launched **'The State Nutrition Profiles' report for 19 States and Union Territories**.

Key Points

Findings of the Report:

- The **'State Nutrition Profiles' (SNPs)** give insights on nutrition outcomes, immediate and underlying determinants and interventions based on **National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-rounds 3, 4 and 5**.
- The reports highlight the best and worst performing districts, highest burden districts and top coverage districts of the country.
- The SNPs are based on the headcount-based analyses and use of data from NFHS-5 to provide evidence that helps identify priority districts and number of districts in the state with public health concern as per WHO guidelines.

About National Family Health Survey (NFHS):

- NFHS is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India.
- First NFHS (1992-93)
- Second NFHS (1998-99)
- Third NFHS (2005-06)

- Fourth NFHS (2015-16)
- Fifth NFHS (2018-19)

Source: PIB

‘The State of the World’s Children 2021’ report of UNICEF

Why in News

- **Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare** released UNICEF’s global flagship publication – **“The State of the World’s Children 2021; On My Mind: promoting, protecting and caring for children’s mental health”**.
- The report details the significant impact of COVID-19 pandemic on children’s mental health.

Key Points

Key Findings of the Report:

- The report has found that around **14 percent of 15 to 24-year-olds in India, or 1 in 7**, reported often feeling depressed.
- An estimated 13 percent of adolescents aged 10–19 is estimated to live with a diagnosed mental disorder.
- Even before the pandemic, psychosocial distress and poor mental health afflicted far too many children.
- Suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among 15- to 19-year-olds. Every year, almost 46,000 children between the ages of 10 and 19 end their own lives.

Source: PIB

NITI Aayog launches Report on ‘Best Practices in the Performance of District Hospitals’

Why in News

- **NITI Aayog** released a performance assessment report of district hospitals in India, titled **‘Best Practices in the Performance of District Hospitals’**.

Key Points

- The report is an outcome of collaboration with the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** and **WHO India**.
- This report is the **first-ever performance assessment** of district hospitals undertaken across the country.

Key Performance Indicators:

- The assessment framework covers 10 Key Performance Indicators across the domains of Structure and Output.
- A total of 707 district hospitals across all States and Union Territories participated in the performance assessment.
- The Health Management Information System (HMIS) data for the year 2017–18 has been used as the baseline for this exercise.

Categories: The framework classifies hospitals in three categories: Small Hospitals (less than or equal to 200 beds), Mid-sized Hospitals (between 201–300 beds) and Large Hospitals (more than 300 beds).

- Overall, 75 district hospitals across 24 States and Union Territories emerged as top performers.

Key Findings:

- A district hospital in India has on an **average 24 beds per 1 lakh population**, with **Bihar having the lowest average of 6 beds** and **Puducherry the highest of 222**.

Note: Indian Public Health Standards 2012 guidelines recommend district hospitals to maintain at least 22 beds per 1 lakh population.

- Only 27% of the total 707 districts assessed met the doctor-to-bed ratio of 29 doctors per 100 beds in a hospital.

Source: PIB

Awards and Honours

DRDO Dare to Dream 2.0 & Young Scientists awards

Why in News

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** felicitated the winners of ‘**Dare to Dream 2.0**’ Contest of Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO).
- He launched ‘**Dare to Dream 3.0**’ to promote innovators & startups and provide a platform for the young ignited minds in the country.
- He gave away **DRDO Young Scientists awards** for the year 2019.

Key Points

- **Dare to Dream** is DRDO's pan-India contest to promote Indian academicians, individuals and startups to develop emerging defence and aerospace technologies/systems.
- Three products/systems indigenously developed by DRDO were also handed over to the Armed Forces. These are:
 - **ARINC818 Video Processing and Switching Module**
 - **Sonar Performance Modelling System**
 - **Bund Blasting Device Mk-II**

Source: PIB

Benjamin List, David MacMillan win Chemistry Nobel Prize 2021 for mirror-image molecules

- German-born **Benjamin List** and Scotland-born **David MacMillan** have been awarded jointly the 2021 Nobel Prize in Chemistry "**for the development of asymmetric organocatalysis.**"

- Their **chemical toolkit** has been used for discovering new drugs and making molecules that can capture light in solar cells.

Source: newsonair

Yemeni humanitarian organization wins 2021 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award

Why in News

- The organisation named **Jeel Albena Association for Humanitarian Development**, founded in 2017 by Ameen Jubran, won the **2021 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award** for its unwavering support for displaced Yemenis.

Key Points

About UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award:

- The UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award honours individuals, groups or organizations to protect refugees, other displaced and stateless people.
- There have been over 60 global winners from different countries since the award was first established in 1954.

About United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

- UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, leads international action to protect people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution

Source: unhcr.org

2021 Nobel Prize for physics awarded to scientists from Japan, Germany, Italy

Why in News

- 2021 Nobel Prize for Physics is awarded with one half jointly to **Syukuro Manabe** and **Klaus Hasselmann** “For the physical modelling of Earth’s climate, quantifying variability and reliably predicting global warming”.
- And the other half to **Giorgio Parisi** “For the discovery of the interplay of disorder and fluctuations in physical systems from atomic to planetary scales”
- This is the first time **climate scientists** have been awarded the Physics Nobel.

Key Points

- **Syukuro Manabe** (Princeton University, USA) demonstrated how increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere lead to increased temperatures at the surface of the Earth.
- **Klaus Hasselmann** (Max Planck Institute for Meteorology, Germany) created a model that links together weather and climate, thus answering the question of why climate models can be reliable despite weather being changeable and chaotic.
- **Giorgio Parisi** (Sapienza University, Italy) discovered hidden patterns in disordered complex materials.

Source: newsonair

2021 Right Livelihood Award

Why in News

- **Delhi-based** environmental organisation '**Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment (LIFE)**' has received the **2021 Right Livelihood Award** for its “grassroots approach of empowering vulnerable communities to protect their livelihoods and claim their right to a clean environment.”
- The award is known as Sweden’s alternative Nobel Prize.

Key Points

- **Other awardees** include Cameroonian women rights activist **Marthe Wandou**, Russian environmental activist **Vladimir Slivyak**, and Canadian Indigenous rights defender **Freda Huson**.
- **Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment (LIFE)** was founded by lawyers Ritwick Dutta and Rahul Choudhary in 2005.

About Right Livelihood Award:

- It was established in 1980 by German-Swedish philanthropist Jakob von Uexkull, and is presented annually in early December

Source: HT

David Julius, Ardem Patapoutian win 2021 Nobel Prize in Medicine

Why in News

- **American scientists David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian** jointly won the **2021 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine** for their discoveries of **receptors for temperature and touch**.

Key Points

- Their findings “have allowed us to understand how heat, cold and mechanical force can initiate the nerve impulses that allow us to perceive and adapt to the world around us.”
- “This knowledge is being used to develop treatments for a wide range of disease conditions, including chronic pain.”

About Nobel Prize:

- Nobel Prizes were created and funded in the will of **Swedish** dynamite inventor and businessman **Alfred Nobel**.
- Nobel Prizes are awarded in the fields of **Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature, and Peace**.
- In 1968, Sveriges Riksbank established the Prize in **Economic Sciences** in Memory of Sir Alfred Nobel, founder of the Nobel Prize.

Source: Indian Express

VAYO NAMAN Programme and Vayoshreshtha Samman-2021

Why in News

- The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** organised VAYO NAMAN Programme on the occasion of **International Day of Older Persons** at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

- In this programme, the **Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu** presented **Vayoshreshtha Samman-2021 to senior citizens.**

Key Points

International Day of Older Persons:

- The International Day of Older Persons is observed on **October 1 each year.**

Background:

- On 14 December 1990, the **United Nations General Assembly** designated October 1 as the International Day of Older Persons.
- The **2021 theme “Digital Equity for All Ages”** affirms the need for access and meaningful participation in the digital world by older persons.

Source: PIB

Obituaries

Actors Arvind Trivedi, Ghanashyam Nayak passes away

- Veteran actor **Arvind Trivedi**, who played the role of Ravan in Ramanand Sagar’s 1987 iconic TV series Ramayan, passed away at the age of 82.
- **Ghanashyam Nayak** was famously known for playing the role of Natwarlal Prabhashankar Undhaiwala AKA Nattu Kaka in Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah.

Source: Indian Express

Important Days

October 8, Indian Air Force Day

Why in News

- Indian Air Force Day is celebrated on October 8, every year in the country.

Key Points

History:

- Indian Air Force (IAF) was established in the country on October 8, 1932, by the British Empire.
- The first operational squadron came into being in April 1933.
- The Air Force in India was officially raised in 1932 as the supporting force of the Royal Air Force of the United Kingdom.

Note:

- IAF is ranked the fourth largest operational air force in the world. Only the US, China and Russia are ahead of India.

Facts about Indian Air Force:

- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Founded:** 8 October 1932
- **Motto:** Nabhaḥ Spṛsam Dīptam (Touch the Sky with Glory)

- **Commander-in-Chief:** President Ram Nath Kovind
- **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS):** General Bipin Rawat
- **Chief of the Air Staff:** Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari

Source: India Today

World Space Week 2021

Why in News

- **World Space Week** is held annually from **4 to 10 October** to celebrate the scientific and technological advancements.

Key Points

- The **theme** for World Space week 2021 is '**Women in Space**'.

History:

- The **United Nations General Assembly** declared in 1999 that World Space Week will be held each year from October 4-10.

These dates commemorate two events:

- **October 4, 1957:** Launch of the first human-made Earth satellite, Sputnik 1
- **October 10, 1967:** The signing of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

Source: worldspaceweek.org

October 02, International Day of Non-Violence

Why in News

- International Day of Non-Violence is observed on October 2nd, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi.

Key Points

- International Day of Non-Violence was established on 15 June 2007 according to the United Nations General Assembly resolution.
- The year 2021 marks the 152nd birth anniversary of Gandhi, who was born on October 2, 1869, in Porbandar, Gujarat.

In India:

- The country observes his birth anniversary as Gandhi Jayanti, which is one of three national holidays, Republic Day (January 26) and Independence Day (August 15) being the other two.

Source: un.org

Books and Authors

Indra Nooyi's memoir "My Life in Full: Work, Family and Our Future"

- **Indra Nooyi, the former Chairperson and CEO of PepsiCo**, has penned her memoir titled 'My Life in Full: Work, Family, and our Future'.
- In her memoir, Indra Nooyi describes events that shaped her life from childhood to her becoming PepsiCo CEO, a position from which she retired in 2018.
- Indra Nooyi was honoured with Padam Bhushan in 2007.

Source: HT

Sports

FC Goa clinch maiden Durand Cup football trophy

- **FC Goa (Football Club Goa)** claimed their maiden Durand Cup football title after a 1-0 win over Mohammedan Sporting Club in the final in Kolkata.
- The Durand Cup crown also marks FC Goa coach Juan Ferrando Fenoll's first-ever trophy on Indian soil.
- FC Goa got 40 lakh rupees for winning the title, while Mohammedan Sporting received 20 lakh rupees.

Source: newsonair

Nagaland to host 56th National Cross Country Championship in January 2022

Why in News

- **Nagaland Athletics Association** will host the 56th National Cross Country Championship on 15th of January 2022.

Key Points

- It will be hosted under the sponsorship of the Athletics Federation of India.

Note: Chandigarh Athletics Association hosted the 55th National Cross Country Championship in February 2021.

Source: newsonair

Sania Mirza-Shuai Zhang wins Ostrava Open women's doubles title 2021

- **India's Tennis veteran, Sania Mirza** won the Women's Doubles Title at the Ostrava Open 2021 with her Chinese partner Shuai Zhang in Ostrava, Czech Republic.
- This is the first title of this season for Sania Mirza and the 43rd title of her career.
- Ostrava Open is a tournament organized for women tennis players.

Source: newsonair