

# Monthly Current Affairs, April 2021

## State PSC Exams

## Important News: State

### 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.

### ‘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.

## Uttar Pradesh government approves scheme offering affordable rental housing for urban migrants and poor

- The Uttar Pradesh government will start the **Affordable Rental Housing and Complexes (ARHC) scheme** for poor people living in cities and a proposal to this effect was approved by the state cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- **About ARHC scheme:** It has been launched by the government of India through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs under the 'self-reliant India' campaign.
- **Note:** The scheme will be implemented under **two models** in the state.
- **Model one** involves converting vacant houses funded by the central or state government into an ARHC through an agreement.
- Under the **second model**, ARHC will be built, operated and maintained by public/private entities on their available vacant land.

## 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 Khori 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.
- **Facts about Rajasthan:**
  - **Governor:** Kalraj Mishra
  - **Capital:** Jaipur
  - **Chief Minister:** Ashok Gehlot

### 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.
- **About Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) Yojana:** It was launched by the Government of India to increase the income of farmers and provide sources for irrigation and de-dieselising the agricultural sector.
- The scheme was launched by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) in 2019 for setting up solar pumps and other new power plants across the country.



## Rs 110 crore ROPAX Jetty Project to come up on river Dhamra in Odisha

- Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways has accorded administrative approval for sanction of Rs 50.30 crore for developing all-weather ROPAX (Roll-on/Roll-off Passenger) Jetty and allied infrastructure connecting **Kaninali in Bhadrak district & Talachua in Kendrapara district, Odisha** under the **Sagarmala initiative**.
- The Government of Odisha will fund another 50% cost of the project.



- This project will reduce travel time for passengers from 6 hours by road to 1 hour by waterway.
- Kaninali in Bhadrak district and Talachua in Kendrapada district, are located on the northern and southern banks of **River Dhamra** respectively.
- The project will facilitate indirect employment opportunities to locals around Dhamra River and reduce road distance of ~200 km from Talachua to Dhamra.

## Ladakh Ignited Minds: A Centre of Excellence and Wellness (An Indian Army initiative in partnership with HPCL)



- As part of the Indian Army's sustained initiative to secure a better future for Ladakhi youth, the Leh based Corps of Indian Army, signed an MoU with corporate partner **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)** and executing agency **National Integrity and Educational Development Organisation, (NIEDO)** at Leh.

- The project Ladakh Ignited Minds: A Centre of Excellence and Wellness has been conceptualized to secure a better future for the youth of UT of Ladakh and is a full-time residential program to mentor and guide them for a period of twelve months for entrance examinations of various Medical and Engineering Colleges spread across in India.
- The program under the aegis of Indian Army will be executed by Kanpur based NGO, National Integrity & Educational Development Organisation (NIEDO). Army would oversee the overall operations to include administration and logistics with requisite funding support through Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL).



- **Facts about Ladakh:**  
**Union territory established:** 31 October 2019  
**Capital** Leh, Kargil  
**Lieutenant Governor:** Radha Krishna Mathur

### 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 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

## Important News: India

### MoU signed towards execution of planned actions in time bound manner in 132 cities under National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)



- In the presence of Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Prakash Javadekar the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by representatives of State Pollution Control Boards, Urban Local Bodies and Institutes of Repute for 132 identified cities for implementation of city specific action plans under National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).
- **A National Knowledge Network** comprising leading air quality specialists has also been constituted as a technical advisory group to support activities under NCAP.
- **About National Clean Air Programme (NCAP):** It is a long-term, time-bound, national level strategy to tackle air pollution problem across the country in a comprehensive manner with targets to achieve 20% to 30% reduction in Particulate Matter concentrations by 2024 (with 2017 as base year).

### 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 Pratisthan (VSP), in collaboration with the Ministry of AYUSH, has successfully organized 'Ayurveda Parav' in Bhubaneswar from 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> 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.

## The Road Transport and Highways Ministry published the draft rules regarding concession in motor vehicle tax against scrapped vehicles



Under the draft rules, people will get 25 percent concession on the purchase of personal vehicles with vehicle scrapping certificate while on the purchase of commercial vehicles, the tax relief will be 15 percent.

- In case of personal vehicles, the tax concessions will be available up to 8 years while for

commercial vehicles, it will be up to 15 years.

- The rules are proposed to come into force from October 01, 2021.
- **Note:** Recently, Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari announced the “**Vehicle Scrapping Policy**”.

## Atal Innovation Mission launches 'AIM-PRIME', in partnership with BMGF & Venture Center

### AIM Program for Researchers in Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Your gateway to deep technology, knowledge intensive entrepreneurship.



Initiative of



Implemented by



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- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog launched **AIM-PRIME (Program for Researchers on Innovations, Market-Readiness & Entrepreneurship)**, an initiative to promote and support science-based deep-tech startups & ventures across India.
- In this regard, AIM has joined hands with **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)** to launch this nationwide program which will be implemented by **Venture Center** - a non-profit technology business incubator.
- The first cohort of the program is open to technology developers (tech start ups/scientists/ engineers/ clinicians) with strong science-based deep tech business ideas.
- **About Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):** It is a flagship initiative set up by the NITI Aayog to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and was setup in 2016.



## Ministry of Labour & Employment set up Expert Committees for suggesting standards under the OSH & WC Code, 2020



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MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

- The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH & WC) Code, 2020 has been enacted after amalgamating thirteen different labour legislations and to simplify the laws regulating the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions in establishments.
- The Expert Committees for Factories and Dock Works are constituted under

**Chairmanship of Dr. R. K. Elangovan**, DG, DGFASLI, Mumbai.

- The other two Expert Committees for the Building & Other Construction Works and the Fire Safety are constituted under **Chairmanship of Shri P.L.N. Murthy**, VP & Head Domestic Operations, L&T Hydrocarbon, Chennai and **Shri D. K. Shami**, Fire Advisor to the Government of India, MHA respectively.

## Labour Bureau launches two of the five All-India Surveys



- The **five surveys** are the All-India Survey of Migrant Workers, All-India Survey on Domestic Workers, All-India Survey on Employment generated in Transport Sector, All-India Survey of Employment Generated by Professionals and All-India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey (AQEES).
- 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)**.
- **Note:** The Labour Bureau is being aided by **Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Limited**, a Government of India Enterprise under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to provide the IT support.

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

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### **Jal Jeevan Mission deploys first-of-its-kind sensor-based IoT devices to monitor rural drinking water supply systems**

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti has decided to take the digital route to use sensor-based IoT devices to effectively monitor the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in more than six lakh villages.
- For this, National Jal Jeevan Mission in collaboration with Tata Community Initiatives Trust (TCIT) and Tata Trusts recently completed pilot projects in several remote villages of five States i.e. Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Himachal Pradesh.
- **The Internet of Things (IoT)** based remote monitoring provides near real-time information without any manual intervention by using sensors.
- **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.

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### **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

**Headquarters:** New Delhi

**Parent agency:** Ministry of Tribal Affairs

**Managing Director:** Pravir Krishna

### Harsh Vardhan, Union Health & Family Welfare Minister approves the “National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021”

- The Rare Diseases Policy aims to lower the high cost of treatment for rare diseases with increased focus on indigenous research with the help of a National Consortium to be set up with the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare as convenor.
- The policy also envisages creation of a **national hospital based registry** of rare diseases.
- A provision for financial support up to **20 lakhs under the Umbrella Scheme of Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi** is proposed for treatment of those rare diseases that require a one-time treatment (diseases listed under Group 1 in the rare disease policy).
- Beneficiaries for such financial assistance would not be limited to BPL families, but the benefit will be extended to about 40% of the population, who are eligible under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.

### 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.
- **Note:** 70 FPOs of Beekeeper/honey producers, including 65 by NABARD & others and 5 by NAFED in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan & West Bengal, have been formed.
- **Honey production** has increased from 76,150 MTs (2013-14) to 1,20,000 MTs (2019-20).



- **Export of honey** has increased from 28378.42 MTs (2013-14) to 59536.74 MTs (2019-20).
- **About NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd.):** It 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.

### Minister of State for Education addresses at consultation meeting of Education Ministers of E9 countries

- Minister of State for Education, Shri Sanjay Dhotre addressed at the consultation meeting of Education Ministers of E9 countries on **E9 initiative: Scaling up digital learning to accelerate progress towards SDG4** on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.
- The initiative aims to accelerate recovery and advance the **SDG4 (Sustainable Development Goal 4)** agenda by driving rapid change in education systems in three of the 2020 Global Education Meeting priorities: **(i) support to teachers; (ii) investment in skills; and (iii) narrowing of the digital divide.**
- **About E9:** The E9 is a forum of nine countries, which was formed to achieve the goals of **UNESCO's Education for All (EFA)**
- The “E” stands for education and the “9” represents the following **nine countries:** Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan.
- The E9 Initiative was launched in 1993 at the EFA Summit in New Delhi, India.

### 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)**, ‘Anamaya’ 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 Mukta 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.

## Supreme Court-appointed committee submits report on farm laws

- The three-member committee appointed by the Supreme Court has submitted its report on farm laws.
- **Note:** On January 12, 2021, the Supreme Court stayed the implementation of the three farm laws and 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 members of the committee:** Noted agricultural economist Ashok Gulati, Anil Ghanwat of the Shetkari Sanghatana, Pramod Kumar Joshi of the International Food Policy Research Institute and former Rajya Sabha member Bhupinder Singh Mann.
- **Note:** The 4<sup>th</sup> member, Bhupinder Singh Mann who is also the national president of the Bhartiya Kisan Union, stepped down from the committee.
- **3 Farm laws are:**
- The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020
- Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020
- Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020

## '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



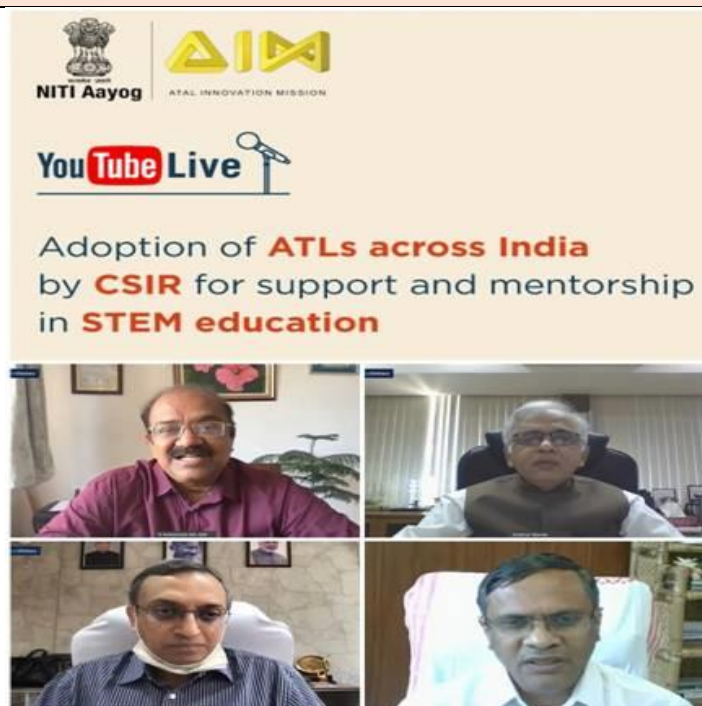
- **Government of India** will soon roll out a Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (**ULPIN**) system in the country allotting distinct IDs for each land parcel.
- Pilot testing has been successfully carried out in 11 States namely Bihar, Haryana, Jharkhand, Odisha, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, 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.
- **Note:** Government of India, in 2008-09, had launched **Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)** - erstwhile National Land Records Modernization Programme to digitize and modernize land records and develop a transparent and **Integrated Land Information Management System (ILIMS)** in the country.

## 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.
- **Facts about NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog:**
  - Formed:** 1 January 2015
  - Headquarters:** New Delhi
  - Chairperson:** Narendra Modi
  - Vice Chairperson:** Rajiv Kumar
  - CEO:** Amitabh Kant

## 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.
- **The key features** of the enhanced version, India Energy Dashboards Version 2.0, are: The IED provides time series data from FY 2005-06 until FY 2019-20, IED provides data at sub-yearly frequencies as well.
- API linked data from Saubhagya, UJALA, PRAAPTI, and Vidyut PRAVAH has been incorporated in the portal.
- **Note:** NITI Aayog launched the **India Energy Dashboards Version 1.0** in May 2017.

### 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.

### The National Regulator grants permission for restricted use in emergency situations to Sputnik-V vaccine



- **The National Regulator, Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI)** approved Russian Covid-19 vaccine Sputnik V for restricted use in emergency situations in India.
- Hyderabad-based M/s Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Ltd. had applied for the grant of permission to import and market Gam-COVID-Vac combined vector vaccine, popularly called Sputnik-V, developed by M/s Gamaleya Institute, Russia.
- **Note:** Two vaccines have been approved for Emergency Use Authorisation by the DCGI. These are "Covishield" manufactured by Serum Institute of India and "Covaxin" manufactured by Bharat Biotech International.

### 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.



Theme of April: Ante Natal Care

- Content for the repository was sourced from the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare and Women and Child Development and developmental organizations.
- **Note:** The portal highlights the “Theme of the Month” (in line with the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare and Women and Child Development guidelines to promote key topics) and the “Most Downloaded Media” (as a way to learn about the materials that are most preferred by audiences).

### 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’.



- The 'Aahaar Kranti' movement is designed to address the peculiar problem being faced by India and the world- hunger and diseases in abundance.
- **Note:** On this occasion, a monthly (English and Hindi) newsletter 'Aahaar Kranti' has also been launched, which is being published by Vigyan Prasar.

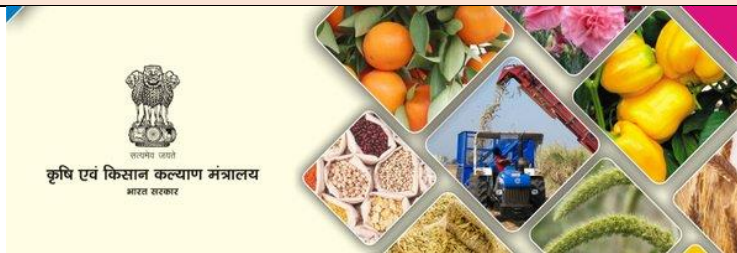
### Microsoft India and Ministry of Agriculture signed an MoU to develop rural areas



- Microsoft has come forward to start a pilot project in selected **100 villages in 10 districts of 6 states (Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Andhra Pradesh)** to develop farmer interface for smart and well-organized agriculture, including post-harvest management and distribution.
- For this project, Microsoft has joined in with its local partner, CropData.
- This project will reduce the input costs for farmers and make farming easy.
- The government aims to increase the income of farmers by removing the bottleneck of inconsistent information. A major initiative, in this regard, is the creation of **Agri-Funds based on the National Farmers Database.**
- **Note:** Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar recently launched a 'National Nursery Portal' developed by the National Horticulture Board to connect nursery operators with consumers.



## 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**.
- The Summit 2021 is planned to be essentially participatory and consultative and needs the game changing ideas from the experiences through the National, Sub-national (State) and independent consultation for the **five Action Tracks** related to **safe and nutritious food, sustainable consumption patterns, nature-positive production, advance equitable livelihoods, and resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress.**

## Shri Piyush Goyal chairs the first meeting of National Startup Advisory Council



- Minister of Railways, Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food & Public Distribution Shri Piyush Goyal chaired the first meeting of National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC).
- In his inaugural address, Shri Goyal said that this council shall act as the guiding light for many budding startup entrepreneurs in India.
- The Minister said that it is our collective responsibility to realise the objectives of 'Startup India: The Way Ahead', which was launched by the Prime Minister in January 2021.
- **About National Startup Advisory Council:** The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) had constituted the National Startup Advisory Council to advise the Government on measures

needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country to drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities.

### “Hydrogen Economy – New Delhi Dialogue 2021”



- **The Energy Forum (TEF and the Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI)**, under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, has organized a Hydrogen Roundtable titled “Hydrogen Economy New Delhi Dialogue-2021” recently in April 2021.
- Union Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan addressed the Hydrogen Economy- New Delhi Dialogue.
- **The objective of the Roundtable** is to understand the progress of the Hydrogen ecosystem across continents and contribute to creating synchrony among the think tanks, Governments and the industry to join forces for developing innovative and sustainable technologies at attractive costs.
- **Note:** India will spend \$200 million over the next 5 to 7 years to promote the use of hydrogen.
- The Government of India recently announced the **National Hydrogen Mission** in the Union Budget 2021 for making a hydrogen roadmap for the country. Work is going on a pilot project on **Blue Hydrogen, Hydrogen CNG (H-CNG) and Green Hydrogen**.

### Ministry of Tourism signs MoUs with Online Travel Companies to strengthen hospitality and tourism industry



- The Ministry of Tourism signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Online Travel Companies- Cleartrip and Ease My Trip**.
- **The primary objective** of this MoU is to provide extensive visibility to accommodation units which have self-certified themselves on **SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for the Hospitality Industry) on the OTA platform (Online travel agencies)**.
- The MoU also outlines both parties to encourage Units to register on **NIDHI (National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry)** and thereby

on **SAATHI** and encourage local tourism Industry with appropriate safeguards for curbing spread of COVID-19.

## New Regulatory Regime for 8 Medical Items under Drugs and Cosmetics Act



- The Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare had earlier notified the following medical items to be regulated under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act which was to come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 (under Medical Devices Rules 2017): **All Implantable Medical Devices; CT scan equipment; MRI equipment; Defibrillators; PET Equipment; Dialysis Machine; X-Ray Machine; and Bone marrow cell separator.**
- Accordingly, as per order the importers/manufacturers are required to take import/manufacturing licence from Central Licencing Authority or State Licencing Authority, as the case may be, for import/manufacture of above devices, w.e.f. 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021.
- Transition time of 6 months allowed for ensuring supply chain continuity and access while implementing their regulatory order under Medical Devices Rules (2017).

## Dr. Harsh Vardhan addresses the Next Gen Health Summit 'Re-Imagine Healthcare'



- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare addressed the Next Gen Health Summit 'Re-Imagine Healthcare', organized by the **IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry.**
- He focused on Ayushman Bharat program, Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centres, Fit India Movement, Swachh Bharat, Eat Right India programs.
- **About IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry:** Indian Merchants' Chamber is an organization of India, representing interests of Indian trade, commerce, and industry. It was organized originally during the days of the

British Raj to promote trade, commerce, and industry by Indian entrepreneurs.

**Founded:** 7 September 1907

**Headquarters:** Mumbai

- **Note:** Dr. Harsh Vardhan also addressed the **5<sup>th</sup> Global Forum on TB Vaccine**.

The Global Forum on TB Vaccines is the world's largest gathering of stakeholders striving to develop and deploy new vaccines to prevent Tuberculosis (TB).

### 551 PSA Oxygen Generation Plants to be set up in public health facilities across the country through PM CARES



- In line with Prime Minister's direction of boosting availability of oxygen to hospitals, the PM CARES Fund has given in-principle approval for allocation of funds for installation of 551 dedicated **Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) Medical Oxygen Generation Plants** inside public health facilities in the country.
- These dedicated plants will be established in identified Government hospitals in district headquarters in various States/UTs.
- The procurement will be done through the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Note:** The PM CARES Fund had earlier this year allocated Rs.201.58 crores for installation of additional 162 dedicated Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) Medical Oxygen Generation Plants inside public health facilities in the country.

### 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.
- To increase awareness about the usage of FOSS in governance and Government functioning, and adoption of FOSS, a virtual roundtable discussion '**Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in Government**' was organized by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in collaboration with Omidyar Network India**.
- **Note:** India is well positioned to become a vibrant hub for Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) innovations, due to the large number of 4G data subscribers in India, 96% of whom access the digital world via open-source based mobile operating systems (primarily Android).
- Some of India's largest-government projects (including Aadhaar) and many technology start-ups have also been built using FOSS.
- Acknowledging the huge potential of FOSS, the Government of India had issued a **Policy on Adoption of Open Source Software in 2015**.

### India's Organic food products exports rise by more than 50 percent in 2020-21 despite COVID-19 challenges



- India's export of Organic food products rose by 51% in terms of value (USD Million), to USD 1040 million (Rs 7078 crores) during financial year 2020-21 compared to the previous fiscal (2019-20).
- In terms of quantity, the exports of organic food products grew by 39% to 888,179 metric tonne (MT) during FY 2020-21 compared to 638,998 MT shipped in 2019-20.
- Oil cake meal has been a major commodity of the organic product exports from the country followed by oil seeds, fruit pulps and purees, cereals & millets, spices & condiments, tea, medicinal plant products, dry fruits, sugar, pulses, coffee, essential Oil etc.
- India's organic products have been exported to 58 countries including USA, European Union, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, Switzerland, Israel, South Korea.
- **Note:** Organic products are currently exported from India only if they are produced, processed, packed and labelled as per the requirements of the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP).
- The NPOP has been implemented by APEDA since its inception in 2001 as notified under the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulations) Act, 1992.

## Cabinet approves agreement between the India and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters

- The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the signing and ratification of an Agreement between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters.



- **Impact:** The Agreement will help in the availability of relevant information for the prevention and investigation of Customs offences. The Agreement is also expected to facilitate trade and ensure efficient clearance of goods traded between the countries.
- **Background:** The Agreement would provide a legal framework for sharing of information and intelligence between the Customs authorities of the two countries and help in the proper application of Customs laws, prevention and investigation of Customs offences and the facilitation of legitimate trade.

## High quality online Yoga training programmes offered by the Ayush Ministry's Yoga Institute



- The quality online Yoga training programmes offered by the **Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY)** under the Ministry of Ayush, which are health-promotive and anxiety-relieving, provide useful support to the common people to balance their daily lives in the changed scenario.

- Since the Common Yoga Protocol (CYP) is considered among the best Yoga course for beginners, much of the current training programmes of MDNIY are devoted to CYP.
- The MDNIY presently streams Common Yoga Protocol (CYP) training programmes on their social media platforms on a daily basis.
- The elementary training course is called the “**Yoga Volunteer Training (YVT) Course**”, since this course, apart from imparting Yoga learning, also gives the learner an opportunity to be endorsed as a “**Yoga Volunteer**”.

### 1 Lakh Portable Oxygen Concentrators to be procured from PM CARES fund



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sanctioned the procurement of 1 Lakh Portable Oxygen Concentrators from the PM CARES Fund.
- The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to discuss the measures needed to improve Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) Supply for COVID management.
- In addition to the earlier sanctioned 713 PSA plants under PM CARES Fund, 500 new Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) oxygen plants have been sanctioned under PM CARES Fund.
- These 500 PSA plants will be established with transfer of the indigenous technology developed by **DRDO and CSIR** to the domestic manufacturers.

## Important News: World

### S Jaishankar attends Heart of Asia conference in Tajikistan



- During his three-day bilateral visit to Tajikistan, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar attended the **9th Ministerial Conference of Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process (HoA-IP)** on Afghanistan in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on March 30, 2021.
- Jaishankar asserted that for a durable peace in Afghanistan, every stakeholder should work towards genuine 'double peace' mechanism, which includes peace both within and around Afghanistan.



- **Note:** The 9th Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process ministerial conference is part of the Istanbul Process - a regional initiative on security and cooperation for a stable and peaceful Afghanistan - that was launched on November 2, 2011, in Turkey.
- India co-hosted the 6th Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference in Amritsar, Punjab in December 2016.
- **Facts about Tajikistan:**  
**Capital:** Dushanbe  
**Currency:** Tajikistani somoni  
**President:** Emomali Rahmon

### MOS Telecom Shri Sanjay Dhotre represents India at the World Summit on Information Society Forum 2021



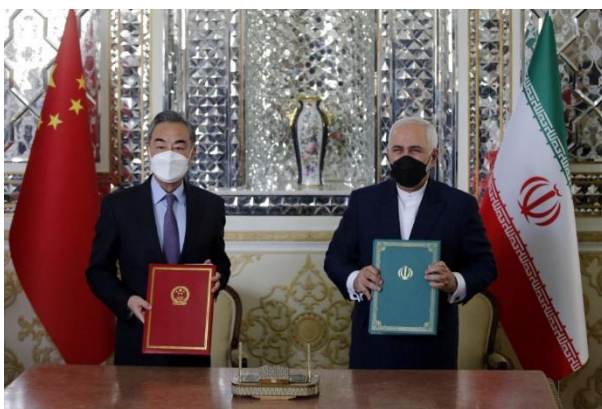
- The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2021 represents one of the world's largest annual gathering of the 'ICT for development'



community, is co-organized by International Telecommunications Union (ITU), UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD.

- Shri Dhotre underscored the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for modernization and transformation of the industry, promotion of inclusive economic growth and stimulation of the national economies to meet the larger objectives of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Note:** The 2021 WSIS Forum will provide an opportunity to serve as a platform to track the achievements of WSIS Action Lines in collaboration with the UN Agencies involved and provide information and analyses of the implementation of WSIS Action Lines since 2005.

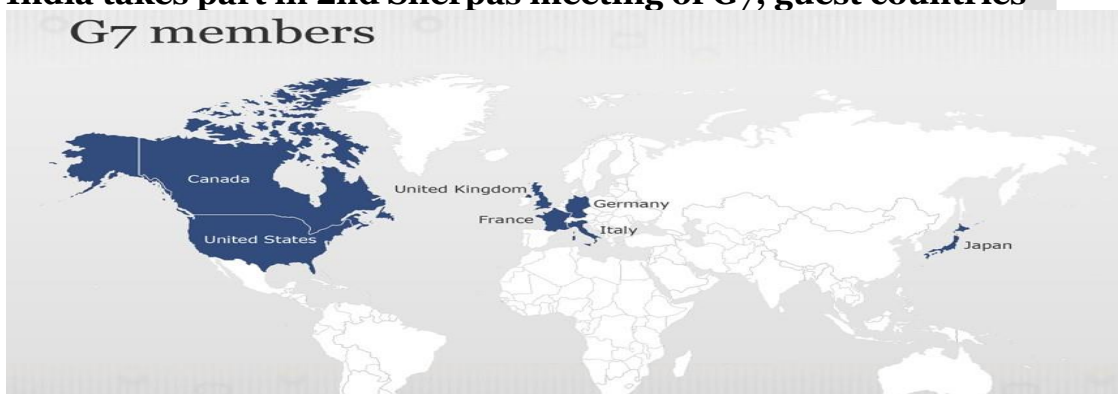
### Iran, China sign a 25-Year 'Strategic Cooperation Pact'



- Iran and China signed a 25-year "Strategic Cooperation Pact" in the latest expansion of Beijing's flagship trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative.
- China is Iran's leading trade partner and was one of the biggest buyers of Iranian oil.
- The agreement, signed in Tehran by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi.
- **Note:** Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said that the pact had first been proposed during a visit to Tehran by Chinese President Xi Jinping in January 2016.

#### 1. India takes part in 2nd Sherpas meeting of G7, guest countries

G7 members



- 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:** The heads of government of the member states, as well as the representatives of the European Union, meet at the annual G7 Summit.
- **Founded:** 1975
- **Members:** United Kingdom, United States, Japan, France, Germany, Canada, Italy.

**Foreign Ministers of BIMSTEC grouping finalised a major Master plan for transport connectivity for the Bay of Bengal region**

# BIMSTEC



- On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar virtually addressed the 17th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting held from Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- The meeting also endorsed **three MoUs/agreements** relating to convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal matters, cooperation between diplomatic and training academies and establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility in Colombo.



**Note:** The study conducted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in 2007 and 2014, identified 166 connectivity projects at an estimated cost of USD 50 billion out of which 65 projects were identified as priority projects.

- **About BIMSTEC** (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation):

**Headquarters:**

Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Founded:** 6 June

1997

**Member:** Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand

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**Headquarters:** Dhaka, Bangladesh  
**Founded:** 6 June 1997  
**Member:** Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand

### 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.



## India-Netherlands Virtual Summit



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Netherlands held a Virtual Summit on 9 April 2021.
- The two Prime Ministers agreed on instituting a '**Strategic Partnership on Water**' to further deepen the Indo-Dutch cooperation in the water related sector, and upgrading the Joint Working Group on water to Ministerial-level.



The leaders also exchanged views on regional and global challenges such as climate change, terrorism and Covid-19 pandemic and agreed to leverage the emerging convergences in new areas like Indo-Pacific Supply Chains and Global Digital Governance.

- **Facts about Netherlands:**

**Capital:** Amsterdam

**Currency:** Euro

**Prime Minister:** Mark Rutte

1. **India-Seychelles high level virtual event**



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in a high level virtual event with the President of the Republic of Seychelles Wavel Ramkalawan on April 8, 2021 to inaugurate a range of Indian projects in Seychelles.
- **Indian projects in Seychelles:**
  - A) Joint e-inauguration of the new Magistrates' Court Building in Seychelles;
  - B) Handing over of a Fast Patrol Vessel to Seychelles Coast Guard;
  - C) Handing over of a 1 MW Solar Power Plant;
  - D) Inauguration of 10 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs).
- **Note:** Seychelles occupies a central place in the Prime Minister's vision of 'SAGAR' - 'Security and Growth for All in the Region'.



- Seychelles was the First African country to receive the Made in India COVID-19 vaccines.
- **Facts about Seychelles:**  
**Capital:** Victoria  
**President:** Wavel Ramkalawan  
**Currency:** Seychellois rupee

### 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**".
- **Note: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar** stressed on South-South cooperation, humanitarian assistance, disaster resistance in the virtual meeting of Raisina Dialogue 2021.
- **About the Raisina Dialogue:** It is India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics, held annually since 2016.

### USA announces withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan



- US President Joe Biden has formally announced his decision to withdraw American troops from Afghanistan before September 11, 2021, the 20th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre.

- **Note:** The U.S. and its NATO allies had signed a deal with the Taliban in February 2020 to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan if the Taliban met certain preconditions.
- **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.
- **Facts about Afghanistan:**
  - President:** Ashraf Ghani
  - Capital:** Kabul
  - Currency:** Afghan afghani

### 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’



- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH India on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety signed an agreement on Technical Cooperation titled '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.
- The project, aimed at enhancing practices to prevent plastic entering the marine environment, will be undertaken at the national level, select states (**Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands**) and in the cities of **Kanpur, Kochi and Port Blair** for a period of three and a half years.
- This project will support the **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban's** implementation with special focus on preventing plastic litter entering the rivers and water bodies at source.
- **Note:** It is estimated that 15-20% of all plastics are entering oceans via rivers of which 90% are contributed by 10 of the world's most polluting rivers. Two of these river systems are located in India, namely Ganga and Brahmaputra.

### 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

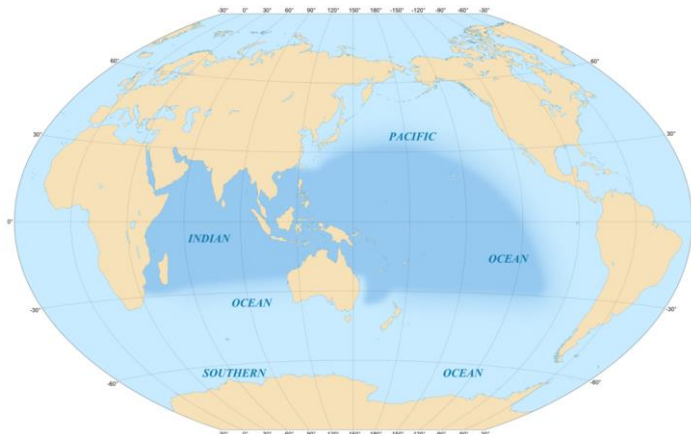


- Singapore has become the first country to complete the official process for ratification of the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** agreement.
- **Note: RCEP agreement** was signed by all 10 ASEAN members and key partners including China, South Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand 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.
- All participating countries are targeting to bring the agreement into force on January 1, 2022.
- **About Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP):** It is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between the ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) and its five FTA partners (Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea).

## Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative: Australia announces Rs 8.12 crore grant under its partnership with India

- As India and Australia increase engagement under the Indo-Pacific vision, Australia has announced an Rs 8.12 crore grant under the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).
- To apply for the grant, the company or organization should be located in either India or Australia and have partners in either of the 2 countries. Up to \$350,00 is anticipated to be available for allocation in 2020-21. All applications will be assessed on a competitive basis.





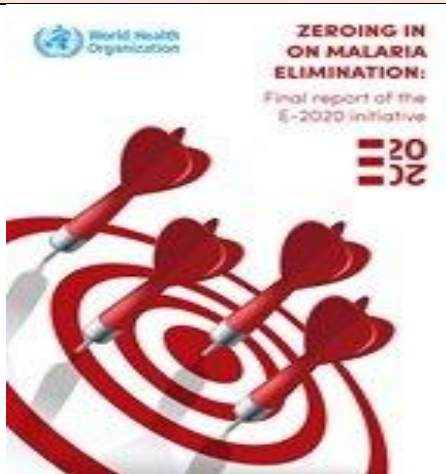
- **Note:** The Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative was proposed by PM Narendra Modi at the East-Asia Summit in November 2019.
- In June 2020, after the virtual summit of Indian and Australian PMs, foreign ministers of both countries, Marise Payne and S Jaishankar, signed a joint declaration on "Shared Vision for Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific."
- **Facts about Australia:**  
**Capital:** Canberra  
**Currency:** Australian dollar  
**Prime Minister:** Scott Morrison

### 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, 25<sup>th</sup> April is observed as ‘World Malaria Day’.
- This year’s theme for the day is “Reaching the Zero Malaria target.”
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has

been among the 18 Global leaders who endorsed the Malaria Elimination roadmap of Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance at the East Asia Summit held in Malaysia in 2015. It was then that the alliance leadership set the goal of ensuring that the Region becomes free of malaria by 2030.

- Government’s efforts have resulted in 84.5% reduction in malaria cases and 83.6% reduction in deaths in 2020 compared to 2015.
- In 2020, as many as 116 districts in the Country reported zero malaria cases.

## Australia-India-Japan Trade Ministers’ Joint Statement on launch of Supply Chain Resilience initiative



- The Trade Ministers of India, Japan and Australia formally launched the Supply Chain Resilience initiative in a Trilateral Ministerial Meeting held virtually on 27.04.2021.
- Mr. Dan Tehan, Australia’s Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Piyush Goyal, India’s Minister for Commerce and Industry, and Mr. Kajiyama Hiroshi, Japan’s Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry held a Ministerial videoconference.
- The Ministers launched the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI). The Ministers instructed their officials to implement the following as initial projects of SCRI and further develop the Initiative: (i) sharing of best practices on supply chain resilience; and (ii) holding investment promotion events and

buyer-seller matching events to provide opportunities for stakeholders to explore the possibility of diversification of their supply chains.

- The Ministers decided to convene at least once a year to provide guidance to the implementation of the SCRI as well as to consult on how to develop the Initiative.

### **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.

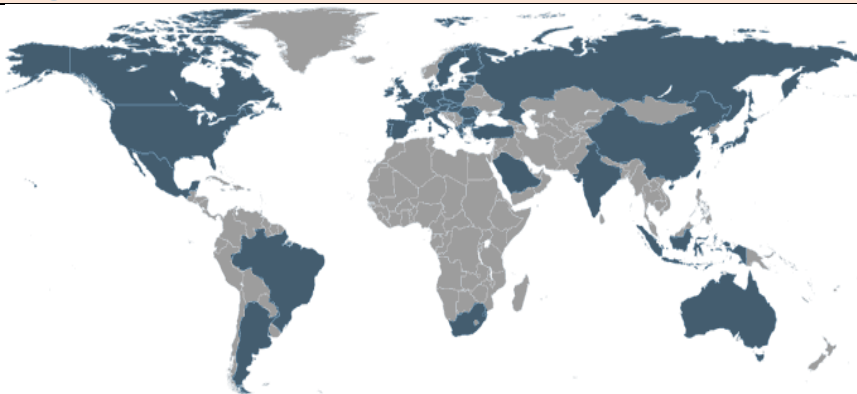
## Important News: Economy

### 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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.
- The G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors discussed Updates of the G20 Action Plan in response to COVID-19.
- 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.

### Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman participated in 103rd meeting Development Committee Meeting of World Bank-IMF



- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the 103rd Meeting of the Development Committee Plenary via video conferencing on 09 April, 2021.
- **The main agenda of the meeting was:** World Bank Group (WBG) and International Monetary Fund Support for Debt Relief Under the Common Framework and Beyond;
- COVID-19 pandemic: World Bank Group Support for Fair and Affordable Access to Vaccines by Developing Countries;
- From COVID-19 Crisis Response to Resilient Recovery – Saving Lives and Livelihoods while Supporting Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development.
- **Note:** Smt. Sitharaman shared that the Indian Government has announced Aatma Nirbhar Packages of Rs 27.1 trillion, amounting to more than 13% of the GDP.
- **Facts about World Bank:**

**Headquarters:** Washington, D.C., U. S.

**Founded:** July 1944

**President:** David Malpass

**MD and CFO:** Anshula Kant

**Membership:** 189 countries (IBRD), 173 countries (IDA)

- **Facts about IMF (International Monetary Fund):**

**Managing Director:** Kristalina Georgieva

**Headquarters:** Washington, D.C., U.S

**Chief Economist:** Gita Gopinath

**Formation:** December 1945

**Membership:** 190 countries

## 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
  - Increase in Income
  - Shielding Against Wrong Practice
  - Ease of Processes

### 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 (25<sup>th</sup> Governor)

## Important News: Defense

### Indian Army formally closes down Military Farms



- Military Farms were set up with the sole requirement of supplying hygienic cow's milk to troops billeted in various garrisons across British India.
- After 132 years of glorious service to the nation, curtains were drawn on this organisation.
- After independence Military Farms flourished with 30,000 heads of cattle in 130 Military Farms all over India in varied Agro-climatic conditions.
- **Note:** First Military farm was raised on 01 Feb 1889 at Allahabad.
- Military Farms were even established in Leh and Kargil in the late 1990s.

### 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.

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### 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.

### DRDO develops Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard naval ships from missile attack

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed an Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard the naval ships against enemy missile attack.

- Defence Laboratory Jodhpur (DLJ), a DRDO laboratory, has indigenously developed three variants of this critical technology namely Short Range Chaff Rocket (SRCR), Medium Range Chaff Rocket (MRCR) and Long Range Chaff Rocket (LRCR) meeting Indian Navy's qualitative requirements.
- Chaff is a passive expendable electronic countermeasure technology used worldwide to protect naval ships from enemy's radar and Radio Frequency missile seekers.

### 8<sup>th</sup> 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.
- **Facts about Kyrgyzstan:**  
**Capital:** Bishkek  
**President:** Sadyr Japarov  
**Currency:** Kyrgyzstani som

### INAS 323 commissioned at Goa as first unit of indigenously built ALH Mk III aircraft enters Naval Service

- **Indian Naval Air Squadron (INAS) 323**, the first unit of the indigenously built ALH Mk III aircraft, was commissioned into the Indian Navy at **INS Hansa, Goa** on 19 Apr 21.
- The squadron will operate three state-of-the-art ALH Mk III, a multirole helicopter with Shakti engine manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).



- The Mk III version of the ALH has an all glass cockpit and will be used for Search and Rescue, Special Operations and Coastal Surveillance.
- INAS 323 is commanded by Cdr Samik Nundy, an accomplished and experienced ALH pilot with extensive operational experience.

### **Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise 'VARUNA-2021'**



- The 19th edition of the Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise 'VARUNA-2021' is scheduled to be conducted in the Arabian Sea from 25th to 27th April 2021.
- The three day exercise will see high tempo-naval operations at sea, including advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises, intense fixed and rotary wing flying operations, tactical manoeuvres, surface and anti-air weapon firings, underway replenishment and other maritime security operations.
- On completion of exercise VARUNA-21, to consolidate accrued best practices and enhance interoperability, Indian Navy's guided missile frigate INS Tarkash will continue to exercise with the French Navy's Carrier Strike Group (CSG) from 28th April to 1st May 2021.
- VARUNA-21 highlights growing bonhomie and showcases increased levels of synergy, coordination and inter-operability between the two friendly navies. These interactions further underscore the shared values as partner navies, in ensuring freedom of seas and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order.

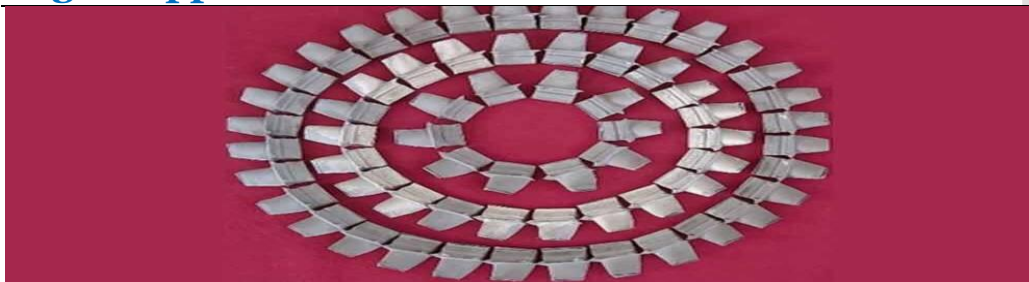


## Project DANTAK completes 60 years in Bhutan



- 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.
- Identifying the utmost importance of connectivity in spurring the socio-economic development and growth of Bhutan, DANTAK was tasked to construct the pioneering motorable roads in the Kingdom. DANTAK completed the road connecting Samdrup Jongkhar to Trashigang in 1968. In the same year, Thimphu was connected to Phuentsholing by DANTAK.
- **Facts about Bhutan:**  
**Capital:** Thimphu  
**Currency:** Bhutanese ngultrum  
**King:** Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck  
**Prime Minister:** Lotay Tshering

## DRDO develops Single Crystal Blades for helicopter engine application



- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed single crystal blades technology and supplied 60 of these blades to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) as part of their indigenous helicopter development program for helicopter engine application.
- It is part of a program taken up by Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory (DMRL), a premium laboratory of DRDO, to develop five sets (300 in number) of single crystal high pressure turbine (HPT) blades using a nickel-based super alloy. The supply of the remaining four sets will be completed in due course.
- Helicopters used in strategic and defence applications need compact and powerful aero-engines for their reliable operation at extreme conditions. To achieve this, state-of-the-art Single Crystal Blades having complex shape and



geometry, manufactured out of Nickel based superalloys capable of withstanding high temperatures of operation are used.

- **Note:** Very few countries in the world such as the **USA, UK, France and Russia** have the capability to design and manufacture such Single Crystal (SX) components.

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## Science and Technology

### 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.

### Novel technique for tracking solar eruptions that disrupt space weather to be used in India's first solar mission

- Research led by Mr. Ritesh Patel, Dr. Vaibhav Pant, and Prof. Dipankar Banerjee from **Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES)**, Nainital, an autonomous institute under **DST, Government of India**, along with their collaborators from Royal Observatory of Belgium, have led to the development of an algorithm, **CMEs Identification in Inner Solar Corona (CIISCO)** to detect and track the accelerating solar eruption in the lower corona.
- CIISCO has been successfully tested on several eruptions observed by space observatories, including Solar Dynamics Observatory and Solar-Terrestrial Relations Observatory, PROBA2/SWAP launched by NASA and ESA, respectively.
- **Note:** Software named **Computer Aided CME Tracking Software (CACTus)** based on a computer vision algorithm was so far used to detect and characterise such eruptions automatically in the outer corona.
- As **India's first solar mission, Aditya-L1**, will be observing this region of the solar corona, implementation of CIISCO on the Aditya-L1 data will provide new insight into the CME properties in this less explored region.

## 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.

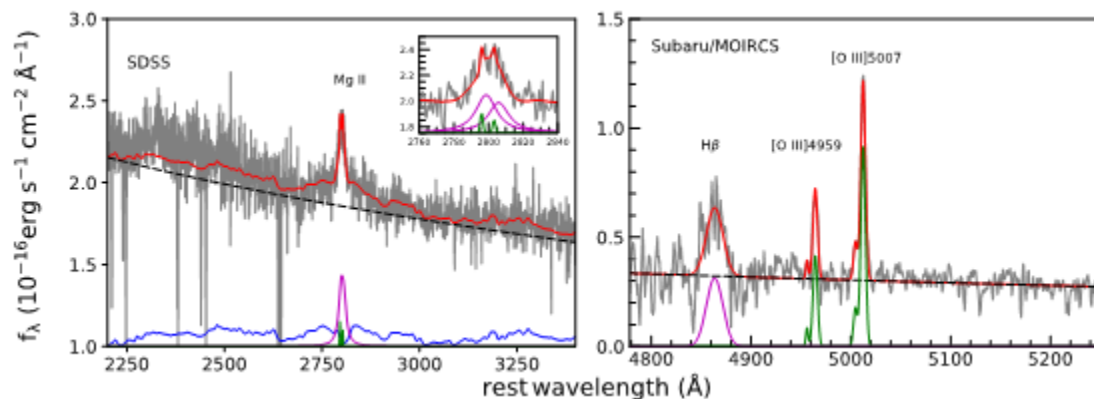
## Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal launched NanoSniffer, the world's first Microsensor-based Explosive Trace Detector (ETD)



- 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.
- Scientists from ARIES, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, in collaboration with researchers from other institutions, studied around 25,000 luminous Active galactic nuclei (AGN) from the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS), a major optical imaging and spectroscopic survey of astronomical objects in-operation for the last 20 years and found a unique object that emits high-energy gamma rays located at a high redshift (more than 1).
- They identified it as a gamma-ray emitting NLS1 galaxy, which is a rare entity in space.
- For the research, the scientists used one of the largest ground-based telescopes in the world, the 8.2 m Subaru Telescope located at Hawaii, USA.
- The new gamma-ray emitting NLS1 was formed when the Universe was only about 4.7 billion years old as compared to its current age of about 13.8 billion years.

### 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.

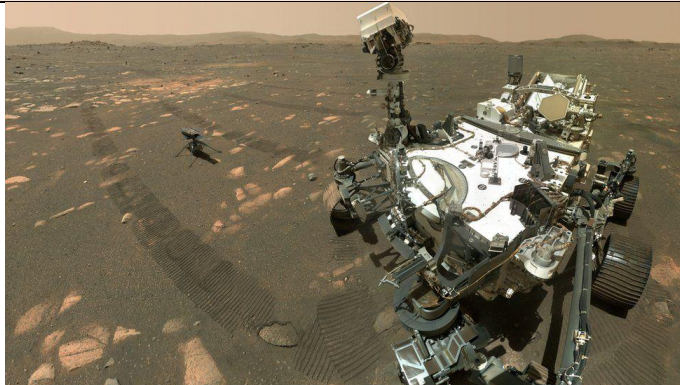


- **About NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration):** It is an independent agency of the U.S. Federal Government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and space research.

**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 O<sub>2</sub> per hour.

### Community service centre to make data from India's first solar space mission accessible for analysis



- A community service centre has been set up to bring all data on board **India's first dedicated solar space mission** to a single web-based interface enabling the users to quickly look at the data and identify the interesting science cases.

- The service centre called **Aditya-L1 Support Cell (AL1SC)**, a joint effort of **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** and **Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES)** an autonomous institute of the **Department of Science & Technology**, Government of India will be used by the guest observers in analyzing science data and preparing science observing proposals.
- **AL1SC** set up at the transit campus of **ARIES** at Haldwani, Uttarakhand, will jointly work with **ISRO** to maximize utilization of science data from **Aditya-L1** and facilitate India's first dedicated solar space mission- Aditya-L1.
- The centre will also provide the co-aligned data from other observatories around the world that can complement the data obtained from Aditya-L1 allowing users to accomplish the science goals beyond the capabilities of the Aditya-L1.

### 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).

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## Award and Honours

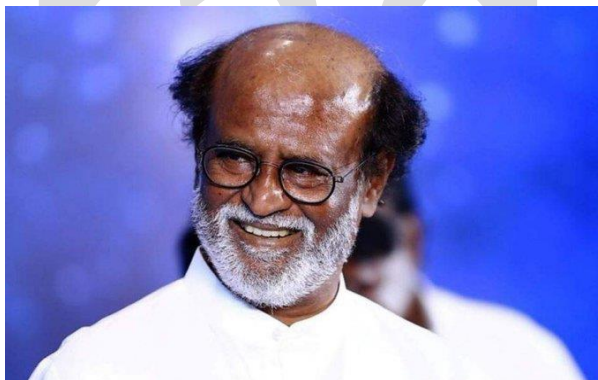
### Marathi writer Dr Sharankumar Limbale to receive Saraswati Samman 2020



- Noted Marathi writer Dr Sharankumar Limbale will receive Saraswati Samman, 2020 for his book **Sanatan**.
- Limbale's Sanatan has been published in 2018. Sanatan is an important social and historical document

of dalit struggle.

- **About Saraswati Samman:** It, instituted by K K Birla Foundation in 1991, is recognised as the most prestigious and highest literary award in the country.
- The award carries fifteen lakh rupees, a citation and a plaque.



### 2. Rajinikanth to be honoured with 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award

- Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shri Prakash Javadekar announced the recipient of the 51<sup>st</sup> Dadasaheb Phalke Award.

- The award for 2019 will be conferred to legendary actor Shri Rajinikanth.
- It will be presented on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, along with the National Film Awards.
- **Note:** Debuted in Apoorva Raagangal (1975), **Rajinikanth** is an Indian actor who works primarily in Tamil cinema. He was also honored with the Padma Vibhushan (2016) by the Government of India.
- **Facts about Dadasaheb Phalke Award:**  
**First winner:** Devika Rani  
**Most recent winner:** Amitabh Bachchan (2018)  
**Established:** 1969  
**Category of:** National Film Awards

### Dutee Chand to receive Chhattisgarh Veerni Award



- Dutee Chand, the Jakarta Asian Games silver-medalist in 100 and 200 meters.



200 metres, will receive Chhattisgarh Veerni Award.

- Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the inaugural edition of the awards ceremony will be held virtually on April 14, 2021.
- In 2019, the Odisha sprinter Dutee Chand became the first Indian woman to win a gold medal at the World University Games held in Italy.
- **Chhattisgarh Veerni Award**, instituted by the Chhattisgarh state government, recognises contribution of Indian women in different fields, including sports.

## Union Minister of Education presents AICTE Lilavati Awards 2020 on women empowerment



- Union Minister of Education Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' presented the AICTE Lilavati Awards 2020 on women empowerment to the winners in New Delhi.
- Mr Pokhriyal welcomed the initiative of **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** for instituting the Lilawati Awards and stressed that such innovative steps shall be a great motivation for girls to join higher education.
- **Based on the theme 'Women Empowerment', AICTE** finalized the winners from a total of 456 entries who competed across **6 sub themes**, which include, **Women's Health, Self-Defense, Sanitation and Hygiene, Literacy, Women Entrepreneurship, and Legal Awareness.**
- **LIST OF AWARDEES:**

Sub theme	Name of Team	Name of Institute
Women Entrepreneurship	SWEAT (Sona Women Entrepreneurship and Training)	Sona College of Technology, Tamil Nadu
Sanitation and Hygiene	SKBCOP ECO Club	Smt. Kishoritai Bhoyar College of Pharmacy, Mararashtra
Literacy	Digital Literacy	Bharatiya Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University) Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development, Pune
Women's Health	WIT Women Health Coalition	Walchand Institute of Technology, Maharashtra

Legal Awareness	Radiant Seetha	Thiagarajar Polytechnic College, Tamil Nadu
Self Defense	Paritrana	St. Joseph's College of Engineering, Tamil Nadu

## BAFTA Awards 2021: Nomadland wins 4 prizes



- 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.
- **Note:** The Film '**Nomadland**' directed by Chloe Zhao, won **4 BAFTA** awards, including Best Film, Best Director, Best Cinematography and Best Leading Actress.
- **Main Winners of BAFTA Awards 2021:**

Award	Winner
Best film	Nomadland
Outstanding British film	Promising Young Woman
Leading actress	Frances McDormand (Nomadland)
Leading actor	Anthony Hopkins (The Father)
Supporting actress	Yuh Jung Youn (Minari)
Supporting actor	Daniel Kaluuya (Judas and the Black Messiah)
Director	Chloé Zhao (Nomadland)
EE Rising Star Award	Bukky Bakray
Outstanding debut by a British writer, director or producer	His House
Film not in the English language	Another Round
Documentary	My Octopus Teacher
Cinematography	Nomadland
Original Screenplay	Promising Young Woman
Adapted Screenplay	The Father
British short film	The Present
Outstanding British	Noel Clarke

contribution to cinema	
Bafta Fellowship	Ang Lee

## Oscar-winning producer Guneet Monga receives second highest civilian French honour



- Oscar-winning producer Guneet Monga, known for films like "The Lunchbox" and "Masaan", 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.
- Monga was given the award for her contribution to world cinema through her Indo-French productions and her relentless work towards women empowerment.

## Roberto Benigni to receive Venice Film Festival's Lifetime Achievement award



- Oscar-winning Italian director-actor Roberto Benigni will receive this year's **Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement** of the **78th Venice International Film Festival**, which runs September 1- 11, 2021.
- The director is best known for his Holocaust drama "Life is Beautiful". The 1997 film fetched him the best actor and best international film Oscars.

"The Future of India lies in its villages"  
-Mahatma Gandhi



### 1. Prime Minister confers National Panchayati Awards 2021

**About National Panchayati Raj Day:** It is the national day of Panchayati Raj System in India celebrated by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on **24 April annually**.

- Then Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh declared the

first National Panchayati Raj Day on 24 April 2010.

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred the National Panchayat Awards 2021** on the occasion of National Panchayati Raj day.
- **The Awards were given under various categories including** the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar (to 224 Panchayats), Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar (to 30 Gram Panchayats), Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award (to 29 Gram Panchayats), Child-friendly Gram Panchayat Award (to 30 Gram Panchayats) and e-Panchayat Puraskar (to 12 States).
- The Award money ranging from 5 to 50 lakh rupees was transferred electronically to the awardee Panchayats.

### Rumana Sinha Sehgal awarded 'Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021'



- Rumana Sinha Sehgal, Software-engineer turned social entrepreneur from Hyderabad, has been awarded the prestigious 'Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021' by the Diplomatic Mission Global Peace.
- 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 is also the recipient of the Nationwide Award -under 50- Business Leader 2021 for social entrepreneurship by Business Mint.
- At the Influencer Summit in January this year, she also received the 'International Influencer of the year 2021'.
- She has won the ReX Karmaveer Chakra (silver) and Global Fellowship award 2019 for her work in the zone of women and child empowerment.
- She was also crowned the 'Mrs Universe Successful 2018'.

### 93rd Academy Awards (Oscar award 2021)

- The 93rd Academy Awards ceremony, presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), honored the best films of 2020 and early 2021. It took place in Los Angeles on April 25, 2021.
- **Note:** Nomadland won three awards. The film won Best Picture, Best Actress for Frances McDormand and Best Director for Chloe Zhao. Chloe is the second woman to win this year in the Academy's 93 years of giving awards.
- In the 'In Memoriam' section of the 93rd Academy Awards, actor Irrfan Khan and costume designer Bhanu Athaiya were honoured. The two legends passed away in 2020.





• **Main Winners of 93rd Academy Awards:**

Award	Winner
Best Picture	Nomadland
Best Director	Chloe Zhao (Nomadland)
Best Actress	Frances McDormand (Nomadland)
Best Actor	Anthony Hopkins (The Father)
Best Supporting Actress	Youn Yuh-jung (Minari)
Best Supporting Actor	Daniel Kaluuya (Judas And The Black Messiah)
Best Original Screenplay	Promising Young Woman
Best Adapted Screenplay	The Father
Best Animated Feature Film	Soul
Best International Feature Film	Another Round
Best Original Score	Soul
Best Original Song	Fight For You (Judas And The Black Messiah)
Best Documentary Feature	My Octopus Teacher
Best Sound	Sound of Metal
Best Cinematography	Mank
Best Film Editing	Sound of Metal
Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award	Tyler Perry

**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'.



- This award was given by the '**WILD ELEMENTS Foundation**' brings together a coalition of innovators, advocates and partners to disrupt the status quo and identify solutions to global sustainability and conservation.
- The Foundation's distinctive approach to addressing climate change is the "Power of Three," recognising the interconnectedness of animal kind, humankind, and plant kind for the future planetary wellness of our shared home.

gradeup

## New Appointments

### SAIL chairperson Soma Mondal is new chairperson of SCOPE



- Soma Mondal, chairperson of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), was elected the new chairperson of the **SCOPE (Standing Conference of Public Enterprises)**.
- Mondal will have a two-year term starting April; she took charge of SAIL chairperson

on January 1, 2021.

- **About SCOPE (Standing Conference of Public Enterprises):** It is an apex professional organization representing the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). It promotes excellence in organisations where public investment is involved, in order to enable them to be globally competitive.

### Mukhmeet S Bhatia takes over the charge of Director General of ESIC



- Shri Bhatia is an IAS Officer of 1990 batch of Jharkhand cadre.
- **Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)** is a statutory and autonomous Body under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

**Industry: Insurance**

**Founded: 24 February 1952**

**Headquarters: New Delhi**

3. **Former RBI Governor Urjit Patel appointed Additional**

**Director of Britannia**



- The Board of Britannia Industries has appointed former Reserve Bank Governor Urjit Patel as the company's Additional Director in the category of Non-Executive and Independent Director.
- **Note:** He was the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) during September 2016-December 2018.
- **About Britannia Industries Limited:** It is an Indian food and beverage company.  
**CEO:** Varun Berry  
**Headquarters:** Bengaluru  
**Founded:** 1892

### Jeff Bezos tops Forbes' billionaire list; Mukesh Ambani is no. 10

- Forbes has released its 35th annual World's Billionaires List 2021.
- **Jeff Bezos** is the world's richest person for the fourth year running, worth \$177 billion.
- **Mukesh Ambani** of India has become the richest person in Asia, ranked No. 10.
- The number of billionaires on Forbes' 35th annual list of the world's wealthiest has increased to 2755. Altogether they are worth \$13.1 trillion.
- **India** has **the third highest number of billionaires with 140** in the world after the U.S. (724) and China (698).

Rank	Name	Wealth	Company
1	Jeff Bezos	\$177 billion	Amazon
2	Elon Musk	\$ 151 billion	Tesla, SpaceX
3	Bernard Arnault	\$ 150 billion	LVMH
10	Mukesh Ambani	\$ 84.5 billion	Reliance Industries

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## TAFE chief Mallika Srinivasan named chairperson of PESB

- Mallika Srinivasan, Chairman and Managing Director of Tractors and Farm Equipment (TAFE) Ltd, has been named chairperson of the **Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB)**.
- This is for the first time a private sector specialist has been appointed the head of the PESB, which is responsible for making appointments to top posts in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).

## Justice N V Ramana appointed as 48th Chief Justice of India

- President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed Justice N V Ramana as the 48th Chief Justice of India, accepting the recommendation made by the outgoing CJI S A Bobde.
- Justice Ramana will take oath on April 24, 2021.
- Ramana will serve as the 48th Chief Justice of India till August 26, 2022.
- Before his elevation to the Supreme Court on February 17th, 2014, Justice Ramana was the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court.

## QCI chief Adil Zainulbhai appointed chairman of Capacity Building Commission

- According to a Personnel Ministry order issued, former Quality Council of India (QCI) Chief Adil Zainulbhai has been appointed as the chairperson of Capacity Building Commission, while Ramaswami Balasubramaniam has been appointed as member (HR) and Praveen Pardeshi as a member (administration).
- **Note:** The government approved Capacity Building Commission under the **National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB)**, also known as '**Mission Karmayogi**', to train civil servants at all levels.

## Chintan Vaishnav appointed as new Mission Director for Atal Innovation Mission

- Acclaimed socio-technologist Dr Chintan Vaishnav has been appointed as the new Mission Director for Atal Innovation Mission (AIM).
- He will replace Ramanathan Ramanan, who had been leading AIM as its first Mission Director since June 2017.
- Dr Vaishnav is moving from his present assignment at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA, to head AIM.
- **About Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):** It is a flagship initiative set up by the NITI Aayog to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and was set up in 2016.

## Nguyen Xuan Phuc sworn in as Vietnam's president: Pham Minh Chinh as Prime Minister

- Nguyen Xuan Phuc has been formally sworn in as president in the Vietnamese capital, Hanoi.
- Nguyen Xuan Phuc, of Communist Party of Vietnam, was Vietnam's prime minister for the last five years.
- Vietnam's National Assembly confirmed Pham Minh Chinh of Communist Party of Vietnam, a career security official, as the Southeast Asian country's next Prime Minister.
- **Facts about Vietnam:**  
**Capital:** Hanoi  
**Currency:** Vietnamese dong

## S Ramann appointed as SIDBI Chairman & MD

- The government has appointed S Ramann as Chairman and Managing Director of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).
- The appointment is for a period of three years from the date of his assuming the charge or until further orders.
- Ramann, a 1991 batch Indian Audit & Accounts Service officer, is currently the CEO of National E-Governance Services Ltd, India's first Information Utility.
- **Facts about SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India):** It is the apex regulatory agency in India for Microfinance Institutions and is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.  
**Founded:** 2 April 1990  
**Headquarters:** Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

## Sushil Chandra appointed as the Chief Election Commissioner



- President Ram Nath Kovind appointed Sushil Chandra, the senior-most Election Commissioner, as the Chief Election Commissioner in the Election Commission of India (ECI).
- Sushil Chandra will assume the charge of office of the Chief Election Commissioner with effect from the 13th April, 2021 vice Shri

Sunil Arora consequent upon his demitting the Office of the Chief Election Commissioner on the 12th April, 2021.

- A 1980 batch Indian Revenue Service Officer, Mr. Chandra took office as an Election Commissioner on February 15, 2019 after retiring as the chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes.

## Punjab appoints Sonu Sood as brand ambassador of COVID Vaccination Programme



- Actor Sonu Sood has been made the brand ambassador for Punjab's COVID Vaccination Programme.
- During the nationwide coronavirus-induced lockdown last year, the actor, known for playing the antagonist in films, had helped thousands of migrant workers stranded across the country reach their home states.
- **Note:** Sonu Sood presented to the Punjab Chief Minister his book "I am no Messiah".
- **Facts about Punjab:**  
**Capital:** Chandigarh  
**Governor:** V P Singh Badnore  
**Chief Minister:** Captain Amarinder Singh

## Russian President signs law letting him run for president of Russia again



- Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a law letting him to hold office for two additional six-year terms, giving himself the possibility to stay in power until 2036.
- Vladimir Putin is a Russian politician and former intelligence officer who is serving as the current president of Russia since 2012.
- He was also prime minister from 1999 to 2000 and again from 2008 to 2012.
- Putin was first elected president in 2000 and served two consecutive four-year terms.
- Putin completes his ongoing 4<sup>th</sup> term as President in 2024.
- **Facts about Russia:**  
**President:** Vladimir Putin  
**Capital:** Moscow  
**Currency:** Russian Ruble

## NCAER appoints World Bank's economist Poonam Gupta as Director General



- National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) appointed the World Bank's lead economist Poonam Gupta as its next Director General.
- Gupta, the first woman Director General of NCAER, will succeed Shekhar Shah who has led NCAER since 2011 and will complete his second five-year term in early May 2021.



- **Facts about National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER):**  
**President:** Nandan Nilekani  
**Headquarters:** New Delhi  
**Founded:** 1956

### Siddharth Singh Longjam appointed as Director General of NADA

- IAS officer Siddharth Singh Longjam will take over as the National Anti-Doping Agency's Director General (NADA).



- Longjam is currently serving as joint secretary in the sports ministry and is also the CEO of the currently suspended National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL).
- He will replace Navin Agarwal.
- **Facts about National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA):** It is the national organisation responsible for promoting, coordinating, and monitoring the doping control program in sports in all its forms in India.  
**Headquarters:** New Delhi  
**Founded:** 24 November 2005

### Haiti Prime Minister Joseph Jouthe resigns



- Joseph Jouthe has served as the Prime Minister since March 2020.
- President nominated **Claude Joseph as Haiti's new Prime Minister.**
- **Note:** Haiti has seen eight Prime Ministers since 2015.
- **Facts about Haiti:**  
**Capital:** Port-au-Prince  
**President:** Jovenel Moïse  
**Currency:** Haitian gourde

## Miguel Díaz-Canel to succeed Raúl Castro as the President of Cuba



- Miguel Díaz-Canel will succeed Raúl Castro as the Cuban Communist Party's first secretary, the most powerful position on the island.
- He is the first person without the surname Castro to run Cuba since the 1959 revolution.
- He will now hold Cuba's two most important positions, head of the party and president of the state.
- Eighty nine years old Castro had been in the post since 2011, when he took over from his older brother, Fidel Castro.
- **Facts about Cuba:**



**Capital:** Havana

**Continent:** North America

**Currency:** Cuban peso (CUP)

## India's CAG GC Murmu selected as external auditor of OPCW



- Hague-based Conference of State Parties of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) selected the India's Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) GC Murmu as its external auditor for a three-year term starting 2021.

• India was also selected as the member of the executive council of the OPCW representing Asia group for another two-year term during the OPCW conference of state parties.

- **About Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW):** It is an intergovernmental organisation and the implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention.  
**Headquarters:** The Hague, Netherlands  
**Founded:** 29 April 1997  
**Director General:** Fernando Arias  
**Membership:** 193 member states

### **Rekha Menon becomes first woman chairperson of NASSCOM**



- Rekha M. Menon, chairperson and senior managing director at Accenture India, was appointed as the chairperson of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) for 2021-22.
- In the 30-year history of

NASSCOM, she became the first woman to head the IT industry's apex body.

- **About National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM):** It is an Indian non-governmental trade association and advocacy group focused mainly on Information Technology and Business Process Outsourcing industry. Established in 1988, NASSCOM is a non-profit organization.

### **Justice Rajesh Bindal appointed acting Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court**



- The President of India in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 223 of the Constitution of India, appointed Shri Justice Rajesh Bindal, senior-most Judge of Calcutta High Court, to perform the duties of the office of the Chief Justice of that High Court with effect from 29th April, 2021 following the retirement of Shri Justice Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan, Chief Justice, Calcutta High Court.

## **Central Government appoints Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth as a Director on the Central Board of RBI**



- The Central Government has appointed Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India as a Director on the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India.
- A 1987-batch Karnataka cadre IAS officer, Seth assumed charge of the Department of Economic Affairs in April 16, 2021.
- Seth replaces Tarun Bajaj, who was appointed as Revenue Secretary.

## **Secretary, DoE in Finance Ministry T V Somanathan designated as new Finance Secretary**



- IAS Officer T V Somanathan who is serving as Secretary, Department of Expenditure (DoE) in the Finance Ministry has been designated as the Finance Secretary.
- He is a 1987 batch IAS Officer of Tamil Nadu Cadre.



## Reports and Indices

### 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.
- 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.

### World Development Report 2021



- The **World Bank** recently released the **World Development Report 2021: Data for Better Lives**.
- The latest edition of the World Development Report provides a blueprint on how to harness the power of data for development, to ensure no one is left behind.
- Most countries have shied away from an open-data policy. Only 11 percent low-income countries consistently made available a license classifiable as 'open'.
- The comparable rate for lower-middle-income countries was 19 per cent, for upper-middle-income countries 22 percent and high-income countries 44 percent.
- **Facts about World Bank:**  
**Headquarters:** Washington, D.C., United States  
**Founded:** July 1944  
**President:** David Malpass  
**MD and CFO:** Anshula Kant  
**Membership:** 189 countries (IBRD), 173 countries (IDA)

## India ranked 140 among 156 countries in WEF's Global Gender Gap Report 2021



- India's 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.
- **Note: India** has been ranked 112 in WEF's Global Gender Gap Report 2020.
- The Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks the evolution of gender-based gaps among four key dimensions (Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment).

## Global Wind Report 2021 by GWEC (Global Wind Energy Council)



- In this special edition of GWEC's 16<sup>th</sup> annual flagship report ahead of the crucial COP26 conference in November 2021, the Global Wind Report 2021 highlights wind power's 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 CO<sub>2</sub> 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.
- **Facts about Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC):**
- The Global Wind Energy Council provides a credible and representative forum for the entire wind energy sector at an international level.

**Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium

**CEO:** Ben Backwell

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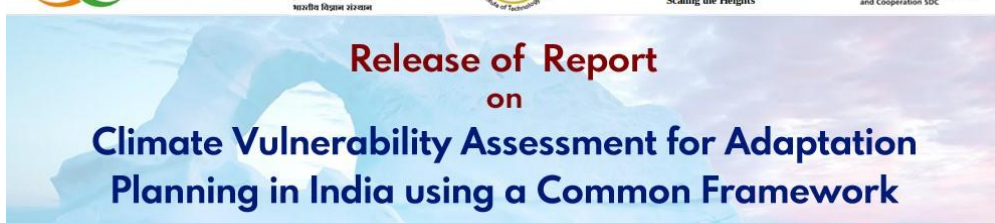
**Founded:** 2005

### Inclusive Internet Index 2021: India ranks 49<sup>th</sup>



- **About the Inclusive Internet Index:** 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.  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rank:** Sweden  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rank:** United States  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Rank:** Spain  
**49<sup>th</sup> Rank:** India
- **Note:** India is tied with Thailand in 49<sup>th</sup> place this year.

### National climate vulnerability assessment report identifies eight eastern states as highly vulnerable



- The report titled '**Climate Vulnerability Assessment for Adaptation Planning in India Using a Common Framework**', which identifies the most vulnerable states and districts in India with respect to current climate risk and key drivers of vulnerability, was released by DST Secretary Professor Ashutosh Sharma.
- The National climate vulnerability assessment report has identified **Jharkhand, Mizoram, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Bihar,**



**Arunachal Pradesh, and West Bengal as states highly vulnerable to climate change.**

- Among all states, Assam, Bihar, and Jharkhand have over 60% districts in the category of highly vulnerable districts.
- A total of 94 representatives from 24 states and 2 Union Territories participated in the nation-wide exercise jointly supported by the **DST and the Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC)**.
- **Note: DST (Department of Science and Technology)** has been implementing **2 national missions** on climate change as part of the National Action Plan on Climate Change.
- These are **National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)** and **National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change (NMSKCC)**.
- As part of these missions, DST has been supporting the State Climate Change Cells in 25 States and Union Territories.

**India ranks 84<sup>th</sup> in 'Henley Passport Index: Q2 2021 Global Ranking'**



- **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: India ranks 142**



- 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

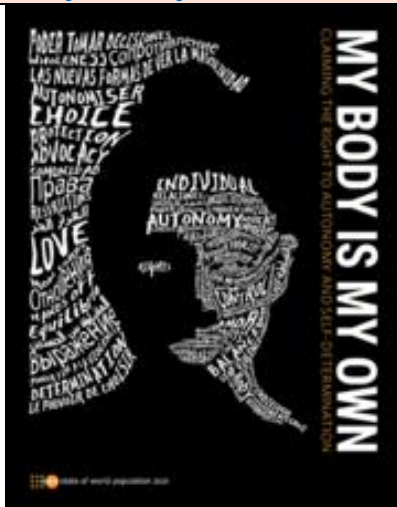
- **Note:** The latest index released ranks 180 countries.
- The report noted that “only 12 of the Index’s 180 countries (7%) can claim to offer a favourable environment for journalism”.
- **About Press Freedom Index:** It is an annual ranking of countries compiled and published by **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** since 2002 based upon the organization's own assessment of the countries' press freedom records in the previous year.

### India ranks 87th in Global Energy Transition Index 2021



- 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.
- **Facts about World Economic Forum (WEF):**  
**Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland  
**Founder & Executive Chairman:** Klaus Schwab  
**Founded:** 24 January 1971

## UNFPA launches the State of World Population Report, 2021: 'My Body is My Own'



- 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.
- **Facts about United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):**  
**Headquarters:** New York, United States  
**Executive Director:** Natalia Kanem  
**Founded:** 1969  
**Parent organization:** United Nations

## SIPRI Report: India 3<sup>rd</sup> highest military spender in 2020



- 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.

Rank	Country	Spending
1	US	USD 778 Billion
2	China	USD 252 Billion
3	India	USD 72.9 Billion

- **About Stockholm International Peace Research Institute:** It is an international institute based in Stockholm. It was founded in 1966 and provides data, analysis and recommendations for armed conflict, military expenditure, and arms trade as well as disarmament and arms control.

### Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) 2021: India ranked 49th



- India has been ranked 49<sup>th</sup> 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.



## Schemes

### Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurates Alignment and Awareness Event for Publicity of DSIR-PRISM Scheme



- Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated Alignment and Awareness Event for Publicity of the **Department of Scientific and Industrial Research - Promoting Innovations in Individuals, Startups and MSMEs (DSIR-PRISM)** scheme at IIT Delhi.
- The innovation movement by DSIR-PRISM making synergy with three National Initiatives like Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, Smart India Hackathon and Rural Technology Action Group is unique.
- **Note:** Under the initiative, an innovator of Indian nationality - student, professional and common citizen - is provided technical, strategic, and financial assistance by DSIR-PRISM.
- **Recently**, Dr. Harsh Vardhan digitally participated in a panel discussion on vaccine production and distribution across Asia at the “**World Immunisation and Logistics Summit**”.

### Jal Jeevan Mission deploys first-of-its-kind sensor-based IoT devices to monitor rural drinking water supply systems



- The Ministry of Jal Shakti has decided to take the digital route to use sensor-based IoT devices to effectively monitor the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in more than six lakh villages.
- For this, National Jal Jeevan Mission in collaboration with Tata Community Initiatives Trust (TCIT) and Tata Trusts recently completed pilot projects in several remote villages of five States i.e. Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Himachal Pradesh.
- **The Internet of Things (IoT)** based remote monitoring provides near real-time information without any manual intervention by using sensors.
- **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.

## Stand-Up India Scheme: More than Rs 25,586 crore sanctioned by the Banks in 5 years

- 25,586 crore has been sanctioned under Stand Up India Scheme to over 1,14,322 accounts upto 23.03.2021 since inception of the Scheme.
- **About Stand up India Scheme:** It was launched on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016.
- This scheme has been extended up to the year 2025.
- The **objective** of Stand-Up India is to promote entrepreneurship amongst women, Scheduled Castes (SC) & Scheduled Tribes (ST) categories.
- Stand Up India Scheme facilitates bank loans between 10 lakh and 1 crore to at least one SC or ST borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a greenfield enterprise. This enterprise may be in manufacturing, services or the trading sector.

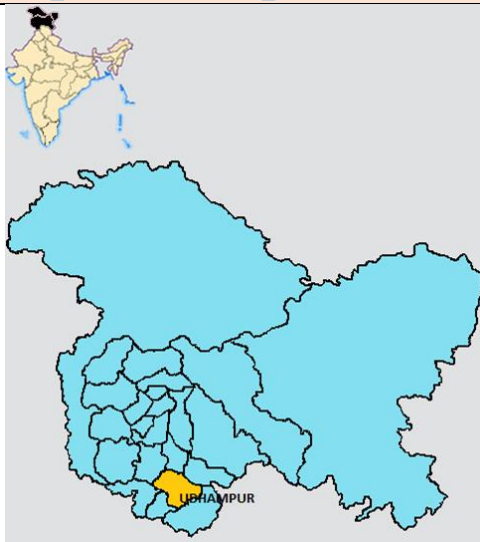
## Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin: 92% target achieved in the 1st phase

- A target of 1 crore houses was set for completion in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G)** scheme i.e. from 2016-17 to 2018-19, against which 92% target of completion has been achieved.
- The government is confident that all the houses in the Permanent Wait List would be completed by the end of Amrut Mahotsava.
- **About Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G):** It is one of the flagship programmes of the Government of India which is driven by the noble objective of providing “Housing for All” by the year 2022.
- It was launched in November 2016 by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

## More than 28.68 crore loans for an amount of Rs 14.96 lakh crore sanctioned since launch of the PMMY

- More than **68 crore** loans for an amount of **Rs 14.96 lakh crore** have been sanctioned since launch of the **Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY)** scheme (as on 19.03.2021).
- Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana has completed six years.
- PMMY helped in generation of 1.12 crore net additional employment from 2015 to 2018.
- **Note:** About 68% of the loans have been given to women entrepreneurs.
- **About Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY):** It was launched by the **Hon'ble Prime Minister on April 8, 2015** for providing loans upto Rs.10 Lakh to the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises.

## Udhampur dist. tops in India to implement PMGSY



- **Udhampur district of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir** has bagged top position at National level for successfully implementing **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)** during 2020-21.
- The district has received top position for constructing roads of 560.49 km in 2020-21.
- However, four more districts from the Union Territory have also figured in the list of PMGSY top performing 30 districts in the country. It includes Rajouri, Doda, Kathua and Reasi districts of Jammu division of Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Chhattisgarh bagged the first place among all states/UT for developing the highest road length under PMGSY, Uttarakhand (2<sup>nd</sup> place), Jammu & Kashmir (3<sup>rd</sup> place).**
- **Facts about Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY):** It is a nationwide plan in India to provide good all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages.

**Launch year:** 25<sup>th</sup> December 2000

**Launched by (Prime Minister):** Atal Bihari Vajpayee

**Ministry:** Ministry of Rural Development

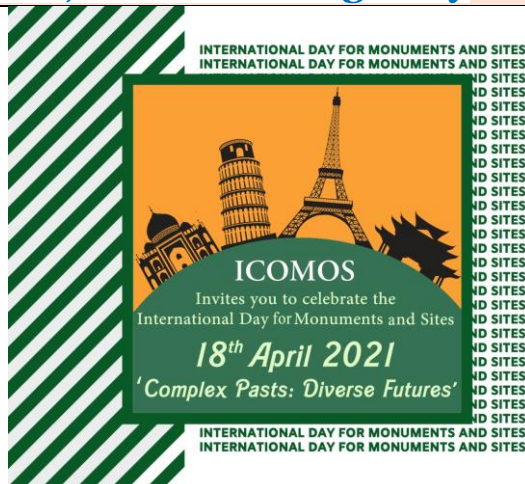
## April 17, World Hemophilia Day



- World Hemophilia Day is celebrated to raise the awareness and understanding of hemophilia and other bleeding disorders.

- The theme of this year is “**Adapting to change: sustaining care in a new world**”.
- World Haemophilia Day was started in 1989 by the World Federation of Hemophilia. April 17th was selected as World Haemophilia Day to commemorate the birthday of Frank Schnabel, who founded the World Federation of Hemophilia.

## April 18, World Heritage Day



- The World Heritage Day is also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites.
- The World Heritage Day was proposed by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on 18 April 1982 and approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.
- World Heritage Day 2021 theme this year is “**Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures**”.
- **Note:** 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**.
- As of June 2020, 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.

## Shri Piyush Goyal launches the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme



### Startup India Seed Fund Scheme

Financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry, and commercialization





- Minister of Railways, Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food & Public Distribution Shri Piyush Goyal launched the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS).
- **Rs. 945 Crore** corpus will be divided over the next 4 years for providing seed funding to eligible startups through eligible incubators across India.
- The scheme is expected to support an estimated 3,600 startups through 300 incubators.
- SISFS will Secure seed funding, Inspire innovation, Support transformative ideas, Facilitate implementation, and Start startup revolution.
- This Scheme will create a robust startup ecosystem, particularly in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns of India, which are often deprived of adequate funding.
- The Government has introduced initiatives like **Startup Innovation Challenges, National Startup Awards, Ranking of States, SCO Startup Forum, Prarambh etc.**
- **Note:** Recently, the government has constituted an experts advisory committee **for Startup India Seed Fund Scheme**, chaired by **H K Mittal** from the Department of Science and Technology.
- The Startup India Seed Fund Scheme was announced **by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi on 16th January 2021 in his address of 'Prarambh: Startup India International Summit'**, marking the five-year anniversary of the Startup India initiative.

### Prime Minister launches distribution of e-property cards under SVAMITVA scheme



## SVAMITVA SCHEME

Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improvised Technology In Village Areas

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi launched the distribution of e-property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme on National Panchayati Raj Day.
- Under the scheme, the entire village's properties are surveyed by drone and property cards are distributed to the owners. 4.09 lakh people were given such e- property cards in more than 5 thousand villages.
- **About SVAMITVA scheme:** SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) was launched by the Prime Minister on 24th April 2020 as a Central Sector Scheme to promote a socio-economically empowered and self-reliant rural India.

- It paves the way for using the property as a financial asset by villagers for availing loans and other financial benefits.
- The Scheme will cover around 6.62 Lakh villages of the entire country during 2021-2025.
- The pilot phase of the Scheme was implemented during 2020–2021 in the States of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and select villages of Punjab and Rajasthan.

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## Important Days

### April 02, World Autism Awareness Day



- The **United Nations General Assembly** unanimously declared 2 April as World Autism Awareness Day to highlight the need to help improve the quality of life of those with autism.
- World Autism Awareness Day, passed in council on 1 November 2007, and

adopted on 18 December 2007.

- **About Autism:** Autism, also called Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is a complicated condition that includes problems with communication and behavior.

### April 05, National Maritime Day



- The National Maritime Day was first celebrated on April 5, 1964.
- The history of India shipping first started on April 5, 1919, when the **SS Loyalty, the first ship of The Scindia Steam Navigation Company Ltd** travelled from Mumbai to the United Kingdom (London).
- **Note: World Maritime Day** is observed on the last week of September on Thursday annually.

### April 07, World Health Day

- The theme for 2021 is '**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.

- The World Health Day is held to mark WHO's founding and is seen as an opportunity by the organization to draw worldwide attention to a subject of major importance to global health each year.
- **Facts about WHO (World Health Organization):**  
**Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland  
**Founded:** 7 April 1948  
**Director-General:** Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

### April 10, World Homeopathy Day



- 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.

- **Note:** A two-day Scientific Convention on '**Homoeopathy - Roadmap for Integrative Medicine**' was organized from 10-11, April 2021 by the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, an autonomous apex research organization under the **Ministry of AYUSH** on the World Homoeopathy Day.

### April 21, National Civil Services Day



- 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.
- In his speech at the All India Administrative Service Training School at Metcalfe House, Delhi, he referred to civil servants as the '**steel frame of India**'.
- To mark this occasion, **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration** is presented to Districts/Implementing Units for implementation of Priority programme and innovation categories.

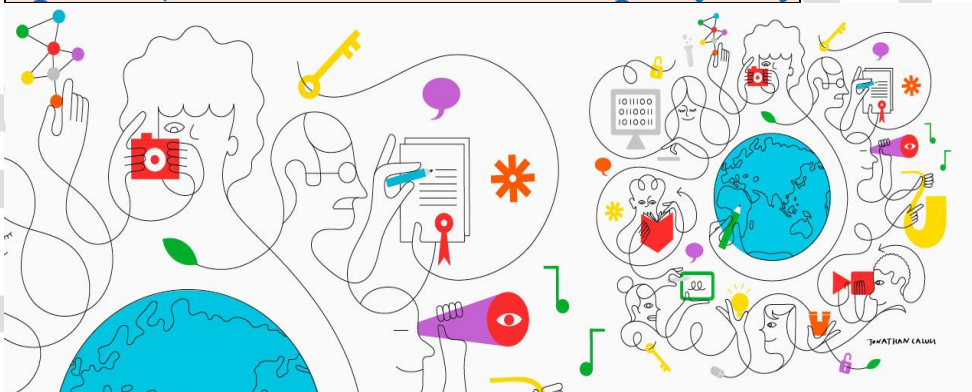


## April 22, World Earth Day



- 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).
- The World Earth Day 2021 theme is **‘Restore Our Earth’**.
- The theme features five primary programs: The Canopy Project, Food and Environment, Climate Literacy, the Global Earth Challenge and The Great Global CleanUp.

## April 26, World Intellectual Property Day



- 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.
- In 2021, the World Intellectual Property Day (IP) is being celebrated under the theme: **‘IP and SMEs: Taking your Ideas to Market’**.
- **Intellectual property (IP)** refers to creations of the mind, such as inventions; literary and artistic works; designs; and symbols, names and images used in commerce.
- IP is protected in law by, for example, patents, copyright and trademarks, which enable people to earn recognition or financial benefit from what they invent or create. By striking the right balance between the interests of innovators and the wider public interest, the IP system aims to foster an environment in which creativity and innovation can flourish.

## April 28, World Day for Safety and Health at Work



- Theme is 'Anticipate, prepare and respond to crises: Invest now in resilient occupational safety and health systems'.
- The World Day for Safety and Health at Work will focus on strategies to strengthen national **occupational safety and health (OSH)** systems to build resilience, in order to face crises now and in the future.
- The annual World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April promotes the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally.

## April 30, Ayushman Bharat Diwas



- 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.

## Books and Authors

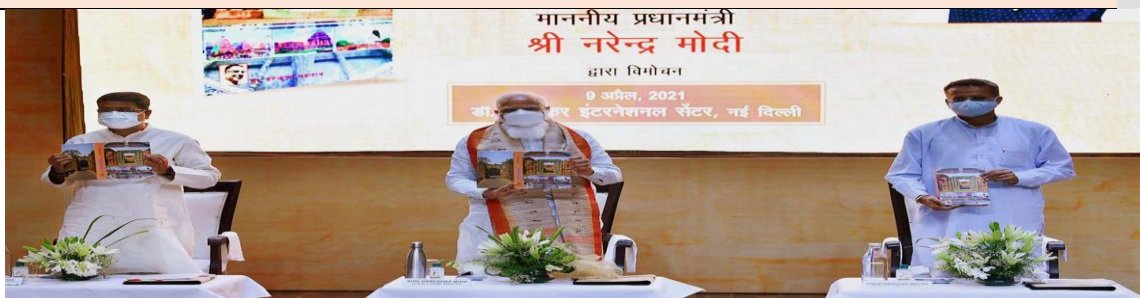
### Vice President releases book 'Suparipalana' by retired civil servant Dr Shailendra Joshi

- 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

### A book titled 'Manohar Parrikar: Brilliant Mind, Simple Life' by Nitin Gokhale

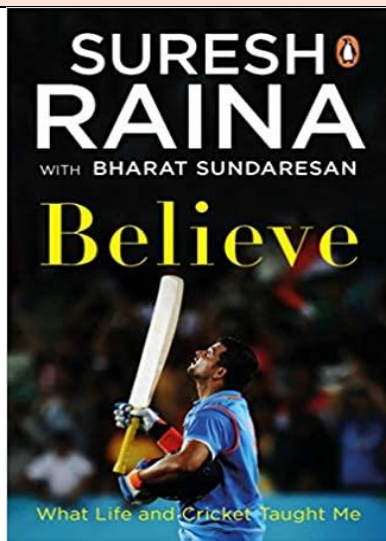
- This book is as much a personal tribute by the author to Manohar Parrikar, as an honest attempt to capture the persona of Parrikar the man, the politician and patriot.
- Manohar Parrikar was India's first IIT-qualified Chief Minister. He served as the Chief Minister of Goa and Defence Minister of India.
- **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.

### Prime Minister releases hindi version of Odisha Itihaas by Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab



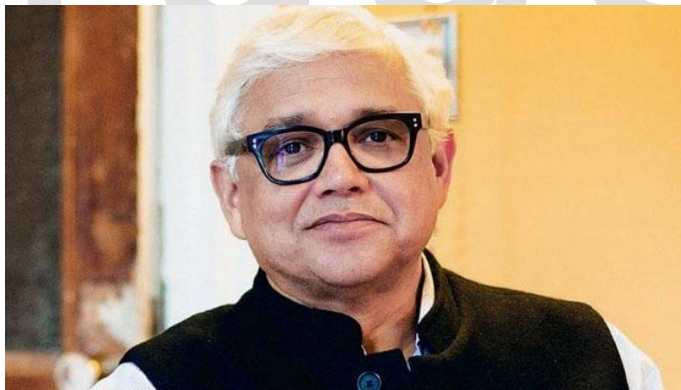
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi released the hindi translation of the book 'Odisha Itihaas' written by 'Utkal Keshari' Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab.
- The book, available in Odia and English so far, has been translated into Hindi by Shri. Shankarlal Purohit.
- **About the Author:** Dr. Harekrushna 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.

## Suresh Raina's memoir 'Believe' to release soon



- Suresh Raina has penned his memoir '**Believe: What Life and Cricket Taught Me**' along with cricket writer Bharat Sundaresan.
- The book will be published by **Penguin Random House India** and is expected to be out on May 12, 2021.
- 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.

## Jnanpith winner Amitav Ghosh's forthcoming publication 'The Living Mountain': A Fable for Our Times



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.

- It is a fable for the current times: a cautionary tale of how humans have systematically exploited nature, leading to an environmental collapse.
- HarperCollins



## Sports

### 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.

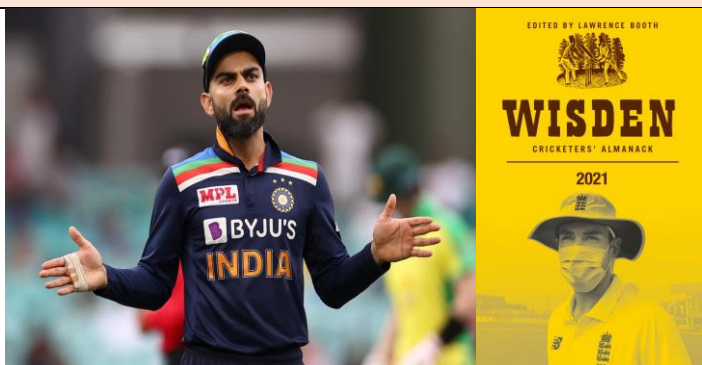
## Kane Williamson wins Sir Richard Hadlee Medal for fourth time

- **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 3<sup>rd</sup> place** in the medals table in the 34<sup>th</sup> edition of the Senior Asian Wrestling Championships 2021.



Place	Countries	Medals
<b>1</b>	Iran	17 Medals (7 Gold, 5 Silver, 5 Bronze)
	Kazakhstan	17 Medals (7 Gold, 5 Silver, 5 Bronze)
<b>3</b>	India	14 Medals (5 Gold, 3 Silver, 6 Bronze)

### 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**

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	India	8	0	3	11
2	Russia	3	5	3	11
3	Uzbekistan	3	1	6	10

- **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.

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## Obituaries

### Veteran actress Shashikala passes away

- More popularly known by her first name, Shashikala Om Prakash Saigal had acted in over 100 movies.
- Shashikala was honoured with the prestigious Padma Shri by the Indian government in 2007. Shashikala bagged two Filmfare awards for her work in Aarti and Gumrah.

### Gita Press president Radheshyam Khemka passes away

- Khemka took Sanatan literature to the masses.
- **Gita Press** is the world's largest publisher of Hindu religious texts. It is located in Gorakhpur city of India's Uttar Pradesh state. It was founded in 1923 by Jaya Dayal Goyanka and Ghanshyam Das Jalan for promoting the principles of Sanatana Dharma.

### Prince Philip, husband of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, passes away at 99



- Philip Philip was also known as the Duke of Edinburgh.
- The Prince married Britain's Princess Elizabeth in 1947, the longest reigning woman in British history.

### Eminent Historian Yogesh Praveen passes away

- Eminent Historian and an expert on Awadh especially Lucknow Yogesh Praveen passed away.
- Mr. Yogesh Praveen had a deep knowledge of the culture and history of Avadh, especially Lucknow.



- He was awarded Padma Shri in 2019.
- Apart from books he also published poetry. He had received several other awards, including the UP Ratna Award (2000), the National Teachers Award

(1999), the Yash Bharti Award (2006), and the UP Sangeet Natak Academy Award (1998).

### Noted Tamil actor Vivek passes away



- An incredible comedian, Vivek had entertained people of Tamil Nadu for over three decades through his 200 plus films.
- A disciple of former President Abdul Kalam, Vivek was involved in afforestation and other social welfare activities.
- He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2009.

### Noted radiologist Dr. Kakarla Subba Rao passes away



- 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)**.

### Noted Hindi litterateur Narendra Kohli passes away

- Eminent writer and litterateur of the Hindi world, Narendra Kohli, passed away.
- Na Bhooto Na Bhavishyati was his best book.





- He was awarded the Vyas Samman (2012) and Padma Shri (2017).

### **Former Assam Chief Minister Bhumidhar Barman passes away**



- Mr. Barman, a veteran Congress leader, was a two-time Chief Minister of the state.
- His first term as the Chief Minister lasted from April 22 to May 14, 1996. He was again made the Chief Minister in 2010.
- The seven-term MLA was first elected to the Assam Assembly in 1967.

### **Noted Bengali poet Shankha Ghosh passes away**



- Shankha Ghosh, Bengali poet and litterateur, passed away.
- Ghosh contributed significantly to Bengali and Indian literature.
- Shankha Ghosh had won the Sahitya Akademi Award, Padma Bhushan, and the prestigious Jnanpith Award.

## Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor M Narasimham passes away



- M Narasimham was the first and only governor to be appointed from the Reserve Bank cadre.
- He served as the 13th RBI governor for seven months between May and November, 1977.
- 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.

## Maulana Wahiduddin Khan passes away



- Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, 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.

## Gujarati poet Dadudan Gadhvi passes away

- Dadudan Gadhvi, also known as Kavi Dad, was a Gujarati poet and folk singer from Gujarat, India.



- He had received the Gujarat Gaurav Award as well as the Jhaverchand Meghani Award. He was also awarded the Padma Shri in 2021 for his contribution in the field of literature and education.

### **Odia and English author Manoj Das passes away**



- Manoj Das, an eminent Indian author who wrote in Odia and English, passed away.
- 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.

## Miscellaneous

### 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.

### 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 (Visakhapattanam, Kolkata, Chennai) of India.



## ICCR unveils 'Little Guru' app, world's first Gamified Sanskrit learning App



- The **Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)** celebrated its 71st Foundation Day at Indian Embassy in Beijing on 09 April, 2021.
- On the occasion, the **ICCR has unveiled 'Little Guru' app, world's first Gamified Sanskrit learning App** which was jointly launched in Beijing by Ambassador Vikram Misri and renowned Chinese scholar on Sanskrit and India studies, Professor Wang Bangwei.
- In keeping pace with changing technology in access as well as teaching methods, ICCR has tied up with Gamapp Sportswizz Tech. Pvt. Ltd. to launch 'Little Guru', a specialized app for learning Sanskrit.
- **Note:** This year, ICCR has also announced two new fellowships dedicated to music – Bhimsen Joshi fellowship for music and Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan fellowship for Music to encourage research in the field of Indian music.
- **Facts about Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR):**  
**Founder:** Abul Kalam Azad  
**Founded:** 9 April 1950  
**Headquarters:** New Delhi  
**Director General:** Shri Dineshk Patnaik

## Prime Minister addresses the Association of Indian Universities' 95th Annual Meet and National Seminar of Vice-Chancellors

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi addressed the Association of Indian Universities (AIU)' 95th Annual Meet and National Seminar of Vice-Chancellors on April 14, 2021.



- The event was hosted by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad.

- **AIU was established in 1925** under the leaders like Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee.
- **The Prime Minister released the following four books based on Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar's life, written by Shri Kishor Makwana:**
  - i. Dr. Ambedkar Jivan Darshan,
  - ii. Dr. Ambedkar Vyakti Darshan,
  - iii. Dr Ambedkar Rashtra Darshan,
  - iv. Dr. Ambedkar Aayam Darshan

### “MANAS” platform launched



- The Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India Prof. K VijayRaghavan launched the “MANAS” App to promote wellbeing across age groups.
- **MANAS** which stands for **Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System** was endorsed as a national program by the Prime Minister’s Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC).
- MANAS is a comprehensive, scalable, and national digital wellbeing platform and an app developed to augment mental well-being of Indian citizens.
- MANAS was initiated by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India. It was jointly executed by **NIMHANS Bengaluru, AFMC Pune and C-DAC Bengaluru.**
- **Note:** In India, the **Mental Health Care Act 2017** was passed on 7 April 2017 and came into force from 29 May 2018.

### “Online Grievance Management Portal” for persons from scheduled castes launched



- Union Minister for Communication & IT and Law & Justice Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad launched the “**Online Grievance Management Portal of National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)**” at a function organised by NCSC on the occasion of 130th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

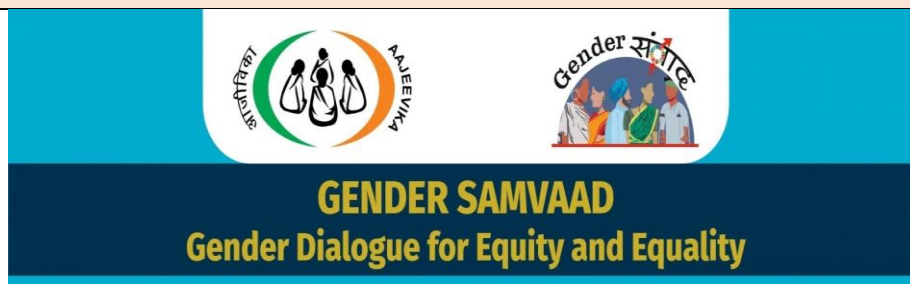
- **NCSC Grievance Management portal** would make it easier for the Scheduled Castes population of country to register their complaint from any part of the country.
- The portal designed in collaboration with the Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG-N), a Centre of Excellence under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India will facilitate an end-to-end e-filing of complaints and grievances and their tracking.
- **About the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC):** It was set up under Article 338 of the Constitution of India.  
**Headquarters:** New Delhi  
**Founded:** 19 February 2004  
**Chairman:** Vijay Sampla

## Eatsmart Cities Challenge and Transport 4 All Challenge launched



- Shri Hardeep S Puri, MoS (I/C), Housing and Urban Affairs launched the EatSmart Cities Challenge and Transport 4 All Challenge.
- **About EatSmart Cities Challenge:** EatSmart Cities Challenge was organized in association with **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** under the aegis of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- The EatSmart Cities Challenge aims to motivate Smart Cities to develop a plan that supports a healthy, safe and sustainable food environment.
- The EatSmart Cities Challenge is envisioned as a competition among cities to recognize their efforts in adopting and scaling up various initiatives under **Eat Right India**.
- The challenge is open to all Smart Cities, capital cities of States /UTs, and cities with a **population of more than 5 lakh**. At the end of the first phase of the challenge, **11 cities** will be selected for deeper engagement for an extended period to implement their vision.
- **About Transport 4 All (T4All) Challenge:** The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched the Transport 4 All challenge in collaboration with the **Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP)**.
- The Transport4All Digital Innovation Challenge aims to develop digital solutions that will make public transport safe, affordable, comfortable, and reliable for all.
- All the Smart Cities Mission cities, capitals of states and union territories, and all cities with a population of over 5 lakhs are eligible for the Challenge.

## Gender Samvaad event launched



- Gender Samvaad event, a joint attempt between **DAY-NRLM** and the Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (**IWWAGE**), was launched by Nagendra Nath Sinha, Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development.
- The attempt is to generate greater awareness on gender related interventions under DAY-NRLM across the country and best practices, with a focus on hearing voices from the states and the field.
- **Note:** With over 60 million women mobilised to be part of one of India's largest livelihoods programme, DAY-NRLM holds great promise for advancing women's socio-economic empowerment by organising them into self-help groups (SHGs) and federations of the rural poor.
- **About DAY-NRLM (Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission):** The DAY-NRLM is the flagship program of Govt. of India for promoting poverty reduction through building strong institutions of the poor, particularly women, and enabling these institutions to access a range of financial services and livelihoods.
- **Aajeevika - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)** was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India in June 2011.
- In November 2015, the program was renamed Deendayal Antayodaya Yojana (DAY-NRLM).

## Three new initiatives/services of National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) launched



- Shri Ajay Prakash Sawhney, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) & Chairman NIXI launched three path breaking initiatives for National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI).
- With this launch, NIXI has announced to play a supporting role for the **IPv6 (Internet Protocol version 6)** awareness and adoption in the country along with the Department of Telecommunications (DOT) & MeitY.
- **The details of the three new initiatives are as below:**



- i. **IPv6 Expert Panel (IP Guru):** IP Guru has been launched to extend technical support to Indian Entities in adoption of IPv6.
  - ii. **NIXI Academy:** NIXI Academy to be created to educate technical/non-technical people in India about technologies like IPv6 which will lead to better management of Internet resources in country.
  - iii. **NIXI-IP-INDEX:** NIXI-IP-INDEX portal has been launched to showcase IPv6 adoption rate in India and across the world.
- **About National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI):** It is a not-for-profit organization (section 8 of the Companies Act 2013) working since 2003 for spreading the internet infrastructure to the citizens of India.

### Union Minister of Education launches “World’s 1st affordable and long-lasting hygiene product DuroKea Series”

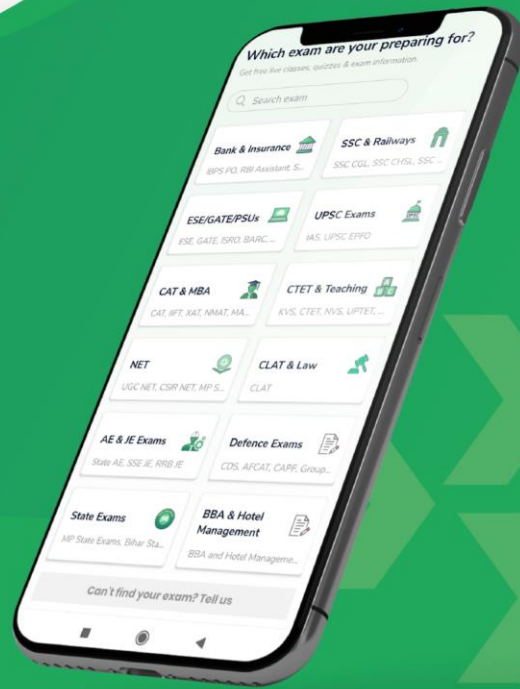


- Union Minister of Education Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ launched “World 1st affordable and long-lasting hygiene product DuroKea Series”, **developed by IIT Hyderabad researchers.**
- Researcher from Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad led Dr. Jyotsnendu Giri, Associate Professor in Biomedical Engineering and founder EaffoCare Innovation Pvt. Ltd incubating at iTIC, IIT Hyderabad has developed innovative DuroKea long-lasting technologies to combat COVID-19 virus spreading.
- This next generation DuroKea antimicrobial technology starts at Rs. 189, kills 99.99% of germs instantly and leaves behind the long-lasting protective nanoscale coating up to 35 days till next wash.

### Marathi film 'Puglya' wins Best Foreign Language Feature at Moscow International Film Festival 2021



- The film has been directed and produced by Vinod Sam Peter under the banner Abraham Films.
- Puglya is a story that revolves around a pug and two boys, Rushab and Datta, who are around 10 years old.



# Monthly Current Affairs, April 2021

## State PSC Exams