

## Weekly Current Affairs 14<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> Jun 2021

### Important News: State

#### Madhya Pradesh to launch 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan'



## Government of Madhya Pradesh

#### Why in News

- In Madhya Pradesh, 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan' means free from corona with the help of a youth power campaign will be launched to make people aware about the COVID pandemic.

#### Key Points

##### About 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan':

- This campaign will be run by the Higher Education and Technical Education Department in collaboration with the Public Health and Family Welfare Department.
- In the Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan, college teachers and around 16 lakh students will be made aware of corona infection by learning Covid appropriate behavior and vaccination.

##### Facts about Madhya Pradesh:

- **Capital:** Bhopal
- **Governor:** Anandiben Patel
- **Chief Minister:** Shivraj Singh Chouhan

### Important News: India

#### Union Cabinet approves "Deep Ocean Mission"

#### Why in News



- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs** has approved the proposal of the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** on "Deep Ocean Mission".
- It explores the Deep Ocean for resources and develops deep sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources.
- MoES will be the nodal Ministry implementing this multi-institutional ambitious mission.

### Key Points

#### About "Deep Ocean Mission":

- Deep Ocean Mission will be a mission mode project to support the **Blue Economy Initiatives** of the Government of India.
- The estimated cost of the Mission will be Rs. 4077 crore for a period of 5 years to be implemented in a phase-wise manner.
- This mission will make India one among the handful of powerful nations that already have dedicated ocean studies and missions, including the **US, Japan, France, Russia and China**.

#### Major Components of the Deep Ocean Mission:

- Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining, and Manned Submersible
- Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services
- Technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity
- Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration
- Energy and freshwater from the Ocean
- Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology

#### Significance of Mission:

- Oceans, which cover 70 percent of the globe, remain a key part of our life. About 95 percent of the Deep Ocean remains unexplored.
- For India, with its three sides surrounded by the oceans and around 30 percent of the country's population living in coastal areas, the ocean is a major economic factor supporting fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, livelihoods and blue trade.
- India's 7517 km long coastline is home to nine coastal states and 1382 islands.

- Considering the importance of the oceans on sustainability, the United Nations has declared the decade, 2021-2030 as the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

#### About Blue Economy:

- The blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.

#### Other Blue Economy Initiatives:

- Ocean Services, Modelling, Applications, Resources and Technology **(O-SMART) Scheme**
- India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development
- Sagarmala Project
- National Fisheries Policy
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management

## MoU for development of Sea Plane services in India

### Why in News



**Objective:**  
MoPSW will develop **Aerodromes/Waterfront infrastructure** in coordination with MoCA, DGCA and AAI for commencing seaplane operations

- Seaplane routes will be identified by Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, MoCA, SDCL and all States/other agencies
- MoCA to bid and select potential airline operators
- Seaplane operations will be under **RCS-UDAN Scheme**

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways** and **Ministry of Civil Aviation** for development of Sea Plane services in India was signed. **Note:** India's first sea plane service between Kevadia and Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad started operation in October 2020, under Sagarmala Sea plane Services.

#### Key Points

- This MoU envisages **development of Non Scheduled/Scheduled operation of seaplane** services within territorial jurisdiction of India under **RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme-Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik scheme** of government of India.
- As per MoU, a Co-ordination Committee with officials of Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) and Ministry of Tourism (MoT) is to be set up for timely completion of operationalisation of Seaplane services at various locations.
- MoCA, MoPSW, SDCL (Sagarmala Development Company Limited) will consider operationalising Seaplane operating routes as identified/suggested by all agencies.

- It will enhance seamless connectivity across the nation by promoting eco-friendly transportation through Sea planes and to boost the tourism industry.

#### About UDAN Scheme:

- **RCS-UDAN, "Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik"** is a Government of India's flagship program which aims to provide affordable, economically viable and profitable air travel on regional routes.
- This **Regional Connectivity Scheme** offers a unique opportunity to a common man to fly at an affordable price.
- The UDAN Scheme is a key component of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) which was released by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (India) on 15 June 2016.

#### About UDAN 4.1:

- The UDAN 4.1 scheme focuses on connecting smaller airports, along with special helicopter and sea plane routes.

#### Sagarmala Sea plane Services:

- Sagarmala Seaplane Services is a project under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- This project is being initiated under a Special Purpose Vehicle framework through airline operators.
- The project execution and implementation would be through **Sagarmala Development Company Ltd (SDCL)**.

## Rs 40,700 crores allocated under Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) towards SLWM support for over 2 lakh villages in 2021-22

#### Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti under **Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G)** Phase 2 is set to support over 2 lakh villages achieve **Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM)** arrangements through an investment of over Rs. 40,700 crores in the present FY 2021-22.
- The National Scheme Sanctioning Committee of SBM-G under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti approved the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) of States and UTs.



#### Key Points

- SBM (G) Phase 2 aims at achieving comprehensive cleanliness in villages also called ODF Plus status by focusing on ODF sustainability and ensuring SLWM arrangements in villages.
- Implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen Phase 2 in 2021-2022 will see construction of over 50 lakh Individual Household toilets (IHHLs), one Lakh Community toilets, Plastic Waste Management Units in over 2400 Blocks of India, Gobardhan projects in 386 Districts, Faecal sludge management arrangements in over 250 Districts apart from the targeted support for over 2 lakh villages in implementation of SLWM interventions.

#### **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM):**

- Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) is a country-wide campaign initiated by the Government of India in 2014 to eliminate **open defecation** and improve **solid waste management**.
- Phase 1 of the Swachh Bharat mission lasted till October 2019. Phase 2 is being implemented between 2020-21 and 2024-25.
- The mission was split into two: rural and urban.

#### **Other Schemes as part of SBM:**

- GOBAR-DHAN (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources) Scheme
- Individual Household Latrines (IHHL)
- Swachh Vidyalaya Abhiyan

**Source: PIB**

## Important News: World

### 5th edition of VivaTech

#### Why in News



- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address at the 5th edition of VivaTech 2021.

#### **Key Points**

#### **About VivaTech:**

- VivaTech is one of the largest digital and startup events in Europe, held in Paris every year since 2016.
- It is jointly organized by Publicis Groupe – a prominent advertising and marketing conglomerate and Les Echos – a leading French media group.
- It brings together stakeholders in technology innovation and the startup ecosystem and includes exhibitions, awards, panel discussions and startup contests.

### Key Points of the speech:

- **Infosys** is providing tech support for the French Open tournament and collaboration involving French companies like Atos, Capgemini and India's **TCS and Wipro** as examples of IT talent of the two countries serving companies and citizens all over the world.
- India's universal and unique **bio-metric digital identity system - Aadhar** - helped to provide timely financial support to the poor.
- Two public digital education programmes- **Swayam and Diksha** - in quick time to help students.
- Indigenous IT platform, **Arogya-Setu** enabled effective contact tracing.
- The **COWIN digital platform** has already helped ensure vaccines to millions.
- The Prime Minister enumerated initiatives like **state-of-the-art public digital infrastructure, five hundred and twenty three thousand kilometres of fibre optic network linking One hundred and fifty six thousand village councils**, public wi-fi networks across the country.
- There are state-of-the-art innovation labs in Seven Thousand Five Hundred schools under the **Atal Innovation Mission**.

## IIT Bombay hosts Conference of BRICS Network Universities as part of 13th BRICS Summit



### Why in News

- A three day virtual Conference of BRICS Network Universities on the **theme of electric mobility** was hosted by IIT Bombay.
- This conference was part of the engagements that **India** is hosting under the education stream during its **Chairship of the 13<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit this year**.

### Key Points

- Eighteen experts from Brazil, Russia, India, China and S. Africa talked about various aspects of electric mobility like traffic management, hydrogen technology, hybrid vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and linkage between e-mobility and livelihoods.

### About BRICS Network University:

- It is a union of higher education institutions of the five BRICS member countries, formed with the objective of enhancing educational cooperation in general, and especially in the realm of research and innovation.
- IIT Bombay is the lead institution of India for the BRICS Network University.

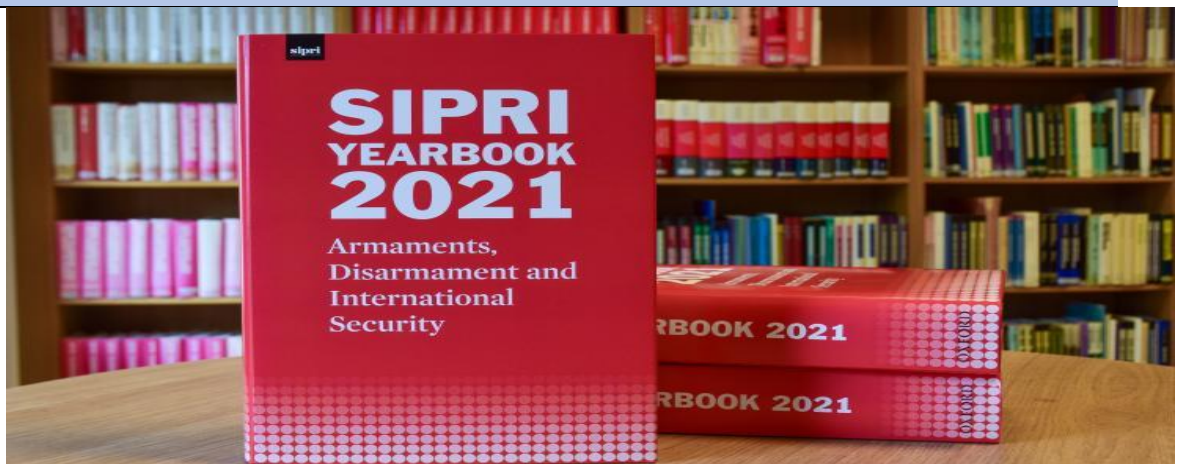
**Note:** The **13th BRICS Summit** will be held under India's Chairship in 2021, and it will be the third time India will host the BRICS Summit after 2012 and 2016.

- The theme for India's Chairship for 2021 would be '**BRICS @ 15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus**'.

**Facts about BRICS:**

- **Formation:** 2009
- **Countries:** Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

## SIPRI Report: China, India, Pakistan expanding nuclear arsenal



**Why in News**

- Swedish think tank, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) launched the findings of *SIPRI Yearbook 2021*, which assesses the current state of armaments, disarmament and international security.

**Key Points**

- **India** has an estimated **156 nuclear warheads** at the start of 2021 compared to 150 at the start of last year.
- Pakistan- 165 nuclear warheads
- China- 350 nuclear warheads
- Russia- 6255 nuclear warheads
- USA- 5550 nuclear warheads
  
- **The U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, China, Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea** - together possessed an estimated **13,080 nuclear weapons** at the start of 2021.

- **The U.S. and Russia** together possessed over **90%** of global nuclear weapons.

**Note:**

- **India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, China and Australia** were the five largest **importers** of major arms in the world between 2016 and 2020.
- Saudi Arabia had 11 percent share and **India 9.5 percent** in the global **imports** of the major arms in this time period.

**Treaties Preventing Nuclear Proliferation and Testing:**

- Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT)
- Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)
- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)
- The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

**India's Nuclear Weapon Program:**

- India tested its first nuclear device in May 1974.
- However, India has a facility-specific safeguards agreement in place with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) allowing it to participate in global civilian nuclear technology commerce.
- India was admitted as a member into the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in 2016 and Wassenaar Arrangement in 2017.

## 75th session of UNGA on prevention of HIV/AIDS

### Why in the News?

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare addressed the 75<sup>th</sup> session of the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**.
- The Union Health Minister spoke on **UNGA Resolution 75/260** which concerns the **Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS**.



### Key Points

#### Main points of address:



- In India, the **HIV & AIDS Prevention and Control Act, 2017**, provides a legal and enabling framework to safeguard the human rights of infected and affected populations.
- India's unique HIV prevention model is centered around the concept of 'Social Contracting' through which the 'Targeted Interventions Program' is implemented with support from civil society.
- The program is aimed at behaviour change, communication, outreach, service delivery, counselling & testing and ensuring linkages to HIV care.
- India is providing free anti-retro-viral treatment to close to 1.4 million people.
- Indian drugs are also reaching millions of People living with HIV in Africa.

#### India's National AIDS Control Program:

- **NACO (National AIDS Control Organisation)**, established in 1992 is a division of India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare that provides leadership to **HIV/AIDS control programme** in India through **35 HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Societies**.
- India's National AIDS Control Program has been **Revised, Revived and Revamped** to focus on hard-to-reach and at-risk populations.



**SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) and HIV/AIDS:** There are a number of SDGs related to the HIV response:

- SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.
- Target 3.3: **End AIDS as a public health threat by 2030**
- SDG 4: Quality education
- SDG 5: Gender equality
- SDG 10: Reduced inequalities
- SDG 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions

#### Other Initiatives:

- The Red Ribbon
- Project Sunrise
- 90-90-90
- GFATM (Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria)

#### HIV (human immunodeficiency virus):

- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is an infection that attacks the body's immune system, specifically the white blood cells called CD4 cells.
- HIV destroys these CD4 cells, weakening a person's immunity against infections such as tuberculosis and some cancers.

**Source: PIB**

## 47th G7 Leaders' Summit 2021

### Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the 47th G7 Leaders' Summit 2021.
- The 47th G7 summit was held on 11–13 June 2021 in **Cornwall in the United Kingdom** while it held the presidency of the G7.
- Apart from India, South Korea, South Africa, and Australia were also invited to participate in the proceedings of the summit as “**Guest Countries**”.
- **Note:** Earlier, the Finance Ministers from the G7 reached a landmark accord setting a **Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate**.



### Key Points

#### Build Back Better World (B3W) Project:

- **B3W Project** will collectively catalyse hundreds of billions of infrastructure investment for low- and middle-income countries (in Asia and Africa) and offer a values-driven, high-standard and transparent partnership with G7.

#### Democracies 11:

- Signed off on a joint statement (Democracies 11) by G7 and Guest Countries on “open societies” that reaffirms and encourages the values of freedom of expression, both online and offline, as a freedom that safeguards democracy.
- The statement also refers to politically motivated internet shutdowns as one of the threats to freedom and democracy.

#### Carbis Bay Declaration:

- The G7 signed the Carbis Bay Declaration. It is aimed at preventing future pandemics.
- The G7 also pledged over 1 billion coronavirus vaccine doses for poorer nations with half of that coming from the United States and 100 million from Britain.

#### Climate Change:

- Pledged to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

#### India's Stand:

- India is a natural ally for the G7 countries in defending the shared values from a host of threats stemming from authoritarianism, terrorism and violent extremism, disinformation, and economic coercion.

- It sought the support of the grouping to lift patent protections for COVID-19 vaccines.
- Planet's atmosphere, biodiversity and oceans cannot be protected by countries acting in silos, and called for collective action on climate change.
- India is the only G-20 country on track to meet its Paris commitments.



### Facts about G7:

- It is an intergovernmental organisation.
- **Founded:** 1975
- **Members:** United Kingdom, United States, Japan, France, Germany, Canada and Italy

**Source: Indian Express**

## El Salvador becomes first country to adopt bitcoin as legal tender

### Why in the News?

- El Salvador has become the first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender.
- Its use as legal tender will begin in 90 days, with the bitcoin-dollar exchange rate set by the market.



### Key Points

- The use of bitcoin will be optional for individuals and would not bring risks to users.
- Bitcoin could boost the economy, help counter El Salvador's low banking penetration rate and facilitate faster transfers for \$6 billion of remittances a year.

### About Bitcoin:

- It is a decentralized digital currency, without a central bank or single administrator that can be sent from user to user on the peer-to-peer bitcoin network without the need for intermediaries.



#### Facts about El Salvador:

- **President:** Nayib Bukele
- **Capital:** San Salvador
- **Currency:** United States Dollar (USD)

**Source:** The Hindu

### 42nd session of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) Conference

#### Why in the News?

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar addressed the 42nd session of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) Conference.
- India is a founder member of the FAO and has played a significant role since inception as Chair and member of various statutory bodies and committees.

#### Key Points

##### India's efforts for Food Security during the COVID 19 pandemic:

- The Agriculture sector in India performed well during the severe COVID-19 pandemic and registered an all time high production of **305 million tons of food grains** as well as their exports contributing to the Global Food Security.
- Special parcel trains with refrigeration facilities "**KISAN RAIL**" were introduced by Indian Railways.
- The Government of India launched the "**Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package**". Under this scheme, free food grains were provided to 810 million beneficiaries.
- More than **Rupees 137000 Crore** have been sent to the bank accounts of over 100 million farmers under the "**PM Kisan**" Scheme to provide income support to the farmers.



## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

### Climate change and Agriculture schemes:

- Green India Mission
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
- Sub-mission on AgroForestry
- Soil Health Card
- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana
- Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region
- India has launched various projects under the **National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture** to develop, demonstrate and disseminate the techniques to make agriculture resilient to adverse impacts of climate change.
- The Green Revolution, White Revolution, blue revolution along with the Public Distribution System and price support system for farmers.
- **Facts about Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):**
  - Formation:** 16 October 1945
  - Headquarters:** Rome, Italy
  - Parent organization:** United Nations Economic and Social Council
  - Director-General:** Qu Dongyu

### Note:

- To commemorate the long-standing relationship between India and the FAO, the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi had released a special **75 rupees commemorative coin to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the FAO** on 16<sup>th</sup> Oct 2020.

Source: PIB

## 8th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus

### Why in the News?

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called for an open and inclusive order in Indo-Pacific based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations while addressing the **8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus** on June 16, 2021.
- Brunei is the Chair of the ADMM Plus forum in 2021.



## Key Points

### About ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus:

- The ADMM Plus is an annual meeting of Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN countries and eight dialogue partner countries - Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.

### Facts about Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

- **The 10 member countries of ASEAN** are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia.
- **Headquarters:** Jakarta, Indonesia
- **Founded:** 8 August 1967



Image: ASEAN

### Key points of the meeting:

- India supports utilisation of ASEAN-led mechanisms as important platforms for implementation of shared vision for the Indo-Pacific.
- India's support to freedom of navigation, over-flight and unimpeded commerce for all in international waters in accordance with the **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**.
- The **Sea lanes of Communication** are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indo-Pacific region.
- On the '**Act East Policy**', announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2014, the key elements of the policy aim to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationships with countries

in the Indo-Pacific region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

- As a member of the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, India remains committed to combat financing of terrorism.
- Through the **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** operations, India remains one of the first to respond in times of distress in the immediate as well as extended neighbourhood.
- As a founding member of the **Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM)**, India seeks to enhance capacity building through collaboration in the areas of Maritime Search & Rescue.

**Source: PIB**

## Important News: Economy

## Important News: Defense

### Defence innovation through iDEX – DIO

#### Why in the News?

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the budgetary support of Rs **498.8 crore** to **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) - Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO)** for the next five years.
- Earlier, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh released an E-booklet titled '**20 Reforms in 2020**', highlighting the major reforms undertaken by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in 2020.



#### Key Points

- The scheme, with budgetary support of Rs 498.8 crore for the next five years, is aimed at providing financial support to nearly 300 start-ups/MSMEs/individual innovators and 20 partner incubators under the DIO framework.
- The **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)** was launched by the Prime Minister in April 2018.
- The creation of the **iDEX** framework and establishment of the **DIO** by the **Department of Defence Production (DDP)** is aimed at creating an ecosystem to foster innovation and technology development in defence and

aerospace by engaging Industries including MSMEs, start-ups, individual innovators, Research & Development institutes & academia.

- **Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC)** is launched with Problem Statements (PS) from Armed Forces and OFB/DPSUs for resolution by innovators.

#### Other Channels for procuring innovative technologies:

- Technology Development Fund scheme
- Indigenous Development by Services

#### Other Related Initiatives:

- Defence Industrial Corridors
- Artificial Intelligence in Defence
- Strategic Partnership Model

**Source: PIB**

## 2021 NATO Summit

### Why in the News?

- The 2021 Brussels summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was the 31st formal meeting of the heads of state and heads of government of the NATO, held in Brussels, Belgium, on 14 June 2021.

**Note:** US President Joe Biden took part in his first in-person NATO summit.



### Key Points

- NATO Leaders discussed a wide range of issues at the 2021 Brussels Summit, including the main themes of the NATO 2030 initiative: how to reinforce the Alliance's unity, broaden its approach to security and contribute to safeguarding the rules-based international order.

**Note:** NATO leaders declared **China a global security challenge**.

### About NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization):

- NATO, also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 European and North American countries. The organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty that was signed on 4 April 1949.

**Source: The Hindu**

## Science and Technology

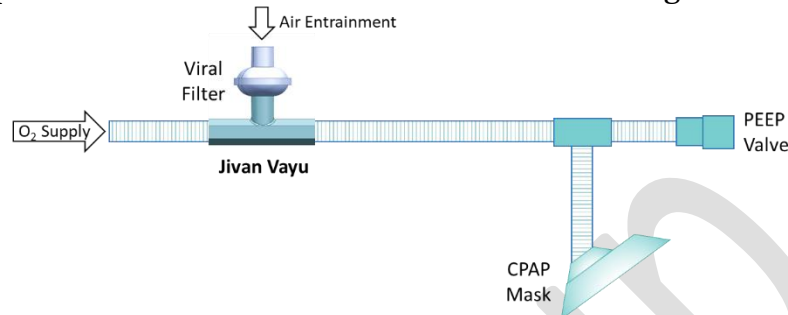
### IIT Ropar develops nation's first power-free CPAP device 'Jivan Vayu'





### Why in the News?

- Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar has developed a device 'Jivan Vayu' which can be used as a substitute of CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) machine.
- This is Nation's first such device which functions even without electricity and is adapted to both kinds of oxygen generation units like O<sub>2</sub> cylinders and oxygen pipelines in hospitals.
- These provisions are not available in otherwise existing CPAP machines.



### Key Points

#### About 'Jivan Vayu':

- It has an inbuilt viral filter at the air entrainment end which has a viral efficacy of 99.99%.
- The viral filter ensures that the air does not bring in any pathogens from the environment.
- The device has been manufactured using 3D printing and has also been tested mechanically.

#### Need of 'Jivan Vayu':

- This was the need of the hour during the present COVID pandemic when power supply is the key concern for saving lives of those on medical equipments such as ventilators and oxygen concentrators.

Source: PIB

## Environment

### UN 'High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land degradation and Drought'

#### Why in the News?

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** delivered a keynote address at the UN "High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought".
- He spoke at the Opening Segment in his capacity as the **President of the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**.



## Key Points

### Steps taken by India to deal with the Land Degradation issue:

- India is on track to achieve its national commitment of Land degradation neutrality (Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3).
- Restoration of 26 million hectares of degraded land aimed by 2030 to achieve an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- In the last 10 years, around 3 million hectares of forest cover has been added in India, enhancing the combined forest cover to almost one-fourth of the country's total area.
- The Prime Minister gave an example of the **Banni region in Rann of Kutch in Gujarat** to illustrate how restoration of land can start a virtuous cycle of good soil health, increased land productivity, food security and improved livelihoods.
- Centre of Excellence is being set up in India to promote a scientific approach towards land degradation issues

### About Land Degradation:

- Land degradation is a process in which the value of the biophysical environment is affected by a combination of human-induced processes acting upon the land.
- Land degradation is caused by multiple forces, including extreme weather conditions, particularly drought.

### Consequences

There are four main ways of looking at land degradation and its impact on the environment around it:

- A temporary or permanent decline in the productive capacity of the land
- Action in the land's capacity to provide resources for human livelihoods
- Loss of biodiversity
- Shifting ecological risk

### Global Efforts to Check Land Degradation:

- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- The Delhi Declaration of 2019, signed by 14th CoP of the UNCCD, called for better access and stewardship over land.
- The Bonn Challenge
- Great Green Wall Initiative
- Drought Initiative
- Land Degradation Neutrality programme



### India's Efforts to Check Land Degradation:

- The National Action Programme for combating desertification in 2001
- Integrated Watershed Management Programme (Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana)
- National Mission for Green India
- National Afforestation Programme
- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
- Soil Health Card Scheme
- Soil Conservation in the Catchment of River Valley Project
- Command Area Development and Water Management programme

Source: PIB

## Schemes

### Proposals for construction of nearly 3.61 Lakh houses approved under PMAY-U

#### Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has approved 708 proposals for construction of 3.61 lakh houses under **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U)**.
- The decision was taken at the 54th Meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC) under PMAY-U held in New Delhi.
- In addition, '**PMAY- U Awards 2021 - 100 Days Challenge**' was also launched by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.



#### Key Points

About '**PMAY- U Awards 2021 - 100 Days Challenge**':

- The awards are given to recognize and celebrate the outstanding contribution and performances by States, Union Territories (UTs), Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and beneficiaries for successful implementation of the Mission and create a healthy competition.
- With this, as on date, the total number of sanctioned houses under PMAY-U is now 112.4 lakh and so far 82.5 lakh have been grounded for construction of which 48.31 lakh have been completed/delivered.
- Total investment under the Mission is Rs 7.35 Lakh Crore which has Central assistance of Rs 1.81. Lakh Crore of which Rs 96,067 Crore of funds have been released.

**About Six Light House Projects (LHPs):** The foundation stones of LHPs were laid by the Prime Minister in January 2021.

- The LHPs are being constructed at Agartala, Chennai, Lucknow, Ranchi, Rajkot and Indore.
- An **E-Module on Technograh**i comprising learning tools on innovative construction technologies shortlisted under Global Housing Technology Challenge – India and being used in six LHPs was also launched at the event.
- Secretary, MoHUA, also inaugurated a newly constructed **Demonstration Housing Project in Panchkula, Haryana** which will be used as a working women hostel on rental basis.
- Under the Technology sub mission of PMAY-U, 6 Demonstration Housing Projects (DHPs) have been completed so far and 7 are being constructed in different parts of the country.

**About Demonstration Housing Projects (DHPs):**

- DHPs are model housing projects built with new/alternate technology that not only showcase field level application of the technology but also used as platform to impart on-site orientation & training to practitioners & students in the housing sector on the application and use of such technology.

**About Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY):**

- It is an initiative by the Government of India in which affordable housing will be provided to the urban poor with a target of building 2 crore (20 million) affordable houses by 31 March 2022.
- It has two components: **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) (PMAY-U)** for the urban poor and **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Gramin) (PMAY-G)** for the rural poor.

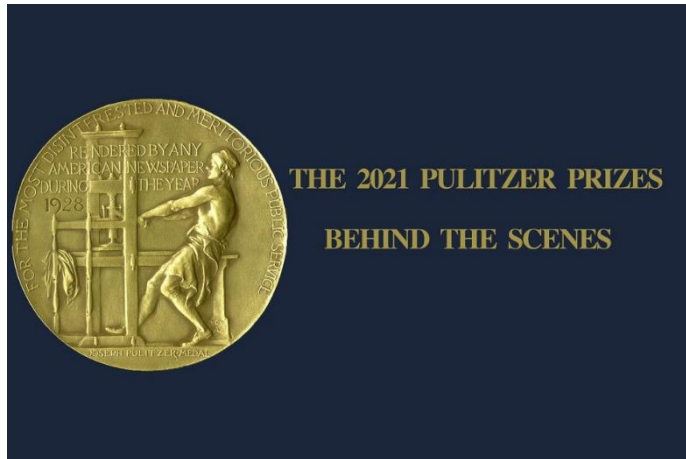
**Source: PIB**

## Awards and Honours

### 2021 Pulitzer Prizes

#### Why in the News?

- The 2021 Pulitzer Prizes were awarded by the Pulitzer Prize Board for work during the 2020 calendar year on June 11, 2021.
- The 105th class of 2021 Pulitzer Prize winners in Journalism, Books, Drama and Music were announced.



**Key Points**

- The awards highlighted coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic, racial unrest, and other major stories in the U.S. that year.
- Several publications, including The Atlantic and BuzzFeed News, received their first Pulitzers.
- **Indian-origin journalist Megha Rajagopalan** from BuzzFeed News won the Pulitzer Prize for exposing China's vast infrastructure for detaining Muslims.

**Main 2021 Pulitzer Prize winners:**

Category	Winner
<b>Journalism</b>	
Public Service	<b>The New York Times</b>
Breaking News Reporting	Staff of the Star Tribune, Minneapolis, Minn.
Investigative Reporting	Matt Rocheleau, Vernal Coleman, Laura Crimaldi, Evan Allen and Brendan McCarthy of The Boston Globe
Explanatory Reporting	Andrew Chung, Lawrence Hurley, Andrea Januta, Jaimi Dowdell and Jackie Botts of Reuters
Local Reporting	Kathleen McGrory and Neil Bedi of the Tampa Bay Times
National Reporting	Staffs of The Marshall Project; AL.com, Birmingham; IndyStar, Indianapolis; and the Invisible Institute, Chicago
International Reporting	<b>Megha Rajagopalan</b> , Alison Killing and Christo Buschek of BuzzFeed News
Criticism	Wesley Morris of The New York Times

Editorial writing	Robert Greene of the Los Angeles Times
Breaking News Photography	Photography Staff of Associated Press
<b>Books, Drama and Music</b>	
Fiction	The Night Watchman by Louise Erdrich
Drama	The Hot Wing King by Katori Hall
History	Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America by Marcia Chatelain
Poetry	Postcolonial Love Poem by Natalie Diaz
Special Citation	<b>Darnella Frazier</b> , The teenager who recorded the killing of George Floyd
Music	Stride, by Tania León

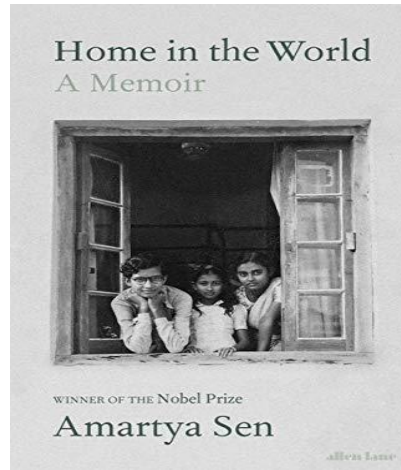
**Source: Pulitzer.org**

## Books and Authors

### 'Home in the World': Amartya Sen's memoir

#### Why in the News?

- **Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen** has penned his memoir titled 'Home in the World'.
- The book will be published in July 2021 by **Penguin Random House**.



### Key Points

- In 'Home in the World', Sen shares details from his life and explores the idea of 'home'.
- He was awarded the **Nobel Prize in Economics** in 1998 and **Bharat Ratna** in 1999.

Source: TOI

## Important Days

### June 17, World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

#### Why in the News?

- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is a United Nations observance celebrated each year on 17 June.
- Its purpose is to raise awareness of the presence of desertification and drought, highlighting methods of preventing desertification and recovering from drought.

**Desertification  
& Drought Day**



17 JUNE  
**2021**



***Restoration. Land. Recovery.***

*We build back better with healthy land*

### Key Points

- The **theme for 2021 is "Restoration. Land. Recovery. We build back better with healthy land"**.

### History:



- This day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly resolution on January 30, 1995, after the day when the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was drafted.

**Note:** India is working towards restoring 2.6 crore hectares of degraded land by 2030 and assisting fellow developing countries to develop land-restoration strategies.

**Source: Indian Express**

## Sports

### French Open 2021

- The French Open 2021 is a Grand Slam tennis tournament played on outdoor clay courts.
- It was held at the Stade Roland Garros in Paris, France, from 30 May to 13 June 2021.



**List of winners:**

Men's singles	Women's singles	Men's doubles	Women's doubles	Mixed doubles
<p><b>Winner-</b> Novak Djokovic (Serbia)</p> <p><b>Runner-up-</b> Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece)</p>	<p><b>Winner-</b> Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic)</p> <p><b>Runner-up-</b> Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (Russia)</p>	<p><b>Winner-</b> Pierre-Hugues Herbert (France), Nicolas Mahut (France)</p> <p><b>Runner-up-</b> Alexander Bublik (Kazakhstan), Andrey Golubev (Kazakhstan)</p>	<p><b>Winner-</b> Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic), Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic)</p> <p><b>Runner-up-</b> Bethanie Mattek-Sands (America), Iga Świątek (Poland)</p>	<p><b>Winner-</b> Desirae Krawczyk (America), Joe Salisbury (Britain)</p> <p><b>Runner-up-</b> Elena Vesnina (Russia), Aslan Karatsev (Russia)</p>





- **Note: Novak Djokovic (Serbia)** won his second French Open title and 19th Grand Slam title.

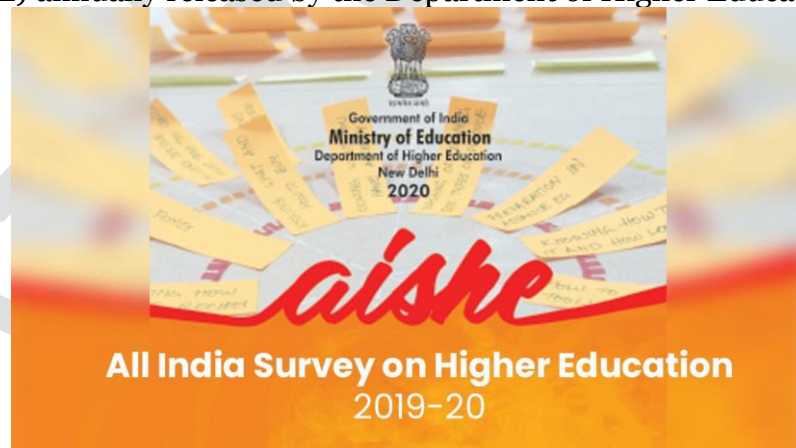
**Source: Indian Express**

## Reports and Indexes

### All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20 Report

#### Why in the News?

- Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Union Education Minister, approved the release of the report of All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20.
- This Report provides key performance indicators on the current status of Higher education in the country.
- This report is the 10th in the series of All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) annually released by the Department of Higher Education.



#### Key Points

##### Key features of AISHE 2019-20 Report:

- In the last five years from 2015-16 to 2019-20, there has been a growth of 11.4% in the student enrolment.
- **Total Enrolment** in Higher Education stands at 3.85 crore in 2019-20 as compared to 3.74 crore in 2018-19, registering a growth of 11.36 lakh (3.04 %). Total enrolment was 3.42 crore in 2014-15.

- **Gender Parity Index (GPI)** in Higher Education in 2019-20 is 1.01 against 1.00 in 2018-19 indicating an improvement in the relative access to higher education for females of eligible age group compared to males.
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)**, the percentage of students belonging to the eligible age group enrolled in Higher Education, in 2019-20 is 27.1% against 26.3% in 2018-19 and 24.3% in 2014-2015.
- **Pupil Teacher Ratio** in Higher Education in 2019-20 is 26.
- In 2019-20: Universities: 1,043(2%); Colleges: 42,343(77%) and stand-alone institutions: 11,779(21%).
- 3.38 crore Students enrolled in programmes at under-graduate and post-graduate level. Out of these, nearly 85% of the students (2.85 crore) were enrolled in the six major disciplines such as **Humanities, Science, Commerce, Engineering & Technology, Medical Science and IT & Computer.**
- The **Total Number of Teachers** stands at 15,03,156 comprising of 57.5% male and 42.5% female.
- The rise in female enrolment in higher education during the period is 18.2%.

#### Recent Initiatives:

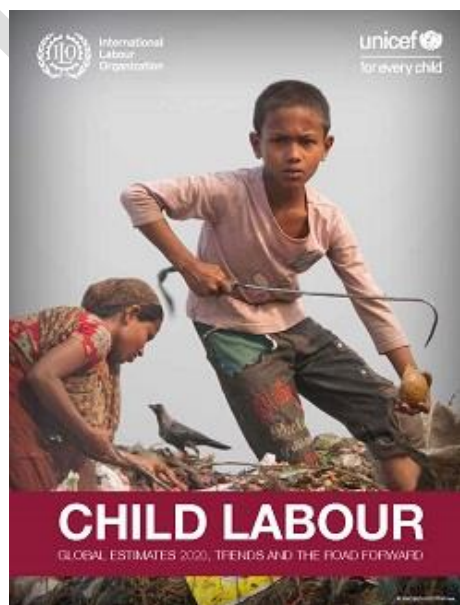
- Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)
- National Education Policy (NEP), 2020
- Prime Minister's Research Fellowship (PMRF)
- Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)

Source: PIB

## ILO, UNICEF Report: Child labour rises to 160 million – first increase in two decades

### Why in the News?

- According to the '**Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward**' report by the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** and **UNICEF**, the number of children in child labour has risen to 160 million worldwide, an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years.



### Key Points



- **Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward** report warns that progress to end child labour has stalled for the first time in 20 years, reversing the previous downward trend that saw child labour fall by 94 million between 2000 and 2016.

#### Key findings of the report:

- The report points to a significant rise in the number of children aged 5 to 11 years in child labour, who now account for just over half of the total global figure.
- The number of children aged 5 to 17 years in hazardous work has risen by 6.5 million to 79 million since 2016.
- The report warns that globally, nine million additional children are at risk of being pushed into child labour by the end of 2022 as a result of the pandemic.
- **The agriculture sector accounts for 70 percent of children in child labour (112 million) followed by 20 percent in services (31.4 million) and 10 percent in industry (16.5 million).**
- Nearly 28 percent of children aged 5 to 11 years and 35 percent of children aged 12 to 14 years in child labour are out of school.
- The prevalence of child labour in rural areas (14 percent) is close to three times higher than in urban areas (5 percent).

#### Measures to improve the situation:

- Adequate social protection for all, including universal child benefits.
- Increased spending on free and good-quality schooling and getting all children back into school - including children who were out of school before COVID-19.
- Promotion of decent work for adults, so families don't have to resort to children helping to generate family income.
- An end to harmful gender norms and discrimination that influence child labour.
- Investment in child protection systems, agricultural development, rural public services, infrastructure and livelihoods.

#### Initiatives by the Government of India:

- Child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986
- National Policy on Child Labour (1987)
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015
- The Right to Education Act, 2009
- Initiatives like Operation Smile, Operation Muskaan

**Note:** Many NGOs like ChildFund, Bachpan Bachao Andolan, CARE India, Kailash Satyarthi Children Foundation etc. have been working to eradicate child labour in country.

**Source: ilo.org**

### India can save logistics fuel worth ₹311 lakh crore between 2020 and 2050: NITI Aayog, RMI India Report

#### Why in the News?

- **NITI Aayog, Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and RMI India's** new report '**Fast Tracking Freight in India: A Roadmap for Clean and Cost-Effective Goods Transport**' presents key opportunities for India to reduce its logistics costs.



### Key Points

- Due to the rising demand for goods and services, freight transport demand is expected to grow rapidly in the future.
- While freight transport is essential to economic development, it is plagued by high logistics costs and contributes to rising CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and air pollution in cities.

### According to the report, India has the potential to:

- Reduce its logistics cost by **4% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**
- Achieve 10 gigatonnes of cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions savings between 2020 and 2050
- Reduce nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) and particulate matter emissions by 35% and 28%, respectively, until 2050

### Need to Make Freight Transportation Cost Effective:

- Freight transportation is a critical backbone of India's growing economy, it's important to make this transport system more cost-effective, efficient, and cleaner.
- Efficient freight transport will also play an essential role in realising the benefits of existing government initiatives such as Make in India, Aatmanirbhar Bharat, and Digital India.
- As India's freight activity grows five-fold by 2050 and about 400 million citizens move to cities, a whole system transformation can help uplift the freight sector.
- This transformation will be defined by tapping into opportunities such as efficient rail-based transport, the optimisation of logistics and supply chains, and shift to electric and other clean-fuel vehicles.

### Recommendations:

- Increasing the rail network's capacity
- Improving warehousing and trucking practices
- Promoting intermodal transport
- Policy measures and pilot projects for clean technology adoption
- Stricter fuel economy standards

### Recent Initiatives:

- Dedicated Freight Corridor
- Bharat Stage VI norms
- FAME Scheme
- Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency Regulations
- E-Way Bill Integration with FASTag

**Source: PIB**

## EIU's Global Liveability Index 2021

### Why in the News?

- **Auckland in New Zealand** has topped the EIU Global Liveability Index 2021.



### Key Points

#### About Global Liveability Index:

- The Global Liveability Index is an annual assessment published by the London-based **Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)**, ranking 140 global cities for their urban quality of life.
- The **index** takes into account more than 30 qualitative and quantitative factors spanning five broad categories: stability (25%), healthcare (20%), culture and environment (25%), education (10%), and infrastructure (20%).

#### The 3 most liveable cities in 2021:

- Auckland, New Zealand
- Osaka, Japan
- Adelaide, Australia

#### The 3 least liveable cities in 2021:

- Damascus, Syria
- Lagos, Nigeria
- Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

**Note: Austria's Vienna**, number one in both 2018 and 2019, has completely dropped out of the top 10 after being heavily affected by COVID, and now ranks 12.

**Source: Indian Express**

## WGI 2021 ranks India as 14th Most Charitable Country in the World

### Why in the News?

- India is now ranked as the 14th most charitable country in the world as per a report released by the **World Giving Index 2021 (WGI)**.
- In the index **Indonesia topped** the list followed by Kenya.



### Key Points

- India has been recognised among the Top 20 most generous countries across the globe, an improvisation from its earlier 10-year global rank of 82.
- As per the report, around 61 percent of Indians helped strangers, 34 percent volunteered for a good cause while 36 percent donated money.

### Note:

- The report suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has further increased the 'giving' trends worldwide.

### About World Giving Index (WGI):

- WGI is a global survey that has interviewed more than 1.6 million people since 2009.
- It conducts surveys by asking three questions: have they helped a stranger, given money, or volunteered for a good cause in recent months.
- It releases an annual report published by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), using data gathered by Gallup and ranks countries in the world according to how charitable they are.
- The first report was produced in 2010 and this year marks the 10 year anniversary of WGI.

**Source: Indian Express**

## New Appointments

### Microsoft names CEO Satya Nadella as chairman



### Why in News

- Microsoft Corporation named Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Satya Nadella as its new chairman.

### Key Points

- Satya Nadella, succeeds John Thompson, who will return to the role of lead independent director.
- Nadella, the company's third CEO, will also be the third chairman in Microsoft's history, following Gates and Thompson.

**Facts about Microsoft:** Microsoft is an American multinational technology company.

- **Founded:** April 4, 1975
- **Founders:** Bill Gates, Paul Allen
- **Headquarters:** United States
- **CEO:** Satya Nadella

## Justice Sanjay Yadav takes oath as Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court

### Why in the News?

- Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel administered the oath of office and secrecy to Justice Sanjay Yadav at Raj Bhavan in Lucknow.
- Earlier Justice Yadav was the acting Chief Justice of the Allahabad HC.
- Justice Yadav also served as the deputy advocate general of Madhya Pradesh.
- Justice Yadav was elevated as a judge of the High Court of Madhya Pradesh on March 2, 2007, and a permanent judge on January 15, 2010.





Source: Indian Express

## Amul's R S Sodhi conferred with Asia Pacific Productivity Champion award

### Why in the News?

- The MD (Managing Director) of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF or Amul), R.S. Sodhi, was conferred with the **regional award as Asia Pacific Productivity Champion from APO (Asian Productivity Organization), Tokyo, Japan.**



### Key Points

- In the past 20 years, this is for the first time an Indian has received a prestigious award.

### About Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF)

- It is an Indian dairy cooperative society, based at Anand in the Indian state of Gujarat. It is also known as Amul.

Source: The Hindu

## Naftali Bennett as Israel's new Prime Minister

### Why in the News?

- Naftali Bennett, leader of the right-wing Yamina party, was sworn in as Israel's new Prime Minister.





### Key Points

- Naftali Bennett succeeds Benjamin Netanyahu, who was forced out of office after 12 years.
- Bennett will be Prime Minister until September 2023 as part of a power-sharing deal.
- He will then hand power over to Yair Lapid, head of the centrist Yesh Atid party, for a further two years.

**Source: Indian Express**

## Obituaries

### Dingko Singh, Asian Games gold-winning boxer, passes away

#### Why in the News?

- Former Asian Games gold medalist boxer Dingko Singh passed at 47.
- Dingko won the gold medal in 1998 at the 13th Asian Games, Bangkok.
- He was also Manipur's first Asian Games gold medalist.
- For his outstanding contribution, the Manipuri pugilist was bestowed the Arjuna award in 1998 and conferred with Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian award, in 2013.

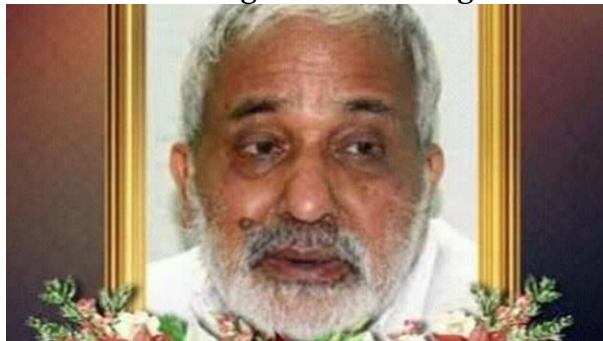


**Source: Indian Express**

## Environmentalist and organic farming proponent Radha Mohan passes away

### Why in the News?

- Noted environmentalist and **Padma Shri** awardee Professor Radha Mohan, who helped popularise organic farming techniques, died at 78.
- Radha Mohan was awarded the Padma Shri along with his daughter Sabarmatee in 2020 for their contribution to the agriculture sector.
- Back in 1990, the father-daughter duo founded '**Sambhav**', a social organisation aimed at educating farmers on organic and natural farming.



Source: Indian Express

## Padma Shri awardee Dr Ashok Panagariya passes away

- Prominent neurologist and Padma Shri recipient Dr Ashok Panagariya passed away at 71.
- One of India's leading neurologists, Ashok Panagariya was a recipient of the Padma Shri and the BC Roy Award.



- **Note:** Ashok Panagariya's publisher announced that his memoir, "**Monk in a Merc**" will be released on June 28, 2021.

Source: Indian Express

## Ramakrishna Math and Mission vice-president passes away



- Vice-President of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission Swami Shivamayanandaji passed away.
- Shivamayananda was born in Bihar on December 20, 1934.
- He joined the order in Belur Math in 1959, received "Sanyas Diksha" from Swami Vireshwaranandaji Maharaj in 1969.

**Source: The Hindu**

### Kannada actor Sanchari Vijay passes away



- National Award-winning actor Sanchari Vijay passed away.
- Vijay Kumar Basavarajaiah known by his stage name Sanchari Vijay, was an Indian actor known for his work in Kannada cinema.
- Vijay was awarded the National Film Award for Best Actor at the 62nd National Film Awards.
- He also received the Karnataka State Film Award for Best Actor and the Filmfare Critics Award for Best Actor – South for the performance.

**Source: The Hindu**

### Miscellaneous