

# Monthly GK Digest: March 2021



## Monthly Digest March-2021

Dear readers,

This **Monthly GK Digest** is a **complete docket** of important news and events that occurred in a month of '**March 2021**'. This file is important for, **BBA and HM** exams.

### **Banking & Financial Awareness**

- 1. Indian Overseas Bank** has signed a corporate agency agreement with the SBI General Insurance to retail its insurance products to the customers of the bank.  
**Note:** IOB has signed a Bancassurance for the distribution of the non-life offerings with SBI General Insurance to offer a wide range of general insurance solutions and innovative products to the customers of the bank. This partnership will improve the reach of insurance products in urban, tier II and III markets. This will also create awareness to the customers about the personal lines of insurance.
- 2. Aditya Birla Health Insurance** has announced India's first initiatives of upto 100% health insurance premium returns under the new version of its Flagship product 'Activ Health Policy'.  
**Note:** With this ABHICL became the only insurance company to offer up to 100% premium returns(HealthReturnTM), offers upto 100% reload of sum insured through its upgraded Activ Health Policy. 'Activ Health' is Asia's first plan to offer mental illness counselling coverage and Industries first to cover unlimited homeopathy telemedicine.
- 3. The government of India** has decided to infuse **Rs. 1,500 crores** into state-owned Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) in the next financial year.  
**Note:** The amount is Rs 200 crore higher than the provision made by the government for the current fiscal. The government has earmarked Rs 1,300 crore capital infusion for the bank. The (Rs 1,500 crore) provision is for Exim Bank as equity support/ subscription to increase the paid up capital of the bank to the level of its authorised capital.
- 4. The Reserve Bank of India** came out with a slew of directions related to maintenance of liquidity coverage ratio, risk management, asset classification and loan-to-value ratio, among others, for **Housing Finance Companies**.  
**Note:** These directions, which shall come into force with an immediate effect and it will be applicable to all the housing finance companies registered under section 29A of the National Housing Bank Act 1987. HFCs are mandated to maintain a liquidity buffer in terms of liquidity coverage ratio (LCR). This will help to have sufficient high-quality liquid asset (HQLA) to survive an acute liquidity stress scenario lasting for 30 days.
- 5. As per the new guidelines** for Housing Finance Companies released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), by **1st Dec 2025** all HFCs irrespective of their asset size will have to maintain 100% liquidity coverage ratio (LCR).  
**Note:** HFCs are mandated to maintain a liquidity buffer in terms of liquidity coverage ratio (LCR). This will help to have sufficient high-quality liquid asset (HQLA) to survive an acute liquidity stress scenario lasting for 30 days. Therefore, the non-deposit taking HFCs with an asset size of Rs 10,000 crore and above, and all deposit-taking HFCs irrespective of their asset size will have to maintain a minimum LCR of 50% by 1st Dec 2021 and to 100% by 1st Dec 2025.
- 6. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has eased the listing norms for large companies by enabling them to divest a minimum **5 per cent** in the Initial public offering (IPO).  
**Note:** The minimum public float for large firms with post-issue market capital exceeding Rs 1 trillion is reduced from 10% of post-issue market capital (existing provision) to Rs 10,000 crore. In addition to this, there will be 5% of the incremental amount beyond Rs 1 trillion. A company with a post-issue market cap of Rs 2 trillion will have to divest a minimum of 7.5%, instead of 10%.
- 7. State Bank of India**, Ministry of MSMEs and the World Bank is planning to launch a \$100-million (\$1 billion) credit guarantee scheme to boost India's rooftop solar programme.  
**Note:** This scheme will enable micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and those firms which do not meet the lending criteria of banks and other financial institutions to avail concessional debt financing for setting up rooftop solar units. WB credit guarantee scheme will be provided as a Green finance i.e. financing for sustainable climate.



8. Telangana Grameena Bank and Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank became India's 1st RRBs to launch Digital Savings Account opening facility through Video-Know Your Customer (KYC) facility. These banks are sponsored by **State Bank of India**.
9. **Cashfree** has partnered with PayPal to enable International payments for its merchants.  
**Note:** It will enable businesses using Cashfree's payment gateway to show prices of all products in 28 + currencies. It will enable Businesses to add a PayPal Express Checkout option to their order pages and accept payments from users across 200 markets.
10. **Wipro** has joined the "Partnering for Racial Justice in Business initiative" launched by WEF that will help in promoting a culture of inclusion, diversity, justice and equity for the people coming from different racial backgrounds at the workplace.  
**Note:** The initiative is aimed towards driving action and accountability for companies to confront racism at a systemic level, set new global standards for racial justice in business and accomplish necessary policy changes for inclusion and advancement of professionals with under-represented racial and ethnic identities.
11. The Arya Collateral Warehousing Services Pvt. Ltd. (Arya) has partnered with **Canara Bank** to offer collateral management and warehousing services to support the farmers with effective market linkage.  
**Note:** Arya will support the farmers and FPOs to get financial assistance against their agricultural produce stored in warehouses managed by Arya. Through the 450 FPO's that work with Arya, Canara Bank will leverage the reach of Arya to more than 350000 farmers.
12. **State Bank of India** has joined 'Liink', a peer-to-peer Blockchain-based data network of US based Investment Banking Company JPMorgan chase.  
**Note:** The partnership will help SBI to reduce transaction costs, speed up Consumer transactions (including International transactions). SBI became the 1st bank in India to go live on the blockchain-based payment network of JPMorgan.
13. **National Stock Exchange** signed an MoU with the SIDBI for cooperation in the various MSMEs initiatives.  
**Note:** The various initiatives of the NSE and SIDBI for the betterment of MSME and the cooperation between them will impact the development of the MSMEs and increase the reach of these programs. The major MSME initiatives to solve the working capital problems faced by small businesses were SME Exchange, NSE Emerge and TreDs platform of Receivable Exchange of India Ltd (RXIL).
14. **Kotak Mahindra Bank** has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army for salary accounts of Indian army personnel.  
**Note:** Private sector lender Kotak Mahindra Bank will handle the salary account of the Indian army personnel, the bank said. The bank has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army here for salary account.
15. **Rs 7,000 crore** is the initial capital likely to put in the in the proposed bad bank that aims to help extract funds stuck in non-performing loans by nine banks and 2 NBFCs including SBI, PNB, and Bank of Baroda.  
**Note:** The entities include PSBs like State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank, Union Bank of India, Bank of India. Other than these, private sector lenders ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, IDBI bank are also a part of the combine. Meanwhile, the non-bank entities include state-owned financiers of power projects- Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC).
16. To support women entrepreneurs, **HDFC Bank** has announced the launch of mentoring programme 'SmartUp Unnati'.  
**Note:** Under this, senior women leaders from HDFC Bank with expertise spanning domains will mentor women entrepreneurs in helping them achieve their goals over the next one year. This programme is available only to exist customers. 'SmartUp Unnati' will initially target more than 3,000 women entrepreneurs associated with the bank's SmartUp programme.
17. **121<sup>st</sup>** is India's rank Globally in the latest Economic Freedom Index 2021 published by US conservative think-tank, The Heritage Foundation.  
**Note:** lobally, the Foundation rates India's economy as the 121st freest. Although its overall score is unchanged, improvements were made in business freedom. This was offset by declines in judicial effectiveness and other scores.
18. Technology company Google has launched a new web platform 'Women Will' that will support one million rural women entrepreneurs in India to help them pursue their ambitions and improve their livelihoods.  
**Note:** Google will implement this through the 'Women Will' web platform launched at the virtual Google for India event on 8 March, International Women's Day. Available in English and Hindi, the Women Will platform is designed for women aspiring to explore entrepreneurship.
19. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has collaborated with **SahiPay** to promote nano-entrepreneurship amongst youth in the financial services sector.  
**Note:** As a part of collaboration, candidates will be provided access to free digital skilling on 'Online Entrepreneurship Program' through NSDC's eSkill India



portal. It will provide youth an opportunity to explore self-employment for sustainable livelihood.

**20. Indian Oil Corporation** has signed an MoU with Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) to develop Paradip Plastic Park.

**Note:** Keeping the enterprise and employment generation potential of the plastic sector in mind, Government of India has initiated the cluster development of the Industry through its Plastic Park scheme. Currently, six such parks have been approved by the Government of India, with Paradip Plastic Park being one of them.

**21. NITI Aayog** has organized a national-level virtual workshop on asset monetization along with the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA).

**Note:** The workshop elaborated on the strategic context of core and non-core asset monetization, along with detailed discussions on the need for and modality of such monetization by public sector entities, and the experiences of public and private sector entities in the space. The workshop discussed the various benefits and pre-requisites of leveraging private sector participation for monetization.

**22. Ujjivan Small Finance Bank** has launched “Garima Saving Accounts”, a women Saving Account to provide the financial needs of women.

**Note:** The account offers various customised benefits for women which includes a maximum of 7% rate of interest on savings account. Free Cash Deposit of up to Rs.5 lakhs per month or 8 transactions, whichever is earlier at any Ujjivan SFB branch.

**23. Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVGB)** has launched the ‘Vikas Asha’ Loan Scheme, under which the bank will distribute loans of up to INR 10 Lakhs to Women Entrepreneurs.

**Note:** The scheme is exclusively for women to meet their business-related needs, for purchasing machinery/equipment/vehicle. It shall also be utilized for meeting the working capital requirements under Micro and Small Enterprises including retail trade.

**24. AckoDrive**, an online car sales platform, a product of ACKO Technologies and Services Private Limited partnered with **IDFC FIRST Bank** to issue free FASTags.

**Note:** The AckoDrive issues FASTags over the digital platform without issuance fee, paperwork or security deposit. The AckoDrive FASTags can be purchased by any private car owner by providing the personal information and vehicle details and initial wallet money of Rs.100 to recharge the FASTag.

**25.** As per the interim Economic Outlook published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

Development (OECD) the Indian economy will grow at **12.6%** in Financial Year 2022.

**Note:** That would enable India to retain its earlier tag of the fastest growing large economy in the world. It, however, pegged economic growth rate to come down to 5.4 per cent in 2022-23, which would be higher by 0.6 percentage points than its earlier estimates. That year, India would share its fastest-growing large economy tag with Indonesia, according to the OECD.

**26. IDBI Bank** has been removed from the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework, by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), after almost four years.

**Note:** The RBI had placed IDBI Bank under the framework in May 2017, after it had breached the thresholds for capital adequacy, asset quality (net NPAs were over 13% in March 2017), return on assets and leverage ratio. It was noted as per published results for the quarter ended December 31, the bank was not in breach of the PCA parameters on regulatory capital, net NPA and leverage ratio. The LIC-owned IDBI Bank had reported a standalone net profit of ₹378 crore for the December quarter.

**27. Magicbricks Realty Services limited** has partnered with Razorpay and **HDFC Bank** to create a secure online solution “Pay Rent” feature for rent payments through credit cards.

**Note:** The online solution is created with a focus on the 10 million rental residential household market. The estimated market size of the payment of rent through credit card is around Rs.3000 crore.

**28. DBS Bank** has partnered with TRRAIN to support the youth from low income households, pandemic affected, and persons with disabilities through skill training and employment opportunities.

**Note:** It is a part of the initiative ‘DBS Stronger Together Fund’. The partnership will lead to one-year-long, Pan-India program which is a combination of classroom and online training sessions.

**29. Aquaconnect** partnered with **Bank of Baroda** to provide credit access to 1.6 million aquaculture farmers under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme.

**Note:** In this regard, M V Murali Krishna, General Manager and Head of Rural and Agri Banking Department of Bank of Baroda signed the MoU along with Arpan Bhalerao, Chief Growth Officer, Aquaconnect. Kisan Credit Card was introduced in August 1998 and created by NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development)

**30.** Government has mandated Electronic-invoicing (e-invoicing) under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime for business entities with a turnover of **INR 50 Crore & more.**



**Note:** It is the 3rd Phase of mandatory e-invoicing under the GST regime. The 1st phase of e-invoicing covered business entities with INR 500 Crore turnover & the 2nd phase covered entities with INR 100 Crore. E-invoicing is mandatory under Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Rules, 2017.

31. e-Commerce & financial Service provider **Paytm** has launched “Smart PoS” a new application for accepting contactless payments through smartphones and also launched the second version of its Internet of Things (IoT) based instant voice confirmation device, “Soundbox 2.0”.

**Note:** Paytm also launched the second version of its Internet of Things (IoT) based instant voice confirmation device, “Soundbox 2.0”. The Smart PoS app is supported by “Paytm for Business” (P4B) app for managing seamless transactions.

32. **Karur Vysya Bank** has entered into a co-lending business partnership with Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited to make new customers all over India with technology from Nucleus Software.

**Note:** The aim of the co-lending is lower the cost of capital and open new markets by enabling new loans at finer rates using technology to enable seamless integration with multiple partner banks. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced this scheme, under which banks will be permitted to co-lend with all registered NBFCs (including HFCs) based on a prior agreement.

33. **Axis Bank** became India’s first bank to launch its own wearable payment device named ‘Wear ‘N’ Pay’, to make contactless transactions.

**Note:** Axis Bank partnered with Thales and Tappy Technologies to design and create these products and they are available on the Mastercard platform. The wearables are embedded with a Flexi-chip which is directly linked with the customer’s bank account and can be used like a regular debit card.

34. **State Bank of India** topped the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) Digital Payment Scorecard for 3 consecutive months.

**Note:** The scorecard tracks the performance of the commercial banks on various digital parameters. SBI topped the list by recording the highest UPI transaction volume of around 64 crore with a user base of 13.5 crores.

35. As per the new guidelines of the Securities and Exchange Board of India **10%** is the investment limit for Mutual Funds in debt instruments with special features such as additional tier-I.

**Note:** Mutual fund will not invest over 10 per cent of its NAV of the debt portfolio of the scheme in instruments with special features and not more than 5 per cent of its

NAV of the debt portfolio in instruments issued by a single issuer. Banning close-ended schemes from investing in perpetual bonds, SEBI said the maturity of all perpetual bonds will be treated as 100 years from the date of issuance for the purpose of valuation.

36. **TATA Motors** has launched a holistic programme that supports new parents in their exciting journey both as a parent and also as a valued employee, titled as ‘Wheels of Love’.

**Note:** It will promote a progressive culture of care, inclusion and sensitization within the organization across levels. It is also presented in the form of a specially curated book with focus on growing family and career goals of employee. Other aspects: Announcing pregnancy, Dedicated Counselling Sessions

37. Cabinet has approved amendment to Insurance Act, 1938 to increase the permissible foreign direct investment (FDI) limit in insurance sector to **74%**.

**Note:** Currently, FDI limit in the life and general insurance is 49% with ownership and management control with Indian. It will allow foreign ownership and control with safeguards, and also provide insurance companies with committed funds to improve the penetration of insurance. Govt hiked FDI cap from 26% to 49% in 2015.

38. As per the Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI) data, India’s position is **4<sup>th</sup>** in terms of Foreign exchange (Forex) reserves holder -

**Note:** India’s foreign currency holdings fell by \$4.3 billion to \$580.3 billion and Russia’s forex holdings were \$580.1 billion. As of March 2021, International Monetary Fund (IMF) table, China has the largest reserves, followed by Japan, Switzerland, India, and Russia. Foreign exchange reserves are assets held on reserve by a central bank (RBI) in foreign currencies, which can include foreign currencies, bonds, treasury bills, and other government securities.

39. The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a penalty of Rs 2 crore on **State Bank of India** for contravention of norms, including specific directions to the lender on remuneration to its employees in the form of commission.

**Note:** The penalty has been imposed for contravention of certain sections of Banking Regulation Act and its specific directions of RBI issued to the bank on payment of remuneration to employees in the form of commission.

40. Telecom equipment maker **Nokia** has partnered with **Microsoft, Amazon web services** and Google to



develop new cloud-based 5G radio solutions with its radio access network (RNA) technology.

**Note:** The goal of the partnerships is to develop new business cases, the company. RAN is the part of a mobile telecommunication system. This system implements a radio access technology.

41. The **Reserve Bank of India** has asked all the banks in India to implement the image-based Cheque Truncation System (CTS) under respective grids in all its branches by **September 30, 2021**.

**Note:** About 18,000 bank branches are still outside any formal clearing arrangement hence, it is proposed to bring all such branches under the CTS image-based clearing mechanism by September 2021. On February 5, 2021, RBI had announced Pan-India coverage of CTS by bringing all branches of banks in the country under an image-based CTS clearing mechanism.

42. **ReNew Power** has become the India's second renewable energy company has been named the Global Lighthouse Company by World Economic Forum (WEF).

**Note:** WEF Global Lighthouse Network recognizes companies using new technologies to achieve environmentally sustainable, community-supportive, profitable growth. ReNew's Hubli facility was specifically nominated as a Global Lighthouse for its ground-breaking work in the development and deployment of advanced analytics and machine learning solutions to increase the yield of ReNew's wind and solar assets.

43. **Punjab National Bank** has incorporated a wholly owned subsidiary which will deal with the banks' non-financial support services related to its credit card business.

**Note:** The authorised capital of the company is Rs 25 crore, which is divided into 25 million shares of Rs 10 each, and the paid-up capital is Rs 15 crore. It is important to note that among public sector banks, State Bank of India, the country's largest lender, has a separate arm for its card business -- SBI Cards and Payment Services.

44. **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)** and Israeli battery developer Phinergy formalised a joint venture to manufacture ultra-lightweight metal-air batteries for electric vehicles (EVs).

**Note:** The equal joint venture will replace lithium with aluminum to make batteries that will charge faster and give a longer run. This will "help overcome most of the challenges facing EVs including range anxiety.

45. **State Bank of India** and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) has signed first Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR) linked External Commercial Borrowing

(ECB) deal with by replacing the London Inter-Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR).

**Note:** The SOFR linked ECB deal is for about \$100 million with a maturity of 5 years. This deal made by SBI & IOCL is the first SOFR linked ECB deal in India. It will facilitate other firms in India to take this as a reference to make a transition from Libor to Alternate Reference Rates (ARR) linked ECB.

46. **Power Trading Corporation of India Limited** has signed an initial pact with the National Productivity Council (NPC) to explore the business opportunities in consultancy services.

**Note:** Under this pact, both NPC and PTC have agreed to jointly explore and develop business opportunities for consultancy/project management services in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, productivity enhancements, quality assurances, optimization of technology, and others within India and overseas.

47. **Tech Mahindra** has announced to acquire a 70 % stake in Ireland-based **Perigord Asset Holdings Ltd** for around Rs 182 crore and plans to buy the remaining 30% shareholding over a period of 4 years.

**Note:** It is intended to help in augmenting its expertise in the domains of global pharmaceutical, and HLS (Healthcare and Lifesciences). It is a part of Tech Mahindra's long-term growth plan which is to make a presence across key markets in Ireland, Germany, the USA, and India with enhanced global delivery

48. Government's think tank **NITI Aayog** has **six** public sector banks including state bank of India out of the privatization plan.

**Note:** The other five PSBs are Punjab National Bank, Union Bank, Canara Bank, Indian Bank, Bank of Baroda. The government will soon take a call on the two banks and one general insurer that will be taken up for privatization in the next fiscal year. The NITI Aayog's recommendation to exclude these is in line with the thinking within the finance ministry that is keen on expeditious integration of systems at these banks, the publication mentioned.

49. **NPCI** has launched 'UPI-Help'.

**Note:** The 'UPI-Help' will help in the grievance redressal mechanism for BHIM app users. With this application, users will be able to check the status of the pending transactions, raise complaints against transactions that are not processed if the money has not reached the other end and raise complaints against merchant transactions.

50. **Deutsche Bank** and Continuum Energy Levanter Pte Ltd has executed the world's first green hedging transaction, with a second party opinion based on a specially designed green hedge framework.



**Note:** Both the firms are working together to develop a green hedge framework to support the implementation of Continuum's green bond framework. External reviewer, Cicero Green, has issued the second party opinion on the green bond and the green hedge frameworks.

51. International Air Transport Association (IATA) has partnered with **Standard Chartered Bank** for providing 'EasyPay' services 'pay as you go' to travel agents in India which will replace the traditional billing and settlement system.

**Note:** The new system is aimed at increasing the digitisation of payments that will result in improving cash flows for the aviation industry and for the travel agents. In the earlier system, the agents would receive credit for tickets. As one of IATA's EasyPay service providers in India, Stanchart said it will provide greater payment flexibility to travel agents.

52. **Asian Development Bank** has raised over USD 307 Million from the first Panda bond issue in more than a decade.

**Note:** It is the first borrowing of ADB from a CNY10 billion program approved by regulator National Association of Financial Market Institutional Investors in June 2020. It will support ADB for its development project in china during its 5-year country partnership strategy.

53. **Union bank of India** has partnered with SMC Global Securities to provide online trading services to the bank's customers.

**Note:** Customers can trade using the portal [www.smctradeonline.com](http://www.smctradeonline.com) apart from desktop and mobile applications. SMC has a presence in more than 550 cities which can service the lender's 9,500 branches.

54. According to UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Indian economy is estimated to contract by **6.9%** in FY 2020-21.

**Note:** However, it forecasted to record a "stronger recovery" in 2021 and grow by 5 per cent in FY 2021-22. The September 2020 report by UNCTAD had said that India's economy was forecast to contract by 5.9 per cent in 2020 and recover to 3.9 per cent in 2021.

55. **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** has released a publication titled "Handbook on Ethics for Insolvency Professionals: Ethical and Regulatory Framework", a practical guide for insolvency professionals (IPs) for discharging their duties ethically in association with British High Commission.

**Note:** Dr. Navrang Saini, Whole Time Member, IBBI released the handbook in the presence of Ms. Natalie Toms, Chief Economist and Counsellor, British High Commission. The launch was followed by the webinar on

"Pre-Pack Insolvency Resolution Process: Report of the Sub-Committee of the ILC". It is based on inputs on the best practices followed by insolvency practitioners in the UK.

56. The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** approved the acquisition of **51%** of the equity share capital of North Eastern Electricity Supply Company of Odisha (NESCO Utility) by The Tata Power Company Limited (TPCL).

**Note:** The proposed acquisition is in accordance with the competitive bidding process initiated by the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission ("OERC") under Section 20 of the Electricity Act, 2003. TPCL which is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra was incorporated on 18th September 1919, a public listed company that is primarily engaged in the business of power generation, transmission, and distribution. It is a part of the Tata group.

57. The Power Grid Corporation of India has signed an agreement with Jaiprakash Power Ventures (JPVL) for the acquisition of **74%** stake of JPVL in Jaypee PowerGrid (JPL).

**Note:** Powergrid has already owned a 26% stake in JPVL and now through this acquisition, it became a wholly-owned subsidiary of Power Grid. JPL has developed a 214-kilometer-long EHV power transmission project to evacuate power from the Karcham-Wangtoo project in Himachal Pradesh.

58. Under chairmanship of **Shyamala Gopinath** the Reserve Bank of India has announced the setting up of a standing external advisory committee (SEAC) to evaluate applications for universal banks and small finance banks.

**Note:** The five-member committee will be headed by former deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath. The SEAC which will have a tenure of three years, and will screen applications for universal and small finance banks after the regulator first vets the proposal.

59. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has hiked the maximum cover under the standard health insurance plan – Arogya Sanjeevani Policy – from Rs 5 lakh to **Rs 10 lakh**.

**Note:** Insurers can offer the revised sum insured with effect from 1 May, 2021 or earlier. IRDAI made it compulsory for insurers to offer a sum insured of up to ₹10 lakhs, starting from ₹50,000 and in multiples of ₹50,000.

60. As per the relaxed norms of for valuing perpetual bonds by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) **10 years** would be the maturity period until March 31, 2022.



**Note:** The norms, which had sought to value banks' deemed residual maturity of Basel III additional tier 1 (AT1) bonds as 100-year debt from April 1, were strongly opposed by the finance ministry. In a statement, the regulator said the maturity would be 10 years until March 31, 2022 and would be increased to 20 and 30 years over the subsequent six-month period.

61. As per the revised estimate of Fitch Ratings **12.8%** will be the GDP growth rate of India in FY 2022.

**Note:** It anticipates the level of India's GDP to remain well below its pre-pandemic forecast trajectory. Fitch also expects GDP growth to ease to 5.8% in Fiscal Year 2023. India's recovery from the depths of the lockdown-induced recession in the second quarter of 2020 has been observed as swifter than expected.

62. **ICICI Bank** becomes the first in the industry to launch an instant EMI (Equated Monthly Instalments) facility on its internet banking platform in partnering with BillDesk and Razorpay.

**Note:** Called 'EMI @ Internet Banking', the facility aims to offer increased affordability to millions of pre-approved customers, as it enables them to convert their high-value transactions up to ₹5 lakh into easy monthly instalments. It also brings in enhanced customer experience as customers get the benefit of EMIs instantly and in a fully digital manner.

63. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zones (APSEZ) Ltd, a subsidiary of the diversified Adani Group acquired **58.1%** of stack in Gangavaram Port Limited (GPL) belongs to DVS Raju & Family.

**Note:** Adani port made an agreement to acquire 89.6% of GPL i.e. (31.5% from Warburg Pincus and 58.1% from DVS Raju & Family). As per the agreement it acquired the 31.5% stake from Warburg Pincus on March 17, 2021.

64. The age bracket of **21 – 38 Years** for the 'IOB Trendy', a savings account customised for the growing millennial population launched by the Indian Overseas Bank (IOB).

**Note:** Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) launched 'IOB Trendy', a savings account customised for the growing millennial population in the country by keeping their banking preferences in mind. The account may be self or jointly operated. In case of a joint account, the primary holder has to be a millennial at the time of account opening.

65. **ESAF Small Finance Bank** had been awarded 'Great place to work' certification by the Great place to Work Institute.

**Note:** The certification is the result of an employee survey conducted by the third-party global authority on recognising high-trust and performance culture at workplaces. This recognition acknowledges the bank's commitment and credibility amongst its employees.

66. **HDFC Bank** has been adjudged as the 'India's Best Bank for SMEs' at the Asiamoney Best Bank Awards 2021.

**Note:** HDFC Bank's transformation of its micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) business over the past few years makes it a worthy winner of this award. The Annual Best Banks survey of the financial magazine based in Hong Kong, aims to identify which banks in each market have excelled across a range of core banking activities over the past 12 months.

67. Public Sector Undertaking **NTPC** has been conferred with the 'Role Model' Award at the 11th Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) National HR Excellence Award 2020-21.

**Note:** NTPC is the only PSU to have received this prestigious award. The award was presented at the virtual conference "Learn from the Achievers".

68. **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited** and Union Bank of India have launched a co-branded contactless RuPay credit card.

**Note:** This card is a contactless "Tap & Go" card and National Common Mobility Card (NCMC). While using this card at HPCL retail outlets, the cardholder will get Cashback/Rewards along with the waiver of fuel surcharge provided by the Bank.

69. **FICCI** has signed an MoU with the IFSCA to establish a framework for collaboration and co-operation for the development of Gujarat International Finance Tec-City ('GIFT') IFSC.

**Note:** The MoU will lead to future collaborations and cooperation between IFSCA and FICCI for the development of a world-class FinTech Hub in GIFT IFSC. FICCI will also assist IFSCA in the development of FinTech Accelerator programmes in GIFT IFSC among the other cooperation areas.

70. Tata Motors signed a three-year MoU with **State Bank of India** to offer financial assistance to the customers looking to purchase its small and light commercial vehicles.

**Note:** According to the automaker, the partnership will not only create employment but also generate more demand for its BS6 range of vehicles. Tata Motors claimed that the collaboration with SBI will allow its CV customers to avail loans in a hassle-free manner as well as access the bank's unique technology-laden offerings.

71. **Edelweiss Infrastructure Yield Plus (EIYP)** has acquired a 74% stake in Engie Group's Solar Energy Assets in India.

**Note:** The Engie Group has 813 MW of operational solar assets in the country, and it plans to add up to 2 GW more over next couple of years, which once commissioned will be acquired by the EIYP. EIYP is the





largest yield-focused infrastructure AIF (alternative investment fund) in the country today.

72. **Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Our Food Pvt. Ltd., Visakhapatnam to help farmers set up cost effective processing units.

**Note:** In a bid to help farmers set up cost effective processing units, the Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding

(MoU) with Our Food Pvt. Ltd., Visakhapatnam. According to the MOU signed recently, the vendor will ensure supply, delivery and installation of high quality, standardised and branded equipment/machinery as per the requirement of the farmer/farmer franchisee, and also purchase of processed products. The vendors also ensure regular recovery towards such loan accounts and also support the bank in end utilisation of the loan.

### Obituaries

1. Veteran parliamentarian Nand Kumar Singh Chauhan passed away recently, he was Lok Sabha MP from **BJP**.  
**Note:** He was suffering from COVID-19 and was airlifted to Medanta Hospital in Gurugram last month in a serious condition. The leader started his political career in 1978 from the Shahpur Municipal Council and was later elected as member of the Madhya Pradesh Assembly. He was an MLA from 1985 to 1996.
2. **Social Activist** Vernon Jordan passed away recently.  
**Note:** Vernon Jordan, who grew up in the segregated South to become an influential leader in the American civil rights movement, Washington politics and Wall Street passed away at age 85. Jordan, who in 1980 was badly wounded by a white supremacist sniper in Indiana, died Monday night, according to the statement, journalist Andrew Ross Sorkin.
3. N.S. Lakshminarayana Bhatta passed away recently, he was a veteran poet of **Kannada** language.  
**Note:** Well-known Kannada poet, critic and translator N.S. Lakshminarayana Bhatta passed away in Bengaluru. The poet, many of whose bhavageetes (lyrical poems) were set to tune and popularised through cassettes in the 80s, was ailing for sometime. He is survived by his wife and two children. Born in 1936 in Shivamogga district, he was a prolific writer, publishing several collections of poems besides critical works and translations. He taught Kannada literature in Bengaluru university until he retired. Some of his best known songs are Thaye ninna madilali, Marege ninthu kayuthiruva karulu yaavudu, Baare nanna Deepika among others.
4. Renowned personality billionaire Olivier Dassault passed away recently, he belongs to **France**.  
**Note:** The Dassault Aviation group has been a leading French plane manufacturer for the last 70 years and is behind the Falcon private jet, the Mirage warplane, and most recently the state-of-the art Rafale fighter. Forbes magazine estimated that Olivier Dassault was the 361st most wealthy person on the planet in 2020, with a fortune estimated at around five billion euros (\$6 billion) -- around the same as his three siblings.
5. Renowned personality Anshuman Singh passed away recently, he was former governor of **Rajasthan**.  
**Note:** He passed away due to COVID-19 related pneumonia. He was born in 1935 in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. Anshuman Singh served as the Governor of Rajasthan from 16th January 1999 to May 2003.
6. Renowned personality Marvelous Marvin Hagler passed away recently, he was a veteran **middleweight champion**.  
**Note:** He is an American dominated middleweight champion from 1979 until his controversial defeat by Sugar Ray Leonard in April 1987. He fought 67 times during his 14-year professional career and won 62 out of them.
7. Renowned personality M.G. George passed away recently he was chairman of **Muthoot Group**.  
**Note:** He was the third generation from his family to become the chairman of the Muthoot Group. He was also the Chairman of the FICCI Kerala State Council. He was the trustee of the Indian Orthodox Church and was also a member of the National Executive Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
8. Padma Bhushan recipient and veteran artist Laxman Pai passed away recently, he belongs to **Goa**.  
**Note:** The renowned painter was born in Goa in 1926, he is well known for his contemporary paintings he is also the former principal of the Goa College of Art. He received the third highest civilian honour of Padma Bhushan award in 2018.
9. Padma Shri Chemacheri Kunhiraman Nari passed away recently, he was a performer of **Kathakali** classical dance.  
**Note:** He founded the Bharatiya Natykalayalam, the first school of dance in North Kerala in 1945 and in 1983 he established Cheliya Kathakali Vidyalayam in Kozhikode. He has won several honours for his contribution to the art form of Kathakali, which includes, Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Award in 1979, Kerala Kalamandalam award in 2001, Kala Ratna award in 2009,



- Mayilpeeli award and Sangeet Natak Akademi Tagore award.
10. Renowned personality GV Ramakrishna passed away recently, he was former chairman/head of **SEBI**.  
**Note:** Born in 1930 in Bengaluru, he started his career as a biochemist and then opted for civil services in 1952. Known for his stellar administrative performance, Ramakrishna was appointed as the chairman Sebi in 1990 when it lacked legal status. Among his many works, he was known for strongly advocating to ban the badla stock trading system in 1994. He headed SEBI till that year and then became the first chairman of the Disinvestment Commission in 1996.
  11. Renowned personality Sagar Sarhadi passed away recently he was a veteran **Screen Writer**.  
**Note:** Sarhadi began his career writing Urdu short stories and became an Urdu playwright. Filmmaker Yash Chopra's 1976 film 'Kabhi Kabhie', starring Amitabh Bachchan and Raakhee, opened the gates to his Bollywood career. The writer collaborated with Chopra for screenplays in acclaimed films like 'Silсила' (1981) and Sridevi and Rishi Kapoor-starrer "Chandni", for which he wrote the dialogues.
  12. Renowned personality Anil Dharker passed away recently, he was veteran **Journalist**.  
**Note:** He was in his mid-70s, was the editor of several publications including Mid-Day and The Independent and played a vital role in opening the Akashwani Auditorium in south Mumbai as an art movie theatre. Dharker had been the editor of a variety of publications, starting with 'Debonair', 'Mid-Day'; 'The Independent' and 'The Illustrated Weekly of India'.
  13. Renowned personality KC Chakrabarty passed away recently, he was former **Deputy Governor of RBI**.  
**Note:** He was the deputy governor of the central bank between 15 June 2009 and 25 April 2014 when he demitted office three months before his term was to end. Prior to the stint, he had served as the chairman and managing director (CMD) of Punjab National Bank (2007-2009), and CMD of Indian Bank (2005-2007).
  14. Renowned personality Anil Dharker passed away recently He was veteran **Journalist and Author**.  
**Note:** Anil Dharker was one of India's best known editors and a tireless supporter of the arts. During his lifetime, Dharker had donned many hats and was the lifeline behind the popular literary festival, Tata Literature Live. Anil Dharker worked as an editor across several publications, of different genres, starting with the Debonair, then Mid-day, The Independent, and the Illustrated Weekly of India.
  15. Nawal Saadawi, a renowned feminist, psychiatrist and novelist passed away recently he was belonged to **Egypt**.  
**Note:** Nawal Saadawi, a renowned Egyptian feminist, psychiatrist and novelist, whose writings have stirred controversy for decades in an overwhelmingly conservative society passed away. She was a fierce advocate of women rights in Egypt and the Arab world. In 2020, Time Magazine named her on their 100 Women of the Year list.
  16. Renowned personality Laxmipriya Mohapatra passed away recently, she was veteran **Odissi dancer**.  
**Note:** Noted Odissi dancer **Laxmipriya Mohapatra**, the wife of legendary classical dancer Kelucharan Mohapatra, passed away. She started her dancing career at the **Annapura Theatre in Puri in 1947**. She has also acted in four Odia movies.
  17. Renowned personality Adam Zagajewski passed away recently, he was veteran **Polish poet**.  
**Note:** Renowned Polish poet Adam Zagajewski has passed away. He was a leading figure in Poland's New Wave or Generation '68, a literary movement of the late 1960s that called for a simple language to relate directly to reality.
  18. Renowned personality KC Chakrabarty passed away recently, he was former **Deputy Governor, RBI**.  
**Note:** Former Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor, KC Chakrabarty passed away. He was the deputy governor of the central bank between 15 June 2009 and 25 April 2014 when he demitted office three months before his term was to end.
  19. Mmilitary hero who led an infantry division to a legendary victory in the 1971 India-Pakistan War who passed away recently -- **Walter Anthony Gustavo 'WAG' Pinto**.  
**Note:** Lieutenant General, Walter Anthony Gustavo 'WAG' Pinto (Retd), a military hero who led an infantry division to a legendary victory in the 1971 India-Pakistan War has passed away at the age of 97. He led the 54 Infantry Division in the Battle of Basantar in the war that gave birth to Bangladesh, leading his troops from the front with the motto he coined "bash on regardless".

### Important Days

1. Zero Discrimination Day is celebrated every year on **1<sup>st</sup> March**.

**Note:** Zero Discrimination Day is celebrated to promote and celebrate everyone's right, regardless of age,



gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnicity, skin colour, etc. Zero Discrimination Day aims to raise the voice for the right to live life with dignity, despite one's choices, beliefs, profession, education, disability or even illness. The theme of Zero Discrimination Day 2021: "End Inequalities".

2. 45th Civil Accounts Day was celebrated on **1<sup>st</sup> March**.  
**Note:** The Indian Civil Accounts Service (ICAS) observes the "Civil Accounts Day" every year on March 01, 2021, since its inception in 1976. The year 2021 marks the 45th Civil Accounts Day celebrations. ICAS is one of the Civil Services of India, under the Department of Expenditure, Union Ministry of Finance.
3. World Hearing Day is celebrated every year on **3<sup>rd</sup> March** by the World Health Organisation (WHO).  
**Note:** The theme of World Hearing Day 2021 is **Hearing care for ALL!: Screen, Rehabilitate, Communicate**. World Hearing Day 2021 will mark the launch of the first-ever **World Report on Hearing**.
4. World Wildlife Day is observed globally every year on **3<sup>rd</sup> March**.  
**Note:** World Wildlife Day also raise awareness about the benefits that the conservation of wild fauna and flora provides to people living on earth. The day also reminds us of the need to fight against wildlife crime and human-induced reduction of species causing various wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts.
5. **Sadak Suraksha** is the theme of the National Safety Day 2021.  
**Note:** The National Safety Day (NSD) is celebrated every year on 4 March by the National Safety Council (NSC) of India. In 2021, we are observing the 50th National Safety Day. The purpose of the day Purpose is to instil a sense of safety awareness among people by providing them with safety, health and environment-related support services.
6. National Security Day (Rashtriya Suraksha Diwas) is celebrated every year on **4th March**.  
**Note:** The day aims to show gratitude to all the security forces, including policemen, para-military forces, commandos, guards, army officers, and other persons involved in security, who sacrifice their life in maintaining the peace and security of the people of the country. 4 March also marks the day when the National Security Council (NSC) of India was established, in 1966 by the Ministry of Labour under the Government of India. The first National Security Day (NSD) was held in 1972.
7. "**Jan Aushadhi -- Seva Bhi, Rozgar Bhi**" was the theme of the Janaushadhi Week celebrated from March 1st to March 7th, 2021 to create more awareness about "Janaushadhi".

**Note:** On the occasion of Jan Aushadhi Divas 2021 Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the 7,500th Janaushadhi Kendra at NEIGRIHMS in Shillong. The Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana aims to provide quality medicines at an affordable price.

8. **#ChooseToChallenge** is the theme of the International Women's Day 2021 which is observed every year on 8th March.  
**Note:** Every year, Women's Day is observed to celebrate the spirit of women every year on 8th March. The first-ever Women's Day was organised in 1911 by the early 20th century Marxist from Germany Clara Zetkin, who was born in Germany's Wiederau. Two years later, in 1913, the date was changed to March 8, and it continues to be celebrated as such every year.
9. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) celebrated its 52nd Raising Day on **March 10**.  
**Note:** CISF or Central Industrial Security Forces was instituted in the year 1969 with a motto to provide integrated protection to the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). Keeping into consideration the evolving demands of the dynamic nature of security, the force has been re-oriented and updated.
10. National Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) Day is observed every year on **March 10**.  
**Note:** The aim of the day is to raise awareness about the link between maternal health and diabetes nationwide, and inviting pregnant women to hospitals and clinics for free screening.
11. World Kidney Day (WKD) is celebrated every year on **second Thursday of March (11<sup>th</sup> March 2021)**.  
**Note:** It is the global awareness campaign to raise awareness of the importance of kidneys to our health and to reduce the impact of kidney disease and its associated health problems worldwide. This year theme is 'Living Well with Kidney Disease'. This year's theme aims to focus on the measures that can be taken to live a fulfilling life with kidney disease.
12. International Day of Mathematics (IDM) is observed every year on **March 14**.  
**Note:** Theme for 2021 IDM: 'Mathematics for a Better World'. The day was initiated by International Mathematical Union (IMU) to celebrate the importance of mathematics and its essential role in everyone's life.
13. Ministry of Women and Child Development has celebrated Poshan Pakhwada from **16<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2021**.  
**Note:** Addressing nutritional challenges through Food Forestry and organizing Poshan Panchayats are the key



focus areas for Poshan Pakhwada 2021. To address nutritional challenges, distribution of 4 saplings of nutrition rich plants per Anganwadi Centre (AWC) in the Aspirational Districts will be done under the supervision of local panchayat and DM/DC by National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), Ministry of AYUSH.

14. The National Vaccination Day, also known as National Immunization Day is observed every year on **16<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** The National Vaccination day 2020 aims to eradicate both polio and the COVID-19. The day was first observed on 16th March 1995, the day on which the Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme became operational.

15. International Day of Mathematics (IDM) is annually observed across the globe on **14<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** The day is observed to celebrate the beauty and importance of mathematics and its essential role in everyone's life. The day also marks the birth anniversary of renowned mathematician and physicist Albert Einstein and death anniversary of theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking. The theme of the International Day of Mathematics 2021 is "Mathematics for a Better World".

16. The International Day of Action for Rivers is annually observed across the globe on **14<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** 14th March 2021 marks the **24<sup>th</sup> edition** of the International Day of Action for Rivers. The theme of International Day of Action for Rivers **2021** is "**Rights of Rivers**".

17. World Consumer Rights Day is annually celebrated across the globe on **15<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** The world Consumer Rights day is coordinated by **Consumers International**, the membership organisation for consumer groups across the globe. The theme of World Consumer Rights Day 2021 is "**Tackling Plastic Pollution**".

18. The World Sleep Day is observed annually on **19<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** The world Sleep day is annually organised by the World Sleep Day Committee of the World Sleep Society. The World Sleep Day 2021 is co-chaired by Lourdes DelRosso, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Associate Sleep Medicine Fellowship Director at University of Washington and Professor Fang Han, MD of The Sleep Center, Peking University People's Hospital in Beijing, China.

19. United Nations International Happiness Day is celebrated every year on **20<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** It is a global event designated by the United Nations. The theme of the 2021 International Day of Happiness campaign is 'Keep Calm. Stay Wise. Be Kind'. The First International Day of Happiness was celebrated on 20th March 2013. International Day of Happiness is a day to value our happiness and make people happy.

20. World Sparrow Day is observed every year on **20<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** **World Sparrow Day** is annually observed across the world on **20<sup>th</sup> March** to create awareness and to bring attention to the significance and importance of conservation and protection of the sparrows and other such birds. The first world sparrow day was observed on **20<sup>th</sup> March 2010**. The theme of World Sparrow Day is "**I Love Sparrows**".

21. World Oral Health Day is celebrated every year on **20<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** The day is observed across the globe on **20<sup>th</sup> March** to promote the importance of oral health and to reduce the problems of oral diseases that affect the individuals, health system and economy. The theme of World Oral Health Day 2021 is "**Be Proud of your Mouth**" and this theme will be followed in 2022 and 2023.

22. International Day of Forest is celebrated every year on **21<sup>st</sup> March**.

**Note:** The United Nations observes March 21 as the International Day of Forests, commemorating the green cover around the world and reiterating its importance. The theme of the International Day of Forests for 2021 is "Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well-being".

23. The theme of the World Tuberculosis Day 2021 -- **The Clock is Ticking**.

**Note:** March 24 marks the day when Robert Koch discovered Mycobacterium tuberculosis in 1882 that causes TB, which opened the way towards diagnosing and curing this disease. Theme 2021: 'The Clock is Ticking'

24. The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on **21 March**.

**Note:** This year theme is "**Youth standing up against racism**". It engages the public through #FightRacism, which aims to foster a global culture of tolerance, equality and anti-discrimination and calls on each and every one of us to stand up against racial prejudice and intolerant attitudes.

25. Every year on **23<sup>rd</sup> March** Martyrs Day (Shaheed Diwas or Sarvodaya Day) is observed to pay tribute on the



death anniversary of the freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru.

**Note:** It was on March 23 in 1931, in Lahore (Pakistan), that these three were hanged to death for assassinating John Saunders, a British police officer in 1928. They had mistaken him for British police superintendent James Scott, who had ordered lathi-charge, which eventually led to the death of Lala Lajpat Rai.

26. The World Meteorological Day is celebrated every year on **23<sup>rd</sup> March**.

**Note:** The day is to commemorate the date of the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization in 23 March 1950. The day also highlights the contribution that the National Meteorological and

Hydrological Services make to the safety and well-being of society.

27. World Theatre Day is observed globally every year on **27<sup>th</sup> March**.

**Note:** World Theatre Day was initiated in 1961 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI), France. It is celebrated annually on the 27<sup>th</sup> March by ITI Centres and the international theatre community.

28. International Transgender Day of Visibility observed globally every year on **31<sup>st</sup> March**.

**Note:** The day is dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide, as well as a celebration of their contributions to society.

### New Appointments

1. Indian Economist **Ligia Noronha** has been appointed as the Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

**Note:** Ms Noronha will succeed fellow Indian and development economist Satya Tripathi to whom Secretary-General Guterres is "grateful for his leadership and dedicated service during his tenure. She has worked since 2014 as Director of UNEP's Economy Division based in Nairobi, leading UNEP's work on climate mitigation and energy transitions; on inclusive green economies, sustainable consumption and production, as well as on trade and sustainable finance, and the nexus of environment, pollution and health.

2. **Woochong Um** has been appointed as the Managing Director General of Asian Development Bank (ADB).

**Note:** He will assume office immediately and report to ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa. Um will support Asakawa to institute bank-wide coherence on key initiatives and issues. He will play a key role in enhancing ADB's internal and external communications across all activities that involve operations, knowledge, fund-raising and institutional reforms.

3. **Rohit Sharma** has been appointed as the Brand Ambassador of Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Limited.

**Note:** Sharma will be the official face of the brand as part of its 360 degree communication. Glenmark said Candid Powder brand is a market leader in its category, with a market share of 64 per cent in the medicated powder category.

4. **Naureen Hassan** has been appointed as first Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Federal Reserve Bank.

**Note:** The Indian-origin veteran of the financial services industry has been appointed by the board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York as the first vice president and chief operating officer, effective from 15 March. The appointment was approved by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

5. **G R Chintala** has been appointed as Chairman of Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA).

**Note:** Chintala is succeeding Bank of Ceylon CEO DPK Gunasekera in office. It is an international organisation, which does a lot of information exchange, takes capacity building initiatives, and creates new institutions.

6. **Pallav Mohapatra** has been appointed as the chief of Asset Reconstruction Co India Ltd (ARCIL).

**Note:** Mohapatra, a former State Bank of India (SBI) executive retired as Central Bank CEO at the end of February. The government has waived his mandatory one year cooling off period. Founded in 2002, Arcil is India's oldest asrt reconstruction company. It currently manages assets of Rs. 12,000 crore. Its total employees are 230.

7. **Girish Chandra Murmu** has been appointed as the Chairman of the Panel of External Auditors of the United Nations.

**Note:** Currently, the panel consists of countries including India, Germany, Chile, China, the United Kingdom, France, Philippines, Switzerland, Italy, Ghana, Indonesia, Canada and Russia. As the chairman, India's CAG plays a key role in achieving the panel's objective of greater degree of collaboration and coordination among members and exchange of information on audit methods and findings.



8. **Tirath Singh Rawat** was sworn-in as the chief minister of Uttarakhand.

**Note:** Tirath Singh Rawat, Lok Sabha MP from Garhwal and a former state BJP chief, was administered oath of office by Governor Baby Rani Maurya at the Raj Bhavan. Rawat was 'unanimously' chosen as the CM of Uttarakhand following a BJP legislature party meet.

9. **G P Samanta** has been appointed as the new Chief Statistician of India for a period of two years.

**Note:** Samanta was till now an adviser in the RBI's Department Of Statistics and Information Management. Samanta is India's fourth CSI.

10. **Thomas Bach** has been appointed as the President of International Olympic Committee (IOC) until 2025.

**Note:** His current term as the President of IOC will finish on the closing day of the Tokyo Olympic Games on 8th August 2021 and his second term as the President will start on 9th August 2021 and will conclude in 2025. He was the only candidate of the IOC presidential election which was held during the 137th IOC session held in Athens.

11. **Deepak Mishra** has been appointed as the next director and chief executive of the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).

**Note:** He will take over from Rajat Kathuria who has been the director & chief executive of ICRIER since 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2012. Mishra has held various positions at the World Bank, including co-director of the World Development Report 2016 (Digital Dividends), Country Economist for Ethiopia, Pakistan, Sudan and Vietnam.

12. **Kuldeep Singh** has been appointed as the new Director General (DG) of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

**Note:** Mr. Singh is currently Special DG of CRPF where the post of DG is vacant following superannuation of A.P. Maheshwari on February 28th. Mr Singh is a 1986 batch officer of West Bengal cadre.

13. **M.A. Ganapathy** has been appointed as the new Director General (DG) of National Security Guard (NSG).

**Note:** His appointment is up to February 29, 2024. The post of DG, NSG has been vacant since last October when the then DG A.K. Singh retired.

14. **Dr. Harsh Vardhan** has been appointed as the Chairman of the international body Stop TB Partnership Board.

**Note:** He was appointed in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the movement to eradicate Tuberculosis from India by 2025. Dr Harsh Vardhan will serve a three-year term, commencing from July this year. The Stop TB Partnership is a unique international body with the power to align actors all over the world in the fight against TB.

15. **H K Mittal** has been appointed as the chairman of the committee constituted by the Government of India (GoI)

which will be responsible for the overall execution and monitoring of the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme.

**Note:** The committee will evaluate and select incubators for allotment of funds under the scheme, monitor progress and take all necessary measures for efficient utilisation of funds towards fulfilment of objectives of the scheme. The committee, it said, would be chaired by H K Mittal from the Department of Science and Technology.

16. cricketer **Ajinkya Rahane** has been appointed as the brand ambassador of NeoGrowth Credit Pvt. Ltd.

**Note:** Rahane will feature in a campaign slated to be released in the first week of April, which will talk about the ease of procuring loans through NeoGrowth for small businesses. The campaign "Keeping it simple" will show the day-to-day struggles of small businesses while scaling up and how NeoGrowth can help them overcome it.

17. Samia Suluhu Hassan was sworn in as first female president of **Tanzania**.

**Note:** She took the oath of the office after the sudden death of John Magufuli from an illness shrouded in mystery. The 61-year-old took the oath of office in Dar es Salaam before inspecting troops at a military parade and receiving a cannon salute.

18. **Rajiv Kumar** has been appointed as the chairman of the high-level taskforce set up by the government of India to lay a roadmap for enforcement of contracts.

**Note:** The task force for enforcement of contracts will give its recommendation for a policy framework for enforcement of contracts and the task force on conciliation mechanism will give its recommendation for an effective conciliation mechanism.

19. **Amitabh Kant** has been appointed as the chairman of the high-level taskforce set up by the government of India to lay down a roadmap for conciliation mechanism.

**Note:** It is to facilitate speedy resolution of contractual disputes between government entities and private investors contractors inter alia to augment ease of doing business. This task force will include DPIIT secretary, DEA secretary, secretary of department of legal affairs, chairman & CEO, Railway Board, secretary, MoRTH, secretary, civil aviation, secretary, power, secretary, MNRE and chairman, NHAI. This task force will submit its report within three months of its constitution.

20. **Sanjeev Kumar** has been appointed as the Chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

**Note:** IAS Sanjeev Kumar has appointed as Chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Kumar is a 1993-batch IAS officer of Maharashtra cadre. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved his appointment.



21. Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) **Vijay Raghavan's** term has been extended by one year.  
**Note:** He was appointed PSA in 2018 after retiring as Secretary of, Department of Biotechnology. His contract ends on April 2 but has now been extended until April 2022.
22. **Justice N V Ramana** has been recommend as the next chief justice of India by the incumbent Chief Justice of India S A Bobde.  
**Note:** CJI Bobde handed over a copy of the letter of recommendation to his successor Justice Ramana after sending it to the Centre. CJI Bobde appears to have dismissed the complaint filed by Andhra Pradesh CM Y S Jagan Reddy against Justice Ramana before sending the recommendation letter to the Centre for Justice Ramana's appointment as the 48th CJI on April 24.
23. Indian Doctor **Vivek Murthy** has been appointed as the Surgeon General under US President Biden's administration.  
**Note:** The 43-year-old Dr Murthy would occupy the position of America's Surgeon General for the second time. Prior to this, Dr Murthy was appointed as surgeon general under the Obama administration in 2011 but was fired by former President Trump in 2017.
24. Director General UNESCO **Audrey Azoulay** and Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank held a virtual meeting.  
**Note:** Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank held a virtual meeting with Director General UNESCO, Ms Audrey Azoulay in New Delhi. They discussed key issues of mutual importance including National Education Policy, India's response to COVID Pandemic especially in the education sector.
25. **Saurbah Garg** has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).  
**Note:** Senior bureaucrat Saurbah Garg has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) as part of a bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Garg as the CEO, UIDAI in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.
26. **Atish Chandra** has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director, Food Corporation of India.  
**Note:** Atish Chandra will be Chairman and Managing Director, Food Corporation of India in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary, the order said. Chandra, a 1994 batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre, is currently Joint Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare.
27. **Soma Mondal** has been elected as the new chairperson of the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE).  
**Note:** Mondal will have a two-year term starting April; she took charge of SAIL on January 1, 2021. SCOPE is an apex professional organization representing the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).
28. **Anish Shah** has been appointed as the Managing Director(MD) and Chief Executive Officer(CEO) of Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd (M&M).  
**Note:** He takes over from Pawan Goenka who will retire as the MD and CEO, and member of the Board of Directors of M&M on 2nd April 2021. Anish Shah is currently serving as the deputy managing director and Chief Financial Officer(CFO) of the company.

### Important News – India

1. Sugamya Bharat App has been launched by **Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment**.  
**Note:** Sugamya Bharat APP — a Crowdsourcing Mobile Application is a means for sensitising and enhancing accessibility in the 3 pillars of the Accessible India Campaign i.e. built environment, transportation sector and ICT ecosystem in India. The app provides for five main features, 4 of which are directly related to enhancing accessibility, while the fifth is a special feature meant only for Divyangjan for COVID related issues.
2. In association with **IIT Bomaby** the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is to form a Centre of Excellence in gaming and other related areas.  
**Note:** Addressing the opening ceremony of virtual exhibition and prize announcement of Khel Khel Mein through video conference yesterday, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, IIT will start the courses from this year itself.
3. **Ministry of External Affairs** has convened the 5th Asia Economic Dialogue (AED) 2021 in association with India and Pune International Centre (PIC) on the theme "Post Covid-19 Global Trade and Finance Dynamics".  
**Note:** Its inaugural session was addressed by Union Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, MEA on "Resilient Global Growth in a Post-Pandemic World". The dialogue saw the discussions between COVID-19's impact on trade and finance, on the world and on Asia as well as strategies to deal with this impact.



4. Union government has invested Rs. 400 crores in Goa to create India's first Fisheries Hub under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).  
**Note:** Out of this, Rs 41.47 crore has been already approved under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)". Goa has the potential to become the fisheries hub of the country. On basis of the discussions with the State Government, it has been decided to develop 30 new landing centres for fisheries as well as for tourism purposes.
5. **Narendra Modi** is the chairman of the reconstituted governing council of the National Institution for Transforming India or NITI Aayog.  
**Note:** According to a notification of the Cabinet Secretariat, chief ministers of all states and those of the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Puducherry are full time members of the council. The Lieutenant Governors of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh, and the administrators of Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep will be special invitees of governing council.
6. **NASSCOM** has launched an 'AI Gamechangers' program to promote artificial intelligence (AI)-led innovation in the country.  
**Note:** Microsoft is the innovation partner for the program. As part of the 'AI for India' mission, the program seeks to recognize impactful and scalable AI-based innovation in the country. Nasscom and Microsoft will work closely to develop and promote the AI Gamechangers program, built on a shared commitment towards accelerating the adoption of AI across key sectors.
7. **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the second edition of 'Maritime India Summit 2021'.  
**Note:** Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the second edition of the summit via video conferencing. Prime Minister also launched e-book of maritime vision 2030, which is aiming to make the Indian maritime industry at par with the top global benchmark in the next 10 years.
8. The International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) Symposium on Sustainable Development of Dams & River Basins was held in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat was the Chief Guest of the Event. The event acts as a forum to share expertise on latest technologies in Dam construction, dam safety measure etc. Advanced technologies can be implemented in Dams to generate clean and cost effective energy, thereby ensuring India's commitments to the Paris Climate Agreement.
9. The seven-days International Yoga Festival was held in **Rishikesh**.  
**Note:** Nearly 400 yoga enthusiasts participated in the event. Festival was inaugurated by Agriculture Minister

Subodh Uniyal, head of Akhil Bharatiya Akhada Parishad (ABAP) Narendra Giri and Patanjali Yogpeeth chairman Acharya Balakrishna.

10. According to the 'Ease of Living Index 2020' released by the Government of India (GoI) **Bengaluru** has been adjudged as the most liveable city in India among million-plus population category.  
**Note:** Of the 49 cities ranked on livability index in the million-plus population category, Delhi ranks 13th. At the bottom of the list are Amritsar, Guwahati, Bareilly, Dhanbad and Srinagar.
11. According to the 'Ease of Living Index 2020' released by the Government of India (GoI) Shimla city has been adjudged as the most liveable city in India the category of cities with population of less than million.  
**Note:** According to the the 'Ease of Living Index 2020' released by the Government of India (GoI), Shimla topped the category of cities with population of less than million. It is followed by Bhubaneswar, Silvassa, Kakinada and Salem. At the bottom of the list of 62 cities are Aligarh, Rampur, Namchi, Satna and Muzaffarpur.
12. According to the 'Municipal Performance Index Report released by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, **Indore** city's civic body has emerged as the best performing municipality among all million-plus municipalities.  
**Note:** The Municipal Performance Index report ranking 114 civic bodies was released by the Union housing and urban affairs minister. The ranking has been done on parameters of service delivery, planning, financial systems, and governance practices.
13. **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Railway Station** becomes the first railway station in Maharashtra to be awarded with Gold certification as per CII's Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) ratings.  
**Note:** Central Railway has implemented various green initiatives across its zone, with plantation creating green areas, installation of solar panels, etc. IGBC ratings gives impetus to the national priorities like energy efficiency, water conservation, etc.
14. With **Ministry of Agriculture** the Central Silk Board has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on a convergence model for the implementation of Agroforestry in the silk sector under the ongoing Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF) Scheme.  
**Note:** The signing of this MoU aims to incentivize the farmers to take up sericulture based Agroforestry models thereby contributing to the Make in India and Make for the World vision of the Prime Minister.
15. As on 26.02.2021, **more than 81** percent accounts with an amount of Rs. 20,749 crores have been sanctioned to women entrepreneurs under Stand Up India Scheme.





- Note:** Stand Up India Scheme was launched on 5 April 2016 to promote entrepreneurship at grass root level for economic empowerment and job creation. This scheme seeks to leverage the institutional credit structure to reach out to the underserved sector of people such as Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Women Entrepreneurs so as to enable them to participate in the economic growth of nation.
16. As on 26.02.2021, **about 68** percent of accounts with an amount of Rs. 6.36 lakh crore have been sanctioned to women entrepreneurs under MUDRA scheme since inception.  
**Note:** PMMY was launched on April 8, 2015 for providing loans up to 10 lakh to the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises. These loans are classified as MUDRA loans under PMMY. These loans are given by Commercial Banks, RRBs, Small Finance Banks, MFIs and NBFCs.
17. Maitri Setu has been built over **Feni river** that connects Sabroom in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh.  
**Note:** The name 'Maitri Setu' symbolizes growing bilateral relations and friendly ties between India and Bangladesh. The construction was taken up by the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd at a project cost of Rs. 133 Crores.
18. **7500** Janaushadhi Kendra have been open as on 7th March 2021 under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana.  
**Note:** The Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana aims to provide quality medicines at an affordable price. From 86 centres in 2014, the number of stores under the scheme has grown to 7,500, covering all districts of the country.
19. **26<sup>th</sup>** is India's rank among 40 Asia-Pacific countries in the Economic Freedom Index 2021 published by US conservative think-tank, The Heritage Foundation.  
**Note:** In the 2021 Index, India came in around the middle of the pack among Asia-Pacific countries ranking 26th out of 40 countries, scoring 56.5 points. Globally, the Foundation rates India's economy as the 121st freest.
20. **71<sup>st</sup>** is India's rank in the 'UNCTAD B2C E-COMMERCE INDEX 2020- Spotlight on Latin America and the Caribbean'.  
**Note:** The index measures an economy's preparedness to support online shopping where B2C stands for Business to Consumer. UNCTAD is an acronym for United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The index has been topped by Switzerland for the first time which has surpassed The Netherlands. Notably 97% of the Swiss population used the internet in 2019.
21. '**Engaging Minds: Empowering Medicine**' is the theme for the 76th Annual Conference of Association of Physicians of India (API).  
**Note:** It was addressed by Union Minister of State (IC) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh. While addressing he mentioned the contribution of Physicians to the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Campaign.
22. International Conference on Multifunctional Electronic Materials & Processing (MEMP 2021) was held in Pune.  
**Note:** MEMP-2021 provided an opportunity to scientists, researchers, academicians and young students to interact with eminent scientists/technologists working in the field of multifunctional electronic materials for various applications & their processing for making devices.
23. REC Ltd and Power Finance Corporation (PFC) signed an agreement with **Bhutan** for the financing of 600-megawatt (MW) Trashiyangtse Hydroelectric Project.  
**Note:** KHEL is a 50:50 joint venture between SJVN India and Druk Green Power Corporation (Bhutan) set up for developing the 600-MW Kholongchhu hydroelectric project in the eastern Bhutan. REC Ltd along with PFC has signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Ltd for financing of 600-MW hydroelectric project at Trashiyangtse, Bhutan.
24. **Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT)** has launched a vendor onboarding mobile app for its upcoming e-commerce portal 'Bharat e Market'.  
**Note:** The app will enable businesses and service providers to register on the portal and create their own "e-dukaan". Its 'purely Indian' Bharat e Market portal will comply with all the rules and regulations of the country.
25. **Mera Ration** mobile app launched by the Department of Food & Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution under the 'One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)' plan.  
**Note:** The mobile app has been developed by the Department of Food & Public Distribution along with the National Informatics Centre (NIC). Beneficiaries of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), with a focus on Migrant workers, Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealers & other relevant stakeholders.
26. With **Japan Railway Track Consultant Co. Limited (JRTC)**, the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Track works for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR).  
**Note:** Under the agreement, JRTC will provide design & drawing of major High-Speed Rail (HSR) track components like RC Track bed, track slab arrangement



& Continuous Welded Rail (CWR) forces. It will strengthen the 'Make in India' initiative & ensure the transfer of technology from the Japanese high-speed rail system to India.

27. According to PwC's (PricewaterhouseCoopers) 24th Annual Global CEO Survey, India emerged as the 5<sup>th</sup> most attractive growth destination in the world.

**Note:** The USA emerged as the Number one market favoured by CEOs over the next 1 year followed by China, Germany. The survey covered 5, 050 CEOs in 100 Countries & Territories including India. Japan took the 6th position overtaking Australia.

28. **Prahlad Singh Patel** will chair the advisory committee to chalk out a plan for studying the mythical Sarasvati river.

**Note:** The ASI had first set up the committee on December 28, 2017 for a period of two years. The committee would continue to be chaired by the Culture Minister and include officials from the Culture, Tourism, Water Resources, Environment and Forest, Housing and Urban Affairs Ministries; representatives of the Indian Space Research Organisation; officials from the governments of Gujarat, Haryana and Rajasthan; and an ASI official.

29. **Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru** has launched India's first dedicated Express Cargo Terminal exclusively for export and import of international couriers.

**Note:** The 2 lakh square feet built to suit facility terminal will be operated by Express Industry Council of India. It has a dedicated space for customs offices with direct access to both Landside and Airside wing

30. 4th Global Ayurveda Festival (GAF) was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi in **Kozhikode, Kerala**.

**Note:** It has been organized from 12 to 19 March 202. GAF is the largest Ayurvedic event ever held anywhere across the world and witness the largest gathering of experts, stakeholders, and business explorers from Ayurveda. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) is the festival and industry partner.

31. India's first dedicated Express Cargo Terminal exclusively for export and import of international couriers has been launched in **Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru**.

**Note:** The 2 lakh square feet built to suit facility terminal will be operated by Express Industry Council of India. It has a dedicated space for customs offices with direct access to both Landside and Airside wing. It will enable ease of doing business and reduce transaction time and cost for the shipper.

32. India's first centralised air-conditioned (AC) railway terminal has been built in **Bengaluru**.

**Note:** It is named after 'Bharat Ratna Sir M Visvesvaraya', one of the foremost civil engineers, and set to become operational soon. It has been built at an estimated cost of Rs 314 crore. Byappanahalli terminal is the 3rd coach terminal and is equipped with all the modern facilities and is aimed to offer an airport-like aura to the passengers.

33. 4th Global Ayurveda Festival (GAF) was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi in **Kozhikode, Kerala**.

**Note:** It has been organized from 12 to 19 March 2021. GAF is the largest Ayurvedic event ever held anywhere across the world and witness the largest gathering of experts, stakeholders, and business explorers from Ayurveda.

34. According to the 'World Air Quality Report, 2020', prepared by Swiss organisation, IQAir, 22 cities from India are among the 30 most polluted cities in the world.

**Note:** Delhi being ranked as the most polluted capital city globally. The report, however, shows that Delhi's air quality improved by approximately 15 per cent from 2019 to 2020. Delhi ranked as the 10th most polluted city and the top polluted capital city in the world.

35. According to the 'World Air Quality Report, 2020', prepared by Swiss organisation, **Ghaziabad** is the second most polluted city in the world.

**Note:** Delhi being ranked as the most polluted capital city globally. The report, however, shows that Delhi's air quality improved by approximately 15 per cent from 2019 to 2020.

36. Delhi's rank in the 'World Air Quality Report, 2020', prepared by Swiss organisation, among the among the 30 most polluted cities in the world -- 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Note:** Delhi being ranked as the most polluted capital city globally. The report, however, shows that Delhi's air quality improved by approximately 15 per cent from 2019 to 2020. Delhi ranked as the 10th most polluted city and the top polluted capital city in the world.

37. Aster Digital Health Incubator (ADHI), a unit of Aster DM Healthcare Group will also support AIM's initiatives such as Atal Incubation Centers (AICs), Established Incubation Centres (EICs), Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACICs) & Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs). Aster will provide access to Aster Clinical Simulation Lab, Aster Federated Learning Data bank for Artificial Intelligence (AI) healthcare research, ADHI, Aster Digital Health Centre of Excellence, and other facilities to startups under various AIM initiatives.

38. Prime minister Narendra Modi held a virtual summit with his counterpart Sana Marin, **Finland**.

**Note:** India & Finland had announced a new partnership in the fields of ICT, Mobile Technology, Digital Education clean energy investment and evolution of 6G. Both sides



noted that Digital Domain was one of the promising sectors for an intensive India-Finland partnership.

39. NITI Aayog has partnered with **Amazon Web Services** to train students on the fundamentals of cloud computing through Atal Tinkering Labs.

**Note:** A statement of intent (SoI) was signed between Niti Aayog and Amazon Internet Services Private Limited (AISPL), which undertakes the resale and marketing of AWS Cloud services in India, to roll out the project. The education and tools will establish a strong foundation in cloud computing for students of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) across India, while the support of AWS EdStart for startups will accelerate their productisation and potential commercialization.

40. India's rank in the UN World Happiness Report 2021 released by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network -- **139<sup>th</sup>**.

**Note:** Finland was once again crowned as the world's happiest country. In 2019, India was ranked 140th. Denmark ranked 2nd, followed by Switzerland, Iceland and the Netherlands. Afghanistan was classed as the world's unhappiest nation this year.

41. **Energy Efficiency Services Ltd** has unveiled the GRAM UJALA programme under which high-quality energy-efficient LED bulbs will be given for Rs 10 per piece in certain villages of five states in the first phase.

**Note:** Under the programme, high-quality energy-efficient LED bulbs will be given for Rs 10 per piece in certain villages of five states in the first phase. The programme will be financed entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such programme in India.

42. Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Ltd function under administrative control of **Ministry of Information and Labour Bureau** has inked an agreement for providing technical and manpower support for conducting all India surveys, including on migrant workers.

**Note:** The surveys to be undertaken by the Bureau will be integrated with the technology provided by the BECIL. It will substantially reduce the time taken for completion of surveys by at least 30-40%. BECIL is an enterprise under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

43. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain' campaign on World Water Day 2021 for rain water harvesting, the campaign will be implemented from **March 22 to November 30**.

**Note:** The 'Catch the Rain' campaign will be undertaken across the country, in both rural and urban areas. It will be implemented from March 22 to November 30 - the pre-monsoon and monsoon period in the country. The campaign aims to take water conservation at grass-root level through people's participation. It is intended to

nudge all stakeholders to create rainwater harvesting structures suitable to the climatic conditions and subsoil strata, to ensure proper storage of rainwater.

44. E-Tendering Portal **PRANIT** established by the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a central PSU under Ministry of Power.

**Note:** It has been certified by Standardisation, Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India. With this, POWERGRID is now the only organization in India to have an eProcurement solution on SAP Supplier Relationship Management (SRM), complying with all applicable requirements relating to security and transparency as stipulated by STQC.

45. Union Minister of Education, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has virtually inaugurated the Shaheed Bhagat Singh Smarak in **New Delhi**.

**Note:** The inauguration took place on the occasion of a programme organised by the University of Delhi on 'Shaheed Diwas' or Martyrs Day (March 23, 2021) to pay homage and commemorate 90 years of martyrdom of our freedom fighters - Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru. It will remain open to students and the university community to inculcate values of freedom and sacrifice.

46. According to the report by 'India: Transforming to a net-zero emissions energy system' released by TERI and Shell, the Net Zero emissions in energy system in India is achievable by **2050**.

**Note:** According to the report by 'India: Transforming to a net-zero emissions energy system' released by TERI (The Energy & Resources Institute) & Shell (otherwise known as Royal Dutch Shell plc), the Net Zero emissions in energy system in India is achievable by 2050. The report is one of the first assessments of the challenges that India would face if India were to move towards Net-zero emissions energy system.

47. Applied Materials India, the local subsidiary of US materials engineering company Applied Materials Inc., has signed a research and development (R&D) pact with **Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru**.

**Note:** This pact is a part of the Industry Affiliate Program of the Centre for Nanoscience and Engineering (CeNSE). IISc Bengaluru and Applied Materials India will work closely with CeNSE to explore new applications and solutions in the field of advanced materials

48. **Sanjay Dhotre** represented India at the 'World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2021' which is one of the world's largest annual gatherings of the 'ICT for development' communities.

**Note:** The Minister highlighted the policies and programs undertaken by his Ministry such as, Arogya



- Setu platform is used to monitor and alert the health status of citizens.
49. **Piyush Goyal** will chair the Empowerment Committee to discuss and enhance manufacturing of products in High technology areas in India constituted by the Government of India.  
**Note:** The 10-member committee will be headed by the Minister of Commerce and Industry. The committee will be serviced by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). Objective of the committee is to facilitate investments and promote manufacturing in technology-intensive sectors including semiconductors.
50. India's rank in the among 53 global economies on the latest annual edition of the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index released by the US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC) -- **40<sup>th</sup>**.  
**Note:** The Index evaluates Intellectual Property rights in 53 global economies from patent and copyright policies to commercialization of IP assets and ratification of international treaties. The overall global IP environment improved in 2020, with positive score increasing in 32 of the 53 economies measured by the IP Index.
51. "Indo-Korean Bilateral Friendship Park" has been inaugurated in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** Friendship Park has been built to commemorate contribution of Indian peacekeepers in the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. India-South Korea relations have strengthened in recent years with the convergence of Act East Policy (AEP) of India and New Southern Policy (NSP) of South Korea.
52. The theme of the 7th Annual Summit of 'NATHEALTH' organized by NATHEALTH – Healthcare Federation of India -- '**Indian Health System Expansion in Post-COVID Era**'.  
**Note:** Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan virtually addressed the 7th Annual Summit of 'NATHEALTH' organized by NATHEALTH – Healthcare Federation of India which was held between March 25-26, 2021 in a virtual format. It was allocated INR 2, 23, 846 Crore in the 2021-22 Budget, an increase of 137% over the previous year.
53. Minister of State for Tourism and Culture, Prahlad Singh Patel, and Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh jointly inaugurated the 'Chhatrasal Convention Centre' in **Khajuraho**.  
**Note:** The Tourism Ministry also launched the "MICE Roadshow Meet in India" at the Chhatrasal Convention Centre at Khajuraho. It is an initiative by the Ministry of Tourism to promote India's Iconic tourist spots into World class destinations for conducting MICE events.
54. The first Airport in South India to have a fully operational parallel runway -- **Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru**.  
**Note:** While the Southern runway is equipped with a CAT III B System that provides precision landing facility by improving runway visibility. Due to reduced passenger traffic caused by the pandemic, it was decided not to implement the CAT III B system in the Northern runway.

### Important News – State

1. **Haryana** state government has launched "Mukhyamantri Antyodaya Parivar Utthan Yojana" aimed at uplifting 1 lakh BPL families of the state.  
**Note:** One of the 4 scheme is Mukhyamantri Antyodaya Parivar Utthan Yojana. The first phase of the scheme to begin on April 1, 2021. The Scheme is aimed at uplifting 1 lakh BPL families of Haryana; these families will be selected through the Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) portal.
2. **Haryana** state government has launched Dr BR Ambedkar Awas Navinikarn Yojana.  
**Note:** The Schemes are aimed at satisfying the needs of the people under Below Poverty line (BPL). He also highlighted the state's initiatives to increase income of BPL families by at least Rs. 8000 to Rs. 9000/month.
3. New Science Centre has been inaugurated in **Udaipur** city of Tripura.  
**Note:** The Udaipur Science Centre has been developed at a cost of Rs 6 crore funded jointly by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and Department of Science, Technology and Environment, Tripura Government and with this; National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) has now set-up science centres in all the north eastern states.
4. **Haryana** state government has approved a bill that reserves 75 percent of the private sector jobs with gross salary upto ₹ 50,000 per month for the people of the state.  
**Note:** The bill, tabled by Mr Chautala last year, makes it mandatory for the private sector companies to reserve 75 percent of jobs with salary upto ₹ 50,000 per month for natives of Haryana. It also contains a clause companies can invoke if suitable local candidates cannot



be found. In such cases they may hire from outside so long as they inform the government of such a step.

5. The International Business Machines (IBM) India partnered with which state government to provide free online courses to students, Job seekers & Entrepreneurs of the state **Goa**.

**Note:** This initiative is aimed at upskilling 10,000 youths across 10 institutions in 1 year through IBM SkillBuild Program. Personalised coaching and experimental learning module is provided on Information & Communication Technology (ITC). The program has over 1lakh beneficiaries in Indian in 2021 alone.

6. **Karnataka** state has launched India's maiden Engineering Research & Development (ERD) policy to raise R&D contribution to 45% in 5 year.

**Note:** This policy has the potential to create over 50,000 jobs in ERD space. According to Nasscom, ER&D has the potential to become \$100-billion industry. New policy has identified 5 key focus sectors: aerospace and defence; auto, auto components and EV; biotechnology, pharma, medical devices; semiconductors, telecom; software products.

7. The President of India Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone for the conservation works of Singorgarh Fort which is located in **Madhya Pradesh**.

**Note:** The President also inaugurated the newly carved Jabalpur Circle of Archaeological Survey of India. He also addressed the State Level Tribal Conference at Singrampur village in Damoh. The program was organized by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and the Tribal Affairs Department of Madhya Pradesh.

8. India's first Forest Healing centre was inaugurated in **Uttarakhand**.

**Note:** It was developed by the Research Wing of Uttarakhand Forest Department in an area of around 13 acres. The centre is based on the concept of healing and revitalizing the overall health and well being of people by bringing them into direct contact with nature.

9. A centre of excellence for the dairy sector will be set up in Rajasthan in collaboration with Denmark.

**Note:** Denmark Ambassador Freddy Svane discussed the idea at a meeting with chief minister Ashok Gehlot. The possibilities of Denmark's cooperation in the field of water conservation and purification were also discussed in the meeting.

10. Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel (AMNS) going to set up an integrated steel plant in **Odisha**.

**Note:** In a major boost to Odisha's industrial landscape, the ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Limited (AMNS India) signed an MoU with the state government to set up a 12 mtpa integrated steel complex in Kendrapada district with an investment of Rs 50,000 crore. The deal

was signed here in presence of chief minister Naveen Patnaik and executive chairman of ArcelorMittal LN Mittal.

11. Odisha state government has announced the setting up of District Investment Promotion Agencies (DIPAs) in its 30 districts to promote and facilitate investment across the State.

**Note:** According to the Industries Department, DIPA, in each of the 30 districts across the state, shall operate under the leadership of the respective District Collector with other senior district officials including SPs, DFOs and line Department officials being constituent members. The District Collector shall be supported by a team of professionals for investment facilitation, project monitoring and promoting local entrepreneurship.

12. **Andhra Pradesh** become the first state of India to incorporate the Gender Budget in its annual budget of the fiscal year 2021 to 2022 with an aim to provide better service to women.

**Note:** International women's day, Andhra Pradesh (AP) Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy announced that the state would become the first state of India to incorporate the Gender Budget in its annual budget of the fiscal year 2021 to 2022 with an aim to provide better service to women.

13. Arjuna Sahayak Irrigation Project is being built in **Uttar Pradesh**.

**Note:** With an outlay of Rs 2,600 crore the irrigation project is scheduled for complete in one or two months. The Arjuna Sahayak irrigation project on the river Dhasan will offer irrigation facilities to 1.5 lakh farmers of as many as 168 UP villages of Hamirpur, Banda and Mahoba.

14. India's Largest Floating Solar Power Plant of 100 MegaWatt (MW) capacity being constructed in **Telangana**.

**Note:** The solar project is commissioned by the energy conglomerate National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC). The solar project which is estimated to cost around Rs 423 cr will have 4.5 lakh photovoltaic panels. The solar panels will cover 450-acre area of the reservoir and can be expanded in the future.

15. 'WE Hub' is an initiative of **Telangana** that has partnered with Australian government to launch "UPSurge" a 12-week pre-incubation program conducted across India.

**Note:** The program is targeted towards Women Entrepreneurs to minimise financial risk while selling novel products & achieve financial independence. Australia is the first International Partner of WE Hub, when they jointly launched the "Community Slate" program that was concluded in 2020.



16. Uttarakhand Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) signed an MoU with **IBM** to improve the education standards among the female children of the state.  
**Note:** The collaboration, 'IBM STEM for Girls' program, will be introduced in 130 secondary and higher secondary schools across five districts in the state. The five districts are Dehradun, Pauri, Haridwar, Almora and Udham Singh Nagar. The program will advance the skills and careers of close to 25,600 students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields.
17. **Maharashtra** state government has launched "Maha Samruddhi Mahila Sashaktikaran scheme" to empower the women in rural areas.  
**Note:** The scheme commenced on 8th March 2021, the International women's Day 2021. The aim of the scheme is to promote the listing of wife's name along with husbands' names on the 7/12 extract and to promote the inclusion of wife's name on house property documents.
18. **Haryana** state has won the 69 Men's National volleyball championships held in KIIT University, Bhubaneswar.  
**Note:** Haryana men has won the 69 National volleyball championships at the KIIT University, Bhubaneswar. Haryana men defeated Assam. Tamil Nadu, the men's defending champion, had lost to Haryana in the quarterfinal.
19. **Uttara Pradesh** government has launched a three-day-long 'Kalanamak rice festival' under one district – one product scheme of the state government.  
**Note:** To promote the production, processing, packaging, and branding of Kalanamak Rice, the UP Government has declared the rice as the One District One Product (ODOP) of Siddharth Nagar in 2018. It is one of the finest varieties of aromatic rice that are grown in India, Kalanamak is also called Buddha Rice.
20. **Maharashtra** state ranked first in the state wise distribution of High Net-worth Individual (HNI) households in accordance with 'Wealth Report 2020' released by Hurun India.  
**Note:** Based on the report there are 4.12 lakh dollar-millionaire households / affluent households in India with a networth of at least Rs 7 crore. Maharashtra is the highest Gross/Net State Domestic Product (GSDP) Generating state in India with growth rate of about 13.16% and it is contributing around 16 % of national GDP
21. 850 MW Ratle Hydro-Electric Project (HEP) is being built in **Jammu and Kashmir**.  
**Note:** The authorised capital of the JVC is Rs 1,600 crore with initial paid-up capital of Rs 100 crore. Out of the paid-up capital, J&K State Power Development Corporation Ltd (JKSPDCL) will contribute Rs 49 crore as initial equity. The MoU to execute the project was signed between the Government of J&K, JKSPDCL and NHPC on 3rd January 2021.
22. **Rajasthan** state government announced to launch Universal Health Scheme (UHS) called "Mukhya Mantri Chiranjeevi Yojana".  
**Note:** The scheme will be launched on May 1, 2021. In his budget speech Gehlot had announced UHS with Rs 3,500 crore in the upcoming financial year wherein cashless health services up to Rs 5 lakh will be provided to all families in the state.
23. **Madhya Pradesh** government has launched the 'Mission Gramodaya' under which housing facilities will be provided in rural areas along with basic and fundamental infrastructure.  
**Note:** The mission was launched by the Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Under the Gramodaya mission, besides providing housing facilities in rural areas, basic and fundamental infrastructure will also be expanded.
24. **Jharkhand** government has launched the SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction) campaign to fight with malnutrition.  
**Note:** Aim of the campaign is to identify anaemic women and malnourished children and converge various departments to effectively deal with the problem in a state. The state govt. runs various schemes under Child Development Schemes, National Nutrition Mission among others to deal with the situation.
25. **Andhra Pradesh** government has launched India's first govt-run ambulance network for animals.  
**Note:** The Animal Husbandry Department has been further directed to set up one Mobile Ambulance Veterinary Clinic at every assembly constituency. These mobile ambulances shall provide veterinary first aid services along with spot diagnosis and attending to emergency cases.
26. **Karnataka** government has signed an MoU with ITC to execute a Watershed Programme covering over one million acres in the southern state.  
**Note:** The MoU was signed under the ITC's Social Investments programme "Mission Sunehra Kal" & the Karnataka Watershed Development Department. With regard to this MoU, 100 Watershed had set up. The agreement was a part of the Karnataka government's 'Watershed development for drought proofing' programme & it is a part of ITCs Sustainability 2.0 agenda.
27. The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) signed an MoU with **Arunachal Pradesh** state to Implement MSP for MFP Scheme & Van Dhan Vikas Yojana.



- Note:** The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the state of Arunachal Pradesh for implementing its flagship program, "Mechanism for marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) & development of value chain for MFP" scheme and Van Dhan Yojana.
28. **Manipur** state has been emerged as the Champion State for Van Dhan Vikas Yojana.  
**Note:** Van Dhan Yojana was launched in October 2019 in Manipur, with the successful establishment of 100 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras in the state. This constitutes 1500 self-help groups for marketing & providing value-addition to the tribal, minor forest produces.
29. Kurnool Airport in **Andhra Pradesh** has been inaugurated by the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Civil Aviation, Hardeep Singh Puri.  
**Note:** The flight operations at Kurnool airport will begin on 28 March 2021. This airport has been developed under the Regional Connectivity Scheme, Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN). Kurnool airport will bring the region closer to major hubs in South India by providing direct flight operations to Bangalore, Vishakhapatnam and Chennai.
30. The Shigmo is a spring festival celebrated in **Goa**.  
**Note:** Goa has announced that this year no Shigmo spring festival parades will be held due to sudden hike in COVID-19 infections. Shigmo is the biggest spring festival in Goa and was scheduled to take place in the first week of April. The decision to cancel the festival was to prevent the further increase in the COVID-19 numbers, informed Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said in the Goa Assembly.
31. **Uttar Pradesh** government has organized a 'Banana Festival' to make Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan for a self-reliant India.  
**Note:** The main goal of organizing this festival is to make Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan for a self-reliant India. Banana made products from Kushinagar are included in One District One Product (ODOP) scheme.
32. India's 1st State to have 2 Green Energy Efficient towns -- **Bihar**.  
**Note:** To implement the project, the state government of Bihar will construct 500 MW solar energy plants at Lakhisarai & Bhagalpur. After Rajgir & BodhGaya, many important government offices in Patna like the Governor house, High Court, Museum & Vidhyut Bhawan would also run on green energy supplied by SECI.

### Important News – World

1. **Russia** has successfully launched its first ever Arctic-monitoring satellite that will monitor the Arctic's climate and environment.  
**Note:** A Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket with the "Arktika-M" satellite on board blasted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. The Arktika-M spacecraft was delivered to the orbit at 12.14 PM. The Arktika-M will provide round-the-clock continuous monitoring of the northern territory of Russia and the seas of the Arctic Ocean.
2. The Swedish automaker, Volvo has announced that it will make only electric vehicles by **2030**.  
**Note:** The automaker phasing out the production of all cars with internal combustion engines — including hybrids. Volvo's announcement follows General Motors' pledge earlier this year to make only battery-powered vehicles by 2035.
3. To African country **Madagascar** and India has sent a consignment of 1,000 metric tonnes of rice and 100,000 hydroxychloroquine as humanitarian assistance.  
**Note:** The prompt Indian assistance to the Madagascar government was conveyed by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in a phone conversation with Madagascar's Foreign Minister Tehindrazanarivelo Djacoba A S Oliva.
4. **Denmark** is the partner country of the second edition of 'Maritime India Summit 2021'.  
**Note:** Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the second edition of the summit via video conferencing. Prime Minister also launched e-book of maritime vision 2030, which is aiming to make the Indian maritime industry at par with the top global benchmark in the next 10 years.
5. India has signed an agreement for cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors with **Fiji**.  
**Note:** The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Agriculture of Indian government and Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Fiji in this regard. The MoU between India and Fiji provides for cooperation in various areas including promotion of joint ventures between private sectors of both countries.
6. **Australia** is building world's first platypus sanctuary to promote breeding and rehabilitation as the duck-billed mammal faces extinction due to climate change.  
**Note:** The Taronga Conservation Society Australia and the New South Wales State government would build the specialist facility, mostly ponds and burrows for the semi-aquatic creatures, at a zoo 391 km (243 miles)



- from Sydney, by 2022, which could house up to 65 platypuses.
7. India and **Norway** have agreed to collaborate in the area of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Oceanic space for the next 5 years.  
**Note:** National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Chennai will be preparing the MSP framework for Puducherry & Lakshadweep in the initial phase of the project. The framework of these 2 environmentally critical areas (Pondicherry & Lakshadweep) will be replicated to other coastal regions of India. The 2 places have been chosen due to their potential to Flourish in multiple sectors such as Industries, Fisheries & Tourism.
8. India described **Sri Lanka** as the "Priority One" partner in the defence sphere.  
**Note:** The SLAF is celebrating its 70th Anniversary on March 2 and to commemorate the historical event, a Fly Past and an Aerobatic Display is being organised for the first time in the country at a grand scale.
9. The 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was held in **Kyoto, Japan**.  
**Note:** This year, the event was held in a hybrid format. Key issues related to criminal justice, strategies for crime prevention and international cooperation in promoting the rule of law and preventing all forms of crime are expected to be discussed. This is the first time that Japan is hosted the congress since 1970.
11. **Singapore** ranked first in the latest Economic Freedom Index 2021 published by US conservative think-tank, The Heritage Foundation.  
**Note:** Globally, the Foundation rates India's economy as the 121st freest. Although its overall score is unchanged, improvements were made in business freedom. This was offset by declines in judicial effectiveness and other scores.
12. **Switzerland** has banned full facial coverings including the niqab and burqa in almost all public places.  
**Note:** As many as 51.21 per cent of voters voted in support of the controversial proposal in the referendum. The approval by voters means that facial covering will be banned in all publicly accessible places, including on the streets, in public offices, on public transport, in restaurants, shops and in the countryside.
13. **India** ranked at top among developing countries in the new country-readiness index 2021 released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its 'Technology and Innovation Report 2021'.  
**Note:** The index ranked India at 43 while the estimated one based on per capita income was 108. This meant that India over performed other countries by 65 ranking positions. India was followed by the Philippines, which over performed by 57 ranking positions.
14. **Denmark** is going to set up a Center of Excellence for the dairy sector in Rajasthan.  
**Note:** Denmark Ambassador Freddy Svane discussed the idea at a meeting with chief minister Ashok Gehlot. The possibilities of Denmark's cooperation in the field of water conservation and purification were also discussed in the meeting.
15. **France** has launched its first military exercise in space in March 2021 to evaluate its ability to defend its satellites and other defense equipment from an attack.  
**Note:** This is the first for the French army and even a first in Europe. The exercise, codenamed "AsterX" in memory of the first French satellite from 1965, will be based on 18 simulated events in an operations room. During the drill, the French military will monitor a potentially dangerous space object as well as a threat to its own satellite from another foreign power possessing a considerable space force.
16. **Sri Lanka** has received ten state-of-the-art railway passenger coaches from India as part of the supply of 160 coaches by the Rail India Technical and Economic Service (RITES).  
**Note:** This supply of coaches to Sri Lankan Railways by RITES is being financed through an Indian Line of Credit. Recently, Sri Lanka approved the development of the West Container Terminal (WCT) after it unilaterally cancelled Indian and Japanese participation in the development of the East Container Terminal at Colombo.
17. Russia has agreed to jointly build a research station on or around the moon, setting the stage for a new space race with **China**.  
**Note:** The United States and the Soviet Union, followed by its successor state, Russia, have long dominated space exploration, putting the first astronauts in space and on the moon and later collaborating on the International Space Station that has been in orbit for two decades.
18. **Japan** has developed world's most powerful supercomputer 'Fugaku'.  
**Note:** Japanese scientific research institute RIKEN and Fujitsu began development six years ago with an aim to make the device core of Japan's computing infrastructure. Now, as Fugaku is fully open and available for shared use, Japan's Research Organization for Information Science and Technology (RIST) has selected 74 projects that will use the supercomputer in FY2021.
19. According to Jones Lang LaSalle's Human Performance Indicator (HPI) Index, **India** ranked highest in workplace satisfaction at 98 percent.  
**Note:** As per the report, India leads other Asia-Pacific (APAC) countries with 81 per cent of high performers





practising flexible working, including flexible hours and work-from-home. The Key Factors impacting workplace satisfaction in high performers are wider range of sophisticated workplaces and technologies.

**20. USA** becomes India's 2nd Biggest Oil Supplier in February 2021.

**Note:** India's imports from America increased to 48% to a record 545,300 BPD in February, 2021 accounting for 14% of India's overall imports last month. Saudi Arabia slipped to No.4 Position for the 1st time since January 2006. Nigeria rose to 3rd Position and UAE slipped to 5th Position.

**21. Xinjiang** is the world's most polluted city, as per the 'World Air Quality Report, 2020', prepared by Swiss organisation, among the among the 30 most polluted cities in the world.

**Note:** Delhi being ranked as the most polluted capital city globally. The report, however, shows that Delhi's air quality improved by approximately 15 per cent from 2019 to 2020. Delhi ranked as the 10th most polluted city and the top polluted capital city in the world.

**22. World Energy Transitions Outlook** report was published by **International Renewable Energy Agency**.

**Note:** Previewed at the virtual Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue (BETD 2021) the report proposes energy transition solutions for the narrow pathway available to contain the rise of temperature to 1.5°C and halt global warming.

**23. Italy** has joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA) after signing the amended ISA Framework Agreement.

**Note:** The new ISA Framework Agreement came into force on January 8, 2021. Under the new amended framework, the membership of ISA is open to all member states of the United Nations. Previously, it was open to countries that were partially or entirely located within the Tropics.

**24. At present, 73** countries have signed and ratified the ISA Framework Agreement.

**Note:** Under the new amended framework, the membership of ISA is open to all member states of the United Nations. Previously, it was open to countries that were partially or entirely located within the Tropics. The signed copies of the agreement were received by an additional secretary (ER) as representative of MEA. MEA is the depositary of the ISA Framework Agreement. It is an alliance of over 121 countries.

**25. Accepting India's invitation, the European Union (EU)** has officially on-boarded as a member of the CDRI.

**Note:** Launched in 2019 by the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi at the UN Climate Change Summit, the CDRI is an international collaborative platform involving the public and private sector, aiming to promote the resilience of new and existing

infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development.

**26. Finland** ranked first in the UN World Happiness Report 2021 released by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

**Note:** UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network released the World Happiness Report 2021. Denmark ranked 2nd, followed by Switzerland, Iceland and the Netherlands. The ranking is based on GDP per person, healthy life expectancy and the opinions of residents.

**27. Afghanistan** ranked as unhappiest country in the UN World Happiness Report 2021 released by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

**Note:** UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network released the World Happiness Report 2021. Finland was once again crowned as the world's happiest country. India has been ranked 139 out of 149 countries. In 2019, India was ranked 140th.

**28. Japan and India** have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU) to achieve water security, improved irrigation facility and sustainability in water resources development.

**Note:** The MoU was signed between Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India and Water and Disaster Management Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan in the field of Water Resources.

**29. Thirty-eight** foreign satellites have been launched by Russia for 18 countries from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

**Note:** The Soyuz-2.1a carrier rocket with the Fregat upper stage and 38 spacecraft from 18 countries took off from the Baikonur cosmodrome. Soyuz rocket successfully placed into orbit the 38 satellites from more than a dozen countries, including South Korea, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Italy and Brazil.

**30. India's Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)** has signed an MoU with **Afghanistan** to share experience and expertise in the area of recruitment, books, manuals and other documents.

**Note:** It will strengthen the relationship between IARCSC and UPSC. The MoU will facilitate sharing of experience and expertise in the area of recruitment, books, manuals and other documents which are not of a confidential nature and Information Technology (IT) for the preparation of written examinations and holding of Computer Based Recruitment Tests and Online Examinations.

**31. The title of the United Nations World Water Development Report 2021 -- Valuing Water.**

**Note:** The World population is set to increase to 9 Billion by 2040, but the projected reservoir volume is



stabilising around 7,000 billion cubic metre. This report published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on behalf of UN-Water.

**32. World's first ship tunnel is being built in Norway.**

**Note:** First announced a few years ago by the Norwegian Coastal Administration, this mile-long, 118-foot-wide tunnel will burrow through the mountainous Stadlandet peninsula in northwestern Norway. Building this engineering marvel will cost somewhere in the region of 2.8 billion Norwegian kroner (\$330 million) and take between three to four years, with construction due to commence in 2022.

**33. Sri Lanka has signed about USD 1.5 billion currency swap deal with China.**

**Note:** The agreement signed between the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the People's Bank of China is valid for three years. China remains Sri Lanka's largest source of imports. In 2020, imports from China amounted to USD 3.6 billion, or just over 22 per cent of Sri Lanka's imports.

**34. The name of the huge cargo ship that was stuck near the southern end of the Suez Canal due to a mishap caused by bad weather -- Ever Given.**

**Note:** This is causing a huge jam of vessels at either end of the vital international trade artery. The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt, to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.

### Honor & Awards

**1. Vinka** received the Best Woman Boxer of the Tournament Award at the 30th Youth International Boxing Tournament 'Adriatic Pearl'.

**Note:** For her magnificent show, Vinka received the Best Woman Boxer of the Tournament award. With two medals in the men's category, the 19-member Indian team concluded its campaign with an overall second position (12 medals).

**2. According to Hurun Global Rich List 2021, Reliance Industries (RIL) chairman, 8<sup>th</sup> is the rank of Mukesh Ambani as the richest person of the world.**

**Note:** The List was topped by Elon Musk (CEO of Tesla), Jeff Bezos (CEO of Amazon) & Bernard Arnault (CEO of LVMH-Louis Vuitton). Hurun Global Rich List 2021 is the 10th Year of ranking. It ranked 3,228 Billionaires from 2,402 companies & 68 countries

**3. According to the 10th Edition of Hurun Global Rich List 2021 Elon Musk** emerged as the richest person of the world.

**Note:** Tesla chief Elon Musk bagged the top spot with net worth \$197 billion. Jeff Bezos ranked second with \$189 billion net worth, followed by Bernard Arnault. Asia's richest person and Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani is ranked 8<sup>th</sup>. Total wealth of all billionaires across the globe surged 32% (\$3.5 trillion) in 2020.

**4. Mohankrishna Bohara** has been declared as the winner of the 30th Bihari Puraskar for 2020 for his Hindi book of Criticism, titled Taslima: Sangharsh aur Sahitya.

**Note:** Mohankrishna Bohara will be awarded 30th Bihari Puraskar for 2020 for his Hindi book of Criticism, titled Taslima: Sangharsh aur Sahitya in New Delhi. His book was published in 2016. Bihari Puraskar: It carries an award money of two lakh 50 thousand rupees, a

Citation and Plaque. It is one of the three literary awards instituted by K.K. Birla Foundation in 1991.

**5. Koneru Humpy** has been adjudged as the BBC India Sportswoman of the Year award for 2020.

**Note:** The award was based on a public vote in which Humpy beat sprinter Dutee Chand, shooter Manu Bhaker, wrestler Vinesh Phogat and hockey captain Rani Rampal. Humpy won the World Rapid Chess Championship in December 2019 after a two-year maternity break. She then won the Cairns Cup in 2020.

**6. Amitabh Bachchan** has been conferred with the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAP) Award 2021.

**Note:** The veteran actor will be the first Indian cinema personality to be bestowed with the FIAP Award for his dedication and contribution to the preservation of the world's film heritage. Hollywood filmmakers and previous recipients of the FIAP Award — Martin Scorsese and Christopher Nolan — will present the award to Bachchan during a virtual showcase scheduled to take place on March 19.

**7. President Ram Nath Kovind** presented a decorated with the emblem of the Indian Republic and a letter of appreciation to **Kiran Bedi**.

**Note:** Kiran Bedi was removed as the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry on February 16 by the President of India and Tamilisai Soundararajan took additional charge as the Lieutenant Governor on February 18.

**8. Indian women Tamilisai Soundararajan** has been conferred with the Top 20 Global Women of Excellence Award for 2020 at a US event.

**Note:** She joined a league of extraordinary women achievers across the world chosen for the award, including US Vice President Kamala Harris. The award



instituted by the US Congressional Multi Advisory Task Force led by Congressman Danny K. Davis, Representative of Illinois's 7th Congressional district, was presented during the 9th Congressional International Women's Day Gala at Naperville, Illinois.

9. **63<sup>rd</sup>** edition of the annual Grammy Awards was held in 2021.

**Note:** The 2021 Grammy awards recognized the best recordings, compositions, and artists of the eligibility year, between **September 1, 2019, to August 31, 2020**. The award is presented by **The Recording Academy** to recognize achievements in the American music industry. **Beyonce** received the most nominations with nine, as well as the most awards with four.

10. **Gowsalya Shanka** has been honoured with a nomination for the International Woman of Courage (IWOC) Award by the U.S. Consulate.

**Note:** Gowsalya Shankar is Tamil Nadu-based anti-caste activist and human rights defender. The IWOC Award Certificate of Nomination was handed over to her by U.S. Consul General in Chennai Judith Ravin at an event 'Courageous Women Inspire a Better World' held in the city.

11. In **20** languages the annual Sahitya Akademi Awards 2021 is announced.

**Note:** Seven books of poetry, four of the novel, Five short stories, two plays, and one each of memoirs and epic poetry in 20 Indian languages. The awards for **Malayalam, Nepali, Odia and Rajasthani** will be announced later. Sahitya Akademi Award is a literary honour in India.

12. **67<sup>th</sup>** edition of National Film Award announced this year (2021).

**Note:** The event is organised by the Directorate of Film Festivals, which comes under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Director Priyadarshan's Malayalam war epic Marakkar: Lion of the Arabian Sea, that is headlined by Mohanlal, won Best Feature Film. The best acting honours went to Manoj Bajapayee for Bhonsle, Dhanush for Tamil film Asuran, and Kangana Ranaut for two of her films: Panga and Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi.

13. **Marakkar: Lion of the Arabian Sea** film has won the best feature film award at the 67th National Film Award ceremony.

**Note:** The best acting honours went to Manoj Bajapayee for Bhonsle, Dhanush for Tamil film Asuran, and Kangana Ranaut for two of her films: Panga and Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi. Vijay Sethupathi (Super Deluxe) and Pallavi Joshi (The Tashkent Files) won the supporting actor awards, while director Sanjay Puri was awarded for Bahattar Hoorain

14. **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** has been conferred with the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020.

**Note:** The Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award instituted by government of India since 1995, the 125th birth anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi. The award is open to all people regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex. The award carries an amount of Rs 1 crore, a citation, plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item.

15. **Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said** has been conferred with the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019.

**Note:** The Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award instituted by government of India since 1995, the 125th birth anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi. The award is open to all people regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex. The award carries an amount of Rs 1 crore, a citation, plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item.

16. **Asha Bhosle** will be honoured with the prestigious Maharashtra Bhushan Award for the year 2020.

**Note:** The award, instituted in 1996 by the State government to recognise distinguished work and achievements of eminent persons from the State, representing different walks of life, carries a cash prize of ₹10 lakh and a citation. The first Maharashtra Bhushan awardee was Marathi writer P.L. Deshpande and the last winner of this award was historian Babasaheb Purandare who got it for the year 2015.

17. **Sharad Pagare** will be conferred with the prestigious Vyas Samman – 2020.

**Note:** The Vyas Samman, started in 1991, is given by K K Birla Foundation for an outstanding literary work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years. It carries an award of four lakh rupees along with a citation and plaque.

18. **Harsh C. Mariwala** has won the won EY Entrepreneur of the year award 2020 and will now represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year Award (WEYO).

**Note:** Mariwala, and will now represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year Award (WEYO) on 10 June 2021. Awards were also announced for eight other categories with the winners representing both mature industries and young entrepreneurs from startups including Unicorns and a Decacorn.

19. **Mahinder Giri** has won the prestigious International Ranger Award for his contribution towards forest conservation.

**Note:** He is the only ranger from Asia to win the prestigious award. Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar has congratulated him for the award.



20. The Parliament of **New Zealand** has passed a legislation that allows the mothers and their partners who have suffered a miscarriage or stillbirth the right of paid leave.  
**Note:** New Zealand's parliament has passed legislation giving mothers and their partners the right to paid leave

following a miscarriage or still birth, becoming only the second country in the world to do so. The bereavement allowance, passed unanimously in parliament late on Wednesday, gives employees three days leave when a pregnancy ends with a stillbirth without having to tap into sick leave.

### Sports News

1. **Kamilla Radhikova** partnered with Ankita Raina to win the WTA 250 Doubles title at Phillip Island Trophy Tennis Tournament.  
**Note:** The pair beat Russia's Anna Blinkova and Anastasia Potapova 2-6, 6-4, 10-7. This is Ankita's first title on the WTA tour. The win will help Ankita, 28, enter the top 100 of the WTA rankings in doubles with the live rankings currently showing her in the 94th position.
2. **Virat Kohli** becomes the first cricketer to have 100 million followers on social media platform Instagram.  
**Note:** The 32-year-old Kohli is also the first person in the Asia-Pacific region to achieve the feat. Kohli is also the fourth most followed sports person on Instagram. Portugal football star Cristiano Ronaldo tops the chart with 265 million followers, ahead of Argentina football captain and FC Barcelona legend Lionel Messi and Brazil's Neymar, who are second and third in the list with 186 million and 147 million followers respectively.
3. Indian shuttler, **Malvika Bansod** has won the women's singles title in badminton at Uganda International Badminton Tournament 2021, held in Kampala.  
**Note:** Varun beat his Indian counterpart Sankar Muthusamy by 21-18 16-21 21-17 to win men's singles final. Malvika won 17-21 25-23 21-10 over compatriot Anupama Upadhyaya in the women singles summit clash.
4. Varun Kapur is associated with **Badminton**.  
**Note:** Varun beat his Indian counterpart Sankar Muthusamy by 21-18 16-21 21-17 to win men's singles final. Malvika won 17-21 25-23 21-10 over compatriot Anupama Upadhyaya in the women singles summit clash.
5. **Srinu Bugatha** won the sixth edition of the New Delhi Marathon in men's category.  
**Note:** Bugatha clocked a personal best of 2 hours 14 minutes and 59 seconds which was shy of the 2 hours 11 minutes and 30 seconds that he was targeting to earn himself a run in the Tokyo Olympics. Uttarakhand's Nitendra Singh Rawat (2:18:54) and Army Sports Institute's Rashpal Singh (2:18:57) clinched the silver and bronze medal in the men's elite category.
6. **Sudha Singh** won the sixth edition of the New Delhi Marathon in women's category.

- Note:** Sudha, who was aiming for a hat-trick of Olympic appearances, won the women's title with a timing of 2:43:41. That was, however, off the national record of 2:30:00 which would have earned her a ticket to Tokyo. Maharashtra's Jyoti Gawate (2:58:23) and Ladakh's Jigmet Dolma (3:04:52) clinched the silver and bronze medal, respectively among the women.
7. Indian shuttler **PV Sindhu** won silver medal in the BWF Swiss Open Super 300 in Basel.  
**Note:** She lost to World No. 3 Spaniard and reigning Olympic champion Carolina Marin in the final of the women's singles event. The World Champion shuttler who has faced a lot of criticism lately for lacklustre performances in the last year had entered the semifinal stage of a BWF tournament after 19 months.
  8. Indian boxer **Manish Kaushik** won the gold medal in the Boxam International Tournament in Castellon, Spain.  
**Note:** The 2018 Commonwealth Games silver medallist Kaushik, who returned into the ring for the first time after the Asian Olympic Qualifiers held in March last year, beat Denmark's Nikolai Terteryan with a split 3-2 decision in the men's 63kg summit bout. However, the World Championship bronze medallist Vikas Krishan went down fighting 4-1 against local favourite Ndiaye Sissokho to settle for a silver medal in the men's 69kg.
  9. Smartphone company, **Vivo** has back as the title sponsor of the Indian Premium League cricket tournament.  
**Note:** The company, which competes with players like Xiaomi and Samsung in the Indian market, also stated that it will expand its portfolio of premium devices, and focus on new technologies like 5G. This year's edition of IPL will run from April 9 to May 30 across six venues -- Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi and Kolkata.
  10. The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has imposed a ban for 4 year on Madhavan R for violating the NADA's code on the usage of prohibited substances. He is associated with **Weightlifting**.  
**Note:** The Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (ADDP) has banned Madhavan R for 4 years. Madhavan R was tested positive for the prohibited substance Phentermine & Mephentermine. The athletes have an option to appeal against the ADDP's sanction to the higher panel Anti-Doping Appeals Panel (ADAP).



11. The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Shotgun World Cup 2021 was held in **Cairo, Egypt**.  
**Note:** The Shotgun tournament took place for disciplines of Trap Shooting & Skeet Shooting. The Indian Women's Trap Team trio of Kirti Gupta, Manisha Keer & Rajeshwari Kumari won the Silver medal in the event. They were defeated by Russia in the Final.
12. **Virat Kohli** becomes the first cricketer to score 3,000 runs in T-20 International cricket.  
**Note:** The India captain reached the milestone in his 87th match in the shortest format. Kohli's India teammate Rohit Sharma can also reach the landmark in the ongoing series between India and England.
13. Bhavani Devi is associated with **Fencing** sport who becomes the first ever Indian to qualify for the Tokyo Olympic Games.  
**Note:** The sabre fencer secured a spot in the World Cup in Hungary after the hosts lost in the quarterfinals of the team event, allowing South Korea to progress to the semi-final. Bhavani Devi qualifies through the Adjusted Official Ranking (AOR) Method.
14. **Mithali Raj** becomes the first Indian woman cricketer to complete 10,000 runs across all format.  
**Note:** With this, she also became the 2nd largest woman scorer in international cricket. She achieved the feat with a boundary off Anne Bosch in 28th over of India's innings during the ongoing 3rd ODI against South Africa. She scored 663 runs in 10 Test matches with a best score of 214, while she has 6974 and 2364 runs from 212 ODIs and 89 T20 Internationals.
15. According to announcement made by the International Boxing Association (AIBA) the Asian Boxing Championship will be held in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** This will be the 1st boxing tournament in Asia in 2021, acting towards evaluating boxers' readiness for the Olympic games. For the 1st time in the tournament's history both men & women fought in the same championship.
16. Cricketer Gary Wilson announced retirement from International Cricket. He belongs to **Ireland**.  
**Note:** Currently, he is all set to take over the role of Head Coach and Pathway Manager for North West Warriors. Gary Wilson made his International Debut in 2005 for Ireland, and represented the side 292 times. He is the 2nd Highest wicket-taker for Ireland with 160 catches & 33 stumping's. In his 16 yearlong cricketing career, he scored 5,959 runs for Ireland, with 1 century and 30 fifties.
17. Kamalpreet Kaur associated with **Discus throw** sports who broke the 9 year old National record and qualified for Tokyo Olympics.  
**Note:** The 25-year-old Kaur, who had also won gold in the 2019 edition of the championships, dramatically heaved the discus to 65.06m in her first throw to the surprise of the sizeable crowd at the NIS. She eclipsed the nine-year-old earlier national record of 64.76m which was in the name of Olympian and 2010 Commonwealth Games gold medallist Krishna Poonia.
18. Cricketers Mohammad Naveed and Shaiman Anwar Butt banned for 8 years from all form of cricket, by the International Cricket Council, the belongs to **UAE**.  
**Note:** The banned for trying to fix matches during the T20 World Cup qualifiers in 2019. The ICC Anti-Corruption Tribunal had found them guilty of breaching the Anti-Corruption Code in January 2021.
19. **Virat Kohli has** become the first cricketer to score 3000 runs in Men's Twenty20 Internationals.  
**Note:** Kohli's knock of 73 runs, which came off 49 balls, also helped India to level the five-match T20I series. He also became the third captain in international cricket to score 12000 runs as a captain. He joined legendary captains Ricky Ponting and Graeme Smith in the elite list.
20. Indian sprinter who beat national record holder Dutee Chand to win women's 100m sprint final in the Federation Cup Senior National Athletics Championships in Patiala -- **S Dhanalakshmi**.  
**Note:** The 22-year-old Dhanalakshmi of Tamil Nadu clocked 11.39 seconds to become the fastest woman of the championships. Odisha-based Dutee clocked 11.58 seconds to be placed in second place.
21. Indian shooter **Yashaswini Deswal has** won the first gold medal for India in the Women's 10M Air Pistol final of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup.  
**Note:** Deswal accumulated 238.8 points to lead in her category. Another Indian shooter Manu Bhaker won a silver medal with 236.7 points. World number one shooter Divyansh Singh Panwar clinched the bronze medal in 10m Air Rifle (men's category) and opened India's medal account in the competition.
22. The Sports Ministry has decided to extend the Khelo India scheme from 2021-22 to **2025-26**.  
**Note:** The Sports Ministry has decided to extend the Khelo India scheme from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The Ministry has furnished an Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) memorandum to the Ministry of Finance for extension/continuation of the Khelo India Scheme from 2021-22 to 2025- 26. An amount of Rs 657.71 crore has been allocated in the Budget Estimate (B.E.) for the year 2021-22 under the Khelo India Scheme
23. Indian shooter **Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar** has won the gold medal in the men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions event at the ISSF World Cup in New Delhi.



**Note:** The 20-year-old became the youngest in history to win a shooting World Cup gold in the 3 Positions event. The two other Indian shooters in the final, Sanjeev Rajput finishing sixth and Niraj Kumar came at the last position.

24. Indian contingent has won 15 Gold Medal in ISSF World Cup in the Trap events.

**Note:** Indian trio of Shreyasi Singh, Manisha Keer and Rajeshwari Kumari won the gold medal in women's Trap Team event. India outgunned the Kazakhstan trio 6-0 in the final. Men's Trap Team event: Kynan Chenai, Prithviraj Tondaiman and Lakshay beat the Slovakian

team in the gold medal match to make it 30 medals for India in the shooting World Cup.

25. **Lewis Hamilton** has won the 2021 Bahrain Grand Prix also known as Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2021.

**Note:** Red Bull Racing's driver Max Verstappen (Netherlands) finished 2nd in the race, while Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas (Finland) finished 3rd in the race. The victory was Hamilton's 96th Formula One Victory. The Bahrain Grand Prix is the inaugural GP of the 2021 Formula One World Championship.

### Books and Authors

1. **Anindya Dutta** has authored the book titled "Advantage India: The Story of Indian Tennis".

**Note:** Advantage India is a well-researched account of the journey of Indian tennis, with a special section on the Doubles game and on women's tennis in India. The book is published by Westland publications. The book provides the extensive history of Indian tennis on both men's and women's side.

2. **Olga Tokarczuk** has authored the book titled "The Lost Soul".

**Note:** It is a story that beautifully weaves together the voice of the Nobel Prize-winning Polish novelist Olga Tokarczuk and the finely detailed pen-and-ink drawings of illustrator Joanna Concejo, who together create a parallel narrative universe full of secrets, evocative of another time. Here a man has forgotten what makes his heart feel full.

3. **Evan Osnos** has authored the book titled "Joe Biden: American Dreamer" a biography of American President, Joe Biden.

**Note:** The author portrays President Joseph R. Biden Jr. as a man who has sustained a 50-year political career and became the President and a man who is marked with deep personal losses. The book captures the characters and features of the presidential election.

4. **Susmita Mukherjee** has authored the book titled "Baanjh: Incomplete Lives of Complete Women".

**Note:** The book is a collection of 11 short stories that portray the lives of women from various social backgrounds. The book was published by Readomania Publishing. The book features the world of the women who are living in the excluded society to the women living in higher levels of society.

5. **Dr Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti** has authored the book titled "Essays on Srimanta Sankaradeva".

**Note:** "Essays on Srimanta Sankaradeva", the new book of **Dr Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti** highlights hitherto unexplored areas of Indian culture and

philosophy. The author has written the essays on the lasting contributions of the medieval polymath Srimanta Sankaradeva.

6. **A.S. Pannerselvan** has authored the book titled "Karunanidhi: A Life".

**Note:** The book tells the story of the man who became a metaphor for modern Tamil Nadu, where language, empowerment, self-respect, art, literary forms and films coalesced to lend a unique vibrancy to politics.

7. **Shobha Tharoor Srinivasan** has authored the book titled "Prince with a Paintbrush: The Story of Raja Ravi Varma".

**Note:** Published under Westland's 'Red Panda' imprint, it aims to inspire young readers to learn about the famed artist and how he made his entry and mark in the art world. Srinivasan has earlier authored children's books like "Indi-Alphabet" and "How Many Lines in a Limerick?"

8. **Indra Nooyi** has authored the book titled "My Life in Full: Work, Family and Our Future".

**Note:** The book is set to be published by Portfolio books on September 28. The book will feature both the personal and professional life of Indra Nooyi. The book features the life of Indra Nooyi from her childhood in India to her life at Yale University as an immigrant to her life as a person of colour in the elite corporate world.

9. **Jahnvi Barua** has authored the novel titled "Undertow".

**Note:** The book was published by Penguin Viking. The book portrays the story of Loya, a 25-year-old who is on a journey to discover herself. Loya leaves her home in Bengaluru and sets off to Assam to study Asian elephants (*Elephas Maximus*) and to connect with her grandfather Torun Ram Goswami.

10. **Usha Thakkar & Sandhya Mehta** has authored the book titled "Gandhi in Bombay".

**Note:** The Indiatourism Mumbai, Regional Office of Ministry of Tourism in the Western Region organized an



online book reading session of “Gandhi in Bombay” by the authors Dr.Usha Thakkar and Sandhya Mehta , as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations. Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (India @ 75) is a series of events to be organised by the Government of India to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Usha Thakkar and Sandhya Mehta India’s Independence

11. **Dr. Deepak Ravindran** has authored the book titled “The Pain-Free Mindset: 7 Steps to Taking Control and Overcoming Chronic Pain”.  
**Note:** The book was published by Vermillion, an imprint of Penguin. This is the first book by a medical physician in the UK in the past 15 years to provide an overview that new scientific advances in understanding the nervous system will support us in overcoming pain.
12. **Arjun Subramaniam** has authored the book titled “Full Spectrum: India’s Wars 1972-2020”.  
**Note:** It is his second book and it explores the trials and tribulations, successes and failures of India’s armed forces in the post-1971 period It is covering major operation that the armed forces have participated including insurgencies in the north-east, terrorism and proxy wars in Jammu and Kashmir, separatist violence in Punjab, the IPKF intervention in Sri Lanka.
13. **Samir Soni** has authored the book titled “My Experiments with Silence”.  
**Note:** Soni’s book aims to be a personal account of his dialogues with himself during his growing-up years in

Delhi, his stint at Wall Street and his time in Bollywood. The book will be published by OM Books International.

14. **Neha Sinha** has authored the book titled “Wild and Wilful: Tale of 15 Iconic Indian Species”.  
**Note:** The book is a collection of 15 essays each focused on an Indian species. Through this book Neha Sinha highlights the indicators of developed India can affect various ecologies and displaced wildlife even result in their extinction.
15. **Daribha Lyndem** has authored the book titled “Name Place Animal Things”.  
**Note:** The book is published by Zubaan Publishers Pvt. Ltd. The book features a young khasi woman who lives in the city of Shillong, Meghalaya in early 2000s. The book has interconnected stories that move through age, lives and places and covers the breadth of childhood and moves into the awareness of adulthood.
16. **Christina Lamb** is the co-author of the autobiographical book “I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban”.  
**Note:** It was co-written by Christina Lamb and published on 8 October 2013, by Weidenfeld & Nicolson in the UK and Little, Brown and Company in the US. The book details the early life of Yousafzai, the rise and fall of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan and the assassination attempt made against Yousafzai, when she was aged 15, following her activism for female education.

### Science and Defence

1. **UAE** hosted the multinational Exercise Desert Flag-VI for the first time.  
**Note:** The exercise is being held from March 3 to 21 at the Al-Dhafra airbase in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Exercise Desert Flag is an annual multi-national large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the UAE Air Force. The aim of the exercise is to provide operational exposure to the participating forces, while training them to undertake simulated air combat operations in a controlled environment.
2. **TRAI** has organized ‘India Telecom 2021’ – an Exclusive International Business Expo under Market Access Initiative Scheme (MAI).  
**Note:** The main objective of the event is to provide opportunities to Indian telecom exporters to meet qualified overseas buyers. TEPC has created this platform to bring potential buyers from across the globe and quality telecom equipment manufacturers and ICT services solution providers from India under one roof to interact and finalize business deals.
3. Special forces of **Turkmenistan** is being trained by Indian Army in "Combat Free Fall" to help them build their capabilities.  
**Note:** The Indian Army shared the information of the training on Twitter and said it was building bonds of friendship with the Turkmenistani forces. Special Forces Training School Indian Army has commenced training of Turkmenistan Special Forces in Combat Free Fall as a precursor to a series of customised courses to follow and help build the capability of the Turkmenistan Special Forces
4. The second edition of the joint military exercise ‘Dustlik’ has been conducted between India and **Uzbekistan**.  
**Note:** The second edition of exercise Dustlik is aimed at carrying out joint counter-terror operations in a mountainous rural and urban scenario. Intelligence-based surgical operations, special forces tracking techniques, surveillance through a hi-tech command post, slithering operations from helicopters were some of the key elements of the exercise.



5. The second edition of the joint military exercise 'Dustlik' was convened between India and Uzbekistan in **Uttarakhand**.

**Note:** The Indian Army was represented by 13 Kumaon known as the Rezag La battalion famous for its heroics in the battle of Rezag La in 1962 war with China. The first one took place in November 2019 near Tashkent in Uzbekistan.

6. With space agency **NASA** the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has completed development of a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) capable of producing extremely high-resolution images for a joint earth observation satellite mission.

**Note:** NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR) is a joint collaboration for a dual-frequency L and S-band SAR for earth observation. "NISAR will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet's surface less than a centimeter across".

7. indigenously developed Advanced Light Torpedo (TAL) **Shyena**, maiden flight trials of which was conducted successfully.

**Note:** This was the country's first such trial where the indigenous lightweight torpedo was fired from a fixed-wing aircraft. The lightweight torpedo was designed, developed, produced and inducted into services a decade ago and is used against underwater platforms as part of anti-submarine warfare (ASW).

8. Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) is joint Robotic Lunar mission of India and **Japan** that aims to send a lander and rover to the Moon's south pole in the year 2024.

**Note:** LUPEX is a robotic Lunar mission that aims to send a lander and rover to the Moon's south pole in the year 2024. The discussions took place in a virtual meeting between ISRO & JAXA. The Indian side was led by ISRO Chairman K Sivan while the Japan delegation was represented by Hiroshi Yamakawa, President of JAXA.

9. The name of the sounding rocket which was launched by ISRO in March 2021 to study altitudinal variations in the neutral winds and plasma dynamics -- **RH-560**.

**Note:** RH-560 will study altitudinal variations in neutral winds and plasma dynamics. ISRO has developed series of sounding rockets known as 'Rohini series'. Among them RH-200, RH-300 and RH-560 are the important ones.

10. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has signed an MoU with **National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela** for setting up a Space Technology Incubation Centre (S-TIC).

**Note:** The MoU was signed after ISRO agreed to set up a Space Technology Incubation Centre(S-TIC) at NIT Rourkela. This collaboration with ISRO will open up new opportunities for research and development as well as space start-ups.

11. The researcher of which IIT **Bombay** built the 'Energy Swaraj Yatra' bus that runs on solar energy and has a complete work-cum-residential unit.

**Note:** An 'Energy Swaraj Yatra' bus has been built by Dr Chetan Singh Solanki, Prof. IIT Bombay. The bus runs on solar energy and has a complete work-cum-residential unit. Mr Solanki has been travelling on it to raise awareness about the use of solar power. The Energy Swaraj Yatra began in 2020 and will continue till 2030.

12. 'Pabbi-Antiterror-2021' is a joint anti-terrorism exercise of **SCO** group of countries.

**Note:** The decision to hold the joint exercise "Pabbi-Antiterror-2021" was announced during the 36th meeting of the Council of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. At the meeting, representatives of the SCO member states also approved the draft program of cooperation for 2022-2024 to counter-terrorism, separatism and extremism.

13. **USA, France, Belgium and Japan** countries are the participants in the Group Arabian Sea Warfare Exercise, a major naval exercise.

**Note:** The Group Arabian Sea Warfare Exercise will see ships from the four countries conduct drills in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman. Ships involved include the French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, as well as the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island.

14. According to a study released by defence website 'Military Direct' has the strongest military force in the world -- **China**.

**Note:** The USA, despite their enormous military budgets, comes in 2nd place with 74 points, followed by Russia with 69, India at 61 and then France with 58. The UK just about makes the Top 10, coming in 9th place with a score of 43. China has the strongest military in the world, scoring 82 out of 100 points in the index.

15. **Larson & Toubro Limited** built the Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) ICGS Vajra was commissioned into the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) by General Bipin Rawat in Chennai.

**Note:** ICGS Vajra is the sixth vessel in the series of seven OPVs being built by L&T under a Ministry of Defence contract signed in the year 2015. Like the five OPVs in the series, ICGS Vajra was also delivered ahead of the contractual schedule.

16. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has partnered with **Indian Institute of Space Science and**





**Technology (IIST** for futuristic research orbit - something similar to the JPL- Caltech model in the United States.

**Note:** The Bengaluru-headquartered space agency is striking a partnership with the IIST -- something similar to the JPL- Caltech model in the United States. JPL (Jet Propulsion Laboratory) is federally funded by US space agency NASA and managed by Caltech (California Institute of Technology).

17. According to Global Wind Report 2021 published by the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC), **93 gigawatt (GW)** wind energy capacity has been installed in 2020 which was the best year in history for the global wind industry .

**Note:** As per the report, 2020 was the best year in history for the global wind industry with 93 gigawatt (GW) of new capacity installed, which was a 53 per cent year-on-year increase. According to the report titled 'Global Wind Report 2021', at present there is 743 GW of wind power capacity worldwide, helping to avoid over 1.1 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> globally – equivalent to the annual carbon emissions of South America.

18. The ordnance was collected from the State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu (SIPCOT) Industrial Estate in Gummidipoondi, Thiruvallur district, TN.

**Note:** Operation Thiruvallur was initiated by the Ministry of Defence on the request of Govt. of Tamil Nadu. Unexploded ordnance from a metal scrap dump were successfully neutralised by the Army Bomb Disposal Team.

19. **IIT Delhi** is setting up an atmospheric observatory to do research, track atmospheric problems like air pollution, and suggest solutions to mitigate pollution, erratic monsoon and extreme weather events associated with climate change.

**Note:** The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi announced that it is setting up an atmospheric observatory to do research, track atmospheric problems like air pollution, and suggest solutions to mitigate pollution, erratic monsoon and extreme weather events associated with climate change. The observatory will be established in its research campus in Sonapat at a cost of ₹125 crore.

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