

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

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Important Days

Date	Day	Theme/Others
July 1	Foundation Day of State Bank of India	Constituted in 1955
July 1	National Chartered Accountant Day	Formed in 1949 (P. Kapadia was the first person to get a membership certificate by the ICAI)
July 1	National Doctors' Day	It was first celebrated in 1991
July 1	National Postal Worker Day	It was declared in 1977.
July 1	Goods and Services Tax Day	4 th anniversary of the GST
July 2	World UFO Day	It was first observed in 2001 by UFO researcher Haktan Akdogan
July 2	World Sports Journalists Day	In 1924, this day was named by the International Sports Committee
1 st Saturday of July	International Co-operative Day	Rebuild Better Together
July 6	World Zoonoses Day	Let's Break the Chain of Zoonotic Transmission
July 7	World Chocolate Day	
July 10	National Fish Farmers Day	It was the 63 rd National Fish Farmers Day
July 11	World Population Day (The day was first celebrated on July 11, 1987)	Rights and Choices are the Answer: Whether baby boom or bust, the solution to shifting fertility rates lies in prioritising all people's reproductive health and rights
July 12	National Simplicity Day	
July 12	World Malala Day	Malala was the youngest recipient ever of the Nobel Peace Prize
July 15	World Youth Skills Day	In 2014, the United Nations General Assembly declared the day.
July 16	World Snake Day	

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July 17	World Day for International Justice	Social justice in the digital economy
July 17	World Emoji Day	
July 18	Nelson Mandela International Day (He served as South Africa's president from 1994 until 1999)	One Hand Can Feed Another
July 20	International Chess Day	Teach someone how to play chess (Proposed by UNESCO)
July 20	Science Exploration Day	Main Objective : 'Tune them in to science'
July 22	World Federation of Neurology (Suggested by the Public Awareness and Advocacy Committee in 2014)	Stop Multiple Sclerosis (Campain - our brain, our future)
July 23	National Broadcasting Day	IBC started organising radio broadcasting from Bombay station in 1927.
July 24	Aaykar Diwas (Income Tax Day)	On 24th July, 1860, Income Tax was introduced for the first time in India by Sir James Wilson
July 25	World Drowning Day	United Nations has designated the day
July 26	Kargil Vijay Diwas	The campaign 'Operation Vijay' held on July 26, 1999
July 26	International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem	Adopted by UNESCO in 2015
July 27	83rd Raising Day of Central Reserve Police Force	
July 28	World Natural Conservation Day	Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet
July 28	World Hepatitis Day	Hepatitis can't wait
July 29	International Tiger Day	Their survival is in our hands
July 30	World Day Against Trafficking in Persons	Voices Lead the Way
July 30	International Day of Friendship (It was first proposed on July 30,	Sharing the human spirit through friendship

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	1958 by the World Friendship Crusade)	
July 31	World Ranger Day	

Important Banking News

RBI

RBI imposes Rs 25 lakh penalty on Punjab & Sind Bank

- The **Reserve Bank of India** imposed a **penalty of Rs 25 lakh** on **Punjab and Sind Bank** for non-compliance with certain provisions of directions on '**Cyber Security Framework in Banks**'.
- The state-owned bank had **reported a few cyber incidents** to the RBI on May 16 and 20, 2020, the central bank said while giving details.
- The RBI issued a show-cause notice to the bank.

RBI imposes monetary penalty on 14 banks

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** imposed a **monetary penalty on 14 banks**, including State Bank of India (SBI), Bandhan Bank, IndusInd Bank, Bank of Baroda (BoB), Central Bank for non-compliance with certain provisions of directions issued by them.
- The penalty ranges from **Rs 50 lakh to Rs 2 crore**, with **SBI being charged Rs 50 lakh and BoB Rs 2 crore**.
- "This action is based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their customers".
- A **scrutiny of the accounts of the companies of a group** was carried out by the RBI.
- It was observed that the banks had failed to comply with provisions of **one or more directions** issued by RBI and/or contravened provisions of the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949**.
- **Notices** were issued **to the banks advising** them to show cause as to why a penalty should not be imposed for non-compliance with the directions/contraventions of provisions of the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949**.

RBI Launches 'Retail Direct Scheme' To increase retail participation in government securities

- To **increase retail participation** in government securities, '**the RBI Retail Direct**' facility was announced in the **Statement of Developmental and Regulatory Policies dated February 05, 2021** for improving ease of access by retail investors through online access to the government securities market – both primary and secondary - along with the facility to open their gilt securities account ('Retail Direct') with the RBI.
- In pursuance of this announcement, the '**RBI Retail Direct**' scheme, which is a one-stop solution to facilitate investment in government securities by individual investors is being issued.

The highlights of the 'RBI Retail Direct' scheme are:

- Retail investors (individuals) will have the facility to open and maintain the '**Retail Direct Gilt Account**' (RDG Account) with RBI.
- RDG Account can be opened through an 'Online portal' provided for the purpose of the scheme.

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The 'Online portal' will also give the registered users the following facilities:

- Access to primary issuance of Government securities
- Access to NDS-OM.

RBI bans Mastercard Asia from adding new customers

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** imposed restrictions on **Mastercard Asia Pacific Pte Ltd** from onboarding new domestic customers (**debit, credit or prepaid**) onto its card network **from July 22**, citing non-compliance of storage of data in India.
- The **RBI order will not impact existing customers of Mastercard.**
- The central bank stated **Mastercard** should advise all card issuing banks and non-banks to conform to these directions.
- "The supervisory action has been taken in exercise of powers vested in **RBI under Section 17 of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 (PSS Act)**".
- As per the **RBI circular on Storage of Payment System Data dated April 6, 2018**, all system providers were directed to ensure that **within a period of six months** the entire data relating to payment systems operated by them is stored in a system only in India.

RBI cancels the licence of Maharashtra based Dr Shivajirao Patil Nilangekar Urban Co-operative Bank

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** mentioned it has **cancelled the licence** of **Dr Shivajirao Patil Nilangekar Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd, Nilanga, Latur**, as it **does not have adequate capital and earning prospects.**
- Also, the **Maharashtra-based bank** with its current financial position would be unable to pay its depositors in full, the central bank stated while announcing cancellation of its licence.
- The **bank ceases to carry on banking business**, with effect from the close of business.
- Further, the **Commissioner for Cooperation and Registrar of Cooperative Societies**, Maharashtra, has also been requested to issue an order for winding up the bank and appoint a liquidator for the bank.
- **Banks get time till March 2022 to implement lockable cassettes swap system for ATMs**
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended the timeline for implementation of cassette swap in all ATMs till **March 31, 2022.**
- Currently, most of the ATMs (Automated Teller Machines) are **filled by way of open cash top-up or by loading cash** in the machines on the spot.
- To do away with the current system, the apex bank had asked banks to ensure that **lockable cassettes are swapped at the time of cash replenishment** in the ATMs.
- Following representations received from banks citing difficulties in moving towards the lockable cassettes system, RBI has decided to extend the deadline for its implementation till March next year
- **In April 2018**, the apex bank had asked banks to consider using **lockable cassettes** in their ATMs which shall be swapped at the time of cash replenishment.

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- It was to be implemented in a phased manner covering at least one-third ATMs operated by the banks every year, **such that all ATMs achieve cassette swap by March 31, 2021.**
- The recommendation to switch to lockable cassettes in ATMs was based on a report of the Committee on **Currency Movement** that was set up by the central bank.
- Banks have also been asked to monitor progress and make the required course correction at the end of every quarter and report status to the RBI.

Given nod to set up small finance bank to take over scam-hit PMC (Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative) Bank: RBI to HC

- Given nod to set up small finance bank to take over PMC Bank tells RBI to HC
- The RBI said this will ease the trouble faced by the bank's customers who are unable to withdraw their money
- The **PMC Bank** has been put under restrictions, including limiting withdrawals, by the RBI, following the unearthing of **Rs 4,355-crore scam.**
- The RBI, submitted that it has given in-principle approval to **Centrum Finance Services Ltd to set up a small finance bank** which will take over Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank very soon as the process is near completion
- **This will ease the trouble faced by the bank's customers** who are unable to withdraw their money.

RBI to allow retail investors to open gilt accounts with the central bank under Retail Direct Scheme

- The Reserve Bank of India has announced the '**RBI Retail Direct**' scheme that will give investors the facility of investing in government securities in one place.
- There will be no charge on account opening and its management.
- The central bank said that retail investors can open a **Retail Direct Gilt Account** (RDG Account) with it.
- To increase retail partnership in government securities, the government had also announced '**The RBI Retail Direct Facility**'.
- Registered investors will have to pay a charge for its payment gateway.
- Significantly, the objective of this plan is **to improve the accessibility of government securities.**
- The online reach of retail investors will also be expanded.
- This includes both primary and secondary markets.

RBI decided to introduce digital currency on a pilot basis soon

- The **RBI** is working on phased introduction of its **own digital currency** Deputy Governor **T Rabi Sankar** stated it is mulling pilot projects in wholesale and retail segments in the near future, .
- He also mentioned several countries have implemented specific purpose **Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs)** in the wholesale and retail segments.
- A **CBDC is a legal tender** issued by a central bank in a digital form.
- It is the same as a fiat currency and is exchangeable one-to-one with the fiat currency.
- Sankar noted that developing a **domestic CBDC could provide the public** with uses that any private virtual currency (VC) offers and to that extent might retain public preference for the rupee.

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Fin Min reported Rs 24,356 crore of unclaimed deposit lying with Scheduled Commercial Banks

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) informed that the total amount of unclaimed deposits of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) was Rs. 24,356 crore, as on 31.12.2020.
- The bank-wise details are at Annex.
- This was stated by Union Minister of State for Finance **Dr Bhagwat Kisanrao Karad** in Rajya Sabha.
- Giving more details for FY 2020, the Minister stated that RBI has informed that **unclaimed deposits have increased by Rs. 5,977 crore in the year 2020**, as compared to the year 2019, on account of depositors not having claimed their deposits from banks.
- RBI has advised banks to play a more proactive role in finding the whereabouts of the account holders of unclaimed deposits/ inoperative accounts vide circulars dated 07.02.2012, 08.02.2012, 21.11.2014 and 02.02.2015.

RBI imposes Rs 5 crore penalty on Axis Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 5 crore on Axis Bank for contravention of certain provisions of directions issued by the RBI, encompassing those on cyber security framework.
- The directions include 'Strengthening the Controls of Payment Ecosystem between Sponsor Banks and SCBs/UCBs as a Corporate Customer', 'Cyber Security Framework in Banks', 'RBI (Financial Services provided by Banks) Directions, 2016', 'Financial Inclusion- Access to Banking Services - Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account' and 'Frauds - Classification and Reporting'.
- The RBI had conducted statutory inspections for supervisory evaluation (ISE) of the bank with reference to its financial position as on 31 March 2017 (ISE 2017), 31 March 2018 (ISE 2018) and 31 March 2019 (ISE 2019).

RBI reported Digital payments grew 30.19% during the financial year ended March 2021

- Digital payments have recorded a growth of 30.19 per cent during the year ended March 2021, reflecting adoption and deepening of cashless transactions in the country, RBI data showed.
- As per the newly constituted Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI), the index rose to 270.59 at the end of March 2021, up from 207.84 a year ago.
- "The RBI-DPI index has demonstrated significant growth in the index representing the rapid adoption and deepening of digital payments across the country in recent years".
- The Reserve Bank had earlier announced construction of a composite Reserve Bank of India – Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) with March 2018 as base to capture the extent of digitization of payments across the country.

RBI cancelled the Madgaum Urban Co-op Bank licence

- The Reserve Bank of India cancelled the licence of Madgaum Urban Co-operative Bank Limited, Margao, Goa, as the bank with its current financial position would be unable to pay its present depositors in full.
- About 99 per cent of the depositors will receive full amounts of their deposits from the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC).

About the cancellation:

- The bank ceases to carry on banking business with effect from the close of business on July 29, 2021.

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- The Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Goa, has also been requested to issue an order for winding up the bank and appoint a liquidator for the bank.
- On liquidation, every depositor would be entitled to receive deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to a monetary ceiling of **Rs five lakh from the DICGC subject to the provisions of the DICGC Act, 1961.**

SBI

SBI launches dedicated counters to Current Account customers in 360 branches

- State Bank of India (SBI) launched a **dedicated counter** across its **360 selected branches** to cater to the **current account customers.**
- The dedicated counter is being called the **current account service point or CASP** to address the critical needs of the key current account customers and to mobilize new customers.
- The **initiative** will also **allow the customers in digitizing their bank-related work** and to provide simpler technical solutions, according to their requirements.
- "**CASP** will be staffed by trained and dedicated Relationship Managers across all the centres.
- The **CASP initiative** was **launched by** Challa Sreenivasulu Setty, Managing Director (Retail & Digital Banking) in the presence of Chief General Managers of all the Circles on the occasion of **66th Bank Day.**

SBI choose Paisalo as its National Corporate Business Correspondent

- India's **largest lender State Bank of India** has selected **Paisalo Digital** as its **National Corporate Business Correspondent** for boosting its financial inclusion drive with the help of kiosk-based banking services.
- The **final signing of the Service Level Agreement** and other formalities shall be done shortly.
- As a part of this alliance, **Paisalo Digital** shall be extending its services and its reach to its existing customers and new customers.
- As a business correspondent for State Bank of India, they will help the bank in improving the synergy with the thrust of the already up and running fully digital small loan business under SBI-Paisalo Loan Co-origination.

World Bank

World Bank expands \$20 billion For coronavirus vaccine funding

- The **World Bank** pledged to boost available funding for **COVID-19 vaccine purchases** and deployment to **\$20 billion** from a previous target of \$12 billion, citing a sharp increase in overall financing demand from developing countries.
- World Bank President **David Malpass** stated the global development bank had **already provided more than \$4 billion to 51 developing countries** for the purchase and deployment of COVID-19 vaccines, and would add billions for 25 more countries soon.

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World Bank approves USD 500 mn loan to India

- **World Bank** stated it has approved a **USD 500 million** (about Rs 3,717.28 crore) loan programme **to support India's informal working class to overcome the current pandemic distress**.
- The **loan will create greater flexibility** for states to cope with the ongoing pandemic, future climate and disaster shocks.
- Of the **USD 500 million** commitments, USD 112.50 million will be financed by its concessionary lending arm International Development Association and USD 387.50 million will be a loan from International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).
- The World Bank mentioned **its total funding towards strengthening India's social protection programmes to help the poor and vulnerable households** since the start of the pandemic stands at USD 1.65 billion (about Rs 12,264.54 crore).

IFC grants \$250-million loan to HDFC for enhance affordable housing

- **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, the investment arm of the **World Bank Group**, has provided a loan of **\$250 million (₹1,875 crore)** to **HDFC**, to promote affordable green housing finance for low and middle income borrowers.

Benefits :

- At least 25 percent of the financing has been earmarked for green affordable housing.
- It aligned with the government of India's target to provide '**Housing for All**,' & the funding will also help generate jobs.
- Green affordable housing can help India on its path to deliver on its commitments under the **Paris Agreement**
- Green and energy-efficient housing can **help cut emissions**, as residential housing accounts for about **24 percent of the nation's electricity consumption**.
- IFC estimates there's a **\$1.25 trillion investment opportunity** in green residential housing in India to the year 2030.
- For on-lending to retail buyers of affordable housing and developers of affordable and green housing, IFC has made investments worth over **\$920 million** in housing finance companies in India.

Other Banking News

ICICI Bank launches banking solutions "SALUTE DOCTORS"

- **ICICI Bank** announced the **launch of a comprehensive banking solution for doctors**, called **Salute Doctors**.
- It provides customized **banking** as well as value-added **services** for every **doctor**, beginning from a **medical student** to a senior **medical consultant** to **an owner of a hospital or a clinic**.
- The solutions, which are mostly **digital and instant**, are designed to take care of the professional, business, lifestyle and wealth banking requirements of doctors and their families.
- The initiative is **powered by ICICI STACK**, a **digital banking platform** with nearly 500 services that helps customers of the bank to avail the services digitally and seamlessly.

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HDFC Bank launches 'Salaam Dil Sey' initiative to show gratitude to doctors

- **HDFC Bank** launched a **Salaam Dil Sey** initiative to show **gratitude to doctors** for their tireless service during the pandemic, **and to pay tribute to doctors** across the country.
- **Salaam Dil Sey** **encourages one and all to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution of doctors** and provides a platform to show their gratitude to doctors, who are bravely fighting the pandemic, at the risk of their own lives.
- As part of this initiative, the bank has created a web platform **www.salaamdilsey.com** wherein the general public can logon on to the microsite and share the thank you message for doctors which can be **immediately shared via** email, social media, and WhatsApp.

Indian Overseas Bank became the second most-valued public lender

- **Indian Overseas Bank (IOB)** has become the **second most-valued listed public sector bank (PSB)** with a **market capitalization of over Rs 50,000 crore**.
- As Street discounts privatization of the **state-owned lender**, its shares have appreciated nearly 80 per cent on the BSE in the past one month.
- On a closing basis, the bank's market cap was **Rs 51,887 crore** at the end of trading, **surpassing** its peers Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Bank of Baroda (BOB).
- While IOB crossed BoB, it beat PNB in market value, and expanded the lead the next day.

NABARD approved Rs 388 crore under RIDF for Odisha

- **NABARD** has **sanctioned** an assistance of **Rs 388 crore for Odisha** under the **Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)** for setting up four mega piped drinking water supply projects.
- The sanctioned amount would also be used **for construction or up-gradation of 20 village roads across 15 districts** in the state.
- The **four mega projects** will come up in Koraput district (covering Boipariguda block), Balasore district (covering Nilgiri block), and Malkangiri district (covering Malkangiri and Kalimela blocks).
- These projects are intended to provide **70 LPCD** (litre per capita per day) clean, safe, hygienic potable drinking water at the consumer end through a functional household tap connection(FHTC) with eight hours of supply in the project area.

About RIDF:

- The **RIDF** was set up by the Government in 1995-96 for **financing ongoing rural Infrastructure projects**.
- The Fund is **maintained by** the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (**NABARD**).

PayU partners with WooCommerce

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- **PayU**, India's leading online payment solutions provider, **has partnered** with **WooCommerce**, an open-source, customizable e-commerce platform, **to enable WooCommerce merchants** with digital payments infrastructure, and end-to-end digitalization of business processes.
- The **partnership will offer** merchants exclusive pricing on transactions, no hidden charges, and contactless payment solutions to scale growth and profitability
- PayU accelerates SMB digitalization by providing 100 percent online and hassle-free onboarding, zero set up charge, smooth check-in & checkout, 100+ local payments options, real-time tracking and business monitoring on the go.

Paytm unveiled 'Postpaid Mini'- small ticket loan product

- **Paytm** announced the launch of **Postpaid Mini**, a need-based and consumption-based credit for users to help them manage their household finances.
- This **product** is an extension of its Buy Now, Pay Later service targeted at users who don't have a credit score.
- **Bhavesh Gupta, CEO, Paytm Lending** stated, "The idea behind launching this product is to give an opportunity to a wider section of people to experience credit with smaller ticket size loans and learn fiscal discipline".

Aeldra provides unique 'Zero Fee' bank account to U.S. bound Indian students

- **Students can fund the account and receive the debit card** so that they have a functional **U.S. bank** account before they leave for the U.S. In addition, the account pays up to 50X interest rates compared to other banks in the U.S.
- To open an **Aeldra bank account**, students do not need to furnish a U.S. Social Security Number, U.S. address proof or even a U.S. visa.
- The **account is tailored for Indian students, professionals and investors** and includes 24X7 customer service provided by '**concierges**' who understand the needs of Indian customers.
- "For Indian students preparing to begin their academic year in the U.S., **easy access to money in a new country** is a prime cause of concern.
- In India, **Aeldra is based out of Bengaluru**.

Razorpay and Mastercard jointly launch 'MandateHQ'

- **India-based fintech unicorn Razorpay and Mastercard** have launched **Mandate HQ**, a platform dedicated to secure recurring payments.
- Razorpay's Mandate HQ is an **API-based plug-n-play solution** that reduces the go-live time for any card issuing bank that wishes to enable recurring payments for its customers.
- **MandateHQ** will also **enable businesses**, especially subscription-based businesses, to get access to a wider customer base, who use debit cards, as recurring payments were mostly supported via credit cards previously.
- Razorpay's MandateHQ solution can be fully integrated with **any bank within 7 days**, as opposed to other solutions which normally take a few weeks.
- In addition to its association with Mastercard, Razorpay has also partnered with the country's three banks and is in talks with **over 20 banks to help integrate this technology** into their existing payment infrastructure in the next few weeks.

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SBM Bank India & Drip Capital make partnership to empower MSME Exporters

- **Drip Capital**, a fintech provider of cross border trade finance, has **partnered with SBM Bank India** to offer trade financing solutions — **customized for small and medium-sized exporters** in India.
- With this partnership, **MSME exporters** will be able to avail collateral-free working capital at competitive rates.
- **Main Aim** to provide collateral-free working capital to MSME exporters through invoice discounting facility.
- This association is an example of how **fintech companies are eager to partner with banks** and other financial institutions to grow collectively by using technology to its very core.

DMRC unveiled India's first UPI-based cashless parking

- The **Delhi Metro** launched FASTag/UPI based cashless parking **facility at the Kashmere Gate Metro Station, Delhi**.
- DMRC stated: "For the first time in the country, a **FASTag/UPI based cashless parking facility** was launched at the Kashmere Gate Metro Station by Dr. Mangu Singh, MD, DMRC."
- Senior officials of **DMRC and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** were also present during the launch.
- As part of the **Multi-Model Integration (MMI) initiative**, dedicated Intermediate Public Transport (IPT) lanes for auto, taxi and e-rickshaws were also inaugurated at the station.

FREO partners with HDB Financial Services

- FREO partners with HDB Financial Services **to offer lending solutions**.
- **Customers will get a personalized amount** approved which they can start using immediately.
- As they repay the borrowed amount, the **credit limit is replenished** and they can continue withdrawing as much as they need.
- Interest is levied only on the amount the consumer uses, and not on the overall limit.
- "The **credit line is FREO's flagship product**."
- **HDBFS in partnership with FREO** will offer the credit line which enables consumers to get access to credit anywhere".
- This partnership offers consumers high-ticket **personal loans of up to Rs.10 lakh**, which can be utilized for bigger expenses such as home renovation, buying a vehicle, or planning a trip.

Bajaj Allianz General ties up with Bank of India

- **Bajaj Allianz General Insurance**, one of the leading private general insurers in India and **Bank of India**, one of the largest Public Sector Banks in the country have entered into a corporate agency **agreement** for the distribution of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance's products through the bank's network of 5084 branches, 80 Retail Business Centers and 60 SME City Centers across the country.
- As a part of this agreement, **Bajaj Allianz General Insurance will be offering** a bouquet of personal lines of products such as motor insurance, health insurance, home insurance, travel insurance along with a commercial line of products like engineering insurance, marine insurance to bank's customers.

Maruti Suzuki introduces Smart Finance online for Arena, Nexa customers

- **Maruti Suzuki** has launched a **new platform, Maruti Suzuki Smart Finance**, for its ARENA and NEXA customers.

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- Under the initiative, the **digital platform** will provide customers end-to-end online car financing solutions.
- The company **has tied up with 14 financiers** who'll provide competitive interest rates.
- The **14 financiers on-board include** HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Yes Bank, Axis Bank, State Bank of India, IndusInd Bank, Bank of Baroda, Karur Vysya Bank, Cholamandalam Finance, AU Small Finance Bank, Mahindra Finance, Kotak Mahindra Prime, Sundaram Finance & HDB Financial services.
- The **digital platform is a one-stop online finance portal** that allows customers to choose the right finance partner, select the right loan product, complete **all finance-related formalities** and get the loan online.

Axis Bank and Max Bupa Health Insurance enter into a Bancassurance partnership

- **Axis Bank** will pick up a **9.9 per cent stake** in Fettle Tone LLP, a promoter of **Max Bupa Health Insurance Company**, for **Rs 90.8 crore** to strengthen its insurance business.
- Axis, which is privately owned, stated in a BSE filing it has signed agreements with Fettle Tone LLP and its partners (on March 13).
- **Max Bupa Health Insurance (MBHI)** is as a joint venture between private equity group True North and Bupa, a global health insurance and healthcare company.
- Fettle Tone LLP is a special purpose vehicle (SPV) set up by True North Fund; it holds a **5.6 per cent stake in Health Insurance Company**.
- Fettle Tone LLP, incorporated in 2019 as a limited liability partnership, had a turnover of Rs 0.16 crore in March 2020 and its net worth stands at **Rs 706 crore**.

Kerala Bank launches new loan scheme to aid various sections of society

- The **Kerala State Cooperative Bank (Kerala Bank)** has announced **Covid-19 relief schemes** to aid various sections of society.
- The **agriculture loan scheme named Kerala Bank Special Liquidity Facility** will be available to individual farmers and societies engaged in group farming on 6.8 percent interest.
- Loans will be provided from the **`300 crore sanctioned to Kerala Bank by NABARD**.
- The **KB Covid Helping Hand** will aid neighbourhood groups (NHGs) of Kudumbashree.
- The **KB Micro-finance scheme** for self-help groups (SHGs) and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs), KB Mithra scheme for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and KB Kisan Mitra Gold Overdraft to finance agriculture and allied activities were also announced.
- The schemes are **available at all 769 branches of Kerala Bank**.

IFSCA made a framework for setting up and operating ITFS platform

- The **International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)** issued a framework for setting up and operating the **International Trade Finance Services platform (ITFS)**.
- The platform will provide **trade finance services at International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs)**.
- The complete text of the framework can be accessed on the IFSCA website.

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- The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) was established through **IFSCA Act, 2019**, to **develop and regulate** financial products, financial services and financial institutions in the International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs).
- The IFSCA issued framework will enable exporters and importers to avail various types of trade finance facilities at competitive terms.
- They would be able to use these facilities for their international trade transactions through a dedicated electronic platform i.e the ITFS.

Next-generation digital banking solutions introduced

- Banks have been using **digital banking** for some time now.
- **Digital banking helps consumers** by bringing the bank to their homes.
- With **advances in technology**, new developments have led to better and improved solutions.
- The **Next-generation digital banking solutions** that are now available allow banks to seamlessly integrate their services across multiple channels.
- Apart from the core banking services, these solutions offer a host of **other services making digital banking a value-adding experience for customers**.
- The **Next-generation digital banking solutions** allow banks to offer a complete bouquet of services to customers.

This would include:

- Account management, including transaction on accounts.
- Single sign on to account
- Value added services like investment, insurance, savings, and loans
- Integration with mobile banking
- Single platform for transacting on all channels

About Gen Next Banking:

- **Next Gen branch banking** is all about **Banks transforming their branches** and putting them on an accelerated **track of digital technology enablement** and adoption towards this goal.

Maruti Suzuki India ties up with Bank of Maharashtra

- The country's largest carmaker **Maruti Suzuki India** stated it has **tied up with Bank of Maharashtra** for offering **inventory financing to its dealer partners**.
- This is the first time that **Bank of Maharashtra** will be **offering dealer inventory financing** to the company's dealers.
- Bank of Maharashtra's Mahabank Channel Financing scheme will provide comprehensive financing opportunities for MSIL's dealer partners across the nation under the partnership.
- MSIL Senior Executive Director, Marketing and Sales, **Shashank Srivastava** stated the collaboration with Bank of Maharashtra will offer new-age banking and finance solutions for the company's dealer partners.
- **"There is a business requirement** to induct more finance partners for dealer inventory funding keeping in mind long term business requirements and contingencies".

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Bad Bank launched for stressed assets as a measure to clean up bank books

- The Government has launched a Bad Bank with all the regulatory approvals in place.
- The high level of provisioning by public sector banks of their stressed assets calls for measures to clean up the bank books.
- An Asset Reconstruction Company Limited and Asset Management Company would be set up to consolidate and take over the existing stressed debt and then manage and dispose of the assets to Alternate Investment Funds and other potential investors for eventual value realization.
- Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has apprised with regard to incorporation of the National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) that NARCL has been registered with the Registrar of Companies on 7.7.2021.
- The Reserve Bank of India, being the regulator of Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs), has already prescribed a regulatory framework for the functioning of ARCs and there are well-laid norms for transfer of stressed assets by banks and non-banking finance companies to ARCs. Identification of non-performing assets by an ARC is an on-going process

Nearly 72% of financial transactions of PSBs done through digital channels

- Nearly 72% of financial transactions of PSBs done through digital channels
- Share of financial transactions undertaken through home and mobile channels increased from 29% in FY2018-19 to 76% in FY2020-21
- The Government has taken a number of steps to facilitate digital banking, doorstep banking services and digital lending platforms.

Some of the initiatives by government

- Initiation of digital lending has been made contactless through **PSBLoansin59minutes.com**, using triangulation of credit bureau, income-tax and goods and services tax (GST) data, to provide online in principle approval for MSME loans.
- Online bill discounting for MSMEs has been enabled on a competitive basis through Public Sector Banks (PSBs) onboarding onto the **Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) platform** and the proportion of online discounted bills has grown rapidly.
- Government's '**Jeevan Pramaan**' initiative for pensioners has enabled senior citizen pensioners the facility to update their annual life certificate online.

Some of the PSB Reforms

- Enhanced access to **Mobile and Internet banking has been enabled through an increase in the average number of services offered**, customer-friendly features and regional language customer-interface
- End-to-end automated digital lending has been introduced in larger PSBs for unsecured personal loans (in five PSBs), loans to micro-enterprises ("**Shishu Mudra**", in five PSBs) and **renewals of loans to micro, small and medium enterprises (in three PSBs)**

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- Digital retail loan request initiation through digital channels has been enabled in all the seven large PSBs, with retail disbursements from loan requests so initiated in the financial year (FY) 2020-21 amounting to **Rs. 40,819 crore**
- **As a result, nearly 72% of financial transactions of PSBs are now done through digital channels, with doubling of customers active on digital channels from 3.4 crore in FY2019-20 to 7.6 crore in FY2020-21, and the share of financial transactions undertaken through home and mobile channels has increased from 29% in FY2018-19 to 76% in FY2020-21.**

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India amends the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016

- The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** notified the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) (Second Amendment) Regulations, 2016 on 14th July, 2021.
- The amendment regulations enhance the discipline, transparency, and accountability in corporate insolvency proceedings:
- **A corporate debtor (CD) may have changed its name or registered office address prior to commencement of insolvency.** The stakeholders may find it difficult to relate to the new name or registered office address and consequently fail to participate in the CIRP. **The amendment requires an insolvency professional (IP) conducting CIRP (corporate insolvency resolution process) to disclose all former names and registered office address(es) so changed in the two years** preceding the commencement of insolvency along with the current name and registered office address of the CD, in all its communications and records.
- **The interim resolution professional (IRP) or resolution professional (RP)** may appoint any professional, including registered valuers, to assist him in discharge of his duties in conduct of the CIRP. The amendment provides that the IRP/RP may appoint a professional, other than registered valuers, if he is of the opinion that the services of such professional are required and such services are not available with the CD. Such appointments shall be made on an arm's length basis **following** an objective and transparent process. The invoice for fee shall be raised in the name of the professional and be paid into his bank account.
- **The RP is duty bound to find out if a CD** has been subject to avoidance transactions, namely, preferential transactions, undervalued transactions, extortionate credit transactions, fraudulent trading and wrongful trading, and file applications with the Adjudicating Authority seeking appropriate relief. **This not only claws back the value lost in such transactions increasing the possibility of reorganisation of the CD through a resolution plan, but also disincentives such transactions preventing stress to the CD.**
- **For effective monitoring, the amendment requires the RP to file Form CIRP 8 on the electronic platform of the Board, intimating details of his opinion and determination in respect of avoidance transactions.**

ICICI Bank and HPCL jointly launches 'ICICI Bank HPCL Super Saver' Credit Card

- **ICICI Bank - the country's second-largest private sector lender**, launched a co-branded credit card with **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)** to provide customers with benefits and reward points of using multiple credit cards in one.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- The '**ICICI Bank HPCL Super Saver Credit Card**' provides in-class rewards and benefits to customers on daily fuel spends as well as other categories such as departmental stores like Big Bazaar and D-Mart, electricity and mobile, and e-commerce portals, among others.
- The **co-branded credit card is powered by VISA** and provides benefits in multiple categories of spends, unlike its peers, which typically offer benefits on only one category.

LIC introduces Arogya Rakshak insurance plan

- **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)**, has rolled out the **Arogya Rakshak** plan, a benefit-based, non-linked, non-participating, regular premium and individual health insurance policy.
- The **policy aims to provide** people with timely financial support in case of medical emergencies.
- "The **Arogya Rakshak policy** provides **fixed benefit health insurance cover** against certain specified health risks and provides timely support in the case of medical emergencies and helps the insured and his family to remain financially independent in difficult times".

Max Bupa Health Insurance renames itself as Niva Bupa

- **Standalone health insurer Max Bupa Health Insurance**, backed by private equity firm True North and Bupa, has **rebranded** itself to **Niva Bupa Health Insurance**.
- **Max India**, which **owned 51 per cent in the insurer**, sold its stake to True North in February 2019 for Rs 510 crore.
- While the erstwhile promoters exited the venture, it was decided that the use of the "**Max**" brand will be phased out over a period of two years and replaced with a suitable name.
- The **Bupa brand name**, however, would continue as before.
- "Owing to a change in shareholding pattern, with the **exit of Max India** and entry of private equity firm True North, Max Bupa needed to create a new brand identity as part of the transition".

Dvara E-Dairy make partnership with IFFCO Tokio General Insurance for AI-led tag

- **Dvara e-Dairy Solutions Pvt. Ltd.** announced its **partnership** with **IFFCO Tokio General Insurance** for providing **artificial intelligence (AI) powered digital cattle** identity solution for cattle insurance.
- The company's '**Surabhi e-Tag**' is an **AI-powered digital tag** that identifies cattle based on muzzle identity.
- **IFFCO Tokio General Insurance Executive Vice President** (underwriting) **Subrata Mondal** stated the company was exploring a reliable cattle identity process that can be stored digitally and can be accessed anytime.
- "Using advanced **AI and ML (machine learning) technologies**, the critical challenge of improving the quality of images at the time of image capturing are mitigated".

Magma Fincorp Limited rebrands its name to Poonawalla Fincorp Limited

- **Magma Fincorp Limited**, a RBI-registered **non-banking finance company (NBFC)** has been **rechristened** as **Poonawalla Fincorp Limited** and has initiated rebranding activity, following the acquisition of **controlling stake by Adar Poonawalla** led Rising Sun Holdings Private Limited on 21st May 2021.
- Along with this, its **fully owned housing finance subsidiary** Magma Housing Finance Limited is **also renamed** as **Poonawalla Housing Finance Limited**.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- In its new avatar under the Poonawalla brand, the group **will be focusing on consumer and MSME segments**.
- As a part of the new strategy, the company will expand its product range to include Personal Loans, Loans to Professionals, Merchant Cash Advances, Loan against Property, Consumer Finance and Machinery Loans along with existing products of Business Loan, Pre-Owned Car Loans and Home Loans.

Indian Bank unveiled drive to instil confidence in customers

- **Indian Bank** launched its **CASA (current account, savings account) campaign** on the **53rd Bank Nationalization day**.
- The campaign is expected to **'inject confidence'** in customers and to **bring new customers into their fold to improve the CASA of the Bank**.
- A programme was organized at the Chetpet branch and was presided by **Imran Amin Siddiqui, Executive Director of Indian Bank**.
- Olympian Shiny Wilson, who had participated in four Olympics and was the flag bearer of Indian contingent at the Barcelona Olympics 1992, was a special guest at the programme.
- She extended her wishes to the CASA campaign.

HDFC ERGO introduces Optima Secure indemnity-based health insurance policy

- **HDFC ERGO General Insurance**, India's leading **non-life insurance company in the private sector**, announced the launch of (<https://www.hdfcergo.com/health-insurance/optima-secure>) **Optima Secure**, a new health indemnity health insurance product that seeks to redefine the value customers can get from their insurance plan.
- The product has the Secure, Plus, Protect, and Restore benefits built-in that combine seamlessly **to offer customers up to 4 times their sum insured** at no additional charge while guaranteeing coverage for listed non-medical expenses.

The policy offers 4 distinct features:

- **Secure Benefit** - doubles the insurance cover instantly and automatically on purchase of the policy
- **Plus benefit** - increases the base coverage automatically by 50% after 1 year and to 100% after 2 years, even if there is a claim
- **Restore Benefit** - if you run out of coverage, the policy will restore your base coverage up-to 100%
- **Protect benefit** - ensures Zero deduction on consumables and listed non-medical expenses

Dhanlaxmi Bank introduces strategic alliance with SMC Global Securities

- **SMC Global Securities limited** announced a strategic alliance with **Dhanlaxmi bank** for **offering online trading services to the bank customers**.
- This **tie-up** will offer an **integrated 3-in-1 account** comprising of a **Savings, Demat, and Trading account** providing a hassle-free and convenient trading experience to the Dhanlaxmi Bank customers through the portal **www.smctradeonline.com** apart from the mobile trading app (SMC ACE) and desktop-based software.
- The **trading platform** is a high-end, integrated application for fast, secure, and hassle-free execution of trades.
- This tie-up will help SMC Global increase its client base by leveraging upon the bank's deep presence in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and other parts of the country.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- This **tie-up** will help the bank provide additional services to its account holders and generate an additional source of revenue.

HDFC Bank introduces up to Rs 10 lakh overdraft facility for shopkeepers, merchants to ease cash crunch

- India's largest private lender **HDFC Bank** launched an **overdraft facility** for small retailers in partnership with the government's e-governance services delivery arm **CSC SPV** that enables government schemes and services through common service centres (CSCs).
- The '**Dukandar Overdraft Scheme**' by **HDFC Bank** is aimed at helping shopkeepers and merchants ease their cash crunch.
- Retailers operating for a minimum of three years are eligible for the scheme by providing a six months bank statement from any bank.
- **HDFC Bank** will approve an overdraft limit from a minimum of Rs 50,000 to a maximum of Rs 10 lakhs.
- Importantly, **HDFC Bank** won't seek collateral security, business financials, and income tax returns from retailers who apply for the scheme.

About the scheme:

- "The **new scheme** has been created keeping in mind the **current situation of small traders**.
- The **upper limit for shops** operational for less than 6 years is Rs 7.5 lakhs and Rs 10 lakh for establishments which have been in business for more than 6 years".
- The **scheme offers** a commission of 0.40 per cent to 0.80 per cent for loan amounts of Rs 5 Lakhs and above for village level entrepreneurs (VLE) along with over 600 branches and virtual relationship management support.

Paytm Payments Bank reaches 1 crore FASTags mark

- **Paytm Payments Bank** informed it has **become the first bank** in the country to achieve the milestone of **issuing 1 crore FASTags**.
- **According to NPCI**, over 3.47 crore FASTags were issued by all banks together till the **end of June 2021**.
- **Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL)** now has close to 28 per cent share as FASTag issuer bank.
- "In the **last 6 months alone**, PPBL has equipped **over 40 lakh commercial & private vehicles with FASTags**".
- Besides this, **Paytm Payments Bank** is also **India's largest acquirer of toll plazas** for the **National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC)** program offering an interoperable nationwide toll payment solution.

Finance Ministry invites entries for new DFI's Name, Logo

- The finance ministry invited entries from citizens **for name, tagline and logo** for the new **Development Financial Institution (DFI)**
- Cash prizes of up to **Rs 5 lakh** in each category.
- The setting up of a DFI was announced by the finance minister in Budget 2021-22.
- In March, Parliament passed the **National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) Bill**.
- Earlier, the ministry had carried out a similar exercise for choosing the name for the flagship financial inclusion programme of the government 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna' in 2014.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

HDFC Bank, ICICI and Axis pick up stake in blockchain start-up

- Three of India's biggest private lenders – ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank – have taken stakes in the blockchain financial technology firm IBBIC.
- HDFC Bank and Axis Bank each acquired 50,000 shares, a stake of about 5.55%, for 500,000 rupees (\$6,700), citing stock-exchange filings.
- ICICI Bank has 49,000 shares, or 5.44% of the company.
- The company paid 490,000 rupees (\$6,600).
- Launched in May, the IBBIC platform offers distributed ledger technology for the Indian financial services sector.

About blockchain start-up:

- A **blockchain startup** is a startup or a company in the early stages of development that uses blockchain ideals in their business model.
- **Many Blockchain networks** have their **own token of cryptocurrency**, and inside the network, they settle transactions and payments.
- The parent business raises the value of tokens and sells sales.
- These are some of the forms in which businesses centered on Blockchain earn cash.

Revision Points

Organizations	Headquarters	President/CEO/Head
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	Paris	Audrey Azoulay
Indian Overseas Bank	Chennai	Partha Pratim Sengupta
Reserve Bank of India	Mumbai	Shaktikanta Das
State Bank of India	Mumbai	Dinesh Kumar Khara
World Bank	Washington DC	David Malpass
Paytm	Noida	Vijay Shekhar Sharma
National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development	Mumbai	Dr. G.R. Chintala
Bajaj Allianz General Insurance	Pune	Tapan Singhel
Maruti Suzuki	New Delhi	Kenichi Ayukawa
Max Bupa Health Insurance	New Delhi	Krishnan Ramachandran
Kerala Bank	Malappuram	Sri P S Rajan
International Financial Services Centres Authority	GIFT City	Manoj Kumar

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Punjab National Bank	New Delhi	S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao
HDFC Bank	Mumbai	Sashidhar Jagdishan
Federal Bank	Aluva, Kerala	Shyam Srinivasan
ICICI Bank	Mumbai	Sandeep Bakhshi
Life Insurance Corporation	Mumbai	MR Kumar
SBM Bank	Port Louis	Deepak Shimpi
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited	Mumbai	Mukesh Kumar Surana
Magma Fincorp Limited	West Bengal	Vijay Deshwal
Indian Bank	Chennai	Padmaja Chunduru
HDB Financial Services	Ahmedabad	Ramesh G
National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)	Mumbai	Dilip Asbe
Razorpay	Bengaluru	Harshil Mathur
Mastercard	New York, USA	Michael Miebach
HDFC ERGO General Insurance	Mumbai	Ritesh Kumar
Dhanlaxmi Bank	Thrissur	J K Shivan
Paytm Payments Bank	Noida	Satish Kumar Gupta
Bank of Baroda	Alkapuri, Vadodara	Sanjiv Chadha

Important Financial & Economy Affairs

Organization	GDP – FY 23	GDP - FY 22
Fitch Ratings		10%
Asian Development Bank	7.5%	10%
Care Ratings		8.8% to 9%
International Monetary Fund	8.5%	9.5%

Fitch cuts GDP growth estimate to 10%

- **Fitch Ratings** cut India's growth forecast to 10 per cent for the current fiscal, from 12.8 percent estimated earlier, due to slowing recovery post-second wave of COVID-19, and said rapid vaccination could support a sustainable revival in business and consumer confidence.
- The **global rating agency** stated the challenges for the banking sector posed by the coronavirus pandemic have increased due to a virulent second wave in the first quarter of the financial year ending March 2022 (FY22).

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Square's hardware announces Bitcoin Hardware Wallet

- Square's hardware head, **Jesse Dorogusker**, announced that the company is going to start building a hardware wallet and accompanying service for **cryptocurrency, Bitcoin**.
- The wallet will be a type of plug-in device, much like a **USB pen drive** that stores, manages and secures a user's crypto assets.
- Each digital asset is linked to a cryptographic password called a '**private key**' to allow users to access it.
- This key **safeguards cryptocurrencies** from theft and unauthorised access.

Software vs Hardware Wallet:

- Cryptocurrency keys can be stored in two kinds of wallets - software and hardware
- Software wallets are like smartphone apps that digitally store private keys.
- These wallets can be vulnerable to malware.
- Hardware wallets and physical devices act like cold storage for confidential keys. The **passwords are protected by a PIN**, making it difficult for hackers to extract private keys as the information is not exposed to the Internet.

World Gold Council (WGC) and Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) sign agreement to promote gold jewellery in India

- The World Gold Council (WGC) and Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) sign an agreement to **promote gold jewellery in India**.
- Under the terms of the agreement, both the partners will jointly fund a **multi-media marketing campaign** that would **aim to increase awareness, relevance and adoption of gold jewellery** among Indian consumers, especially millennials and the new generation.
- A Report stated although young women are active gold jewellery consumers, their future purchase intent could be higher.
- This is especially true in the urban areas and could be achieved if the gold jewellery trade could tap into consumers' desire for self-expression and prestige
- This Report finding presents an opportunity for the gold industry to work collectively to make gold jewellery more relevant and contemporary, leading to a consequential shift.

Wholesale inflation eases to 12.07% in June despite spike in fuel price

- India's wholesale price inflation **eased in June to 12.07% from a record 12.94%** a month ago as food and fuel prices fell while those of manufactured items accelerated.
- Data released by the industry department showed food inflation in June decelerated to 3.1% from 4.3% a month ago while fuel inflation eased **to 32.8% from 37.6%** despite the recent increase in prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas.
- Manufactured products saw a marginal increase in inflation **to 10.9% from 10.8%** in May due to rising price pressure in textiles, apparel, leather, wood, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, cement, basic metals and fabricated metal products.
- Core inflation excluding food and fuel items hardened further to 10.4% in June from 10% a month ago

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- WPI inflation tends to reflect global inflation pressures more fully as it gives a higher weight to fuel and other commodities while CPI gives a higher weight to food and services, both of which are driven more by domestic dynamics.
- Hence, inflation pressures were first visible in WPI (since March 2021), while upward pressure on CPI became more visible from May 2021 onwards. The elevated WPI inflation implies that cost push pressures will gradually seep into CPI inflation as capacity utilization improves.
- The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) monetary policy committee (MPC) aims to achieve **a retail inflation target of 4%, plus or minus 2%**. Even though elevated inflation will put pressure on RBI, it is expected to maintain policy rates unchanged at the next monetary policy review in August to protect the nascent economic recovery from the devastating impact of the pandemic.
- With the encouraging progress of the southwest monsoon, supply-side interventions in the pulses and edible oils market, and gradual unlocking of states with declining caseload would mitigate cost pressures going forward. However, rising global commodity prices, especially of crude and logistics costs, pose upside risks to the inflation outlook.

Adani Group takes management control over Mumbai International Airport

- **Adani Group** has **taken over** the management control over **Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL)**.
- The Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL), **a subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Limited**, has taken over the management control from the GVK Group.
- **Mumbai International Airport** is **India's second busiest airport** by both passenger and cargo traffic.
- "The **larger objective** is to reinvent airports as ecosystems that **drive local economic development** and act as the nuclei around which we can catalyze aviation-linked businesses.
- These include metropolitan developments that span entertainment facilities, e-commerce and logistics capabilities, aviation dependent industries, smart city developments, and other innovative business concepts".

About Adani Group:

- Adani Group is an **Indian multinational conglomerate**, headquartered in Ahmedabad.
- It was founded by **Gautam Adani** in 1988 as a commodity trading business, with the flagship company Adani Enterprises Limited.

FDI limit in NPS fund managers increased to 74%

- The government may hike **foreign direct investment (FDI) limit** in the **pension sector to 74 per cent** and a Bill in this regard is expected to come in the next Parliament session, according to sources.
- Last month, Parliament approved a Bill **to increase FDI limit in the insurance sector from 49 per cent to 74 per cent**.
- **The Insurance Act, 1938** was last amended in 2015 which raised FDI limit to 49 per cent, resulting in **foreign capital inflow of Rs 26,000 crore in the last 5 years**.
- Amendment to **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Act, 2013** seeking to raise FDI limit in the pension sector may come in the monsoon session or winter session depending on various approvals.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

India emerges as 5th largest foreign exchange reserves holder in world

- With India's forex reserves at \$608.99 billion as on June 25, 2021 stood, India has emerged as the fifth largest foreign exchange reserves holder in the world after China, Japan, Switzerland and Russia.
- This was stated by **Minister of State for Finance Shri Pankaj Chaudhary**.
- The Minister stated that India's foreign exchange reserves position is comfortable in terms of **import cover of more than 18 months** and provides cushion against unforeseen external shocks.
- Government and RBI are closely monitoring the emerging external position calibrating policies or regulations to support robust macroeconomic growth.
- Giving more details, the **Minister stated that RBI takes regular steps for diversification of forex reserves** by scaling up operations in forex swap and repo markets, acquisition of gold and exploring new markets/products, while adhering to safety and liquidity standards.
- Variation in India's forex reserves is **primarily the outcome of RBI's intervention** in the foreign exchange market to smoothen exchange rate volatility, valuation changes due to movement of US dollar against other international currencies in the reserve basket, movement in gold prices, interest earnings from deployment of foreign currency assets and inflow of aid receipts.

ADB downgrades India's economic growth forecast projected at 10% in FY22 and 7.5% in FY23

- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has **downgraded India's economic growth forecast** for the current financial year to **10 per cent, from 11 percent** predicted earlier this year, mainly on account of the adverse impact of the coronavirus pandemic.
- India's **GDP growth recovered to 1.6 per cent** in the **last quarter of fiscal year ended March 2021**, narrowing contraction in the whole fiscal year from 8 per cent estimated in April to a revised 7.3 per cent, the multilateral funding agency stated in the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) Supplement.
- Then a second wave of the pandemic induced many state governments to impose strict containment measures.
- New COVID-19 cases daily peaked at **more than 4,00,000 in early May**, then fell to a little over 40,000 in early July.

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- Current account deficit, accompanied by increasing foreign exchange reserves, reflects a surplus on the balance of payments i.e., the magnitude of the net capital inflows exceeds the volume of the current account deficit.
- In 2020-21, India's balance of payments recorded surplus in both current account and capital account which contributed to the increase in foreign exchange reserves during the year.
- Besides exports and imports of goods and services, the overall stability of the external sector depends on other components of balance of payments including remittances (transfers), income in the current account, the size of net capital flows and external debt.

Mirae MF introduces financial services ETF

- Mirae Asset Investment Managers (India), with an asset under management (AUM) of Rs 77,674 crore at the end of June 2021 launched India's first ETF tracking Nifty Financial Services Index.
- It is an open-ended ETF tracking Nifty Financial Services Total Return Index.
- The new fund offer (NFO) will open for subscription on July 22, 2021, and close on July 29, 2021.
- The minimum initial investment in the scheme during the NFO period will be Rs 5,000 and multiples of Re 1, thereafter.
- Mirae Asset Nifty Financial services ETF will provide exposure to 20 companies, representing various segments of the financial services sector including banks, non-banking financial company, insurance, and capital market.

About Mirae MF:

- Mirae Mutual Fund is one of the fastest growing AMCs in India.
- The funds they offer have shown a stable performance over the last few years.
- Investors who wish to attain long-term Investment plan can prefer Investing in Equity Funds.
- Mirae Asset Financial Group is a financial services group headquartered in Seoul, South Korea.

Significant improvement in India's score in United Nation's Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation

- India has scored 90.32% in United Nation's Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific's (UNESCAP) latest Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation. The Survey hails this as a remarkable jump from 78.49% in 2019.
- After evaluation of 143 economies, the 2021 Survey has highlighted India's significant improvement in the scores on all 5 key indicators, as follows:
 1. **Transparency:** 100% in 2021 (from 93.33% in 2019)
 2. **Formalities:** 95.83% in 2021 (from 87.5% in 2019)
 3. **Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation:** 88.89% in 2021 (from 66.67% in 2019)
 4. **Paperless Trade:** 96.3% in 2021 (from 81.48% in 2019)

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

5. **Cross-Border Paperless Trade:** 66.67% in 2021 (from 55.56% in 2019)

- The Survey notes that India is the best performing country when compared to South and South West Asia region (63.12%) and Asia Pacific region (65.85%).
- The overall score of India has also been found to be greater than many OECD countries including France, UK, Canada, Norway, Finland etc. and the overall score is greater than the average score of EU.
- India has achieved a 100% score for the Transparency index and 66% in the “Women in trade” component.
- CBIC has been at forefront of path breaking reforms under the umbrella of 'Turant' Customs to usher in a Faceless, Paperless and Contactless Customs by way of a series of reforms.
- This has had a direct impact in terms of the improvement in the UNESCAP rankings on digital and sustainable trade facilitation.

About the Survey:

- The Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation is conducted every two years by UNESCAP.
- The 2021 Survey includes an assessment of 58 trade facilitation measures covered by the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement.
- The Survey is keenly awaited globally as it evidences whether or not the trade facilitation measures being taken have the desired impact and helps draw comparison amongst countries.
- A higher score for a country also helps businesses in their investment decisions.

Trade Margin by the Union Government: 91% of brands of 5 Medical Devices report downward revision of prices up to 88%

- **Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (MoC&F)** stated After the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) put a cap on prices, **91% of brands of five medical devices** reported **downward revision of prices up to 88%**.
- The **Centre has capped the Trade Margin for five medical devices** – Pulse Oximeter, Blood Pressure Monitoring Machine, Nebulizer, Digital Thermometer, and Glucometer.
- The revised MRP was **effective from July 20, 2021**.
- Stating that the margin was capped up to **70% on the Price to Distributor (PTD) level**, the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers informed that a total of 684 products or brands of these medical devices have been reported as of July 23, 2021, and 620 products/brands (91%) have reported downward revision of MRP.
- The **maximum downward revision** has been reported by the imported brand of **Pulse Oximeter** that showed a reduction of Rs 2,95,375 per unit.

Bank NPAs decline to Rs 8.34 lakh cr Rs 61,180 crore at March-end 2021

- Minister of State for Finance **Bhagwat K Karad** Stated **Non-performing assets (NPAs) of banks have declined by Rs 61,180 crore to Rs 8.34 lakh crore** at the **end of March 31, 2021**.
- Scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) were carrying NPAs worth Rs 8.96 lakh crore on their balance sheet at the end of March 2020.

About Scheduled commercial banks :

- Scheduled banks are banks that are listed in the **2nd schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- The bank's paid-up capital and raised funds must be at least Rs5 lakh to qualify as a scheduled bank.
- Scheduled banks are liable for low-interest loans from the Reserve Bank of India and membership in clearinghouses.

Care Ratings predicts India's GDP growth between 8.8-9% in FY22

- Care Ratings stated in a report, The **country's gross domestic product (GDP) growth** is likely to be **8.8 to 9 per cent** in the current financial year, **driven by agriculture and industry sectors**.
- The country's economy had contracted **by 7.3 per cent** in fiscal 2020-21.
- The agency stated the outlook for the Indian economy on almost all counts in FY22 would look seemingly better than FY21 on account of the **negative base effect**.
- "GDP growth for the year (FY22) is expected to be **8.8-9 per cent with GVA (gross value added) growth of 7.8 percent** and the **main drivers of the economy would be agriculture and industry**".

IMF Projects India's economic growth for FY22 at 9.5% & FY23 at 8.5%

- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has **sharply scaled down India's economic growth projection** by **300 basis points to 9.5 per cent** for the current financial year **from 12.5 per cent** estimated earlier in April.
- IMF stated the downward revision is owing to "**lack of access to vaccines**" and possibility of renewed waves of coronavirus.
- "Growth prospects in India have been downgraded following the severe second Covid wave during March–May and expected slow recovery in confidence from that setback," IMF stated in the latest edition of its flagship World Economic Outlook (WEO) report.

Norms fixed for implementation of Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) in country to enable state-specific reforms

- The **Union Government** has fixed norms for implementation of **Ease of Doing Business (EoDB)** in the country to enable state-specific reforms.
- The Minister stated that in order to strengthen resources in the hands of State Governments in the wake of unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, **the Union Government addressed to all the States, laid out an additional borrowing of 0.25% for each reform of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) to the States for FY 2020-21** subject to implementation of following specific state level reforms:
 - **Implementation of One Nation One Ration Card System;**
 - **Ease of Doing Business reform;**
 - **Urban Local body/ utility reforms and**
 - **Power Sector reforms.**

Systemic measures by Government under Black Money Act yields results

- In recent years, the Government has taken a number of measures to bring back the black money stashed abroad '**The Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015**'.
- The Minister stated that as a result of systematic actions by the Government, the following results have been achieved as on 31.05.2021:

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- As on 31.05.2021, assessment orders under section 10(3)/10(4) of the Black Money Act, 2015 have been passed in 166 cases, wherein demand of Rs. 8,216 crore has been raised.
- Undisclosed income of Rs. 8,465 crore (approx.) has been brought to tax and penalty of Rs. 1,294 crore has been levied in HSBC cases.
- Undisclosed income of Rs. 11,010 crore (approx.) has been detected in ICIJ (International Consortium of Investigative Journalists) cases.
- In the Panama Papers Leaks cases, undisclosed credits of Rs. 20,078 crore (approx.) have been detected.
- In the Paradise Papers Leaks cases, undisclosed credits of Rs. 246 crore (approx.) have been detected.
- Steps taken by the Government to bring back black money from outside the country to India, the Minister stated that the following numbers of measures have been taken:
 - I. **Constitution of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Black Money** under Chairmanship and Vice-Chairmanship of two former Judges of Hon'ble Supreme Court,
 - II. Proactively engaging with foreign governments with a view to facilitate and enhance **the exchange of information under Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs)/Tax Information Exchange Agreements (TIEAs)/Multilateral Conventions.**
 - III. India has been a leading force in the efforts to forge a **multi-lateral regime for proactive sharing of financial information** known as Automatic Exchange of Information which will greatly assist the global efforts to combat **tax evasion.**
 - IV. **The Automatic Exchange of Information based on Common Reporting Standard** has commenced from 2017 enabling India to receive financial account information of Indian residents in other countries.
 - V. **India has entered into an information sharing agreement with the USA under the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act of USA.**

Government identified 2,38,223 companies as shell companies between 2018-2021

- There is no definition of the term "Shell Company" in the Companies Act and it normally refers to a company without active business operation or significant assets, which in some cases are used for illegal purposes such as tax evasion, money laundering, obscuring ownership, benami properties etc.
- The Minister further stated that the **Special Task Force set up by the Government to look into the issue of "Shell Companies"** has **inter-alia recommended the use of certain red flag indicators as alerts for identification of Shell Companies.**
- The Government has undertaken **a Special Drive for identification and striking off Shell Companies during the last three years**, the Minister stated.
- In Total around **238223 companies have been struck off from the year 2018-2021**

Better prospects of consumption in Indian rural economy

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- As per the Provisional Estimates of **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** for the year 2020-21 released by the National Statistical Office, the Gross Value Added (GVA) of agriculture has shown a growth of 3.6 per cent, signalling better prospects of consumption in rural India.
- The Minister stated that total foodgrain production is estimated to rise 2.7 per cent to a new record of 305.44 million tonnes in the current crop year 2020-21, on record output of rice, wheat, maize and gram.

Key Measures to improve the Status of the farmer:

- **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana**, additional Emergency Working Capital Funding for farmers through NABARD,
- Concessional credit through **Kisan Credit Cards**, Fund transfer under PM-KISAN
- PM-Fasal Bima Yojana claim payments,
- Additional subsidy for DAP & P&K fertilizers,
- **Extension of SVAMITVA Scheme to all States/UTs**, enhancing agricultural credit and infrastructure funds, **interest subvention for dairy cooperatives**, **liquidity support under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund to states**,
- PM Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan, enhanced MGNREGA budgetary support,
- **PM SVANidhi**, **Agri-Infrastructure Fund for farm gate infrastructure**, scheme for Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (MFE),
- **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana**,
- **National Animal Disease Control Programme**, Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund, Promotion of Herbal Cultivation and Beekeeping and extension of Operation Greens from Tomatoes, Onion and Potatoes (TOP) to all fruits and vegetables (TOTAL).

IMF releases World Economic Outlook report - global economy growth forecast of 6% for 2021

- Economic prospects have diverged further across countries since the April 2021 **World Economic Outlook (WEO)** forecast.
- The global economy is projected **to grow 6.0 percent in 2021 and 4.9 percent in 2022**.
- The **2021 global forecast** is unchanged from the April 2021 WEO, but with offsetting revisions.
- Prospects for emerging markets and developing economies have been marked down for 2021, especially for Emerging Asia.
- By contrast, the forecast for advanced economies is revised up.
- These revisions reflect pandemic developments and changes in policy support.
- The **0.5 percentage-point upgrade for 2022 derives** largely from the forecast upgrade for advanced economies, particularly the United States, reflecting the anticipated legislation of additional fiscal support in the second half of 2021 and improved health metrics more broadly across the group.

With an aim to further improve ease of doing business, Centre launches the "Secured Logistics Document Exchange"

- With an aim to further improve **ease of doing business**, Centre launches the **"Secured Logistics Document Exchange"** along with a Calculator for GreenHouse Gas Emissions

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- The Digital initiative is now set to improve logistics efficiency, reduce logistics cost, and promote multi-modality and sustainability in a big way.
- The Launch Event was attended by more than 75 participants from the Central Ministries, Banks, IT companies, international organizations, logistics sector stakeholders and industry bodies.
- The Logistics Division with the mandate of “Integrated Development of the Logistics Sector” has planned specific digital initiatives with a focus on integrating the various digital systems across ministries/ departments and filling gaps so identified
- Key digital initiatives including **SLDE platform for digital exchange of logistics-related documents and a Calculator for GHG emissions for choosing sustainable and right mode of transport for freight movement** have been developed.
- The SLDE platform is a solution to replace the present manual process of generation, exchange and compliance of logistics documents with a digitized, secure and seamless document exchange system.
- Along with the SLDE, Centre also launched a **GreenHouse Gas Emission calculator** as well.
- The **GHG Calculator** is an efficient, user-friendly tool and provides for calculating and comparing GHG emissions across different modes.
- It allows for commodity-wise comparison of GHG emissions and total cost of transportation, including their environmental cost, between movement by road and rail.
- The tool is intended to facilitate appropriate modal choice for all concerned.

52,391 entities recognized as start ups

- Indian startup ecosystem is widely recognized as the 3rd largest start up ecosystem.
- As of 14th, July 2021 **total 52,391 entities are recognized as start-ups by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, more than 5.7 lakh jobs have been reported by more than 50,000 start-ups.
- As per Industry estimates, **there are 53 unicorns currently in India, with a tentative valuation of Rs. 1.4 lakh crore.**
- Valuation of a company is a market driven exercise and the data of individual companies is not maintained by DPIIT.
- The Start-up India initiative is a flagship initiative of Government of India which **aims to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and Start-ups in the country.**
- **A 19-point Start up India Action Plan was launched in January 2016** which paved the way for the introduction of a number of policy initiatives to build a strong, conducive, growth-oriented environment for Indian start-ups.

GST payable only on profit earned from resale of gold jewellery: Karnataka Authority for Advance Ruling (AAR)

- **Jewellers will have to pay GST only on the profit earned on resale of second-hand gold jewellery**, Karnataka AAR has ruled.
- The application to the Authority for Advance Ruling (AAR) was filed by Bengaluru-based Aadhya Gold Private Ltd seeking clarity on whether GST is to be paid only on the difference between the selling and purchase price if it purchases used/second- hand gold jewellery from individuals and there is no change in the form/nature of goods at the time of sale.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- The Karnataka bench of the AAR observed **that GST is payable only on the margin between the sale price and the purchase price**, since the applicant was not melting the jewellery to transform it to bullion and then recreating it into new jewellery, but rather cleaning and polishing the old jewellery without changing the form of the jewellery purchased.
- This **ruling will reduce the GST payable on resale of second-hand jewellery**.
- The industry usually charges GST at three per cent rate on the gross sale value received from the purchaser.
- The Karnataka AAR's decision **to charge GST only on the difference between the purchase price and the selling price will have a significant impact on the industry to lower the tax cost to the final consumer**.

APEDA with Basmati Export Development Foundation organizes awareness creation programme for the basmati rice growers

- **APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) with Basmati Export Development Foundation (BEDF)** organizes an awareness creation programme for the basmati rice growers.
- For boosting exports, both APEDA and BEDF has taken an innovative step to sensitize farmers involved in the cultivation of Basmati rice.
- As part of the nationwide celebration of 75 years of India's independence or '**AzadiKaAmrutMahotsav**', BEDF launched an awareness drive for **farmers for judicious use of chemicals in basmati paddy cultivation**.
- Through the awareness creation programme, farmers were informed that the **Basmati rice cultivation is an Indian tradition and it is a collective responsibility** to maintain this tradition as there is huge demand for Basmati rice in the global market.
- The farmers have been requested to get themselves registered on **basmati.net** through **State Agriculture Department**.
- **Basmati.net** is developed by **APEDA** and is aimed to provide a common platform to all stakeholders in the supply chain to enter details of activities undertaken by them as part of the Basmati value chain.
- **India exported 4.63 million tons of Basmati rice valued at Rs 29,849 crore (\$ US 4019 million) in 2020-21**.
- APEDA has been promoting rice exports through collaborations with various stakeholders in the value chains.
- The government had set up the **Rice Export Promotion Forum (REPF)**, under the aegis of the APEDA.
- **REPF** has representations from rice industry, exporters, officials from APEDA, ministry of commerce and directors of agriculture from major rice producing states including **West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh and Odisha**.

Static Points

Organizations	Headquarters	President/CEO/Head
Fitch Ratings	New York	Paul Taylor
Asian Development Bank	Mandaluyong, Philippines	Masatsugu Asakawa
Care Ratings	Mumbai	Ajay Mahajan
International Monetary Fund	Washington D.C	Kristalina Georgieva

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Square's hardware	San Francisco	Jesse Dorogusker
World Gold Council	London	Kelvin Dushnisky
Jewellery Export Promotion Council	New Delhi	Colin Shah
Adani Group	Ahmedabad	Gautam Adani
Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority	New Delhi	Dr. M. Angamuthu
Basmati Export Development Foundation	Meerut	Anupam Dixit

Important Business News

Flipkart launches grocery service in Coimbatore

- Homegrown e-commerce marketplace **Flipkart** stated it has **launched grocery services in Coimbatore** with the opening of its **first fulfillment center** in the city to meet growing demand.
- Spread across an area of over **1.2 lakh sq ft**, the newly built facility will generate direct employment for nearly 1,200 people.
- This will be **Flipkart's second grocery facility in Tamil Nadu, after Chennai**, and **ninth in the south**.
- The Coimbatore fulfillment center is in line with **Flipkart's plans to strengthen its grocery supply chain** infrastructure across the country and add over 800,000 sq. ft of space through five new fulfillment centres this year.

Google India publishes first transparency report under the new IT rules

- Google India** has published its **first transparency report** under the **new IT rules** which includes details of complaints received from users in the country and the action taken across Google's platforms that are classified as **"significant social media intermediaries (SSMIs)"** under the rules.
- The report currently covers **complaints received and auctioned between April 1 and April 30 this year**.
- Google stated there will be a two-month lag on reporting in a bid to allow sufficient time for data processing and validation.
- Under the new rules**, Google, Twitter, Facebook, and Indian players like ShareChat, Koo, and Chingari will have to publish a compliance report on a monthly basis.

Elon Musk's Starlink now ready to provide internet nearly worldwide

- Elon Musk's satellite network Starlink** is on track to beam broadband internet everywhere in the world except the polar regions by August.
- Space Exploration Technologies Corp.** has launched **more than 1,500 satellites** so far and has Starlink operations in about a dozen countries.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- That's costing a lot. **SpaceX's total investment** in the network will be between **\$5 billion and \$10 billion** before cash flow is positive.
- The company is set to launch a **new version of Starlink's satellites** next year that will have inter-satellite laser links to help them cover Polar Regions.

Govt announces inclusion of retail and Wholesale trades under MSMEs

- Union Minister **Nitin Gadkari** announced inclusion of **retail and wholesale trade under MSMEs** as per which they will also now get the benefit of priority sector lending **under RBI guidelines**.
- He stated the retail and wholesale trade sector was left out of the ambit of **MSMEs** (micro, small and medium enterprises).
- The revised guidelines will **benefit 2.5 crore** retail and wholesale traders.
- The move would also allow them to register on the Udyam **portal**.
- **Kumar Rajagopalan**, CEO of Retailers Association of India (RAI) mentioned that this is a **major boost to smaller retailers across the country**, especially since this has been a specific task of the industry since last year.
- Currently, **95 percent of the retail industry** in the country is MSMEs and this move is set to benefit 13-14 million retailers in India.

Flipkart partners with PhonePe

- Digital payments platform **PhonePe** stated it has **partnered with Flipkart** to enable **pay-on-delivery service** for the e-commerce major's orders.
- PhonePe's **dynamic QR code solution** will enable customers who earlier opted for 'cash on delivery' to pay digitally through any UPI app **at the time of delivery**.
- This will help **reduce personal contact** while ensuring safety and drive contactless payments for customers who are traditionally more comfortable with cash on delivery.

Amazon introduces its first Digital Kendra in India in Surat, Gujarat

- **E-commerce giant Amazon** launched its first Digital Kendra in Gujarat's Surat.
- Referred to as 'brick and mortar resource centres', **Digital Kendra** will provide micro small and medium enterprises (**MSMEs**) the opportunity to learn about the **benefits of eCommerce** and avail a range of third party services such as shipping and logistics support, cataloguing assistance, digital marketing services, GST and taxation support to kick start their journey towards being digital entrepreneurs.
- Amazon Digital Kendra is **one of the most important MSME clusters** and will cater to thousands of MSMEs located in and around the city.

Facebook introduces newsletter platform "Bulletin"

- **Facebook Inc.** launched its **newsletter product Bulletin**, a **standalone platform for free and paid articles and podcasts** that will aim to rival Substack.
- **CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced** the platform, which is live at **Bulletin.com**, and introduced some of the writers that the company has recruited in a live audio room on Facebook.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- Facebook is pushing to compete in the **fast-growing email newsletter trend**, as high-profile journalists and writers have left media companies over the past year to strike out on their own.
- **Self-publishing platform Substack** is a leader in helping writers sell email subscriptions, and has lured journalists with cash advances.
- Other tech companies are also competing in the field, including Twitter Inc., which acquired newsletter platform Revue.

Bulletin:

- A bulletin is a **short official announcement made publicly** to inform people about an important matter.
- A **brief public notice** issued usually from an authoritative source specifically: a brief news item intended for immediate publication or broadcast.

Qatar Airways and IATA's joined for Turbulence Aware Platform

- **Qatar Airways and the International Air Transport Association (IATA)** announced that Qatar Airways will become the **first airline in the Middle East to join the IATA Turbulence Aware platform**.
- **IATA's Turbulence Aware** helps airlines mitigate the impact of turbulence, a leading cause of passenger and crew injuries and higher fuel costs each year, by pooling and sharing anonymized turbulence data from multiple participating airlines and thousands of daily flights.
- The real-time, accurate information enables pilots and dispatchers to choose optimal flight paths, avoiding turbulence and flying at optimum levels to maximize fuel efficiency and thereby **reduce CO2 emissions**.
- **Qatar Airways was the first Middle Eastern airline** to participate in the Turbulence Aware initiative when it was launched as a pilot project in December 2018.

Coal India appointed Accenture for digitalization of mine process

- **Coal India (CIL)** has engaged **Accenture Solutions** as a consultant for **digitalization of mine process** in **seven select opencast mines of the company** for accelerated performance enhancement.
- A contract was signed to this effect earlier.
- In a **first of its kind venture**, the consultant would lead and support the implementation of digitalization and process excellence while assuring 100 million tonne (MT) increased coal output from the identified mines.
- The seven identified mines are: Kusmunda, Gevra, Dipka of South Eastern Coalfields (SECL) and Nigahi, Jayant, Dudhichua, Khadia of Northern Coalfields (NCL).

Union Minister Narayan Rane launches two new Khadi Products

- **MSME Minister Narayan Rane** launched **two new Khadi Products- Khadi Babywear and Unique Handmade Paper Use and Throw Slippers** in New Delhi.
- The **new products** include **Khadi's first ever cotton clothing for babies**.
- Khadi and Village Industries Commission, KVIC has used **100 per cent hand-spun and hand woven cotton fabric** that is soft on the tender and sensitive skin of the children and prevents them from any rashes or skin irritation.
- The **cost of a Khadi cotton babywear is 599 rupees per piece**.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- The Khadi's handmade paper use and throw slippers have been developed for the **first time in India**.
- These handmade paper slippers are **100 per cent eco-friendly and cost-effective**.
- The **Handmade paper** is made of natural fibres like Cotton and Silk rags and agro waste.
- These **slippers** are weightless and best suited for travel and indoor usage like in home, hotel rooms, hospitals and laboratories.

Google Cloud unveiled second 'Cloud Region' in India

- With this new region, **Google Cloud customers** operating in India will benefit from low latency and high performance of their cloud-based workloads and data.
- Google Cloud announced expanding its footprint in India with its second '**Cloud Region**' in the country.
- Located in Delhi-NCR to further serve customers and the public sector in **India and across Asia-Pacific**, this is the **company's 26th Cloud Region globally, and 10th in Asia Pacific**.
- It also would **support organizations' digital transformation efforts** and India's economic recovery, Google Cloud's India managing director Bikram Singh Bedi wrote in a post.
- The Delhi region has three availability zones and offers a service portfolio that includes Google Kubernetes Engine, BigQuery, and Cloud Spanner.

IOA names Adani Group as sponsor for Tokyo Olympics

- The **Indian Olympic Association** roped in the **Adani Group** as a **sponsor for the Indian contingent** at the ongoing Tokyo Games.
- IOA secretary general **Rajiv Mehta**, who is in Tokyo, announced the development.
- "**Adani** has confirmed to us a good sponsorship association and support for the future also".
- The IOA had earlier entered into sponsorship deals with various private entities, **including dairy giant Amul, mobile gaming platform MPL Sports Foundation, JSW Sports among others**.

Cisco and NSDC make Partnership to Upskill India in Digital Skills

- **Cisco Networking Academy** and the **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** announced a **partnership** that is aimed at addressing the shortage of tech-proficient workforce in India and **creating career opportunities for millions in the digital economy**.
- The partnership will offer access to the Cisco Networking Academy courses through NSDC's eSkill India platform to provide comprehensive digital skills critical for the digital-first world.
- It **aims to enable free access to an industry-relevant global curriculum** and content in Networking, Cybersecurity, Programming, the Internet of Things (IoT), Digital Essentials, and Linux.
- The demand for technical talent continues to outpace supply, and as an example, Cybersecurity demand is expected to increase five times over the next four years in India.

Maruti Suzuki tie-up with Savitribai Phule Pune University to train youth

- The country's leading car maker **Maruti Suzuki India** stated it has partnered with **Savitribai Phule Pune University, Maharashtra**, to train the youth in automobile retail.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- Maruti Suzuki India Ltd (MSIL) stated A customized three-year '**Bachelor of Vocational Studies in Retail Management**' course will be offered to students by the university with support from the company.
- The curriculum will comprise one-year classroom training followed by **two-year on-the-job training** at Maruti Suzuki authorized dealerships.

About the training:

- The curriculum for '**Bachelor of Vocational Studies in Retail Management**' has been developed by the two partners with an enhanced focus on value education, work ethics, soft skills, and learning Indian and Japanese work culture.

Three India-based enterprises among UN's Best Small Business winners

- Three Indian businesses** are among the winners of a **United Nations-sponsored global competition** for the "**Best Small Businesses**" that provide creative, varied, and impactful solutions for increasing access to healthy and sustainable food.
- Fifty small and medium-sized businesses from all around the globe have been named the **Best Small Businesses** of the UN Food Systems Summit's "**Good Food for All**" competition.
- "Edible Routes Private Limited", "Oorja Development Solutions India", and "Taru Naturals" are the winners from India.**
- The 50 winners were chosen from almost 2,000 applications from 135 countries, and their solutions to improve access to nutritious, sustainable food are inspiring, diverse, and impactful.
- The **UN stated** that they will also split **US\$ 100,000 in monetary rewards**.

Intel introduced 'AI For All' initiative in collaboration with CBSE

- Intel in collaboration** with the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)**, Ministry of Education announced the launch of the AI For All initiative with the purpose of creating a basic understanding of artificial intelligence (AI) for everyone in India.
- Based on Intel's AI For Citizens program, **AI For All is a 4-hour, self-paced learning program** that demystifies AI in an inclusive manner.
- It is as applicable to a student, a stay-at-home parent as it is to a professional in any field or even a senior citizen.
- The **program aims to introduce AI** to 1 million citizens in its first year.

Revision Points:

Organizations	Headquarters	President/CEO/Head
Flipkart	Bengaluru	Kalyan Krishnamurthy
PhonePe	Bengaluru	Sameer Nigam
Amazon	Seattle	Andy Jassy
Facebook	Massachusetts, United States	David Wehner
Accenture	Dublin, Ireland	Julie Sweet
Coal India	Kolkata	Pramod Agrawal
Khadi and Village Industries	Mumbai	Ms. Ashima Gupta

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Commission		
Google Cloud	California	Sundar Pichai
National Skill Development Corporation	New Delhi	Manish Kumar
CISCO	San Jose	Chuck Robbins
Taru Naturals	Mumbai	Ruchi Jain
Oorja Development Solutions India	New Delhi	Amit Saraogi
Edible Routes Private Limited	New Delhi	Kapil Mandawewala
Central Board of Secondary Education	New Delhi	Manoj Ahuja
Intel	California	Patrick P. Gelsinger
National Tiger Conservation Authority	New Delhi	Bhupender Yadav
Indian Oil Corporation Ltd	Mumbai	Shrikant Madhav Vaidya
Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	New Delhi	Anupriya Patel
Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs	New Delhi	Ajit Kumar
Dalmia Bharat Group	Kolkata	Puneet Dalmia
World Health Organization	Geneva	Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
UltraTech Cement	Mumbai	K C Jhanwar
Indian Council of Medical Research	New Delhi	Balram Bhargava
Confederation of Indian Industry	New Delhi	T. V. Narendran
National Statistical Commission	New Delhi	Bimal Kumar Roy
Geological Survey of India	Kolkata	R.S. Garkhal

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Important State Wise News

Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh govt made 10% EWS quota in employment, education

- The **Andhra Pradesh** government has issued fresh orders for the implementation of **10 per cent reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) in education and employment**, in accordance with the **Constitution 103 Amendment Act**.
- The state government has, in fact, been implementing EWS reservation in education for the last two years following interim orders passed by the High Court in a writ petition.
- Persons who are not covered under the existing scheme of reservations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and socially and educationally backward classes, with a **gross family income below Rs 8 lakh per annum**, will get the benefit of EWS reservation.

Arunachal Pradesh

North Eastern Institute of Folk Medicine at Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh renamed as North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda and Folk Medicine Research

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for changing the nomenclature & mandate of **North Eastern Institute of Folk Medicine (NEIFM) as North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda & Folk Medicine Research (NEIAFMR)**.
- **Background:**
- The NEIFM, Pasighat was established for systemic research, documentation and validation of traditional folk medicine and health practices of the region.
- The **objectives for which the Institute was established include to function as an apex research centre for all aspects of Folk Medicine, to create an interface between traditional healers and scientific research, survey, documentation and validation of folk medicine practices, remedies and therapies** for possible usage in public health care and future research etc.

Details:

- The proposal to change the nomenclature and mandate of North Eastern Institute of Folk Medicine (NEIFM) to North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda & Folk Medicine Research (NEIARMR) for imparting quality Education and Research in Ayurveda & Folk Medicine at Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh.
- The consequential changes will also be carried out in the Memorandum of Association & Rules and Regulations.

Union Govt to set up Centre for Bioresources & Sustainable Development

- The **Ministry of Science and Technology** will set up a first-of-its-kind **Centre of Excellence** in the Northeast.
- The **prestigious project for establishing the Centre for Bio-Resources and Sustainable Development as a Centre of Excellence** was sanctioned by the Department of Biotechnology and is complete for formal inauguration shortly.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- The location of the project is at **Kimin in district Papum Pare in Arunachal Pradesh**.
- The construction of the new building as well other infrastructure has been completed.
- A **delegation of MPs from Arunachal Pradesh** called on Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh and thanked him on behalf of the people of Arunachal Pradesh in particular and the people of the entire North Eastern Region in general.

Assam

Assam govt grants one month's compulsory leave every year to arms battalion personnel of police

- The **Assam cabinet** decided to grant **one-month compulsory leave every year** to **police personnel** from the rank of constable to sub-inspector to visit their homes.
- The **cabinet also gave its nod to give a 10-day annual leave** to those who are staying with their families in police quarters.
- The meeting was **chaired by** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.
- The cabinet decided that staffers from the rank of constable to sub-inspector in all the arms battalions of the Assam Police will be given one-month compulsory leave every year for visiting their homes.
- The **cabinet also gave the task of setting up mobile towers** to the Information Technology Department to strengthen internet access in the state for the benefit of online education.

Assam govt. to set up "department of indigenous faith and culture"

- **Assam** government to set up "**department of indigenous faith and culture**" & the **aim** of this program is to **protect demography and indigenous culture**
- The New Department of indigenous faith and culture will mainly focus on **areas dominated by illegal immigrants**
- Also it will enable people of all indigenous faiths to get the benefits of the schemes to be offered by the department.
- Schemes will be meant for Bodos, tea tribes, Morans, Mottocks, Rabhas and Mishings.

Assam CM Declared the state govt adopted zero tolerance policy against drugs menace

- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stated Union Home Minister Amit Shah has asked him to take tough action against **drugs, human trafficking and cattle smuggling**.
- Responding to questions during the ongoing budget session of the Assembly, the Chief Minister mentioned his government has adopted a **zero tolerance policy towards drugs** and that all the Northeastern states are trying to put up a united fight against the menace.
- "Home Minister Amit Shah has asked him to take stern measures against drugs, cow smuggling and human trafficking".
- He promised to further intensify the **war against drugs**, the Chief Minister noted drugs are smuggled into the **country from Myanmar through Assam**.
- He stated the menace is ruining the **lives of hundreds in Assam**.

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Assam govt announced to provide jobs to National Games medallists

- The **Assam Government** has decided to provide jobs to National Games medalists.
- Chief Minister **Himanta Biswa Sarma** stated that along with Olympics, Asian and Commonwealth games medalists the medal winners in National Games would also get government jobs.
- The Chief Minister mentioned that all those who won medals in National Games so far for Assam would be given **Sports Pension by the State Government**.
- Mr. Sarma hoped that this decision would **help the sportspersons of the state**.
- The Chief Minister also announced that the house would send a goodwill message to boxer Lovlina Borgohain who will vie for a medal in Tokyo Olympics.

Assam: HM Amit Shah inaugurates various schemes in Guwahati

- **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** laid the foundation stone of **Tamulpur Medical College and Hospital** in Guwahati.
- He also ceremonially distributed cheque of **Rs. 1 lakh** each to the next kin of 100 selected Covid-19 victims under the State Government's '**Prarthana Achoni**' in the presence of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Health Minister Keshab Mahanta and Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Chief Promod Boro. Speaking at the event of Assam Government's Healthcare and Welfare Schemes launch, the Union Minister stated that Central Government is committed to fulfill all the promises made at **Bodo Accord within a very short period**.
- The **Tamulpur Medical College and Hospital** is a result of the Bodo Accord.
- The Union Minister stated that Assam will be a **hub for Cancer treatment and research**.
- Earlier the Home Minister inaugurated a **new unit of Radio Therapy at Guwahati Medical College and Hospital**.

Assam: CM Himanta Biswa Sarma lays the foundation stone of bamboo industrial park

- **Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma** laid the foundation of **Bamboo Industrial Park** at Manderdisa in Dima Hasao.
- The project will be implemented with **Rs. 50 crores from DoNER Ministry**.
- CM Sarma, "**Laid the foundation stone of Bamboo Industrial Park at Manderdisa, Dima Hasao**".
- Once completed, the **project will usher in a new era in the economy of #NorthEast** & create vast employment opportunities for local youth.
- Earlier, the **Central Government has decided to set up the first Bamboo Industrial Park in the Northeast** in Dima Hasao district for tapping the immense potential of the bamboo sector in the State.

Bihar

India's 1st national dolphin research centre unveiled soon in Patna

- The much-awaited **National Dolphin Research Centre (NDRC)**, a big step for the **conservation of the endangered Gangetic river dolphin**, will soon be a reality as the process to set it up has finally begun.
- The construction work on its building is likely to commence in Patna after the monsoon this year.

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- The **NDRC is coming up on the 4,400 square metre plot of land** on the **premises of Patna University**, near the banks of the Ganga.
- The Bihar urban development department has recently cleared the construction of **NDRC's building about 200 metres from the Ganga**.
- The Bihar forest, environment and climate change department had sought approval for this as **any construction within 200 metres of the Ganga is restricted**.
- Surendra Singh, conservator of forest wildlife, stated that work has already started for NDRC.
- "Now, there will be no further delay. It will be complete by next year".

Gujarat

Gujarat: PM inaugurates redeveloped Gandhinagar railway station and a newly-build five-star hotel

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated **projects worth over Rs 1,100 crore** in Gujarat.
- These **projects include three new attractions** in a state-of-the-art science city, a five-star hotel atop a railway station and several railway projects.
- The **PM first inaugurated a newly-built five-star hotel atop the redeveloped Gandhinagar railway station** and later inaugurated three new attractions at the Science City in Ahmedabad through video-conferencing.
- During the virtual event, PM Modi would also flag off **Gandhinagar-Varanasi** weekly superfast train and Gandhinagar-Varetha train.
- Gandhinagar railway station has been developed after 35 years.
- Due to the Prime Minister's vision, the Indian Railways have received international fame.
- Few such examples are **Vande Bharata Express** and **'Oxygen Express'** trains.

About the Gandhinagar hotel:

- The **luxury hotel** has **318 rooms** and is spread across **7,400 square meters**.
- It has been built at a cost of Rs 790 crore.
- The **hotel is 250 feet high** and has been developed as an **SPV** (special purpose vehicle) set up by the Gujarat government and the Ministry of Railway.

First elections of Balika Panchayat successfully held at Kunariya village in Kutch District

- The **Kunariya village of Kutch district in Gujarat** has come up with a unique idea of holding **Balika Panchayat**.
- The first-ever elections of this Balika Panchayat were successfully held.
- Young females aged between **10 to 21 years** contested elections for this unique Panchayat which will take up issues pertaining to adolescent girls and women in the village.
- **Inspired by the TV series**, Balika Vadhu, the Kunariya village in Kutch district held elections for the unique Balika Panchayat, which aims to develop leadership qualities in the girls for Future Panchayat polls.

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- This Panchayat will be run by the girls and for the girls.

Dholavira in Gujarat's Rann of Kutch on UNESCO World Heritage List

- The **Harappan city of Dholavira in Gujarat's Rann of Kutch** has found a place in UNESCO's World Heritage list, making it the **40th world heritage property in the country**.
- The **UNESCO announcement on Dholavira**, which followed the agency's announcement listing Rudreswara Temple, also known as the Ramappa Temple, in Telangana as a world heritage site.
- India had submitted the nomination dossier for '**Dholavira: A Harappan City to the World Heritage Centre**' in **January, 2020**.
- The site has been on UNESCO's tentative list since 2014.
- It is one of the very few well-preserved urban settlements in south Asia dating from the 3rd to mid-2nd millennium BCE.

Goa

Goa state govt launches Tika Utsav 1.2

- **Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant** announced that the Government is now launching **Tika Utsav 1.2** from 5th July, which will emphasize on the administration of the **2nd dose of vaccine** to those who have completed **84 days**.
- "However, all persons above **18 plus can walk-in to get either first or second dose** during this drive at any of the venues.
- The public may contact their local representative/health officials for the timetable of the venue in their locality".
- Goa Government had extended the COVID-induced curfew **till July 12**.
- According to the **new guidelines** issued in view of the decline in the daily count of coronavirus cases, the state government has eased certain restrictions and permitted shops across **Goa to open from 7 am to 6 pm**.

Haryana

Haryana: India's first 'Grain ATM' open in Gurugram

- **Consumers in Gurugram** will no longer have to stand in long queues, nor worry about the shopkeeper giving less ration, as **India's first 'Grain ATM'** has been set up in the district as a pilot project.
- **Haryana's Deputy Chief Minister, Dushyant Chautala**, who also holds the portfolio of Food and Civil Supplies Department, stated with the **installation of Grain ATMs**, all the complaints regarding waiting time and right measurement of ration quantity will be redressed.
- "**The purpose of installing this machine** is to ensure that the right quantity should reach the right beneficiary with minimum hassle".
- After the **successful completion of the pilot project** at Farrukhnagar in Gurugram, the Haryana government plans to install these machines at its depots across the state.

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Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh

J&K LG unveiled 'Special Assistance Scheme for COVID Mortalities'

- In the **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir**, Lieutenant Governor **Manoj Sinha** rolled out '**Special Assistance Scheme for COVID Mortalities - SASCM**', by handing over the grant of Scholarship and Pension certificates to the children and the members of the families affected due to COVID-19.
- Mr Sinha remarked that the J & K government is committed to **support children who lost their parents** in this pandemic and the administration as guardian will take all necessary steps for their well-being and education so that they can have a bright future.

About the scheme:

- Under the '**SASCM**' scheme, **cash assistance of Rs 1,000 per month** shall be provided to the **spouse** and the **eldest member of the family**.
- Apart from this, the scheme provides for a scholarship of **Rs 20,000 per annum** for **school** going students and **Rs 40,000 per annum** for **college** going students.
- A **family in distress** shall be eligible for **scholarship for two children**, if they are not getting any other scholarship.

J&K govt via JKTPo introduces a initiative called "HAUSLA"

- Government of **Jammu and Kashmir** took a proactive measure, via Jammu & Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPo) under the aegis of Department of Industries of Commerce, with the **initiative** called "**HAUSLA**" for **women entrepreneurs** of Jammu & Kashmir.
- The initiative was **launched by** Lt. Governor, Shri **Manoj Sinha** at Srinagar.

About the Initiative:

- The initiative is a **5-month training program** for women entrepreneurs of J&K organized by JKTPo and **partnered with India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace Flipkart** to give an extra-mile outreach and marketing support for the products of these women Entrepreneurs.
- **Flipkart** will provide them with time-bound incubation support that includes **e-profiling, e-listing of products and their seamless onboarding on its marketplace as sellers**.

J&K Chief Secretary introduces helpline "Sukoon"

- **Chief Secretary, Arun Kumar Mehta**, inaugurated **SDRF first Battalion's 24x7 mental health helpline 'SUKOON'** at its headquarters.
- **About SUKOON:**
- '**SUKOON**' is a mental health **helpline initiative** (toll free number **1800-1807159**) to offer **guidance to persons** (or their well-wishers) **who are experiencing** anxiety, depression, stress, panic attack, PTSD, adjustment disorder, suicidal thoughts, substance abuse, mental health emergency and pandemic induced psychological stress.

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- **This initiative**, launched by **SDRF First Battalion Kashmir** in collaboration with **Mission Youth J&K and Tourism department**, will guide the caller to avail services of clinical psychologists, therapists, counsellors and psychiatrists and provide round the clock one to one support, free and confidential services to those experiencing mental health issues.

J&K: Model Anti-Rabies Clinic inaugurated in Govt Medical College, Doda

- **Doda, July 03, Model Anti Rabies clinic (Animal Bite clinic)** has been made operational in Government Medical College, Doda for prevention and management under national Program for Rabies control (NRCP).
- The clinic was **inaugurated by** Principal GMC Doda Dr Dinesh Kumar along with former Principal and Professor Surgeries GMC Doda Dr Tariq Parvez Azad here at Associated Hospital of GMC in a simple but momentous function observing all SOPs of COVID-19.
- Others who were present in the event are Dr Yunis HOD Medicines, Dr Yudhvir MS Associated Hospital, Dr Suresh Kumar HOD Community Medicines, and Dr Safia Khan HOD Microbiology besides other doctors and staff of Associated Hospital.

About the Clinic:

- This **Anti Rabies clinic** shall render outpatient services during routine hours in Phase-I.
- It's **services shall be extended** for inpatient management of patients in future who report with confirmed/ suspected rabies.
- It will be the second **centre in** Jammu Division apart from GMC Jammu, which will extend animal bite services.
- The **aim is to ensure zero deaths due to Rabies by 2030** in accordance with **WHO target** and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India.

J&K LG unveiled Golf Training Academy in Srinagar

- **Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha** launched a golf training academy here and said the **Jammu and Kashmir** administration has made the **sport accessible** to the common man and it is no longer a game of the elite only.
- The **academy** was launched at the **Kashmir Golf Club**.
- He stated the restoration work of **the historic Golf Course** after the 2014 floods has been done in the best way while maintaining its originality.
- With best-in-class golf courses, **Jammu and Kashmir** aspires to be the golfing capital of the country, he added a similar golf academy with national-level training facilities will be launched in Jammu soon.
- Sinha mentioned that **at least 17 national-level sports events** would be held in Jammu and Kashmir this year so that the youth get an opportunity to showcase their talent.

J&K: Manoj Sinha initiates various online services of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board

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- In the **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir**, Lieutenant Governor **Manoj Sinha**, in order to provide a personal experience to the devotees of Shri Amarnathji, **launched various online services** of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board.
- Mr Sinha stated that with the launch of the **new online services of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board**, the devotees of Lord Shiva from across the world can perform **online virtual Puja and Hawan at the Holy Cave Shrine**.
- He noted that **Online Prasad booking service** was also extended to the devotees through this **initiative**.
- **For millions of devotees who are unable to pay their obeisance** at the Holy Cave shrine of Shri Amarnath Ji this year due to unprecedented COVID pandemic, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board has brought Darshan, Hawan and Prasad facility under the virtual mode.
- The **devotees can book their** Pooja, Hawan, and Prasad online and priests at the holy cave shrine will offer it in the devotee's name.
- Prasad will be subsequently delivered at doorsteps of the devotees by the postal department.

High Court UT of J&K and UT of Ladakh renamed as 'High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh'

- **Ministry of Law and Justice** informing that the 'long-winding and cumbersome' nomenclature '**Common High Court of UT of Jammu and Kashmir and UT of Ladakh**' have been changed to '**High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh**'.
- President Ram Nath Kovind has signed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2021, to effect the change.
- "Present nomenclature is found to be rather long-winding and cumbersome.
- The nomenclature may be substituted as High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, which besides being convenient would also be in consonance with the name pattern followed in other common HCs".

Union Cabinet gives nod to setting up of Integrated Multi-purpose Infra Development Corp for Ladakh

- The **Centre approved the establishment of an integrated multi-purpose infrastructure development corporation** for the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- The decision has been taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The **establishment of the corporation** will result in inclusive and integrated development of the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- This will, in turn, ensure **socio-economic development** of the entire region and the population of the UT.
- The impact of development will be **multi-dimensional** and it will help in further development of human resources and better utilization thereof.
- It increases domestic production of goods and services and will facilitate their smooth supply.
- Thus, the approval will help in realising the goal of '**Atmanirbhar Bharat**'.
- The **authorized share capital** of the corporation will be Rs 25 crore and recurring expenditure will be around Rs 2.42 crore per year.

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Cabinet gives approval for setting up of Central University of Ladakh

- The Union Cabinet approved the **setting up** of a **central university** in the union territory of **Ladakh**, while also giving its nod to an integrated multi-purpose infrastructure development corporation.
- The **decision was taken at the meeting** chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with an aim of addressing regional imbalances in higher education and stimulating the intellectual current within the broader society of Ladakh.
- “**Cabinet approves** establishment of a Central University in the Union Territory of #Ladakh,” Jaideep Bhatnagar.
- The Cabinet also approved the creation of one post of Managing Director, for the corporation in the pay scale of **Rs. 1,44,200- Rs.2,18,200** level.

Karnataka

India's first movable freshwater tunnel aquarium opened at Bengaluru Station

- **Krantivira Sangolli Rayanna Railway Station** also known as **Bengaluru City Railway Station** has become the **first railway station** in India with a **movable freshwater tunnel aquarium**.
- The **aquarium has been opened** by the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation Limited (**IRSDC**) in collaboration with the **HNI Aquatic Kingdom**.
- The IRSDC stated that the **aquarium is based on the concept of Amazon River** and is one-of-its-kind, promising to be a visual treat and a passenger's delight.

About the Tunnel:

- The **12-feet long aquatic kingdom** at the railway station is **Indian Railways first paludarium** that houses myriad flora and fauna.
- The Indian Railways stated that the entrance of the **station** now gives a glimpse into marine life, with a beautiful dolphin humbly greeting visitors with a slight bow and a smile.
- A 3D selfie area, 20 feet of glass periphery are also some attractive features of the new facility.

Karnataka state govt to initiate 'Model Tenancy Act'

- **Karnataka's Revenue Minister R Ashoka** has mentioned that the **state government is planning to introduce the Model Tenancy Act in the state**, aimed at ending tenant-owner disputes.
- It is Simplifying the current tenancy act.
- Earlier, the government had a role in fixing the rent.

About the act:

- The **rent should be fixed by both the parties (owners and tenants)** and after reaching an agreement, they need to finalize it legally and then upload it in the portal.”
- “This is just a proposal and they are expecting feedback from the public before we officially introduce this in Karnataka”.

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- The **Union Cabinet** in the **first week of June** had approved the **Model Tenancy Act** and sent it for circulation to all the States for adaptation by way of enacting fresh legislation or amending the existing rental laws suitably.

Highlights of Model Tenancy Act

- **Deposits cannot exceed six-month rentals** for commercial properties and two-month rentals for residential properties.
- Without a **valid notice**, tenants cannot be evicted during the agreement period.
- The **rent agreement** should be uploaded on the **revenue department website** and the **agreement between tenant and landlord** is final.
- Without written permission from owners, tenants cannot make any structural changes to the property.

Karnataka set up 46 Kempegowda heritage sites in Bengaluru to boost tourism

- In a bid to boost tourism in the state, **Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa's** is going to develop **46 Kempegowda heritage sites located in Bengaluru** Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara, Chikballapura, and Tumakuru districts.
- Yediyurappa announced the news after chairing a meeting of the **Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Heritage Area Development Authority**.
- **BS Yediyurappa** stated that the sites identified to be in three circuits would be developed for **Rs 223 crore** for promoting tourism.
- An action plan has been prepared to develop the **Magadi Circuit (Rs.132 crores)**, **Bengaluru Circuit (Rs.47 crores)** and **Nandi Circuit (Rs.44 crores)**.
- "A plan has been prepared to develop Magadi circuit at a cost of **Rs 132 crore**, **Rs 47 crore** for Bengaluru circuit, and **Rs 44 crore** for Nandi circuit".
- These sites are developed to help people acknowledge the contribution of **Kempegowda or NadaPrabhu Kempegowda**, the founding father of Bengaluru.

Karnataka CM unveiled the event to mark World Youth Skills Day

- **Karnataka Chief Minister B. S. Yediyurappa** has stated that skilling and livelihood assurance to the unemployed youth goes hand in hand to reap the advantages of demographic dividend in the country.
- The Chief Minister informed that an **MOU was signed with Tata Technologies** to upgrade 150 Government ITIs.
- He also mentioned that the **Karnataka Skill and Entrepreneurship Task Force** will submit its report on a road map to create 10 million jobs in the next five years in the state.
- The Chief Minister stated that **www.skillconnect.kaushalkar.com** web portal offers information on jobs available in various industries for the skilled manpower.
- On World Youth Skills Day the State Government signed various MOUs with private partners to take up skills training.
- An MOU was signed with **Toyota motors** to impart training to youth in **Automotive skills**.

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Karnataka: 1st state to reserve jobs for transgender persons

- **Karnataka** became the **first state in India** to reserve jobs in public employment in favour of transgender persons.
- The state government informed the division bench of the **Karnataka high court** of Chief Justice **Abhay Shreeniwas Oka** and **Suraj Govindaraj** that it has amended the **Karnataka Civil Services (General Recruitment) Rules, 1977** to provide for **1% horizontal reservation for transgenders**.
- A draft notification issued on May 13 proposed to amend Rule 9 for the purpose.
- The proposed amendment to **Rule 9 Sub Rule (1D)** was inserted to **provide for 1% of vacancies** to be filled in any service or post by the state government from among the transgender candidates in each category of general, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and in each of the categories among the Other Backward Classes.

Kerala

Ernakulam District Library Council's initiative, 'Books at Doorstep'

- The Ernakulam District Library Council's **initiative, 'Books at Doorstep'**, to revive reading habits among school children, has evoked enthusiastic response and is on course to exceed the target.
- The project launched and **aims at reaching out to 25,000 families spread across 500 libraries** under the district library council.
- The idea was to **lend one lakh books a month** by giving four books to a child and cover at least 50 households within every library limits.
- "They expected to lend **12 lakh books a year**, but are now very likely to exceed that going by the great response to the project.
- The district council launched the project after the **Education Department** found that reading habits among students has taken a hit in the wake of remote learning.

Kerala govt got its own OTT platform

- The **Kerala State Film Development Corporation (KSFDC)** will soon prepare a detailed project report (DPR) for launching an **OTT platform** exclusively for Malayalam movies.
- The technical team of KSFDC has started the **preliminary works** and is hopeful of submitting the report by next month.
- Once theatres reopen after the **Covid crisis settles**, the producers will have an option to screen the movies in theatres owned by KSFDC before releasing them on **state-owned OTT platform**.
- KSFDC chairman Shaji N Karun stated "If they get a **theatre screening first** and then get to shift the **movie to the OTT platform**, it will be more beneficial to the producers".

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About OTT platform:

- An **over-the-top media service** is a **media service** offered directly to viewers **via the Internet**.
- **OTT** bypasses cable, broadcast, and satellite television platforms, the types of companies which traditionally act as controllers or distributors of such content.
- **Over the top (OTT)** is film and television content that is provided via the Internet as opposed to the traditional means of a cable or satellite provider.
- Common examples of **OTT include services such as** Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, and HBO Now.

Perumkulam is named as Kerala's first 'Book Village'

- **Perumkulam** is a **unique village in Kerala**, where the inhabitants are so passionate about reading that they have turned the entire village into what you can call a **public library** and have rightly earned the title of being **Kerala's first 'village of books'**.
- In 2017, **Bapuji Smaraka Vayanasala**, a hopeful library in Perumkulam, near Kollam, installed a public bookcase in the village as an experiment.
- Three years later, a **US-based book-sharing movement** called the **Little Free Library**, inspired by this initiative, helped the office bearers of Bapuji library to install around ten more such public bookcases in different locations of Perumkulam.

Kerala police initiates 'Pink Protection' project for women safety

- The **Kerala Police** has launched a new initiative called the **"Pink Protection"** project for the **protection of women in public, private and digital spaces**.
- For the project, 10 cars, 40 two-wheelers, including Bullet bikes and 20 bicycles, were allotted, which were flagged off by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
- The "Pink Protection" project **aims to prevent dowry-related issues**, cyber-bullying and humiliation in public places.
- The project has 10 components, one of which is activating the existing Pink Police Patrol system.
- The system has been named **"Pink Janamaithri Beat"**, under which police officials will conduct regular house visits to collect information on domestic violence.
- They will **collect information from panchayat members**, neighbours and other locals and hand it over to the Station House Officers for further action.

'Krishikarna' Project of Kerala

- The mini polyhouse [polyhouse is a type of greenhouse] is coming under **'Krishikarna'** project launched in **Kerala**, a joint initiative of State Agri Horticultural Society (SAHS), Sustainable Foundation and Qore3 Innovations.
- **State Agri Horticultural Society (SAHS)**, the government-accredited cooperative society, is involved in promoting agri-horticultural practices.
- **Sustainable Foundation**, a Thiruvananthapuram-based NGO, promotes sustainable development.
- **Qore3 Innovations** is a start-up that claims to provide 'end-to-end support for farms'.

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- The plan is to cultivate **long beans, tomato, salad cucumber, capsicum, chillies and leafy vegetables** at the mini polyhouses.
- Krishikarna covers greenhouses, fish and vegetables and mushroom farming.
- Under Krishikarna, a small polyhouse will be built on **a 2.5 cent land**.
- The total estimated cost of each **plastic house is Rs 2, 35, 000**.

Kerala Announces Rs 5000 cr to assist Small-scale Traders, Farmers

- Kerala Government announced a financial package of **₹ 5,650 crore** in the state Assembly, to assist small-scale traders and farmers of the state.
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises have been **given a building tax exemption** from July to December 31
- The state government has decided to **issue subsidized loans and** announced new **loan programs for Kerala State Financial Enterprises (KSFE) and Kerala Financial Corporation (KFC) and**
- **For loans up to Rs 2,00,000 rupees**, the state government **will pay 4% of the interest on the loan over a 6 months period**.
- The state government of Kerala has also decided to provide loans of up to **Rs 1 crore at 5% interest rate for a total of 500 business enterprises a year**.

Madhya Pradesh

MP CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan unveiled UNESCO's 'Historic Urban Landscape' Project

- In **Madhya Pradesh, Gwalior and Orchha cities** have been selected by **UNESCO** under '**Historic Urban Landscape Project**', which was started in the year 2011, for the inclusive and well-planned development of fast-growing historical cities while preserving the culture and heritage.
- **Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan** virtually launched UNESCO's 'Historic Urban Landscape' project for Gwalior and Orchha cities of the state through video conferencing.
- Chief Minister stated that six cities of South Asia, including Ajmer and Varanasi in India are already involved in this project.
- **Orchha and Gwalior** have been included as the **7th and 8th cities**.
- The development and management plan of these cities will be prepared by UNESCO.
- This project will help MP tourism get a new dimension.
- **Additional employment opportunities** will also be created along with the development of tourism.

Madhya Pradesh: UNESCO's 'Historic Urban Landscape' project for Gwalior, Orchha launched

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International Clean Air Catalyst Programme: Indore becomes only Indian city selected from India

- **Indore** has become the only city to be selected from India for the International **Clean Air Catalyst Programme**.
- The project will be operated for five years to purify the city's air.
- It is a **new flagship programme** launched by the **US Agency for International Development** and a global consortium of **organizations** to accelerate clean air solutions in **low and middle-income countries**.
- The **only Indian city** to be **selected in this international project** is **Madhya Pradesh's Indore**, which is also known as the cleanest city in the country.
- With the cooperation of **Indore Municipal Corporation** and Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board, the project will be in operation for five years to purify the air of the city.

Maharashtra

Maharashtra government planning to appoint 'Marathi language officers'

- The **Maharashtra government** is planning to appoint "**Marathi language officers**" to increase use of state language at **the district level** to address complaints that the Marathi language is not being used properly in administrative activities, minister Subhash Desai mentioned in the **Legislative Council**, July 5.
- The **Maharashtra Official Languages Act** was passed in **1964**, but Desai warned the Legislative Council that it lacked the required clarity.
- **Desai** introduced the **Maharashtra Official Languages (Amendment) Bill, 2021**, which amends the **Maharashtra Official Language Act**.
- Both the Assembly and the Council voted in favour of the bill.
- Desai went on to say that he had received multiple complaints and that it had been discovered that Marathi was not being adequately utilized by **various authorities and corporations** in the state.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari launches India's first private LNG Facility plant at Nagpur

- **Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari** inaugurated **the country's First Private LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) plant** in Nagpur.
- He stated, LNG is a **clean and cost effective fuel** which is capable of decreasing the logistics cost.

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- It also has the potential of **creating ample job opportunities**.
- LNG is the fuel of the future and will revolutionize the transport sector.
- The **Country's first LNG facility plant** has been **set up by Baidyanath Ayurvedic Group on Kamptee Road near Nagpur Jabalpur Highway**.
- Mr.Gadkari also informed that the Central Government is **promoting Ethanol, Electric, CNG, LNG gas** as an alternative to conventional fuels.
- He pointed out that the **country produces surplus sugar and rice**.
- He suggested that surplus of such products can be used to make biofuels.
- Experiments were carried out **to produce bioethanol from these agricultural products** which have succeeded.
- Large scale production of **bioethanol from Paddy Straw** is underway in East Vidarbha which is known for Paddy cultivation.

Maharashtra state govt launches new EV Policy 2021

- The **new EV policy introduced in Maharashtra** is a revision of the 2018 policy.
- It is introduced with an aim to make Maharashtra the **"topmost producer of battery-powered electric vehicles in India."**
- It also **aims** for electric vehicles (EVs) to make up 10 percent of all new vehicle registrations, **by 2025**.
- For this ambitious mission, the state government has rolled out a Rs. 930 crore policy, valid up to 31st March, 2025.
- To make this success, **EVs will be exempted from road tax and registration charges**.
- For the smooth implementation of Maharashtra's new EV Policy, the state government is instituting a Mechanism Steering Committee under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary & other concerned principal secretaries.
- The Chief Secretary & other secretaries will evaluate policy effectiveness to amend it, according to the EV ecosystem and environment.
- A **Climate Change Department (CCD)** will drive the 'EV Monitoring Cell.'

Maharashtra to become first state to issue educational documents using blockchain technology

- **Maharashtra** will be the **first state in the country to issue educational documents** using blockchain technology.
- **Maharashtra's Skill Development Minister Nawab Malik** stated, one million diploma certificates will be issued using this technology.
- Forgery of documents is a serious concern for various educational and other institutions.
- Many steps are being taken to avoid forgery along with verification of documents.
- **Maharashtra State Board of Skill Development** has decided to issue block chain based certificates to students.
- **Around 10 lakh digital certificates** will be issued to diploma holders of eight educational years.
- Mr. Malik stated that Singapore, Malta and Bahrain are the only countries using this technology.
- **Maharashtra** will be the **1st Indian state and world's largest user of Blockchain for educational certificates**.

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- **Meghalaya cabinet approved the Meghalaya Youth Policy 2021**, a framework that envisages towards achieving the government's vision to create pathways for Meghalaya's youth in achieving their fullest potential and becoming engaged, skilled, creative, responsible and empowered members of the local and global community.
- The policy will be notified by the Government soon.
- **Drafted by the Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Government of Meghalaya**, the policy is in sync with the government's vision for the state to transform Meghalaya to be amongst the **top 10 states in 10 years in GSDP per capita and SDG ranking**.
- The policy aims to address major issues and concerns of the youth based on nine identified key thrust areas that includes Education, Health & Wellbeing, Counselling & Mentoring, Employment Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Sports, Cultural & creative industries, Engagement & Leadership, Inclusion and Environmental Consciousness.

Meghalaya: HM Amit Shah to inaugurate several projects

- **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** is reaching **Shillong** on a **two-day visit to Meghalaya** along with a few other Union Ministers handling portfolios for the Northeastern states.
- The Union Home Minister will also **chair** a closed-door meeting with the Chief Ministers, the Chief Secretaries and the Police Chiefs of all the Northeastern states to discuss, among other agendas, the **inter-state boundary issue**.
- The Union Home Minister will inaugurate the **Inter-State Bus Terminus at Mawiong** in the outskirts of Shillong city and a cryogenic plant at New Shillong Township.
- During his two-day visit, the Home Minister is likely to discuss the ongoing developmental projects, overall law and order scenario, economic challenges, special projects and schemes apart from inter-state conflicts.
- The Union Home Minister will visit **Sohra** earlier known as **Cherrapunji** to inaugurate the **Greater Sohra Water Supply Scheme** and a separate afforestation project.
- He is also scheduled to pay a visit to the **Ramakrishna Mission Ashram** there.
- The Home Minister will also meet civil society groups to discuss various demands, especially those linked to the boundary issues and implementation of the Inner Line Permit in Meghalaya.

Manipur

Manipur CM declared Rs. 20 lakh cash reward to first fully vaccinated assembly constituency in the state

- In Manipur, the **Chief Minister N. Biren Singh** announced that a **cash reward of Rs. 20 lakh** would be given to the first fully vaccinated assembly constituency.
- The cash reward is **aimed to encourage mass vaccination drives** being taken up in all the Assembly constituencies of the State.
- In the launching program of **Mobile Insulated Vaccination Bus** in Imphal East, Shri Biren stated that the **nationwide free vaccination drive** conducted under the leadership of Prime Minister is the only weapon to fight COVID-19.

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Manipur now shown India's railway map as first passenger train reaches the state

- **Chief Minister N Biren Singh** hailed the moment to be “**historic**” and stated that the people of Manipur are “immensely grateful” to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- A passenger train – Rajdhani Express from **Assam's Silchar railway station** - reached the Vaingaichunpao railway station in Manipur for a trial run, putting the state on the Indian Railways map.
- The train covered the distance of **11 km between the two northeastern stations**, with railway officials onboard.
- The train halted briefly at **Manipur's Jiribam railway station**, where railway officials were greeted by local citizens before the national flag was hoisted accompanied by the national anthem, East Mojo reported.
- Among the **Indian Railways officials** that reached Jiribam station from Silchar were North East Frontier (NF) Railway senior PRO Nripen Bhattacharya, and CDO Silchar, Abdul Hakim, among others.

Manipur CM unveils Model Hepatitis B Treatment Centres on World Hepatitis Day

- On the occasion of **World Hepatitis Day 2021**, Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh launched **Model Hepatitis B Treatment Centres** at two hospitals in Manipur.
- The Model Hepatitis B Treatment Centres are **opened at Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Science (JNIMS) and Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS)**.
- The centres were launched during the function held at CM Secretariat on the occasion of World Hepatitis Day 2021 under the **theme- Hepatitis Can't Wait**.
- The Chief Minister stated that treatment of Hepatitis B and its medicines would be made available free of cost at the Model Treatment Centres launched.
- The opening of treatment centres would be helpful in controlling the infectious diseases in the State to a large extent.
- Stressing on the status of **National Viral Hepatitis Control Program (NVHCP)** in the State, the Chief Minister informed that 29,414 people had been screened for Hepatitis B and 35,036 for Hepatitis C so far.
- Of the total screened, 1,519 were found positive and 1,225 are undergoing treatment. 861 had undergone complete treatment.

Odisha

Odisha state govt approves five major industrial projects

- **The Odisha Government** has approved **five major industrial projects** giving a big push to the steel production capacity of the state.
- This will almost double the state's capacity to **58 million tonnes per annum** from the current 30 million tonnes.
- These projects worth **over 1.4 lakh crore rupees** were approved by the **State High-Level Clearance Authority chaired by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik**.

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These projects include the expansion of five major existing steel projects in the state namely:

- **Tata Steel** in Jajpur,
- **Bhushan Power and Steel** in Sambalpur,
- **Jindal Steel and Power** in Angul and
- **Rungta Mines Limited's steel projects** in Keonjhar and Dhenkanal districts.
- These **extended projects** will ensure a capacity addition by **28 million tonnes per annum** which will further zoom in on the state's dream to achieve 100 million tonnes steel production capacity by the year 2030 which was a rock-bottom two million tonnes in the year 2000.

Odisha's Puri: India's first city to provide quality drinking tap water

- **Odisha's Puri** has become the **first city** in the state to have a **drink-from-tap facility**.
- This means that the city now has safe drinking water that can be used directly from tap for cooking and drinking, without requiring further filtration.
- Odisha Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** inaugurated the '**Sujal**' or drink-from-tap mission.
- The drink-from-tap mission of the Odisha government has made Puri the first in the country to have city-wide 24-hour quality drinking water from the tap.
- "Puri has now joined the elite group of international cities like London, New York and Singapore in supplying quality potable water from municipal taps throughout the day."

About the scheme:

- "This is the **best model of the '5T' initiative**.
- **Good drinking water** has a strong link with health, living standards and the economy.
- Therefore, I urge **people not to waste or pollute the water**.
- The **budget** for drinking water has been **doubled in five years**.
- The previous water budget of Rs 200 crore has reached Rs 4,000 crore.

Odisha govt implements One Nation One Ration card scheme across State

- The **Odisha government** has implemented the **one nation one ration card scheme**.
- **Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik** launched the scheme across the state.
- The scheme **allows the beneficiaries to lift his or her quota of food grains** from any of the fair price shops of his or her choice, both within and outside the state.
- Inside the state alone, the beneficiaries will have **more than 10000 fair price shops** for their ration, to choose from.
- The state government also launched a **vitamin-added rice distribution scheme** under the public distribution system in the tribal dominated and remote district of **Malkangiri** as a pilot project.
- The scheme is supposed to address the nutritional needs, particularly of the women and children.

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Punjab

Punjab waives off of Rs 590 cr of loans of labourers, landless farmers

- Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh has decided to waive loans worth Rs 590 crore under the **farm debt relief scheme** for farm labourers and the landless farming community.
- Captain Amarinder Singh has informed that his government will pay off loans to the tune of **Rs 520 crore** of **2,85,325** members of the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS). It will provide relief of **Rs 20,000 per member**.
- It will cover only Consumption Loan to the members of the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies advanced by District Central Cooperative Banks in the state of Punjab through Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies.
- So far, loans **worth Rs 4624 crore** have been waived of as many as 5.64 lakh farmers under the scheme.
- In addition, the Punjab government has written off loans of up to Rs 58.39 crore of 6405 beneficiaries by the SC Corporation and Rs 20.71 crore of 1225 beneficiaries by the BC Corporation.

Punjab begins AABR system for effective screen of hearing loss in newborn

- To **manage hearing loss in newborn and young children**, Punjab government launched an **automated auditory brainstem response system (AABR)** under universal newborn hearing screening programme.
- By doing so, Punjab has become the first state in the country to introduce the system.
- Punjab health minister **Balbir Singh Sidhu** stated the **initiative will help in effective screen of hearing loss** in newborn and young children.
- Sidhu mentioned that after **diagnosing the hearing disability in a child**, the state government also provides free of cost cochlear implant which is a **surgically implanted neuroprosthesis** that provides a person with sensorineural hearing loss a modified sense of sound.

Rajasthan

Rajasthan: NTCA approved conversion of Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary into fourth tiger reserve

- **National Tiger Conservation Authority, NTCA**, has approved the conversion of the **Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary** in **Rajasthan's Bundi district** into the fourth tiger reserve in the state.
- According to the 2018 tiger census, there are **102 tigers in three reserves** - **Ranthambore** Tiger Reserve in Sawai Madhopur, **Sariska** Tiger Reserve in Alwar and **Mukundra Hills** Tiger Reserve in Kota - in the state.
- The **proposal for converting the Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary**, which is spread across 1,071 square kilometres, into a tiger reserve was recently approved by the National Tiger Conservation Authority's technical committee.
- The **NTCA is now expected to send a committee** to review the **Bundi sanctuary**.
- Tigers from **Ranthambore** can only be **translocated** to the new sanctuary after the NTCA's approval.
- Upgrading the sanctuary would resolve the space crunch at Ranthambore reserve.

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Rajasthan Farmers now get Rs 1,000 Monthly Grant under Kisan Mitra Urja Yojna

- **Farmers in Rajasthan** will get a monthly grant of **Rs 1,000** under the '**Kisan Mitra Urja Yojna**' which was launched by **Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot**.
- Under this scheme, for which an additional expenditure of Rs 1,450 crore will be incurred annually, electricity for agricultural purposes will become almost free for the small and medium category farmers in the state.
- Gehlot stated a **grant of Rs 1,000 monthly or a maximum of Rs 12,000 annually on electricity cost** will be given on agriculture connections.
- 'The **main objective of the scheme** is to provide economic support to the farmers'.
- The rate of **agricultural electricity in the state is Rs. 5.55 per unit** but farmers are being charged 90 paise per unit and the state government is bearing the remaining cost.
- 'Due to subsidy on agricultural electricity rates, an **economic burden** of Rs 16,000 crore rupees is there on the state government every year and now an additional burden of Rs 1450 crore will also be borne for the welfare of the farmers'.

About the scheme:

- The Rajasthan government has approved the draft of the **Mukhyamantri Kisan Mitra Urja Yojana**, under which agriculture power consumers will get **Rs 1,000 every month**.
- In such a situation, know which people are going to get the benefit of this and what farmers will have to do to take **advantage of this scheme**.
- Central and state government employees and income tax payers will **not be eligible** for agricultural consumer subsidy amounts.

Rajasthan introduces 'Niryatak Bano' mission to help local traders take businesses abroad

- **Rajasthan government's Industries Department** and the apex industrial development body, the **Rajasthan Industrial Development and Investment Corporation (RIICO)**, have launched a campaign to help local traders in expanding their businesses to foreign countries.
- The campaign "**Mission Niryatak Bano**" is planned in six steps to register and handhold the local traders willing to expand their business to foreign countries.
- The campaign will cover **assistance of local traders from** training, securing necessary documentation, registration in Rajasthan Export Promotion Council and even support in exports and trade operations.

Telangana

Telangana: 'Bonalu' festival to begin

- **Bonalu**, the **traditional folk festival of Telangana**, began at the **Jagadambika Temple** at the Golconda Fort in Hyderabad.

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- The religious procession started from **Langar Houz** and is on the way to the **temple near Bala Hissar** on top of the historic fort.
- The **three-kilometer procession** will reach the temple.
- Ashada Bonalu is the Telangana state festival held in the **month of Ashada**, according to the Hindu calendar, celebrating Goddess Mahankali.
- While the celebrations were going on, incessant has also impacted the narrow pathways around the fort.

Ramappa Temple bags UNESCO World Heritage tag

- The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** inscribed the 13th-century Ramappa in Palampet, Telangana a '**World Heritage Site**'.
- A consensus was reached in this regard during the ongoing virtual meet of the World Heritage Committee.
- While Norway opposed the inscription, Russia led an effort to have the temple recognized as a World Heritage Site.
- A consensus of **17 countries supported the move**.
- The **World Heritage Committee** currently includes Australia, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, and Uganda.

RAMAPPA TEMPLE:

- The **Ramalingeswara temple**, also known as the **Ramappa temple**, was named after its chief sculptor Ramappa. It is one of the very few temples in the world named after its sculptor.
- "The mediaeval Deccan temple dates back to **1213 AD** and was built under the patronage of the **Kakatiya ruler Kakati Ganapathi Deva** under the authority of his Chief Commander Rudra Samani at Ranakude in the Atukuru province."

Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh: Manduadih railway station renamed as Banaras Railway Station

- The **Manduadih railway station** has been finally **renamed as Banaras** by the North eastern railways (NER).
- The **NER replaced the old signboard** with the new one which read '**Banaras**' after the Railway Board gave its nod for the new name.
- The **newly painted signboards** were put up with **Banaras** written in **Hindi, Sanskrit, English, and Urdu**.
- The process to change the station's name started in 2019 when former railway minister and the present governor of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Singh.
- The Uttar Pradesh government accepted the proposal and forwarded it to the ministry of home affairs.
- The formal renaming of **Manduadih railway station as Banaras Railway Station** was done on September 16, 2020 in view of the **NOC** given by the ministry of home affairs on **March 31, 2020**.

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PM Narendra Modi launches 'Rudraksh' convention centre in Varanasi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Rudraksh International Cooperation and Convention centre in his parliamentary constituency of Varanasi.
- The two-storey convention centre can accommodate 1,200 people and was constructed with the aid of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
- Modi thanked the Japanese people, the Japanese country's government, and Suzuki Satoshi, its ambassador to India.
- He also thanked Yoshihide Suga, his Japanese counterpart, for personally taking an interest in the project.
- He expressed happiness that a new chapter of friendship was being written, and referred to the Delhi-Mumbai high-speed train and industrial corridor, being built with Japanese cooperation.
- The foundation stone for Rudraksh was laid in 2015 during a visit to Varanasi by then-Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.
- Modi had also hailed the Japanese support and stated the convention centre would make the city an attractive destination for conferences and draw many more tourists and businesspersons.

India's first driverless pod taxis introduced in Jewar international airport with Greater Noida

- The Uttar Pradesh government is all set to bring in 'pod taxis' that will connect commuters from Greater Noida to the Noida International Airport in Jewar using the driverless mode of transport, popular in many western countries.
- The Yamuna Expressway and Eastern Peripheral Expressway will soon sign an agreement with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) to extend the connectivity to remote areas.
- The driverless cars will transport four to six people each.
- Metro connectivity to Greater Noida but Jewar is about 25 kilometres from Greater Noida city.
- To bridge this gap, pod taxis are being considered.
- Pod taxis are a revolutionary mode of transport widely being used in many western countries.

About Jewar international airport:

- Jewar Airport, officially Noida International Greenfield Airport, is a proposed international airport to be constructed near the town of Jewar in Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh.
- The Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority will be the implementing agency on behalf of the Government of Uttar Pradesh.

IOC to set up nation's first 'green hydrogen' plant at Mathura

- India's largest oil firm IOC will build the nation's first 'green hydrogen' plant at its Mathura refinery, as it aims to prepare for a future catering to the growing demand for both oil and cleaner forms of energy.

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- **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) chairman Shrikant Madhav Vaidya** stated it has drawn a strategic growth path that aims to maintain focus on its core refining and fuel marketing businesses while making bigger inroads into petrochemicals, hydrogen and electric mobility over the **next 10 years**.
- The **company** will not set captive power plants at all its **future refinery and petrochemical expansion projects** and instead use the **250 MW** of electricity it produces from renewable sources like solar power.

SC bans on disc jockeys imposed by the Allahabad High Court in UP

- The **Supreme Court** lifted a blanket **ban** imposed on **disc jockeys by the Allahabad High Court in Uttar Pradesh** two years in the past.
- **A Bench, led by Justice Vineet Sareen**, mentioned disc jockeys might carry out at capabilities supplied they observe the foundations and procure essential licences.
- The High Court had handed a common order in August 2019 directing authorities to refuse permission to DJs underneath The Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules of 2000 as they create noise at “unpleasant and obnoxious levels”.
- The High Court had famously argued that **even minimal ranges of sound** at which DJs function violate the foundations.

Uttar Pradesh to set panchayat secretariat in all panchayats of the state

- **Uttar Pradesh Cabinet** has decided to set up a **panchayat secretariat in all panchayats of the state**.
- The move is aimed at strengthening the **rural democracy and providing employment** to the rural youth.
- **Panchayat secretariat** will be established in all gram panchayats for the first time in the state.
- There are **currently 58,189 gram panchayats in UP**. **State government** has also decided to provide free healthcare to all antyodaya card holders who are not covered under any healthcare scheme.
- This will benefit around **40 lakh families**.
- Briefing the media after Cabinet meeting, **UP minister Sidharth Nath Singh** stated that the government has decided to create about 1.6 lakh jobs, two each in 58,189 gram panchayats in the state by appointing a computer operator and an assistant who will work **from panchayat bhawans or rural secretariat** buildings to be constructed at gram panchayats where such infrastructure doesn't exist at the moment.

UP state govt. and Sapio Analytics join hands to revive MSMEs, distributes automation software

- **Department of MSME, Government of Uttar Pradesh**, signed an **MoU** with government advisory firm **Sapio Analytics**, to provide licenses of automation software Accloud, worth Rs. 72 crores, to 20,000 MSMEs of the state.
- The **software licenses** shall be **provided free of cost to the MSMEs** who can apply for the same (<https://sapioanalytics.com/accloud/>) through a portal.
- In an **event marking the launch of this initiative by the government**, Navneet Sehgal, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of MSME and Export Promotion, Government of Uttar Pradesh, and Pravin Singh, Managing Director, UP Industrial Consultants Ltd., spoke about the need to revive MSMEs with automation and financing.

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Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand: India's first cryptogamic (non-seed-bearing plants) garden inaugurated at Deoban in Chakrata town of Dehradun district

- India's first cryptogamic garden with nearly 50 species of lichens, ferns, and fungi has been opened in Uttarakhand's Dehradun district.
- The garden was inaugurated by social activist Anoop Nautiyal, and it is situated in the district's Chakrata town and at a height of 9,000 feet.
- Algae, bryophytes (moss, liverworts), lichens, ferns and fungi are the best-known groups of cryptogams that require moist conditions to survive.
- Deoban has pristine majestic forests of Deodar and Oak which create a natural habitat for cryptogamic species

About Cryptogamic:

- Cryptogamae refers to the fact that no seed, no flowers are produced, and it means "hidden reproduction"

Uttarakhand: Shravan Harela Festival celebrated

- The Shravan Harela, celebrated in the Hindu calendar month of Shravan, marks the onset of the rainy season (Monsoon).
- Harela means "Day of Green".
- It is considered to be an auspicious day for farmers, as it is the day when they begin the sowing cycle in their fields.
- It is celebrated by people from the Kumaon region of the state of Uttarakhand.
- The day marks the religious celebration of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati's wedding.
- The village communities make clay idols of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.
- These are known as Dikare or Dikars.
- The festival is celebrated with prayers for good harvest and prosperity.

West Bengal

West Bengal govt launches 'Students Credit Card'

- West Bengal launched its 'Student Credit Card' on June 30.
- Under the scheme, a student will be eligible for a soft loan of up to Rs 10 lakh for higher studies.
- This was one of the schemes promised by the Trinamool Congress in the run-up to the elections.
- The scheme will cover various institutional or non-institutional expenses to ensure no student from West Bengal is deprived of education due to lack of monetary support.

About the scheme:

- Any Indian citizen who has been living in West Bengal for the last 10 years is eligible to apply.

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- The **soft loan** will be **available for students pursuing** undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, and post-doctoral study in India or abroad.
- The student can apply for a **credit limit of up to Rs 10 lakh**.
- An **interest rate of 4 percent** will be levied on the loan.
- The loan will have **easy repayment options**.
- This will ensure that students need **not depend on** their parents for pursuing higher education.
- The **upper age limit** for eligibility is **40 years**.
- Students will have **15 years to repay the loan** after getting a job.
- The education loan can also be extended to those studying in various coaching institutes.
- Any student preparing for **national level competitive exams** such as IIT, IIM, NLU, IAS, IPS, WBPS among others, **can apply**.

Revision Points

State/UT	Chief Minister	Governor
Andhra Pradesh	YS Jagan Mohan Reddy	Biswa Bhusan Harichandan
Arunachal Pradesh	Pema Khandu	B. D. Mishra (Retd.)
Assam	Himanta Biswa Sarma	Jagdish Mukhi
Bihar	Nitish Kumar	Phagu Chauhan
Chhattisgarh	Bhupesh Baghel	Sushri Anusuiya Uikey
Delhi	Arvind Kejriwal	
Goa	Pramod Sawant	P.S. Sreedharan Pillai
Gujarat	Vijaybhai R. Rupani	Acharya Dev Vrat
Haryana	Manohar Lal	Bandaru Dattatraya
Himachal Pradesh	Jairam Thakur	Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar
Jharkhand	Hemant Soren	Ramesh Bais
Karnataka	Basavaraj Bommai	Thaawarchand Gehlot
Kerala	Pinarayi Vijayan	Arif Mohammed Khan
Madhya Pradesh	Shivraj Singh Chouhan	Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel
Maharashtra	Uddhav Thackeray	Bhagat Singh Koshyari
Manipur	N. Biren Singh	Najma Heptulla
Meghalaya	Conrad Kongkal Sangma	Satya Pal Malik
Mizoram	Pu Zoramthanga	Dr. Kambhampati Haribabu
Nagaland	Neiphiu Rio	R. N. Ravi
Odisha	Naveen Patnaik	Ganeshi Lal

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Punjab	Capt. Amarinder Singh	V.P. Singh Badnore
Rajasthan	Ashok Gehlot	Kalraj Mishra
Sikkim	PS Golay	Ganga Prasad
Tamil Nadu	M.K.Stalin	Banwarilal Purohit
Telangana	K Chandrasekhar Rao	Tamilisai Soundararajan
Tripura	Biplab Kumar Deb	Satyadeo Narain Arya
Uttar Pradesh	Yogi Aditya Nath	Anandiben Patel
Uttarakhand	Pushkar Singh Dhami	Baby Rani Maurya
West Bengal	Mamata Banerjee	Jagdeep Dhankhar
Puducherry (UT)	N Rangaswamy	

List of Governors & Administrators

Union Territory	Lt. Governor & Administrator
Andaman and Nicobar Island	Admiral D K Joshi
Chandigarh	V.P. Singh Badnore
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	Praful Patel
Delhi (NCT)	Anil Baijal
Jammu and Kashmir	Manoj Sinha
Lakshadweep	Praful Patel
Puducherry	Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan (Addl. Charge)
Ladakh	Radha Krishna Mathur

Important National News

Centre unveiled Asia's longest and world's fifth-longest High Speed Track

- Asia's longest and the world's fifth high speed test track was inaugurated at **National Automotive Test Tracks (NATRAX)** in Pithampur.
- The **11.3 km** facility is likely to attract global players for automotive testing and reduce **dependence of Indian OEMs** on foreign testing tracks.
- This one of its kind facility has **two semi-circular curves** that can test vehicles at a maximum neutral speed of **250 kmph** without touching the steering, while with control on steering, vehicles can be driven up to **375 kmph** on curves.
- **About high-speed track:**
- It is used to measure the speeding capabilities of **high-end cars** like **BMW, Mercedes, Audi, Ferrari, Lamborghini, and Tesla among others**, which cannot be measured on any of the test **tracks** in India yet.

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- Currently, foreign OEMs go to their respective **high-speed tracks** abroad to test the speeding requirements.

Dept of Justice inaugurates Enforcing Contracts Portal

- On 28th June, 2021 an exclusive **"Enforcing Contracts Portal"** was inaugurated by **Shri Barun Mitra**, Secretary (Justice) at the Department of Justice, Delhi in the presence of senior officers of the Department of Justice.
- Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice**, as the nodal department has been monitoring an array of legislative and policy reforms to strengthen the **"Enforcing Contracts"** regime for **Ease of Doing Business in India** in coordination with e-Committee, **Supreme Court of India and the High Courts of Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Karnataka**.
- In close collaboration with all of them, the Department of Justice has been aggressively pursuing various reform measures to create an effective, efficient, transparent and robust **'Contract Enforcement Regime'**.
- The **portal** is envisioned to be a comprehensive source of information pertaining to the legislative and policy reforms being undertaken on the **"Enforcing Contracts"** parameters.
- It includes the latest data related to the functioning and disposal of commercial cases in the Dedicated Commercial Court Of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata.

About EoDB:

- The **Doing Business Report of World Bank Group** benchmarks business regulations across 191 economies of the world.
- Within this, the **Ease of Doing Business (EoDB)** index is a ranking system which is an indication of an economy's position relative to that of other economies across **11 areas of business regulation**.

Union Minister N S Tomar unveiled Crop Insurance Awareness Campaign for Fasal Bima Yojana

- Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare **Shri Narendra Singh Tomar** launched the **Crop Insurance Awareness Campaign** for **Fasal Bima Yojana** during the Crop Insurance Week as a part of Government's India@75 campaign **'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'**, commemorating **75 years of India's Independence**.
- Union Minister Shri Tomar stated that Fasal Bima Yojana aims to provide security cover to each farmer.
- He also announced that the scheme achieved milestone figure of **Rs 95,000 crore of claims paid to farmers**.
- The Minister mentioned that **state governments and insurance companies** have an important role in the implementation of PMFBY.
- The result of their hard work is that in the last 4 years, a premium amounting to **Rs 17 thousand crores** was deposited by the farmers, against which more than **Rs 95 thousand crores** have been provided to them as claims.
- The Agriculture Minister **also flagged off** IEC vans which will continue to engage the farmers on the PMFBY throughout the crop insurance week.
- He **also launched** PMFBY e-brochure, FAQ booklet and a guidebook to assist farmers and on ground coordinators to understand the scheme, its benefits and the process of crop insurance.

About Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana:

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- The **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana** launched on **18 February 2016** by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is an insurance service for farmers for their yields.

Union Education Minister releases Report on UDISE 2019-20 for School Education

- Union Education Minister, **Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** released the Report on **United Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2019-20** for School Education in India.
- Report stated that the **Gross Enrolment Ratio** at all levels of school education has improved in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19.
- **Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR)** has improved at all levels of school education.
- **Enrolment of girls from primary to higher secondary** is more than 12.08 crore.
- This is a substantial increase by 14.08 lakh compared to 2018-19.
- Between 2012-13 and 2019-20, the **Gender Parity Index (GPI)** at both Secondary and Higher Secondary levels have improved.
- The UDISE+ report shows a remarkable **improvement in the number of schools** with functional electricity, with functional computers, internet facilities in 2019-20 over the previous year.

CBSE introduces Financial Literacy Textbook for Class 6 students

- Union Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** launched the **'Financial Literacy Workbook'** for Class 6 students.
- The book has been **prepared by** the Central Board of Secondary Education (**CBSE**) and the National Payments Corporation of India (**NPCI**).
- The book will be used in the **"Financial Literacy"** subject offered as an elective subject **for Class 6**.
- "The book has been divided into four units and covers crucial topics with **regards to financial awareness**: starting from **basic financial concepts like** currency Banking, Security, savings, and investments, UPI, RuPay Cards, Wallets, to evolved concepts such as IMPS, USSD, NACH, PoS, mPoS, QR Codes, and ATMs, etc," it added.

Defence Ministry initiates project to set interactive virtual museum of country's Gallantry award winners

- As the nation celebrates the **75th anniversary of its Independence**, Ministry of Defence (MoD) **has initiated a project** to create an **interactive virtual museum of the country's Gallantry award winners** to honour the heroic deeds of the **bravehearts of India**.
- MoD will **implement the project**, with no financial implications, in **partnership** with Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (**SIDM**) and Confederation of Indian Industries (**CII**).
- The Approval Letter to this effect was handed over by **Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar** to President, SIDM **Shri Jayant D Patil** in New Delhi on June 30, 2021.
- The project is expected to be completed soon.
- The Defence Secretary stated that the project would be the **first-of-its-kind cyber museum** that would honour the war heroes, emphasizing that it would add value to the **Gallantry Awards Portal** to inspire the countrymen, especially the youth, to serve the nation.

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- The **project also aims** to express gratitude to the families of the Armed Forces personnel and convey the Nation's respect to them.

Digital India flagship programme completed six years

- The government's flagship programme- **Digital India** has completed six years.
- The vision of **Digital India programme** is to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had **launched** this ambitious programme on **1st July, 2015**.
- Mr Modi will interact with beneficiaries of '**Digital India**' via video conferencing.
- The programme is being **organized by** the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- Minister of Electronics and Information Technology **Ravi Shankar Prasad** will also be present on the occasion.
- '**Digital India**' has turned out to be **one of the biggest success stories** of New India.
- It has enabled services, brought the Government closer to citizens, promoted citizen engagement and empowered people.
- The Digital India journey in the **past 6 years** has centred around empowerment, inclusion, and digital transformation.
- It has **positively impacted all aspects of the lives of Indian citizens** through Aadhaar, Direct Benefit Transfer, Common Services Centres, DigiLocker and mobile-based UMANG services.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar launched 6 Technology Innovation Platforms

- **Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises Shri Prakash Javadekar** inaugurated (through virtual mode) **six Technology Innovation Platforms** which will focus on development of technologies for the globally competitive manufacturing in India.
- Shri Javadekar mentioned that these platforms are the gift to the nation during the celebration of '**Azadi Amrut Mahotsav-Celebration of 75 Years of Independence**' and will help in bringing all India's technical resources and the concerned Industry on to one platform to kick start and facilitate identification of technology **problems faced by Indian Industry** and crowdsource solutions for the same.
- The Minister further stated that this will facilitate the development of the key '**mother**' **manufacturing technologies**' indigenously through '**Grand Challenges**' on the Platforms to help achieve the vision of an **Atma Nirbhar Bharat** and a globally competitive manufacturing sector in India.

About the platforms:

- The **Six Technology Platforms have been developed by** IIT Madras, Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI), International Centre for Automotive Technology (iCAT), Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), BHEL and HMT in association with IISc Bangalore.
- These platforms will focus on development of technologies for the globally competitive manufacturing in India.
- These **platforms will facilitate industry**, including OEMs (original equipment manufacturers), **Tier 1, 2, and 3 companies** and raw material makers, start-ups, domain experts/professionals, R&D institutions, and academia to provide technology solutions, suggestions, and opinions on issues involving manufacturing technologies.

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President Laid Foundation Stone for Ambedkar Memorial and Cultural Centre in Lucknow

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** laid the **foundation stone** for a **memorial and cultural centre** dedicated to **B.R. Ambedkar** in **Lucknow**.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** mentioned that the project would **“further popularise the ideals”** of Ambedkar among the youth.
- “If the U.P. had the government had done this earlier, the President would have been inaugurating this centre and not laying its foundation stone”.

About the Museum:

- **President Kovind** laid the foundation stone for the **cultural centre**, which will come up in **Aishbagh**, at an event at the **Lok Bhawan** here.
- His real success was in building a society and nation according to the values and ideals of **Ambedkar**.
- The project will have a **25-feet high statue** of Ambedkar.
- The centre would cost an estimated **Rs.45 crore** and include an auditorium with a **capacity of 750 persons**, a research centre, and a museum.

RCA Planned to construct World's third largest cricket stadium in Jaipur

- The **Rajasthan Cricket Academy** noted it will construct the **world's third-largest cricket stadium** in **Jaipur** with capacity for 75,000 spectators at **estimated cost of Rs.300 crore**.
- Rajasthan Cricket Association President **Vaibhav Gehlot** stated that the **stadium's construction work** in **Chomp village** on **Jaipur-Delhi highway** will be completed by RCA in about two and a half years.

About The Stadium:

- “It will be the third-largest stadium in the world.
- In which 75,000 spectators will be able to enjoy the match.
- The **stadium** will be constructed in two phases - In **phase-1, 40,000 spectators** capacity will be built with 11 cricket pitches, two practice grounds, one cricket academy, a hostel, parking facility, sports club, hotel and gym”.
- Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) commissioner **Gaurav Goyal** stated the construction work for both phases will take **5-years to complete**.
- The new stadium will be the third largest cricket stadium in the world **after the Narendra Modi Stadium in Motera and the Melbourne Cricket Stadium in Australia** that can hold 132,000 and 100,024 spectators respectively.

Union Education Minister launch NIPUN Bharat

- The **Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education** will launch the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (**NIPUN Bharat**).
- It will be launched virtually by Union Minister of Education, **Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'**.
- A short video, anthem and Implementation Guidelines on **NIPUN Bharat** will also be launched during this programme.

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- Senior officers from the School Education Department from all States and UTs, Senior Officials of the Department and Heads of Institutions will also attend the event.

About the Mission:

- The **vision of NIPUN Bharat Mission** is to create an enabling environment **to ensure universal acquisition** of foundational literacy and numeracy, so that every child achieves the desired learning competencies in reading, writing and numeracy by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27.
- NIPUN Bharat will be **implemented by** the Department of School Education and Literacy and a five-tier implementation mechanism will be set up at the **National- State- District- Block- School level** in all States and UTs.

e-Sanjeevani completes seven million consultations

- **Union Health Ministry's National Telemedicine Service – eSanjeevani** has crossed another milestone by completing 7 million (70 lakh) consultations.
- Patients consult with doctors and specialists on a daily basis using this **innovative digital medium** to seek Health services.
- In another significant milestone, in June it **served around 12.5 lakh patients**, which is the highest since the services were launched last year in March.

About the Service:

- In **April last year**, soon after the **first National lockdown**, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched **eSanjeevaniOPD**, owing to the ranging pandemic.
- eSanjeevaniOPD is a **patient-to-doctor** telemedicine platform and provides health services to the public in the confines of their homes.
- Currently, the **National Telemedicine Service** is operational in 31 States/Union Territories.
- **eSanjeevani AB-HWC** – the **doctor-to-doctor telemedicine platform** has been implemented at **around 21,000 Health and Wellness Centres** as spokes and over 1900 hubs, which are located in District Hospitals and Medical Colleges in around 30 States.
- The doctor-to-doctor telemedicine platform has served over 32 lakh patients.
- The **Ministry of Defence** too has hosted a **National OPD on eSanjeevaniOPD**, where over 100 veteran doctors and specialists - roped in by the Ministry of Defence, serve patients across the country.

India joins G20-OECD tax framework deal

- **India joined the G20-OECD** inclusive framework deal that seeks to reform international tax rules and ensure that **multinational enterprises** pay their fair share wherever they operate.
- However, India will have to **roll back the equalization levy** that it imposes on companies such as Google, Amazon and Facebook when the **global tax regime** is implemented.
- India and majority of the members OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting adopted a **high-level statement** containing an outline of a consensus solution to address the tax challenges arising from the digitalization of the economy.

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- India **will continue** to be constructively engaged in reaching a consensus based ready to implement solution with **Pillar one and Pillar two as a package by October** and contribute positively for the advancement of the international tax agenda.

Health Ministry launches 'COVID GuruKool'

- The Health Ministry has launched **COVID GuruKool**, an informational **video series on its social media platforms**.
- It is aimed at **disseminating authentic information on COVID-19 pandemic** and its vaccination program.
- Leading public health experts**, policy makers, doctors, scientists and health professionals will participate in the series and will help in sensitization of people towards Covid appropriate behaviour and bust the myths around the vaccines.

About video series:

- A **web series** is a **series of scripted or non-scripted online videos**, generally in **episodic form**, released on the Internet, which first emerged in the late 1990s and became more prominent in the early 2000s.

DPIIT inaugurates the project on Open Network for Digital Commerce

- Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, Ministry of Commerce and Industry has initiated a project on **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)**.
- The task has been assigned to the **Quality Council of India (QCI)**.

About ONDC:

- ONDC **aims at promoting open networks** developed on open-sourced methodology, using open specifications and open network protocols independent of any specific platform.
- ONDC is **expected to digitize** the entire value chain, standardize operations, promote inclusion of suppliers, derive efficiencies in logistics and enhance value for consumers.
- An **advisory council** has been constituted to advise the Government on measures needed to design and accelerate adoption of ONDC.
- The **members of the Advisory council** include **RS Sharma**, CEO, National Health Authority, **Nandan Nilekani**, non-executive Chairman of Infosys and **Arvind Gupta**, Co-founder and Head, Digital India Foundation.

KVIC project 'BOLD' initiated to boost tribal income

- A unique scientific exercise serving the combined national objectives of reducing desertification and providing livelihood and multi-disciplinary rural industry support has been **initiated by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)**.
- The project named **"Bamboo Oasis on Lands in Drought" (BOLD)** is the first of its kind exercise in India which was **launched** from the tribal village NichlaMandwa in Udaipur, Rajasthan.
- 5000 saplings of special bamboo species – BambusaTulda and BambusaPolymorpha** specially brought from Assam – have been planted over 25 bigha (16 acres approx) of vacant arid Gram Panchayat land.
- KVIC has thus created a world record of planting the highest number of bamboo saplings on a single day at one location.

About the Project:

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- **Project BOLD**, which seeks to create bamboo-based green patches in arid and semi-arid land zones, is aligned with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's call for reducing land degradation and preventing desertification in the country.
- The initiative has been launched as part of KVIC's "**Khadi Bamboo Festival**" to celebrate **75 years** of independence "**Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**".
- KVIC is set to **replicate** the Project at Village Dholera in Ahmedabad district in Gujarat and Leh-Ladakh region by August this year.
- Total **15,000 bamboo saplings** will be planted **before August 21**.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar inaugurates Virtual India Pavilion at 74th Cannes Film Festival

- Information and Broadcasting Minister **Prakash Javadekar** mentioned **India has opened up a facilitation office for international filmmakers** and all approvals are to be given in one go.
- Inaugurating the India Pavilion during the **74th Cannes Film Festival**, the Minister hoped that the world comes out of the pandemic very soon and people come back to theatres once again.
- This is the **second year** when the pavilions are being virtually organized.
- Mr Javadekar stated, the virtual India pavilion can become a meeting place to meet and discuss the future of the world of cinema.
- The Minister further stated that **many of the international films** are being filmed in India with **over 500 sites available**.
- He noted that the government has **taken a number of steps** to attract more international filmmakers to India.
- Mr Javadekar informed that a lot of Hollywood movies have got their **VFX animation done in India** and India's contribution to world films is also increasing.

Common Eligibility Test for job aspirants across country from early 2022

- **Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh** stated that a **Common Eligibility Test, CET** for job aspirants will be conducted across the country **from early 2022**.
- This **unique initiative** is being undertaken with the personal intervention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to screen and **shortlist candidates for recruitment to Central Government jobs**.
- The Minister mentioned, this initiative was scheduled to take off with the **first such test before the end of this year**, but is likely to get delayed due to COVID pandemic.
- In the launch of **e-Book Civil List-2021 of IAS officers**, Dr Jitendra Singh stated, the Common Entrance Test is a path-breaking reform carried out by Department of Personnel & Training to bring about "Ease of Recruitment" for young job aspirants.
- The Minister further informed that the **National Recruitment Agency (NRA)** for conducting CET has been constituted with the approval of the Union Cabinet.
- **NRA** will conduct **CET to screen and shortlist candidates for jobs in Government** sector for which recruitment is presently carried out through the Staff Selection Commission, Railway Recruitment Boards and Institute of Banking Personnel Selection.

Govt creates ministry of cooperation

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- The Modi government announced a new '**Ministry of Cooperation**' for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country.
- This **new ministry** will provide a separate administrative, legal and policy framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country, adding that it will help deepen cooperatives as a "true people-based movement reaching up to the grassroots".
- The ministry will **work to streamline processes for ease of doing business** for cooperatives and enable development of **multi-state cooperatives (MSCS)**.
- In the country, a **cooperative-based economic development model** is very relevant where each member works with a spirit of responsibility.

New Dept of Public Enterprises under Finance Ministry

- The **government** has decided to bring the **Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) under the finance ministry**.
- The move comes a few hours ahead of a **major cabinet reshuffle**.
- The **DPE, which was earlier under the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises**, has been brought under the finance minister to ease coordination related to future disinvestment plans.
- It noted that **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** had mentioned this change in her budget speech.
- A notification was issued by the Central Secretariat, amending the new change.
- The **amendment** will come into force with immediate effect.
- "**Ministry of Finance** (Vitta Mantralaya), **after the sub-heading** (v) Department of Financial Services (Vittiya Sewayen Vibhag), following sub-heading shall be inserted, namely: - (vi) Department of Public Enterprises (Lok Udyam Vibhag)".
- The gazette notification issued stated these rules may be called the Government of India (Allocation of Business) **Three Hundred and Sixty First Amendment Rules, 2021**.

Centre constitute 25-member development council for cement industry

- The government has set up a **25-member development council for the cement industry**, including **Dalmia Bharat Group CMD Puneet Dalmia and UltraTech Cement MD K C Jhanwar**, which will suggest ways to eliminate waste, obtain maximum production, improve quality, reduce costs and promote standardization of products.
- **Other functions of the council** include recommending measures for securing the full utilization of the installed capacity and for improving the working of the industry, particularly of the less efficient units; promoting training of persons; and promoting or undertaking scientific and industrial research.
- It would **also work for standardization of accounting and costing methods and practice**; and promoting the adoption of measures for increasing the productivity of labour, including measures for securing safer and better working conditions.

CBIC unveiled online filing of Authorised Economic Operators T2, T3

- Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) **Chairman Shri M. Ajit Kumar** here inaugurated the **online filing of Authorised Economic Operators (AEO) T2 and T3 applications**.

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- The **AEO web application** is accessible at URL **www.aeoindia.gov.in**.
- The **new version** (V 2.0) of the web application is designed to ensure continuous real-time and digital monitoring of physically filed **AEO T2 and AEO T3** applications for timely intervention and expedience.
- The AEO application processing for AEO T1 on the web-based portal **www.aeoindia.gov.in** has been functional since December 2018.
- To take this Endeavour for digitization forward, in line with the **government's Digital India initiative**, the CBIC Board has launched a new version (V2.0) for on-boarding of AEO T2 and AEO T3 applicants for online filing, real-time monitoring, and digital certification.

KVIC made trademark registrations in Bhutan, UAE, Mexico

- **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)** has recently secured trademark registrations in three countries – **Bhutan, UAE and Mexico** – a big stride towards protecting the identity of brand **"Khadi"** globally.
- **KVIC's trademark** applications are pending **in 40 countries across** the world that include the USA, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Japan, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Brazil and others.
- While **KVIC** obtained the latest trademark registration in Bhutan on 9th July; trademark registration was granted in UAE on 28th June.
- With this, **KVIC has succeeded** in securing trademark registration for the **first time in a Gulf country**.
- Earlier, KVIC got the trademark registration for **"Khadi"** in Mexico in December 2020.
- So far KVIC was having Trademark registrations for the word mark **"KHADI"** in **6 countries** namely Germany, UK, Australia, Russia, China and EU where trademark registrations were granted in certain classes.
- However, with recent **trademark registrations in Bhutan, UAE and Mexico**, the number of such countries has gone up to nine.
- In these countries, KVIC has got registrations in various classes that pertain to Khadi fabric, Khadi readymade garments and village industry products like Khadi soaps, Khadi cosmetics, Khadi incense sticks among others.

Uttar Pradesh: CM Yogi Adityanath unveils new population policy 2021-30

- On the occasion of **World Population Day** Uttar Pradesh government released the **new population policy for 2021-2030**.
- This policy comes after a **draft of the population control bill**.
- As per the new population policy, a target has been set to **bring the birth rate to 2.1 per thousand populations by 2026 and to 1.9 by 2030**.
- The state's present **total fertility rate is 2.7 percent currently**.

Measures under the Program

- Efforts will be made to **increase the accessibility of contraceptive measures** issued under the **Family Planning Programme** and provide a proper system for safe abortion.
- It also **promotes a two-child policy**, violation of which would mean people will be debarred from contesting local body elections, applying for government jobs or receiving any government subsidy.

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- Digital tracking of new-borns, adolescents, and elderly people will also be arranged.

India Aims to Target over 100 Billion “Blue Economy”

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh stated that in the years to come, India aims to target over 100 billion **“Blue Economy”** through its **Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)** and ocean resources.
- The Minister reiterated the importance of exploring the ocean to give further fillip to the growth of country's economy.
- This could be a new avenue to supplement the country's economy to the tune of an estimated **Rs. 110 billion**
- The **“Deep Ocean Mission”** will also have far-reaching benefits for the common man.
- For example, it could help in providing clean drinking water and explore the avenues of desalination of water as well as extracting minerals from the ocean belt.

India's first national dolphin research centre to come up in Patna

- **India's and Asia's first National Dolphin Research Centre (NDRC)** will come up on the **bank of the Ganges in the premises of Patna University**
- Around 1,455 dolphins have been sighted during a survey conducted in 2018-19 in the river Ganga by the teams of experts.
- The Gangetic dolphin is India's national aquatic animal but frequently falls prey to **illegal poaching**.
- The presence of dolphins in the Ganga gives a sign of a healthy ecosystem because dolphins live at least in 5 ft to 8 ft deep water.
- The **Gangetic dolphin has been declared an endangered aquatic animal** and is one of the four freshwater dolphins species in the world as another three species are said to be found in the **Yangtze River, the Indus River in Pakistan and the Amazon River globally**.
- The proposed NDRC in Patna would play a major role in facilitating deep and wide researches on the life cycle of dolphins and their behavioural significances in context with climate change.

Ladakh: 1st UT to achieve 100% first dose coverage

- **Ladakh** has become the **first Union Territory to vaccinate all residents** and the ‘guest population’, consisting of migrant labourers, hotel workers and Nepalese citizens who are earning their livelihood there, with the first dose of Covid-19 jab.
- According to official data, a total of **89,404 people** from all eligible age groups including 18-44 years have been administered the first dose of covid vaccine. The second dose has been administered to 60936 people.
- This was done in less than three months of starting the third phase of vaccination covering the 18-44 age groups. A **total of 6821 Nepalese citizens living in the UT were among those vaccinated**.
- A wide network of functioning primary health centres and health workers experienced in mass vaccination programmes such as against polio helped pace up the vaccination.

IIT Madras joined with Sony India to host national-level hackathon ‘SAMVEDAN 2021’

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- The IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation (IITM-PTF) is collaborating with Sony India Software Centre Pvt. Ltd. to conduct a National hackathon called 'SAMVEDAN 2021 – Sensing Solutions for Bharat' to inspire citizens to solve India-specific problems of societal interest using IoT sensor board.
- Registration has already commenced on July 1, 2021 for this challenge, which is open to all Indian nationals residing in India.
- A team with a maximum of three members can register for the grand challenge.
- The challenge will be held in three stages: quarterfinals, semi-finals and finals.
- A total of 75 ideas will be selected for the quarter-finals, and among them, 25 best ideas will be selected for the semi-finals.
- There will be seven finalists with prizes for every finalist.
- Prizes worth 3 Lakhs will be awarded to the best teams.

Union Minister Amit Shah unveiled centre of excellence at National Forensic Science University

- Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Centre of Excellence for Research and Analysis of Narcotics, Drugs and Psychotropic Substances at National Forensic Science University at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
- He has stated that scientific and technological investigation will help in punishing the accused more easily.
- He mentioned that the Modi Government is dealing firmly against the drug smugglers.
- He noted that the collection of evidence and confession of accused become easier in the modern age with the help of forensic experts through scientific technology.
- Mr. Shah stated that the research based center of excellence at the National Forensic Science University in Gandhinagar will help our youths to become free from the addiction of drugs and narcotics.
- He mentioned that this centre will help in research and analysis of drugs and narcotics seized in the different parts of the country and its routes.

NICL introduces First Ever Insurance Policy for Himalayan Yaks

- In order to launch Insurance Policy for Himalayan Yaks, the National Research Centre on Yak (NRCY) at Dirang in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh has tied up with the National Insurance Company Ltd. (NICL).
- This is the first such instance in the country that an insurance policy for highly valuable Himalayan cattle/yak has been approved.
- The insurance policy provides the yak owners with risks posed by weather calamities, diseases, in-transit mishaps, surgical operations, strikes or riots, and permanent total disability for breeding or stud yaks.
- The policy will be useful for yak communities that belong to Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh.

NTPC install India's largest solar park at Rann of Kutch

- National Thermal Power Corporation, NTPC will set up India's single largest solar park at Rann of Kutch in Khavada, Gujarat.
- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy stated, NTPC will set up a 4750 MegaWatt renewable energy park.

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- As a part of its green energy portfolio augmentation, NTPC Limited, India's largest energy integrated company **aims to build 60 Giga Watt renewable energy capacity by 2032**.
- Recently, NTPC has also commissioned **India's largest Floating Solar of 10 MegaWatt** on the reservoir of Simhadri Thermal Power Plant, Andhra Pradesh.

Jagannath Puri Rath Yatra begins

- **Jagannath Rath Yatra** begins and has a lot of importance in Hinduism.
- This **Rath Yatra** is organized from **the Jagannath Temple in Puri, Orissa**. The festival is celebrated by worshipping **Lord Jagannath (ruler of the world)**, his elder brother **Balbhadra (Balaram)** and sister **Subhadra**.
- Three giant wooden chariots are made of a kind of **Neem tree for the deities for the yatra**.
- This Rath Yatra of Puri is a symbol of harmony, brotherhood and unity.
- According to religious beliefs, Lord Jagannath is taken out on a Rath Yatra and taken to the famous **Gundicha Mata temple**, where the **Lord rests for 7 days**.
- After this, the return journey of Lord Jagannath begins.
- The Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath is celebrated like a festival all over India.

Ashadhi Bij: The Kutchi New Year

The Prime Minister has greeted the people on the special occasion of **Ashadhi Bij, the Kutchi New Year**.

- Ashadhi Bij falls on the second day of **Shukla paksha of Ashada** month of Hindu calendar.
- The festival is associated with **the beginning of rains in the Kutch region of Gujarat**.
- During Ashadhi Bij, the moisture in the **atmosphere is checked to predict which crop would do best in the coming monsoon**.

Addl.Info:

- **Chaitra Shukla Pratipada, Gudi Padwa and Ugadi, Navreh, Sajibu Cheiraoba, Cheti Chand, Bihu, Baisakhi, Losoong** are some of the Traditional New Year celebrated in India.

Cabinet approves continuation of the CSS for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary for further five years till March 2026

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved continuation of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary for further five years from 01.04.2021 to 31.03.2026 at a total cost of Rs.9000 crore, out of which Central share will be **Rs.5357 crore including Rs.50 crore for the Gram Nyayalayas Scheme and their implementation in a Mission Mode through National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms**.
- This proposal will help in construction of **3800 court halls and 4000 residential units** (both new and on-going projects) for judicial officers of District and Subordinate Courts, **1450 lawyer halls, 1450 toilets complexes and 3800 digital computer rooms**. This will help in improving the functioning and performance of the Judiciary in the country and will be a new step towards building better courts for a new India.

Cabinet approves continuation of centrally sponsored scheme National AYUSH Mission

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- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri **Narendra Modi** has approved the continuation of **National AYUSH Mission (NAM)** as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme from 01-04-2021 to 31-03-2026 with financial implication of Rs. 4607.30 crore (Rs 3,000 crore as Central Share and Rs. 1607.30 crore as State Share).
- The Mission was launched on 15-09-2014.
- Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National AYUSH Mission is being implemented by **Ministry of AYUSH**, Government of India With the objectives of providing cost effective AYUSH Services, with a universal access through upgrading AYUSH Hospitals and Dispensaries, co-location of AYUSH facilities at Primary Health Centers (PHCs), Community Health Centers (CHCs) and District Hospitals (DHs), strengthening institutional capacity at the State level through upgrading AYUSH educational institutions, setting up of new upto 50 bedded integrated AYUSH Hospital,
- AYUSH Public Health programmes and operationalization of 12,500 AYUSH Health and Wellness Centres to provide services of a holistic wellness model based on AYUSH principles and practices so as to empower masses for "self-care" to reduce the disease burden, and out of pocket expenditure.
- The Mission is addressing the gaps in health services through supporting the efforts of State/UT Governments for providing AYUSH health services/education in the country, particularly in vulnerable and far-flung areas.
- Under NAM special focus is given for specific needs of such areas and for allocation of higher resources in their Annual Plans.

Union Cabinet approves hike in Dearness Allowance from 17% to 28%

- The **Union Cabinet**, headed by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, approved a **hike in dearness allowance (DA) and dearness relief (DR) for central government employees and pensioners**.
- The decision will come into **effect from July 1, 2021** and is expected to cost the government an additional Rs 34,400 crore.
- Dearness allowance and dearness relief **rates** have been hiked from the existing **17 per cent to 28 per cent**.
- "In view of the unprecedented situation that arose **due to the Covid-19 pandemic**, three additional installments of dearness allowance to central government employees and dearness relief to pensioners, (01.01.2020, 01.07.2020 and 01.01.2021) were frozen".

India has emerged as world leader in Energy Transition

- Addressing the conference of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on "**Atma Nirbhar Bharat - Self Reliance for Renewable Energy Manufacturing**", the Union Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy, Shri RK Singh stated that India had emerged as world leader in the Energy Transition.
- India had pledged in COP-21 in Paris that by 2030;
- **40% of its power generation** capacity will be from non-fossil fuel sources and had already reached at **38.5% and if the capacity under installation is added, it comes to 48.5%**.
- India proposes to continue to be a world leader in the coming years as well and it has set a target of **450 GW of Renewable Energy capacity by 2030**.
- India will also emerge as a leader in **Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia**.

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- India proposes to green industry sectors to replace Grey Hydrogen (drawn from imported natural gas) with Green Hydrogen and for this it will come out with a **Green Hydrogen Purchase Obligation** for different sectors like petroleum and fertilizer.
- Government proposes to come out with Rules and Regulations providing for easier Open Access for those industries which want to become green i.e. which want to rely on green energy for their functioning.

Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) shifted to Finance Ministry; was part of Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises

- The Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, the parent ministry of DPE, will now be called the **Ministry of Heavy Industries**.
- The government has merged the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) with the Finance Ministry to give it better control over key state-owned firms, review their capital expenditure plans and chalk out measures relating to revival as well as closure of CPSEs.
- The finance ministry will now have six departments, with five other departments being **Economic Affairs, Revenue, Expenditure, Investment and Public Asset Management and Financial Services**.
- Key government companies like BPCL, ONGC, IOC, HPCL, Power Grid Corporation, Coal India, among others, will now come under direct control of the Finance Ministry.

Cabinet okays scheme to promote India-owned ships with subsidy support

- Cabinet approves scheme to promote India-owned ships;
- **A subsidy of Rs 1,624 crore** over five years will be given to domestic shipping companies in global tenders floated by Ministries and central PSEs.
- The move has brought in an opportune time to invest in Indian flagged vessels
- The policy was announced in February as part of the **fiscal 2022 Union Budget**.
- As per the scheme, for a new ship, which is less than 10 years old on the date of flagging in India, the subsidy support **will be 15 percent of the lowest** quoted offer by a foreign flagged company in a tender.
- This subsidy for a **10-20-year-old ship will be 10 per cent**.
- After the scheme is launched, **this rate will be reduced by 1 percent every year till it reaches 10 per cent and 5 per cent**, respectively.

Inter-Ministerial Cooperation for Promotion and Facilitation of Marine Resources in the field of Polar biology

- **Department of Biotechnology** SIGNS Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) With **Ministry of Earth Sciences** To Set up **DBT MOES Polar Research Centre**.
- The POLAR region encompassing the Antarctic, Arctic, Southern Ocean and the Himalayas being a unique ecosystem offers a huge amount of interest due to its extreme climate compared to the rest of the world.
- Although researchers across the globe have contributed to different areas of research, the **POLAR region is yet known as an unexplored ecosystem**.

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- The MoU envisages mutual collaboration to explore the possibility of cooperation, convergence and synergy to bring out expertise and services of both the organizations under one roof and work hand-in-hand for addressing relevant questions in the field of polar biology.
- Biotechnological **applications of polar microbes could be the centre point of this collaboration between both the Ministry of Earth Sciences and DBT.**
- In order to strengthen this association and expedite the research in the polar region joint laboratories will be set up at Ministry of Earth Sciences stations.
- This will allow researchers to **carry out the experiments on the site without the need for transporting the samples in the parent laboratories in India** and will generate valuable information and novel products from these unique environments.

Cabinet extends tax rebate scheme for garment companies

- The Union Cabinet approved the extension of the Rebate of State and central taxes and levies (RoSCTL) for garments.
- The scheme will be applicable **until March 2024** and is meant to ensure continuity in government policy so that businesses can work to boost exports.
- The rates have therefore been left unchanged.
- Based on a **conservative 5% export target of \$42 billion** for the current financial year, the government may end up refunding levies of **around Rs.7000 crore in 2021-22**
- It will refund all embedded taxes and make our products globally competitive
- The scheme will go a long way in bringing back positive sentiments and helping the Indian textile value chain attain \$100 billion annual exports in next three years.

PM Modi addressed 6th anniversary of Skill India Mission

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will address the youth of the nation **on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day and 6th anniversary of Skill India Mission.**
- Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship **Dharmendra Pradhan** and Minister of State for **Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar** will also address during the virtual event.
- The **6 years of the Skill India Mission** have been worthwhile and seen a large number of achievements, including expansion of skill development infrastructure and facilities, and inculcation and support of entrepreneurial spirit.
- The efforts of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and other Central Government Department Ministries involved in **skilling saw more than one crore youth joining the Skill India Mission** every year, to meet demand of Skilled Workforce.

About Skill India Mission:

- **Skill India or the National Skills Development Mission** of India is a campaign **launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi** on 15 July 2015 to **train over 40 crore people** in India in **different skills by 2022.**
- It is **managed by** the National Skills Development Corporation of India.

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Government launches Kisan Sarathi digital platform

- Government launched the digital platform **Kisan Sarathi** to facilitate farmers to get the right information at the right time in their desired language.
- The platform **Kisan Sarathi** was jointly launched by **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar** and **Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw** through video conference on the occasion of **93rd ICAR Foundation Day**.
- Speaking on the occasion, Ashwini Vaishnaw stated, farmers can avail personalized advisories on agriculture and allied areas directly from scientists of Krishi Vigyan Kendra through the digital platform.
- He mentioned, this initiative of **Kisan Sarathi** will empower farmers with technological interventions and reach farmers in remote areas.

Bihar had maximum deaths due to lightning strikes since 2019

- As per the report, Since 2019, **Bihar has reported most deaths because of lightning**.
- In between April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 about 401 deaths were reported
- Bihar witnessed **168% increase** in lightning strikes.
- **On July 11, 2021 lightning strikes** killed about 70 people in different parts of India, including **Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan**.
- India's second annual Lightning Report was recently published. According to it, lightning in India has become the biggest cause of death by forces of nature.
- There has been a **34% increase in Lightning strikes** in the country.
- It has increased from 1.38 crore strikes in 2019-2020 to 1.85 crore strikes in 2020-2021. Punjab reported **a 331% rise in thunderbolt strikes**. It is followed by Haryana (164%), Pondicherry (117%), Himachal Pradesh (105%), and West Bengal (100%).
- Bihar is followed by Uttar Pradesh where 238 deaths were reported in the same period.
- UP is followed by Madhya Pradesh with 228, Odisha with 156 deaths and Jharkhand with 132 deaths.
- While, other states reported less than 100 deaths in the same period.

Peace in border areas essential': EAM S. Jaishankar tells Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Dushanbe

- External Affairs Minister (EAM) **S Jaishankar** concluded the one-hour-long bilateral meeting with his **Chinese counterpart Wang Yi** on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Dushanbe, **where he conveyed that that unilateral change of status quo of the border area is not acceptable to India**.
- Jaishankar stated that **both sides agreed on convening an early meeting of the senior military commanders**.
- The meeting took place on the sidelines of a foreign ministerial meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

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- Recalling their last meeting in Moscow in September 2020, Jaishankar stressed the need to follow through on the agreement reached then and complete the disengagement, **resolving the remaining issues along the LAC in eastern Ladakh at the earliest.**

Don't register cases under repealed Section 66A of IT Act related to posting online comments: Centre to states

- The Centre asked the states to direct their police not to register cases under the **repealed Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000** related to posting online comments.
- The Supreme Court in 2015 had struck down the controversial Section 66A of the IT Act that made posting **"offensive" comments online a crime punishable by jail**, after a long campaign by defenders of free speech.
- The Supreme Court in its judgment **on March 24, 2015 in the matter of Shreya Singhal Vs. Union of India had struck down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000.**
- This made Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 null and void with effect from the date of the order and hence no action could be taken under this section.
- The section of the law provides police power to arrest a person for posting "offensive" content online and provides for a three-year jail term.

Union Minister Arjun Munda launches the nationwide campaign 'COVID Teeka Sang Surakshit Van, Dhan aur Uddyam'

- Shri Arjun Munda, Minister of Tribal Affairs**, virtually launched the nationwide campaign **"COVID Teeka Sang Surakshit Van, Dhan aur Uddyam"** to accelerate the pace of COVID vaccination among tribals, in India.
- Minister of State for Steel**, Shri Fagga Singh Kulaste; **Ministers of State for Tribal Affairs** – Shri Bishweswar Tudu and Smt. Renuka Singh too was present virtually during the launch.
- Shri Munda launched the **campaign through video conferencing** link-up with field camps in Mandla in Madhya Pradesh and Bastar in Chhattisgarh. During this, Bastar Collector Shri. Rajat Bansal and Mandla District Collector Smt Harshika Singh gave details about the preparations for vaccination being run in their respective districts.
- Launching the campaign, Shri Munda stated, "We have been able to overcome two challenging waves, gained experience and are determined to stop the third wave.
- We have a role to play in rebuilding a new society, free of COVID infection.

About the campaign:

- The campaign hopes to make our **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras** and villages to be the first in respective states to be declared COVID free and free of all restrictions."
- The **campaign** will be implemented with the help of traditional village headsmen, SHGs, and ground level workers in villages and the **Van Dhan Kendras** will become the focal points.
- Tribal communities should not only remain safe and healthy during the pandemic but should also be able to continue their livelihood activities.

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Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Arjun Munda Launch School Innovation Ambassador Training Program for School Teachers

- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda launched **"School Innovation Ambassador Training Program"** for 50,000 school teachers.
- The innovative and one-of-its-kind training program for school teachers **aims at training 50,000 school teachers in innovation**, entrepreneurship, IPR, design thinking, product development, idea generation, among others.
- The education minister stressed that technology is reshaping the world and students have the potential to not only address domestic but also global challenges.

About the Programme:

- The program launched is a collaborative effort by the Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)**, and the AICTE, which will in turn nurture lakhs of students with innovation capabilities, develop a culture of innovation and lay the foundation of a new and vibrant India.
- "The **initiative** will **benefit a large number of schools for tribal children** across the country by giving wings to the creativity of the children and provide a platform so that they can give something new to the world with their ideas".

Government to set up a world-class 'Indian Institute of Heritage' at Noida

- Government to set up a world-class **'Indian Institute of Heritage' at Noida** to focus on conservation and research in India's rich tangible heritage.
- The government has decided to set up the 'Indian Institute of Heritage' at Noida, Gautama Buddha Nagar.
- This will impact higher education and research in the field related to **rich Indian heritage and its conservation** leading to **Masters and Ph.D courses** in **History of Arts, Conservation, Museology, Archival Studies, Archaeology, Preventive Conservation, Epigraphy and Numismatics, Manuscriptology** etc. as well as conservation training facilities to in-service employees and the students of the Indian Institute of Heritage.
- The Institute is being set up as **Deemed to be University** by integrating Institute of Archaeology (Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology), School of Archival Studies under National Archives of India, New Delhi, the National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property (NRLC), Lucknow, National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology (NMICHM) and Academic Wing of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi.

104 startups from different sectors have currently on boarded on the Startup India Showcase Platform

- 104 startups from different sectors such as **Food-Tech, Green energy, Defence, Ed-Tech, Health-Tech**, etc are currently on board on the platform.
- **Startup India Showcase** is an **online discovery platform** for the most promising startups of the country.
- These innovations span across various cutting-edge sectors such as Fintech, EnterpriseTech, Social Impact, HealthTech, EdTech, among others.
- **Ecosystem stakeholders (Investors/Accelerators, Corporates/PSUs, Start-ups)** have evaluated, nurtured, and supported these start-ups.

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- Each startup has a profile page with detailed pitch about their product, innovation, and USP in forms of Videos and PDF links. This provides unique visibility to them in front of the entire startup ecosystem.
- Each startup profile is linked with Social Media Pages, LinkedIn URLs of founders and a direct Connect button which facilitate networking opportunities between users. This enables platform users to connect better and explore further business opportunities.
- The platform is powered with various tools from a powerful search to an intuitive filter which will enable seamless discovery of startups for stakeholders.
- Startup India Showcase is an all-star repository as the platform contains startups who have already proved their capabilities via different means (winning competitions, selling on GeM etc), they will also be a potential priority choice for government and corporate buyers, facilitating their business growth.

Government launches National Logistics Excellence Awards

- With a view to turn the spotlight on the logistics sector, the Government announced the launch of National Logistics Excellence Awards.
- Awards will give due recognition to various players involved in the logistics supply chain
- Awards will be an opportunity to laud the extraordinary measures taken by Organizations to address the deficiencies exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The framework of awards has been finalised in consultation with the logistics associations and forum user industry partners.
- The awards are in two categories, the first group includes logistics infrastructure/service providers and second one is for various user industries.
- The awards will highlight best practices including consolidation, process standardisation, technological upgrade, digital transformations, and sustainable practices.
- While the Indian logistics sector has been growing at a CAGR (Compound annual growth rate) of 10.5%, reaching approximately USD 215 billion in value in 2020, there are systemic, interconnected problems that must be addressed to enhance its efficiency.
- Comprehensive logistics costs amount to almost 14% of India's GDP.

Indian Panorama calls for entries for 52nd edition of IFFI

- The 52nd International Film Festival of India (IFFI) has announced a call for entries for Indian Panorama, 2021.
- Indian Panorama is a flagship component of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) under which best of contemporary Indian films are selected for the promotion of film art.
- The 52nd edition of IFFI will be held in Goa from 20th to 28th November, 2021.
- The last date to submit applications online is 12th August, 2021, and the last date of the receipt of the hard copy of the online submitted application, along with other requisite documents is 23rd August, 2021.
- A set of guidelines have to be followed while submitting films for the 2021 Indian Panorama.

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- **The date of CBFC or completion of production of the submitted film** should be during the last 12 months preceding the festival, i.e. 1st August, 2020 to 31st July, 2021.
- **Films not certified by CBFC and produced within this period can also be submitted.**
- All films must carry English subtitles.
- The Indian Panorama has ever since been completely devoted to showcasing the best of the Indian films of the year.
- **The aim of the Indian Panorama**, organized by the **Directorate of Film Festivals, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India**, is to **select feature and non-feature films of cinematic, thematic and aesthetic excellence**, for the promotion of film art through the non-profit screening of these films in international film festivals in India and abroad, Indian Film Weeks held under **Bilateral Cultural Exchange Programmes** and **Specialized Indian Film Festivals** outside cultural exchange protocols, and special Indian Panorama festivals in India.

Chief Labour Commissioner of India reviews implementation of Labour Laws and new Labour Codes with Project officials in Srinagar

- **Chief Labour Commissioner of India Shri DPS Negi reviewed the status of sensitization and implementation of labour laws in labour codes in various developmental projects in Srinagar.**
- In separate meetings with State Government and senior project officials from Airports **Authority Of India (AAI)**, **NHPC**, **BRO**, **NHIDCL**, **Power Grid**, **HPCL**, **CPWD**, etc., Shri Negi enquired about the prevailing labour issues at their project sites.
- **Senior officers of state Government and GMs in-charge of the projects briefed the CLC(C)** regarding the compliance with various labour laws.
- Shri Negi expressed satisfaction about the compliance status of labour laws at their projects.
- He **explained** to the officials and contractors **about the importance of implementation of labour laws and new labour codes.**
- He elucidated how compliance with new labour codes is a win-win situation for all - the Government, the employees and the employers.
- He **emphasised and elaborated the keenness of GOI** to ensure the **safety, security and welfare of all sections of workers - in both the organised and unorganised sectors.**
- Shri Negi told the officials present that it is all the more important to implement Labour Codes because the majority are PSUs of GOI and they all must keep in mind the last worker who is standing in line.

Lower stunting among children with mothers who had access to midday meal scheme: Nature Communications Study

- **Lower stunting among children with mothers who had access to free school lunches, shows data from 1993-2016.**
- Girls who had access to the free lunches provided at government schools, had children with a higher height-to-age ratio than those who did not, says a new study on the intergenerational benefits of India's midday meal scheme published in **Nature Communications.**

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- Using nationally representative data on cohorts of mothers and their children spanning 23 years, the paper showed that by 2016, **the prevalence of stunting was significantly lower in areas where the mid scheme was implemented in 2005.**
- **More than one in three Indian children are stunted, or too short for their age, which reflects chronic undernutrition.**
- The fight against stunting has often focussed on boosting nutrition for young children, but nutritionists **have long argued that maternal health and well-being is the key to reduce stunting in their offspring.**
- Noting that “**interventions to improve maternal height and education must be implemented years before those girls and young women become mothers**”, the study has attempted a first-of-its-kind inter-generational analysis of the impacts of a mass feeding programme.
- The paper was authored by a **researcher from the University of Washington and economists and nutrition experts at the International Food Policy Research Institute.**
- It found that the midday meal scheme was associated with **13-32% of India's improvement in height-for-age z-scores (HAZ) between 2006 and 2016.**
- The linkages between midday meals and lower stunting in the next generation were stronger in **lower socio-economic strata and likely work through women's education, fertility, and use of health services**

Successful trial of movement of train between Jaynagar in India and Kurtha in Nepal undertaken on 34.5 km-long rail section

- **On July 18, 2021**, a successful trial of movement of trains was **undertaken between Jaynagar in India and Kurtha in Nepal.**
- The **length of the rail section is 34.50** and this is the first section of the rail line links between the two countries which connects **Kurtha in the Mahottari district of Nepal to Jaynagar in the Madhubani district of Bihar**
- The total cost for this rail section is **619 crores.**
- IRCON has set up the **The Jayanagar – Kurtha Railway** under the **India – Nepal friendship rail project** which was **financed by the Indian government.**

Central Govt extends 'Stand Up India Scheme' up to 2025

- The **Government of India** has extended the duration of '**Stand Up India Scheme**' up to the year 2025, **MoS for Social Justice and Empowerment Sushri Pratima Bhoumik.**
- This scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on April 5, 2016.
- The **objective** of the '**Stand Up India Scheme**' is to facilitate loans from Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) of value between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 1 crore to at least one SC or ST borrower and one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up green field enterprise in manufacturing, service or trading sector.
- Finance Minister in the Budget Speech for Financial Year 2021-22, the margin money requirement for loans under the '**Stand Up India Scheme**' has been reduced from 25 per cent to up to 15 per cent.
- Activities allied to agriculture have been included in the scheme and apart from this, no other change is contemplated.

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About Stand Up India Scheme:

- **Stand-Up India** was launched by the Government of India on 5 April 2016 to support entrepreneurship among women and SC & ST communities.
- It is similar to but distinct from Startup India.
- **Stand-Up India Scheme facilitates bank loans between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 1 Crore** to at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a greenfield enterprise.
- This enterprise may be in manufacturing, services or the trading sector.

IITH develops affordable COVID-19 testing kit: COVIHOME

- The **Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT-D)** launched an affordable rapid antigen test kit to detect Covid-19 priced at Rs.50, which was developed entirely by its **Centre for Biomedical Engineering (CBME)** led by professor Harpal Singh.
- The kit was launched by minister of state for education **Sanjay Dhotre**, who stated the premier institute's efforts have helped the country in becoming more "self-sufficient" in its fight against the deadly virus.
- **IIT-Delhi first disrupted the RT-PCR market** with a **Rs.399 probe-free RT PCR kit**, launched in July 2020.
- Over 8 million high-quality PPE kits were supplied so far, using the technology developed at IIT-Delhi.
- Now, the institute is launching a rapid diagnostic kit, **costing Rs.50, for Covid-19**.

Jurisdiction of Krishna & Godavari River boards notified in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

- **The Ministry of Jal Shakti** through Gazette Notification dated 15.07.2021 has notified the **jurisdiction of Godavari River Management Board and Krishna River Management Board**, which provide the required authority and power to the two Boards in terms of administration, regulation, operation and maintenance of listed projects in **Godavari and Krishna rivers in the two States**.
- This step is expected to ensure judicious utilization of water resources in the two states.
- The **Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act 2014 (APRA)** contains provisions for the effective management of river waters in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- **The Constitution of the Godavari and Krishna River Management Boards** and the constitution of an Apex Council for the supervision of the functioning of these Boards, is laid down in this Act.
- The Central Government in exercise of the powers conferred **under Section 85 of the APRA, 2014**, constituted the two River Management Boards effective from 2nd June, 2014 for the administration, regulation, maintenance and operation of such projects on Godavari and Krishna rivers, as may be notified by the Central Government.
- This decision of the **Union Government** for notifying the jurisdiction of two Boards would go a long way in enabling the River Boards to discharge their responsibilities to the fullest as mandated in the **APRA, 2014** and bring about efficiency in management of water resources in the two States.
- The Centre expects the wholehearted cooperation and assistance of both the State Governments in the smooth functioning of the two Boards, to ensure equitable benefit to the people of both the states.

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Chief Justice of India N.V.Ramana launches 'FASTER' (Fast and Secure Transmission of Electronic Records)

- Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana launched a new scheme called 'FASTER' or 'Fast and Secure Transmission of Electronic Records'.
- Under the scheme, the Supreme Court will instantly transmit bail and other orders to the jail authorities, district courts and the High Courts.
- This will be done in a secure way electronically.
- As per the present practice, hard copy of the bail order received by hand is mandated.
- The Supreme Court announced a plan to set up a system for swift and secure electronic transmission of its rulings to jail authorities so that prisoners who have been granted relief are not left waiting for a certified order copy in order to be released.
- A bench headed by him had taken suo motu cognizance of the delay in the release of 13 prisoners from Agra Central Jail despite the court granting them bail on July 8.
- The bench, also comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao and A S Bopanna, mentioned it is contemplating a system — 'FASTER' — to address the issue.

"Dayzero" Roadmap for Water Scarce Regions

- No specific expert / inter-ministerial committee / research study / policy / plan / strategy for studying, evaluating and preparing a "Day Zero" roadmap/policy for water scarce regions of the country has been conducted.
- The Central Water Commission has also carried out the study "Reassessment of Water Availability in India using Space Inputs" in 2019.
- However, the Dynamic Ground Water Resources of the country are being periodically assessed jointly by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and State Governments.
- Water being a State subject, steps for augmentation, conservation and efficient management of water resources are primarily undertaken by the respective State Governments.
- In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Central Government provides technical and financial assistance to them through various schemes and programmes.
- Central Government has formulated National Water Policy (NWP), 2012 which inter-alia recommends conservation, promotion and protection of water
- It also advocates conservation of river, river bodies and infrastructure to be undertaken in a scientifically planned manner through community participation.
- Central Government has formulated a National Perspective Plan (NPP) for Water Resources Development which envisages transfer of water from water surplus basins to water deficit basins to improve availability of water.
- To promote recharge of ground water, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has formulated guidelines for the States to adopt measures suitable to local conditions.

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- In compliance to the decision taken by the Committee of Secretaries, an 'Inter Ministerial Committee' under the Chairmanship of Secretary (WR, RD & GR) has been constituted to take forward the subject of '**Push on Water Conservation Related Activities for Optimum Utilization of Monsoon Rainfall**'.

Tertiary value addition centres being set up in tribal areas of Jagdalpur and Raigad under TRIFOOD

- **Tertiary value addition centres** being set up in **tribal areas of Jagdalpur and Raigad under TRIFOOD**
- Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED), under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, **has its own E-commerce portal www.tribesindia.com to market tribal products.**
- It is also present on all major e-commerce portals like **Amazon, Snapdeal, Flipkart, Paytm, and Gem.**
- **TRIFOOD Scheme** is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Food Processing Industry, **Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED.**
- Under this scheme, tertiary value addition centres are being set up by TRIFED at Jagdalpur in Chhattisgarh and Raigad in Maharashtra at a cost of approximately Rs.11 crore.

Government sets up Dairy Investment Accelerator to promote or facilitate investments in the Dairy sector

- Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF) offers **financial support to entrepreneurs, private companies, MSME and Farmers Producers Organizations (FPOs)**
- The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD), Government of India, with a view to provide dedicated focus towards promoting & facilitating investments in the Indian Dairy sector, has setup Dairy Investment Accelerator under its Investment Facilitation Cell.
- **This Investment Accelerator is a cross functional team** constituted to serve as the interface with investors.
- It shall provide support across the investment cycle:
- Offering specific inputs for evaluation of investment opportunities
- Addressing queries about application to govt. schemes
- Connecting with strategic partners
- Providing on-ground assistance with state departments & relevant authorities
- Further, **the Dairy Investment Accelerator will work with DAHD** to organize a series of events with global & local industry participants and one-on-one discussions with the investors to understand their perspectives.
- Dairy Investment Accelerator is also generating awareness among investors about **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development fund (AHIDF).**
- AHIDF is one of the flagship schemes by DAHD, Government of India whereby **Rs. 15,000 crore fund has been setup for offering financial support**
- Eligible entities can avail the benefits of the scheme to set up new units or expand existing units in areas of dairy processing & related value addition infrastructure, meat processing & related value addition infrastructure and Animal Feed Plant.
- The benefits available are:
- 3% interest subvention on loans

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- 2-year moratorium with 6-year repayment period
- INR 750 Cr credit guarantee
- The DAHD encourages all the private companies, individual entrepreneurs, and start-ups, who are interested in investing in Dairy sector, to reach out to the Dairy Investment Accelerator on dairy-accelerator@ismgr.nic.in.

Under PM's Mentorship Scheme for Young Writers the MyGov platform hosts Online Competition

- **MyGov platform** is hosting the **Online Competition** under **PM's Mentorship Scheme for Young Writers**, seeking participation of young and aspiring Indian writers from across the globe.
- The online competition was launched on 4th June and it is **open till 31st of this month**.
- The Electronics and IT Ministry stated, **the initiative** is getting enthusiastic response from Indian Youth and nearly five thousand book proposals have already been received.
- The winners will be announced on 15 August this year.
- The **Ministry said, 75 authors** will be selected through the All India Contest being conducted through nbtindia.gov.in and MyGov.in.

About PM's Mentorship Scheme:

- The **PM's Mentorship Scheme for Young Writers** is garnering a lot of interest among the youth of the nation.
- To be part of this scheme, **many aspiring and budding writers** have come forward to submit their entries and benefit from this unique initiative of the government.
- **Under the dynamic leadership of Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi**, the National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes on empowering **young minds & creating a learning ecosystem** that can nurture young learners for future leadership roles.
- To foster this goal, and **commemorate India's 75 years of Independence**, a **national scheme YUVA: Prime Minister's Scheme for Mentoring Young Authors** will go a long way in cementing the foundation of these leaders of tomorrow.

NESTS has collaborated with NCERT for NISHTHA Capacity Building Programme for EMRS Principals & Teachers

- **National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS)** (an autonomous body under this Ministry) has collaborated with **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** for conduct of "**National Initiative of School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement**" (**NISHTHA**) **Capacity Building Program for EMRS teachers and Principals**.
- The first batch of **NISHTHA Capacity Building program for Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) Principals and Teachers** was conducted from 10th May, 2021 to 23rd June, 2021 (utilizing Summer Vacation).
- The training was conducted in a virtual mode following a blended approach, including live interactive sessions from the National Resource Group **members of NCERT Faculty and at the same time NISHTHA Portal was used for training package upload, activities and quizzes**.
- The integrated teacher training was provided on 18 modules that were part of comprehensive training package covering different aspects of education such as **Learning Outcomes, School Based Assessments, POCSO Act,**

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Gender Sensitization, Health and Well-Being in Schools, Teaching of Mathematics, Language, Science, and Social Science etc.

- The training methodology included sharing of 5 training modules every week with the participants through NISHTHA Portal followed by online interaction with participants.
- The program had training modules in text form, activities, quizzes, portfolio activity, etc. Pre and post training survey was administered to ascertain the impact of the training program.

Khelo India' centres are being opened for nurturing of athletes at grassroots level and to strengthen sports ecosystem in the country

- As a part of Government's vision to strengthen the sports ecosystem in the country at the **grassroots level, a low-cost, effective sports training mechanism** has been developed wherein past **"Champion Athletes"** would become coaches and mentors so that their expertise and experience would be properly utilised for nurturing of athletes at grassroots level and to ensure a sustained source of income for them.
- The grant to each **Khelo India Centre (KIC)** will be provided for remuneration of the past champion athlete as a coach, support staff, purchase of equipment, sports kit, consumables, participation in competition and events.
- **In 267 districts of 26 States/UTs, 360 KICs have been opened.**
- Selection of talent pools is yet to be finalised by the centres.
- **Each KIC is provided with a non-recurring grant of ₹ 5.00 lakhs** initially for upgradation of existing facility, field of play, sports equipment and consumables, etc.
- In addition, **₹ 5.00 lakhs per year is given as recurring grant each year for the next 04 years to meet the recurring expenditure such as procurement of sports equipment, consumable sports kit, etc. and remuneration of past champion athletes engaged as coach/mentor.**

NSE Foundation inaugurates project CAVACH in 5 Districts

- **NSE Foundation, a subsidiary of the National Stock Exchange (NSE), in partnership with the NITI Aayog and UNICEF** has launched a programme to spread awareness on COVID-19 vaccination in India.
- The programme will unite the efforts of **grassroot-level partners and the local district administration** to facilitate increased vaccination in remote districts of India which include Nandurbar and Osmanabad in Maharashtra, Karauli in Rajasthan, Ramanathapuram in Tamil Nadu and Kiphire in Nagaland.

About the Project

- **The project – CAVACH (COVID-19 and Vaccination Assistance Campaign for Health) – unites more than 30 community-based organizations on a single platform to address issues of vaccine hesitancy and resistance across five aspirational districts to improve COVID-19 immunization numbers.**
- Vinod K Paul, Member of NITI Aayog, Chair of the Empowered Group on Medical Infrastructure and Covid Management Plan, National Task Force on Covid-19 (ICMR), and the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19, launched Project CAVACH in the presence of district collectors and NSE officials.

Union Cabinet approves Production-linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Specialty Steel

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- Union Cabinet approved the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** for **specialty steel**.
- The duration of the scheme will be five years, **from 2023-24 to 2027-28**.
- With a budgetary outlay of **₹6322 crores**, the scheme is expected to bring in investment of **approximately ₹40,000 crores** and capacity addition of **25 MT for specialty steel**.
- The scheme will give employment to **about 5, 25,000 people of which 68,000** will be direct employment.
- Specialty steel has been chosen as the target segment because out of the production of **102 million tonnes steel in India in 2020-21, only 18 million tonnes value added steel/specialty steel was produced in the country**
- Apart from this out of **6.7 million tonnes of imports in the same year, approx.**
- **4 million tonnes import** was of specialty steel alone resulting in **FOREX outgo of Approx. Rs. 30,000 crores**.
- By becoming Aatmanirbhar in producing specialty steel, India will move up the steel value chain and come at par with advanced steel making countries like Korea and Japan.
- It is expected that the specialty steel production **will become 42 million tonnes by the end of 2026-27**.
- This will ensure that **approximately 2.5 lakh crores worth of specialty steel will be produced and consumed** in the country which would otherwise have been imported.
- Similarly, **the export of specialty steel will become around 5.5 million tonnes as against the current 1.7 million tonnes** of specialty steel getting **FOREX of Rs 33,000 crore**.
- The benefit of this scheme will accrue to both big players' i.e. integrated steel plants and to the smaller players (secondary steel players)
- Specialty steel is value added steel wherein normal finished steel is worked upon by way of coating, plating, heat treatment, etc to convert it into high value added steel **which can be used in various strategic applications like Defence, Space, Power, apart from automobile sector, specialized capital goods etc.**

The five categories of specialty steel which have been chosen in the PLI Scheme are:

- A. Coated/Plated Steel Products
 - B. High Strength/Wear resistant Steel
 - C. Specialty Rails
 - D. Alloy Steel Products and Steel wires
 - E. Electrical Steel
- Out of these product categories, it is expected that after completion of the Scheme India will start manufacturing products like API grade pipes, Head Hardened Rails, electrical steel (needed in transformers and electrical appliances) which are currently manufactured in very limited quantity or not manufactured at all.
 - There are 3 slabs of PLI incentives, **the lowest being 4 % and highest being 12%** which has been provided for electrical steel (CRGO).
 - The PLI Scheme for specialty Scheme will ensure that the basic steel used is 'melted and poured 'within the country which means that raw material (finished steel) used for making specialty steel will be made in India only, thereby **ensuring that Scheme promotes end to end manufacturing within the country.**

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Cabinet approves establishment of an Integrated Multi-purpose Corporation for the Union Territory of Ladakh

- The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of an **Integrated Multi-purpose Infrastructure Development Corporation** for the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- The Cabinet also approved the creation of one post of Managing Director, for the corporation in the pay scale of **Rs. 1, 44,200-Rs.2,18,200 level**.
- It is a **new establishment**.
- Presently, there is no such similar organization within the newly formed UT of Ladakh.
- The approval has an inherent potential for employment generation as the corporation will be undertaking various kinds of developmental activities.
- **Corporation will work for industry, tourism, transport and marketing of local products and handicraft.**
- **Corporation will also work as main construction agency for infrastructure development in Ladakh.**
- The establishment of corporation will result in inclusive and integrated development of the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- This will, in turn, **ensure socio-economic development of the entire region and population of the Union Territory.**
- The impact of development will be multi-dimensional.
- It will help in further development of human resources and better utilization thereof.
- **It increases domestic production of goods and services** and will facilitate their smooth supply.
- Thus, the approval will help in **realizing the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat**.

Government receives 27 proposals from private entities for undertaking various space activities in India

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said that 27 proposals from private entities were received so far for undertaking various space activities in India.
- He said, the types of **proposals include building and launching of Launch vehicles, building, owning and operating Satellites, providing Satellites based services, establishing Ground segments, Research Partnerships and providing Mission services.**
- The **global space economy is poised to grow over a trillion USD in the next two decades.**
- With the space sector reforms, Indian Private Space Industry is slated to contribute to the core elements of global space economy **space-based services, launch services, manufacturing of launch vehicles and satellites, establishment of ground segment and launch infrastructure to a considerable extent.**
- Participation of private sector including academic institutions, start-ups and industries in end-to-end space activities is expected to expand the national space economy, generate more employment opportunities and create better manufacturing facilities.

Government achieves its atomic energy generation target set for the current year

- Government has achieved its atomic energy generation target set for the current year.
- The target set for the current year 2021-22 is **41821 Million Units**.

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- The target for the period **April to June 2021** was **10164 Million units** against which, the actual generation was **11256 Million Units**.
- The targets for nuclear power generation are set on an annual basis, as a part of **Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL)**'s annual Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).
- The **targets for future will be set on an annual basis** prior to the commencement of the financial year.

National Farmers Welfare Program Implementation Committee office inaugurated by Union Agriculture Minister

- Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar **inaugurated the office of National Farmers Welfare Program Implementation Committee**.
- The National Farmers Welfare Program Implementation Committee would act as a **project monitoring unit for the implementation of PM-Kisan Yojana, Kisan Maandhan Yojana, Agriculture Infrastructure Fund and other schemes of the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- The Central Government has implemented **the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme to make farmers self-reliant** and to provide direct income support for agricultural expenditure.
- Under this scheme, **an amount of Rs 1.37 lakh crore has been transferred to the accounts of more than 11 crore farmer families** so far.
- The Minister said that **the Central Government along with the experts, IT companies of the country is working with new technology to make the farmers self-reliant**.
- Various technological solutions are being developed through Aadhar integration with UIDAI, **launch of mobile app and integration with CSCs, KCC, and integration with land records database maintained by States/UTs**.

Union Agriculture Minister lays foundation stone of Plant Authority Building

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar laid the foundation stone of the Plant Authority building at Pusa, New Delhi.
- On this occasion, Shri Tomar said that **the rights of farmers are being protected through Plant Authority**.
- With this, **the farmers can get rights over their traditional varieties and the seeds of any other variety produced by them**.
- It also ensures that **the farmers are not exploited by infringement of intellectual property rights**.
- **The National Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy-2016** has been implemented through **better infrastructure and modifications** to encourage innovations.
- **Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPVFRA)** is affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- In this IPR, **the certificate is awarded only after crops are grown and verification the claim made by the farmer**.
- **Under the new IPR policy, the IPR authorities are being strengthened by the government by providing necessary manpower and infrastructure**.
- Union Agriculture Minister Shri Tomar stated that one floor will be allocated for the establishment of the courts of the Authority and two floors will be allocated for registry work along with other support systems.

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- He said that it will make it easier for the visiting farmers and consumers.
- It is expected that work on the new office building will start from next year.

Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Padhati (BPKP)

- Government is implementing **Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Padhati (BPKP)** as a sub scheme of **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)** since 2020-21 for the promotion of traditional indigenous practices.
- The scheme mainly **emphasizes on exclusion of all synthetic chemical inputs and promotes on-farm biomass recycling with major stress on biomass mulching; use of cow dung-urine formulations; plant-based preparations and time to time working of soil for aeration.**
- Under BPKP, financial assistance of Rs 12200/ha for 3 years is provided for cluster formation, capacity building and continuous handholding by trained personnel, certification and residue analysis.
- As of now, an area of 4.9 lakh ha is covered in 8 states and Rs. 4980.99 lakh has been released. Telangana has not taken up natural farming so far under BPKP programme.

GOI Promoting Organic Farming under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

- **The Government of India** has been implementing a dedicated **scheme of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)** since 2015-16 to promote chemical free organic farming in the country in cluster mode.
- Under the programme, **financial assistance of Rs 50000/ha/3 years** is provided for cluster formation, capacity building, incentive for inputs, value addition and marketing.
- **Out of it, Rs 31000/ ha / 3 years** is provided for preparation / procurement of organic inputs such as bio/organic fertilizers, bio pesticides, seeds etc.
- **Through DBT and Rs 8800/ ha/ 3 years** is provided for value addition and marketing that includes post harvest management practices like storage.
- A **total fund of Rs 1197.64 cr** has been released to states and UTs for the last four years under the programme.
- **Financial assistance of Rs 3000 /hectare** for 3 years is provided for Cluster formation (of 20 ha) and Capacity building including exposure visits, and training of field functionaries.

About the scheme:

- The **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)**, launched in 2015, is an extended component of **Soil Health Management (SHM)** under the **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)**, **National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**.

Govt Setting up of Mobile Labs for Soil Testing

- **Government** has been implementing the **Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme** since 2015 to provide soil test based fertilizer use recommendations periodically to the farmers in the country.
- **Soil health card** provides **nutrient status of the soil** along with prescription about balanced and integrated use of inorganic and organic fertilizers to maintain good health that results in increase in production.

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- **SHC based fertilizer use advisories** are issued to farmers from time to time.
- Demonstrations about balanced use of fertilizers **based on soil health card** recommendations and training to the farmers on proper and integrated use of fertilizers are integral part of the scheme.
- State/ district **agriculture machinery and panchayats**, **village level rural development workers** like KrishiSakhis, PasuSakhis are involved in educating farmers on right use of fertilizers.
- **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** also imparts training, organizes front line demonstrations to educate farmers on this aspect.
- Since 2015, based on demand from states, 107 mobile labs have been set up under Soil Health Management programme.
- In all, 11531 labs have been set up including 491 static labs, 107 mobile labs, 8811 mini labs and 2122 village level labs.

NITI Aayog and IEA jointly launch 'Renewables Integration in India 2021'

- “**Renewables Integration in India 2021**” report was jointly launched by Dr. Rakesh Sarwal, Additional Secretary, NITI Aayog & Mr. Keisuke Sadamori, Director of Energy Markets and Security, IEA on 22nd July, 2021.
- The report is based on the outcome of three state workshops held with the Governments of **Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat** to understand the specific energy transition challenges faced by these renewable-rich states.
- The report uses IEA modelling results to show the effects of different flexibility options on the power system.
- **About the report:**
- The report highlights that India's power system can efficiently integrate renewable energy (175 GW by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030), but it would require identification of resources and proper planning, regulatory, policy and institutional support, energy storage and advance technology initiatives.
- Indian states need to employ a wide range of flexibility options – such as demand response, more flexible operation of coal based power plants, storage, and grid improvements – to transition to cleaner electricity systems.
- Larger shares of renewable energy can be better managed by shifting time of use in agriculture.
- **Time of Use (ToU) tariffs** will be an effective tool to incentivize demand side management and encourage flexible consumption.

'Azad Ki Shaurya Gatha' exhibition on the martyr of freedom struggle Chandrashekhar Azad inaugurated at IGNCA

- Union Minister of State for Culture and Parliamentary Affairs, **Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal** inaugurated the exhibition “**Azad Ki Shaurya Gatha**” focused on the life of immortal martyr ‘**Chandrasekhar Azad**’ as part of “Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav” at Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi.
- **Books and documentaries** were also released on the second day of the three-day ‘**Kalakosh Pratishtha Diwas**’ celebrations being celebrated by IGNCA.

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- The Minister of State for Culture stated that “It is through the festival of **“Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav”** that the **young generation of the country will know how many people were martyred during the freedom struggle**.
- A large number of persons from weaker sections also lost their lives in the freedom struggle which was never written in history.
- It was the Prime Minister who has given the name 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' to **celebrate 75 years of our country's freedom**.
- The Prime Minister has asked all the Ministries/Departments to make their own programs on the occasion of 75th year of Independence across the country.”

Ministry of Culture in partnership with International Buddhist Confederation celebrates Asadha Poomima Dhamma Chakra Day 2021

- India celebrated its **Buddhist heritage** with President Shri Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi extending greetings of **Asadha Poomima** and **Guru Poomima** to Indians and the **global Buddhist community**.
- The day marks the establishment of the **Sangha, on a full-moon day of the month of Asadha**, in the Indian Sun calendar at the **‘Deer Park’, Rṣipatana** in the current day Sarnath, near Varanasi, India.
- This is popularly also known as the day of the First Turning of **Wheels of Dharma** and is the second most important-sacred day of observance for Buddhists, after Vesak Buddha Poomima.

About the day:

- **Ashadha Poomima-Dhamma Chakra Day** celebrations **organized by the Ministry of Culture** with its grantee body International Buddhist Confederation, President Shri Ram Nath Kovind stated “Buddhism goes much beyond the **nearly 550 million** formally ordained followers of the faith.
- People belonging to other faiths & even sceptics & atheists feel attracted to the teachings of Buddha”.
- He further stressed that the application of **Buddhist values and principles** in addressing issues of global concern will help in healing the world and making it a better place.

ICMR 4th national serosurvey : 67.6% population above 6 yrs found to have Covid antibodies

- According to the **Findings of the Indian Council of Medical Research's (ICMR) fourth national serosurvey**, **67.6 percent** Of India's population above the age of six, have developed antibodies against Covid-19 done between June 14 and July 6, announced by the Lok Sabha.
- In addition to that 85.2 percent of the surveyed healthcare workers had antibodies against COVID-19.

About the Survey :

- The fourth round of the survey **covered 36,227 individuals to estimate seroprevalence among children aged 6-17 years, adults and healthcare workers**.
- Metropolitan cities such as **Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad** have reported seroprevalence **-ranging between 17.6 percent and 56 percent at different time points**.

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Govt proposes to establish National Research Foundation to strengthen research ecosystem

- On July 26, 2021, Education Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan** stated that the Government proposes to **set up a National Research Foundation NRF** to **strengthen the research ecosystem** in the country.
- The total proposed outlay of National Research Foundation is **Rs 50,000 crore** over a period of **five years**.

Ayurvedic products helped to improve the immunity of people during the Corona pandemic

- The Ministry of AYUSH has developed and launched the **AYUSH Sanjivani mobile application** to generate data on the acceptance and usage of Ayush advocacies and measures among the population and its impact in the prevention of COVID-19.
- A cross-sectional analysis of the responses received from approximately **1.47 crore respondents** through this App, highlighted **that 85.1% of the respondents** reported use of AYUSH measures for prevention of COVID-19, among which **89.8% respondents** agreed **to have been benefited from the practice of AYUSH advisory**.
- 79.1% of the users** responded that the AYUSH measures gave an **overall feeling of good health**.
- 63.4%** reported improvement in parameters of **well being like sleep, appetite, bowel habits, stamina and mental well being**.
- The Ministry of AYUSH has prepared a draft scheme namely **“Pradhan Mantri VRIKSHA AYUSH Yojna”** for promotion of Herbal Cultivation to increase the production of medicinal herbs used in Ayurvedic drugs in near future, which is yet to be approved.

Government taken initiative to identify effective medicines under Ayush systems to cure patients with symptoms of COVID-19

- The Ministry of AYUSH has formed an Interdisciplinary **AYUSH R&D Task Force** having representation from **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and AYUSH Institutions**.
- The Inter-disciplinary AYUSH R&D Task Force has formulated and designed clinical **research protocols for prophylactic studies and add-on interventions in COVID-19** positive cases through thorough review and consultative process of high repute experts from different organizations across the country for studying four different interventions viz. **Ashwagandha, Yashtimadhu, Guduchi + Pippali and a poly herbal formulation (AYUSH-64)**.
- Under various research organizations and National Research Institutes **126 studies are going on in 152 centers in the country to identify effective medicine to cure patients** with symptoms of COVID-19.
- The Government of India has released **“National Clinical Management Protocol based on Ayurveda and Yoga for management of COVID-19”** prepared by National Task Force in consensus from various expert committees.
- Apart from this various guidelines and advisories have been issued for management of Covid-19 by **Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy Practitioners respectively**.
- Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) has undertaken four collaborative research studies in COVID-19 in which the Ayurvedic formulations have been administered as add on to conventional standard care.

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- Further four collaborative studies have Ayurvedic formulations as standalone treatment out of which two studies have conventional standard care as control arm and remaining two studies are standalone Ayurveda intervention.

Dr. Virendra Kumar Inaugurates 5th North-East India Traditional Fashion Week

- Dr. Virendra Kumar virtually inaugurated the “5th North-East India Traditional Fashion Week (NEIFW) 2021”.
- The event aims to enrich the ‘Make in India’ Movement by mainstreaming divyangjan along with promoting the indigenous culture and art-forms of North-East India.
- NIEPVD(National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities), Dehradun is organizing the NEIFW 2021 with the objective to cater to the divyang populace and stakeholders from the NorthEast to promote the arts and artisans of North-East India.
- It aims to empower and uplift the Divyangjan from the various tribes and ethnic groups of North-East and to encourage the textile and craft industry to take an inclusionary approach.
- The NEIFW has focused on- **Skilling and Entrepreneurship Building; Artisan Training Workshop; Exhibition of Divyang Artisans; Traditional Dress Show and Traditional Cultural Festival;** that will not just create awareness about the skills and abilities of divyangjan but also help promote their employment avenues.
- Divyangjans, families of Divyangjan, NGOs, DPOs, Parent Organizations, Special Schools, Special Vocational Centers and Cooperatives etc. from all the 08 North-Eastern States are participating in this historic event that will pave the way forward for re-engineering the concept of skilling, employment and entrepreneurship of divyangjan across the country.

As part of ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’ 33/11kV 10 MVA Substation inaugurated in Bandipora, J&K

- A 33/11kV 10 MVA Substation commissioned under the IPDS scheme of the Government of India was inaugurated in Nusso, Bandipora, J & K.
- Power Finance Corporation is the Nodal Agency for (IPDS) Integrated Power Development Scheme scheme.
- The inauguration ceremony is a part of ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’ celebrations marking 75 years of India’s independence.
- The substation which was sanctioned with a cost of Rs 3.85 crore will benefit more than 2400 households in areas of Nishat Bandipora, Baghi Bandipora, Nusso, Lankreshara, Papchan and the surrounding areas.
- Additionally, the substation will reduce the curtailment of power supply in the region.
- The substation will also ensure that the ajar station gets relieved by 450 Amps of electricity.

The Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated and laid foundation stones of several projects in Shillong

- The Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated the Inter-State Bus Terminal at Maviyang.
- The aim of this Inter-state bus terminal is to give highest priority for the connectivity of the North East.
- Government aims to link the capitals of all the states of the Northeast by rail, road and airways before 2023-24.
- The Inter-State Bus Terminal is being built here with the help of Government of India and Government of Meghalaya at a cost of Rs 50 crore.
- This bus terminal will not only increase connectivity with other states but will also boost economic activities.

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- Shri Amit Shah also inaugurated a cryogenic oxygen plant and paediatric ward at Umsavali.
- **Note:**
- To bring north –East region to the mainstream area, the government is moving ahead by giving priority to three things-
- First: To preserve and promote its dialects, languages, dance, music, food, culture and create awareness about it all across India,
- Second: To make it a peaceful region by resolving all disputes of the Northeast, &
- Third: Efforts to make the Northeast a developed region and bring its GDP contribution back to the pre-Independence level

Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah, laid the foundation stone for the Multipurpose Convention Centre and Exhibition Facility of the North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC) in Shillong

- **NESAC's role** will be of **utmost importance** in making the Northeast drugs free and terrorism free and developed.
- Government's plans will get scientific basis through **NESAC Society** and on this foundation a **developed North-East** will be made by the minister.
- With the coordination of MHA and NESAC, a single window system will be made so that the states can **get real time information about flood management**.
- There will be coordination to **reduce disaster risk to zero**.
- There will be coordination between **disaster management** and NESAC which can provide warnings of lightning about **36 hours in advance**.

Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched the web based portal pmcaresforchildren.in

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched the web based portal **pmcaresforchildren.in** to facilitate submission of applications, identification of children eligible to receive support under the '**PM CARES for Children**' **scheme** and processing of applications for securing benefits to them.
- '**PM CARES for Children**' **scheme was announced** by the Union Government for supporting children who **have lost both parents** or surviving parents or legal guardian or adoptive parents due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- **The scheme aims to ensure comprehensive care and protection of children** who have lost their parents to COVID pandemic, in a sustained manner.
- It enables their wellbeing **through health insurance**, empower them through education and equip them for self-sufficient existence with financial support of Rs. 10 lakh, on reaching 23 years of age.

Union Power Minister and Minister of State for Power release a report on Key Regulatory Parameters of Power Utilities as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

- As part of the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Indian Independence, the Hon'ble Ministers also released a report on **Key Regulatory Parameters of Power Utilities**.

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- The report captures key regulatory information of DISCOMs apart from state-owned transmission and generation utilities.
- It will facilitate meaningful comparison of their performance and bring forth actionable insights for relevant power sector stakeholders, including policy makers and regulators.
- Benchmarking and **comparative assessment of the key regulatory parameters will also provide a comprehensive overview of how the power utilities are faring** and the corrective measures required to be undertaken.
- The **Report on Key Regulatory Parameters of Power Utilities released by REC is a unique initiative to provide a comprehensive collection of performance parameters for power utilities and insights for better decision-making.**

About REC Limited:

- REC Limited is a **Navratna NBFC** focusing on Power Sector Financing and Development across India. Established in 1969, REC Limited has completed over fifty years in the area of its operations.
- It provides **financial assistance to state electricity boards, state governments, central/state power utilities, independent power producers, rural electric cooperatives and private sector utilities.**
- Its business activities involve financing projects in the complete power sector value chain; different types of projects include Generation, Transmission, Distribution Projects, and Renewable Energy projects.
- REC's funding illuminates every fourth bulb in India.

Kandla becomes first Green SEZ

- KASEZ (Kandla SEZ) is **the First Green SEZ to achieve the IGBC (Indian Green Building Council) Green Cities Platinum Rating for Existing Cities.**
- The efforts of the KASEZ team were applauded, especially noting the fact that this was **accomplished in the Bhuj region** where water conservation and afforestation are critical interventions.
- This was a major achievement and is part of activities envisaged under **the commitment of the Government to the Green SEZs Mission as part of celebrations marking India@75 - Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav.**
- It may be noted that the Government of India is working towards ensuring environmentally sustainable development through a series of measures and efforts that encompass many Ministries.
- IGBC Platinum rating has been awarded for **'Green master planning, policy initiatives and implementation of green infrastructure'** by CII's Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).
- The recognition is set to pave the way for all the other SEZs in the country to emulate the green initiative and efforts of Kandla SEZ.

Direct Benefit Transfer in Farm Mechanization

- The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization' (SMAM)** with effect from 2014-15.
- The scheme is implemented by the respective State Governments and some of the major States like Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Haryana have their own online portals for implementing the scheme.

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- The Department has also developed a Farm Machinery Direct Benefit Transfer (FMDBT) portal for implementation of SMAM and the State Governments of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Uttarakhand have on-boarded for implementation of SMAM through this portal.
- Farmers can register on this portal through online registration in simple easy steps with Aadhaar Number, mobile number and name as per Aadhar Card.
- The illustrative user manual describing the step by step process of registration of the farmers is also available on the portal.
- Since inception of the SMAM, central grants amounting to Rs. 4865 crores have been released to different States during the period from 2014-15 to 2021-22 and through which more than 1323000 machines have been distributed to farmers and more than 15400 Custom Hiring Centres, 360 Hi-tech hubs and 14200 Farm Machinery Banks have been established to make machines and equipments available to farmers on rental basis.

NITI AAYOG -TRIFED join hands for successful implementation of Van DhanYojana in Tribal Clusters of Aspirational Districts of India

- Keeping in line with the Prime Minister's call for "Atmanirbhar Bharat" aligned to the slogan of "Be Vocal for Local Buy Tribal", towards realizing the goal of "SabkaSaath, SabkaVikas", TRIFED is collaborating with NITI Aayog to implement the Van DhanYojana in the districts that have been identified as aspirational districts by NITI Aayog.
- The collaboration and partnership with NITI Aayog along with the support of the collectors and other district officials is aimed at a complete transformation of the tribal ecosystem across the country.
- The Van Dhan tribal start-ups and the Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) Through Minimum Support Price (MSP) & Development of Value Chain for MFP' Scheme that provides MSP to gatherers of forest produces and introduce value addition and marketing through tribal groups and clusters are among the many initiatives of TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs that have proved helpful by generating employment and income for the tribal population.
- These initiatives, spearheaded by TRIFED, exemplify MFP-led Tribal Development in Mission Mode.
- Tribals have been made legal owners of MFP in their areas.
- Minimum Support Price (MSP) has been announced for several MFPs.
- Under the program the processing and value-addition to MFP will be done in a well-equipped common facility centre which is to be called Van DhanVikas Kendra.
- As per TRIFED, 37,904 Van DhanVikasKendras (VDVKs), subsumed into 2275 Van DhanVikas Kendra Clusters (VDVKCs) of 300 forest dwellers each, have been sanctioned by TRIFED as of date.
- A typical Van DhanVikas Kendra includes 20 tribal members.
- 15 such Van DhanVikasKendras form 1 Van DhanVikas Kendra cluster.

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- The Van DhanVikas Kendra Clusters will provide the Van DhanVikasKendras economies of scale, livelihood and market-linkages, as well as entrepreneurship opportunities to nearly 6.77 lakh Tribal forest gatherers in 27 states and 2 UTs.
- 50 lakh tribals have been impacted by the Van Dhan start-ups programme up until now.
- This plan has proved to be a boon during the pandemic times with dwindling livelihoods for the marginalised

National web portal for sharing R&D facilities I-STEM Phase II project launched

- The Indian Science Technology and Engineering Facilities Map (I-STEM), the national web portal for sharing R&D facilities was formally launched in January 2020 by the Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- The I-STEM project has been accorded extension for five years, until 2026 and enters its second phase with added features.
- The goal of I-STEM is to strengthen the R&D ecosystem of the country by connecting researchers with resources, in part by promoting technologies and scientific equipment development indigenously, and providing necessary supplies and supports to researchers by enabling them an access to existing publicly funded R&D facilities in the country through the I-STEM web portal.
- In the first phase, the portal is listed with more than 20,000 pieces of equipment from 1050 institutions across the country and has more than 20,000 Indian researchers.
- I-STEM portal facilitates researchers to access slots for the use of equipment, as well as to share the details of the outcomes, such as, patents, publications and technologies.

About phase II:

- Under Phase II, the portals will host indigenous technology products listed through a digital catalogue.
- The portal will also provide a platform for the various City Knowledge and Innovation Clusters (<https://www.psa.gov.in/st-clusters>) supported by the Office of PSA to enhance effective use of R&D infrastructure through leveraging collaboration and partnership built on a shared STI ecosystem.
- It will also host and provide access to selected R&D software required to undertake research projects by students and scientists.
- The I-STEM portal in its new phase will be designed as a dynamic digital platform that will provide a boost to research and innovation especially for 2 tier and 3 tier cities and also for the emerging start-up ecosystem.

WCD Minister Smriti Zubin Irani to introduce 24/7 helpline number

- Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani inaugurated the National Commission for Women's 24/7 helpline number - 7827170170.
- The helpline aims to provide 24/7 online support to women affected by violence through referral by linking them with appropriate authorities such as police, hospitals, District Legal Service Authority, psychological services etc.

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- She stated that **this digital helpline gives a message to women** that whenever they are in need, their government and their Commission will stand by them.
- She also congratulated the entire NCW **team** for the “**stupendous**” efforts for helping women especially during the pandemic.

About the service:

- She mentioned that the **partnership between NCW and WCD** goes a long way in ensuring a seamless intervention to help women in distress.
- These **complaints** are **received in writing or online through** its website i.e., **www.ncw.nic.in**.
- The Commission processes complaints to facilitate in providing adequate and expeditious relief to women ensuring suitable redressal of grievances.
- In order to strengthen and expand the complaint platform, the Commission took the **initiative to start this Digital Helpline**.
- This **helpline service** has been developed in **collaboration with Digital India Corporation, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**.

Govt decided to set-up Centre of Excellence for Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming

- The **Union Government has decided to set up** a National Centre of Excellence for **Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics** for creating a world-class talent pool in India to cater to the Indian as well as global industry.
- It will be set up in **collaboration with Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay**.
- Minister of Information and Broadcasting **Anurag Thakur** stated this in the Rajya Sabha.
- He stated, **in order to support skilled manpower in the animation** and VFX sector, Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute and Film and Television Institute of India run courses on Animation and VFX.
- The Minister also mentioned that the Media and Entertainment sector is one of the largest growing sectors in the country.
- He noted that to attract foreign investment in the film industry, National Film Development Corporation organizes Film Bazaar at the International Film Festival of India held at Goa every year.
- Mr Thakur stated, it is the largest South Asian Film Market and attracts investors from around the world by encouraging creative and financial **collaboration between the South Asian and International Film communities**.
- The Minister also informed that India has also audio-visual co-production treaties with **15 countries**.

Home Minister Amit Shah launches Green Sohra Afforestation Campaign at Sohra (Cherrapunji) and inaugurated the Greater Sohra Water Supply Scheme

- Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah launched the **Green Sohra Afforestation Campaign at Sohra (Cherrapunji) in Meghalaya**.
- This afforestation campaign will be run by the **Meghalaya Government with the help of Assam Rifles**, this will greatly **benefit eco-tourism and will also boost tourism in the state**.

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- Our country is intact due to the paramilitary forces deployed to protect the borders of the country, since the last two years they are also shouldering the responsibility of improving the environment.
- **With the help of Paramilitary forces around 1.48 crore plant saplings have been planted across the country.**
- This will help to fight against the carbon emissions and also to achieve the Paris agreement proposals.
- The **Greater Sohra Water Supply Scheme** will help to provide pure drinking water across the Meghalaya State.
- Therefore the Government has set the **target of providing pure drinking water to every household in the state of Meghalaya and the country before the completion of 75 years of Independence and 50 years of Meghalaya.**

Parliament passes the National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2021

- Parliament has passed the **National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2021.**
- Two educational institutes, **National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM) Kundali (Haryana) and Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFT) Thanjavur (Tamil Nadu)** under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries became Institutions of National Importance (INI).
- This will provide these Institutes Greater Autonomy, so that **they can start new and innovative courses, as well as help them to attract excellent faculty and students.**
- **Global standards can also be adopted in academic and research work.**
- These institutes will have curricular provision related to food processing areas e.g. **cold chain technology, food bio nanotechnology** which can help in filling the technological gap.
- Now they can **open new centres anywhere in the country and abroad.**
- Along with this, **giving them the status of Institute of National Importance (INI) will also pave the way for the creation of skilled manpower.**

Union Agriculture Minister inaugurates 28th regional workshop of Krishi Vigyan Kendras of Madhya Pradesh -Chhattisgarh

- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare **Shri Narendra Singh Tomar** virtually inaugurated the **28th Regional Workshop of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)**
- At present **723 KVKs are being run by ICAR units, NGOs and State Agricultural Universities. Out of which 7 are in Naxal-affected areas.**
- KVKs distribute **soil health cards to the farmers** and advise them for nutrient requirements according to the crops through demonstration and training.
- A new project- '**Arya**', being operated in Attari, Jabalpur in 12 KVKs of Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh, is attracting youth towards farming.
- Under the project, more **than 700 youth have set up enterprises in nursery management, processing and mushroom production etc.**
- The '**Farmer First**' project in Attari, Jabalpur is being run by three institutes and four universities.
- '**Mera Gaon-Mera Gaurav**' program is also being run by 5 universities and 5 other institutes of Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh.
- To increase the availability of seeds of pulse crops, the Seed Hub program is being operated by KVK in 15 districts.

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- KVKs play an important role in discharging the responsibility of women empowerment by promoting nutrition-sensitive agriculture through the 'Nari' program, development of agriculture and entrepreneurship in tribal-dominated areas through 'Kshamata' program, value addition of employment-oriented regional products through 'Vatika' program.
- Also the foundation has been laid for Soybean Seed Hub Store at KVK, Govind Nagar, Hoshangabad.

In a big boost to AgriBusiness, First consignment of vegetables exported to UAE from Uttarakhand

- In a major boost to agricultural produce exports from **Uttarakhand**, first consignment of vegetables including curry leaf, okra, pear and bitter gourd sourced from the farmers of Haridwar, was exported to **Dubai, United Arab Emirates**.
- The exports of vegetables come after a consignment of millets grown in Uttarakhand was exported to Denmark in May, 2021.
- APEDA, in collaboration with **Uttarakhand Agriculture Produce Marketing Board (UKAPMB)** & **Just Organik**, an **exporter**, sourced & processed ragi (finger millet), and jhingora (barnyard millet) from farmers in Uttarakhand for exports, which meets the organic certification standards of the European Union.
- The Uttarakhand government has been supporting organic farming.
- **UKAPMB**, through a unique initiative, has been supporting thousands of farmers for organic certification.
- These farmers produce **mainly millets such as Ragi, Barnyard millet, Amaranthus etc.**
- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has been **carrying out promotional activities to bring Uttarakhand on the agricultural and processed food products export map of India**.
- APEDA is planning to **provide financial assistance for setting up a pack house in Uttarakhand which would fulfil the mandatory requirement or infrastructure for export of fresh fruits and vegetables to the international market**.
- APEDA would continue to focus on the Uttarakhand region both in terms of **capacity building, quality upgradation, and infrastructure development by linking buyers to farmers through strengthening the entire supply chain of agricultural produce**.
- In 2020-21, India exported fruits and vegetables valued at Rs 11,019 crore compared to Rs 10,114 crore worth of exports in 2019-20, which is an increase of close to 9%.
- APEDA undertakes market promotion activities for export of food products, market intelligence for making informed decisions, international exposure, skill development, capacity building and high-quality packaging.

Coal India Ltd. (CIL) Takes Out of Box Initiative To Produce Sand From Overburden at a Much Cheaper Price

- **Coal India Ltd. (CIL)** has taken an out of box initiative to produce sand from overburden at a much cheaper price.
- This will not only help in minimising environmental pollution due to sand siltation from overburden, but will also be an option for getting cheaper sand for construction purposes.
- In this effort, CIL aims to **reach a production level of around 8 million tonnes of sand within the next five years** by commissioning 15 major Sand Plants in its different coal producing subsidiaries.

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- By the end of current fiscal, CIL envisages to **have 9 out of 15 plants with a production of around three lakh cubic meter.**
- This effort will not only help the society at large but will also **help in minimising river bed mining of sand.**
- During opencast mining of coal, the strata lying above coal seam is known as **overburden consisting of clay alluvial sand and sandstone with rich silica content.**
- The overburden is **removed to expose and extract coal from beneath.**
- After completion of coal extraction, **the overburden is used for backfilling to reclaim the land in its original shape .**
- While extracting overburden from top, **the swell factor of the volume accounts for 20-25%.**
- Initiative has been taken to utilise at least **25% of overburden in converting to sand by crushing, sieving and cleaning.**
- The very first initiative of such conversion has been taken by **Western Coalfields Ltd.(WCL), a subsidiary of CIL in its mines.**
- Initially a Pilot Project was launched where sand was extracted through machines erected departmentally.
- This sand has been offered to **Nagpur Improvement Trust at a much cheaper price for constructing low cost houses under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMAY).**
- The price of sand is almost **10% of the market price with better quality.**
- The use of overburden has minimised the volume of land required for overburden dump. This initiative also lowers the adverse footprint of river bed mining of sand.
- WCL is also selling overburden for road construction at a cheaper price to NHAI & others.
- Two new plants in Chandrapur District of Maharashtra have been planned by WCL, which is likely to be commissioned by the year end.

Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) Launches New Earth System Science Data Portal

- Union Minister of State for Earth Sciences, **Jitendra Singh** launched the **MoES-ESSDP** (Earth System Science Data Portal) during the **15th foundation day.**

About ESSDP :

- The MoES-ESSDP (Earth System Science Data Portal), an integrated digital web portal of MoES institutes.
- It will make available data on various themes of earth system science for public use.
- The portal has been developed using the latest information technology tools and is available at **<https://incois.gov.in/essdp>.**
- The portal is aligned with the Digital India initiative of the Government of India to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.
- It would facilitate search and retrieval of earth system science data (of atmosphere, ocean, poles, geoscience and seismology) for societal benefit.
- Also, Dr Singh released a **book** entitled **Hydrocarbon fluid inclusions in petroliferous basins.**

About the Book :

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- The book discusses new tools for oil exploration and is a valuable reference for researchers studying fluid inclusion and oil prospecting.
- The book is **authored by Dr V Nandakumar** (Scientist G/Group Head and Former Director of National Centre for Earth Science Studies (NCESS), Thiruvananthapuram) and Dr Jayanthi JL, Project Scientist at NCESS.
- In addition to that, the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** introduced a new mobile app named '**Pune Weather Live**'.

King Chilli 'Raja Mircha' from Nagaland exported to London for the first time

- In a major boost to exports of Geographical Indications (GI) products from the north-eastern region, **a consignment of 'Raja Mircha' also referred as king chilli from Nagaland was exported to London via Guwahati by air for the first time.**
- The consignment of **King Chilli also considered as world's hottest based on the Scoville Heat Units (SHUs).**
- The consignment was sourced from **Tening, part of Peren district, Nagaland and was packed at APEDA assisted packhouse at Guwahati.**
- The chilli from Nagaland is also referred to as **Bhoot Jolokia and Ghost pepper.**
- It got GI certification in 2008.
- **APEDA** in collaboration with the **Nagaland State Agricultural Marketing Board (NSAMB)** coordinated the first export consignment of fresh King Chilli.
- APEDA had coordinated with NSAMB in sending samples for **laboratory testing in June and July 2021 and the results were encouraging as it is grown organically.**
- Exporting fresh King Chilli posed a challenge because of **its highly perishable nature.**
- Nagaland King Chilli belongs to the genus **Capsicum of the family Solanaceae.**
- **Naga king chilli has been considered as the world's hottest chilli and is constantly on the top five in the list of the world's hottest chillies based on the SHUs.**
- In 2021, APEDA facilitated exports of Jackfruits from Tripura to London and Germany, Assam Lemon to London, Red rice of Assam to the United States and Leteku 'Burmese Grape' to Dubai.

Government plans to set up a National Farmers Database by Using Digitized Land Records

- The **Government** has announced its **plans** to set up a **National Farmers Database.**

Aim of the Database :

- Increase farmers' income
- Reducing input costs
- Ensure ease of farming
- Better price for their produce
- Higher efficiency

About the Database :

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- The Database will consist of digitised land records and will facilitate **online single sign-on facilities for universal access**.
- It provides services like **direct benefit transfer, weather advisories, insurance facilities** and information on neighbouring logistic facilities.
- The database will provide personalised services to farmers such as direct benefit transfer, soil and plant health advisories, weather advisories, irrigation facilities, seamless credit and insurance facilities, seeds, fertilisers, pesticide related information nearby logistic facilities, market access information and peer to peer lending of farm equipment.

Note :

- **Agriculture Minister of India** : Narendra Singh Tomar

Geological Survey of India taken by Seven Projects for Lithium Exploration

- The **Geological Survey of India (GSI)**, part of the **Ministry of Mines**, has taken up **seven projects for lithium exploration** across different states in India.
- It is done across different states in India namely
- **Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir and Rajasthan** during the Field Season Programme (FSP) 2021-22.
- The Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Analysis (AMDER) below Division Atomic Vitality (DAE) has undertaken lithium exploration in Karnataka and Rajasthan.
- The Centre announced a **PLI scheme worth Rs 18,100 crore** to make lithium-ion cells to promote e-mobility in India.

ECI holds a review meeting with CEOs of five states

- The **Election Commission of India** held a **review meeting** on advance planning for forthcoming elections with the **Chief Electoral Officers** of the five states namely **Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh**, at Nirvachan Sadan.
- The preliminary meeting held was focussed on various thematic issues including **Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at the polling stations, ease of registration arrangements for voter facilitation, electoral roll, timely resolution of grievances, arrangements of EVMs/VVPATs, postal ballot facility for senior citizens (80+) and PwDs, COVID Mitigation plan, training of polling staff and extensive voter outreach amongst others.**

NMCG launched Capacity Building Initiative on Making Water Sensitive Cities In Ganga Basin

- The **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** and the **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)** launched a capacity-building initiative on '**making water sensitive cities in Ganga basin**', aimed at improving river health and flows.
- The key focus areas of the programme will be water sensitive urban design and planning, urban water efficiency and conservation, decentralized wastewater treatment and local reuse, urban groundwater management and urban water bodies and lake management.
- **Launching the initiative**, NMCG Director General **Rajiv Ranjan Mishra** emphasized the need for respecting traditions and suggested focusing on the basics of water cycle in urban areas.

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About NMCG:

- The **NMCG is a body under the Jal Shakti Ministry** that has been working on the rejuvenation of the Ganga and its tributaries.
- **The aim of the programme** is capacity building and action research for promoting sustainable urban water management for improved river health in Ganga basin cities.

NSO reported Unemployment rate for women has come down from 5.1% in 2018-19 to 4.2% in 2019-20

- Periodic Labour Force Survey (**PLFS**) conducted by National Statistical Office (**NSO**) stated that **Unemployment rate for women fell to 4.2 per cent in 2019-20 from 5.1 per cent in 2018-19.**
- The **NSO is a wing of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.**
- A labour ministry stated that, "Unemployment rate for women has come down from 5.1 per cent in 2018-19 to 4.2 per cent in 2019-20".
- **As per the PLFS** for 2019-20, of the total employment generated (in person days) in the 2020-21 **under MGNREGS**, women's share has increased to around 207 crore person days.
- **Government has taken various steps for generating employment in the country** like encouraging various projects involving substantial investment and increasing public expenditure on **schemes like** Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (**PMEGP**), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (**MGNREGS**), Pt. DeenDayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (**DDU-GKY**) and Deendayal Antodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (**DAY-NULM**).
- **Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojna (ABRY) Scheme** has been launched with effect from 1st October 2020 to incentivize creation of new employment along with social security benefits and restoration of loss of employment.
- This **scheme reduces the financial burden** of the employers and encourages them to hire more workers.

Parliament moves landmark 'Marine Aids to Navigation Bill 2021' to repeal and replace the Lighthouse Act 1927

- The **Marine Aids to Navigation Bill 2021** has been passed by the Parliament, which **aims to replace the over 90-year-old Lighthouse Act of 1927.**
- The **bill was moved in Rajya Sabha** by Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways **Sarbananda Sonowal** on 19 July 2021 and it was passed on 27 July 2021.
- According to the ministry, the bill will now go to the President for his assent.
- Sonowal mentioned **this initiative is** part of the Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways' proactive approach by repealing colonial laws as well as replacing them with legislations catering to the maritime industry's modern and contemporary requirements.
- The Union Minister also stated that the Marine Aids to Navigation Bill 2021 **aims to adopt marine navigation's state-of-the-art technologies** which were not covered under the statutory provisions of the old Lighthouse Act.

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Govt. to introduce Deposit Insurance Credit Guarantee Corporation Bill 2021

- The Union Cabinet has cleared the **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) Bill, 2021**, which will **allow depositors to withdraw up to Rs 5 lakh in 90 days**.
- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** stated that the announcement will cover **98.3 per cent** of all deposit accounts and **50.9 percent** of the deposit value.
- This compares with the global deposit insurance coverage of **80 per cent of all accounts and 20-30 percent** of the deposit value.
- The **DICGC Bill, 2021**, will cover banks that have been already placed under moratorium, and will insure savings deposits, fixed deposits, current and recurring deposits.

Lok Sabha passes Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill 2021

- The Lok Sabha passed the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2021** which was introduced in the Lower House on July 26.
- Union Corporate Affairs Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** tabled the bill in the Lok Sabha, which amends the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016**.
- The **Bill replaces the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021**, which was promulgated on April 4, 2021.
- The Bill introduces an alternate insolvency resolution process for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), called the **pre-packaged insolvency resolution process (PIRP)**.

DRDO now get 2% royalty from Dr Reddy's on sale of Covid drug 2-DG in India

- Minister of State for Defence **Ajay Bhatt** stated that, The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** will get **two per cent** royalty from **Dr Reddy's Laboratory (DRL)** on the **sale of anti-Covid drug 2-DG**.
- The defence ministry mentioned that the DRDO developed the technology along with Hyderabad-based Dr Reddy's Lab, adding that the pricing is solely decided by DRL.
- The actual price fixed by Dr Reddy's Laboratory is Rs 990 per sachet.

DRDO'S 2-DG DRUG:

- The **anti-Covid drug 2-deoxy-D-Glucose (2-DG)** was developed by the **Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS)**, a laboratory of the DRDO, in collaboration with Dr Reddy's.
- It is an **oral drug**.
- Emergency use approval for **anti-Covid-19** therapeutic application of the **drug was granted on May 1, 2021**.
- In June, Dr Reddy's Laboratories announced the commercial **launch of 2-DG drug**.
- Dr Reddy's had stated that it will supply the **anti-Covid drug** to major government hospitals as well as private hospitals across the country.

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Union Govt to set up Garima Grihas for transgender persons to provide safe shelter

- Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot e-launched a 'National Portal for Transgender Persons' and e-inaugurated a 'Garima Greh: A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons' in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot stated that this **National Portal for Transgender Persons** has been developed within 2 months of **Notification of Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020** on 29 September, 2020.
- This **highly useful Portal** would help a transgender person in applying for a Certificate and Identity card digitally from anywhere in the country.
- The **most important benefit** is that it helps the transgender person to get the **I-Card without any physical interface and without having to visit any office**.
- Through the **Portal**, they can monitor the status of their application that ensures transparency in the process.

PM Modi initiates SAFAL Assessment Framework for CBSE Students

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a new framework to assess students of the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)**.
- The new framework, named **SAFAL (structured assessment for analyzing learning levels)**, is a competency-based assessment framework to move away from the "**rote-learning system**" of heavy memorization, according to the CBSE.
- The ministry of education stated The framework will be used to assess **50 lakh students in 25,000 CBSE schools across India**.
- However, the SAFAL results will not be used in any manner by schools for promotion of students to the next grade.
- Prime Minister Narendar Modi, during the live telecast: With **SAFAL a scientific method** for assessing students' intelligence has been developed.
- This will **reduce the students' fear towards exams**.
- They will have the eagerness to pursue new skills, new innovations, the possibilities are endless.

COVID BEEP-India's first Physiological Parameters Monitoring System

- Government is taking various steps to undertake the **large-scale production of COVID BEEP** stated by the Union Minister **Dr Jitendra Singh**.
- **COVID BEEP (Continuous Oxygenation & Vital Information Detection Biomed ECIL ESIC Pod)**, India's first indigenous, cost effective, wireless physiological parameters monitoring system for COVID-19 patients, developed by **ESIC Medical College Hyderabad in collaboration with IIT Hyderabad and Department Of Atomic Energy**.
- The latest version of COVID BEEP has incorporated the following:
 - 1) **NIBP monitoring**: Affected aged people have the highest death rates in COVID-19. Hence, NIBP monitoring becomes imperative in this context.
 - 2) **ECG monitoring**: The drugs used as prophylaxis and /or treatment like Hydroxychloroquine and Azithromycin etc. have effects on the heart and hence the importance of ECG monitoring.

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3) **The Respiratory Rate:** Is calculated by Bio Impedance method.

- COVID BEEP will greatly reduce the transmission risk as well as help save resources like PPEs.
- A proposal has been submitted to the Ministry of Labour & Employment for the large-scale deployment of COVID BEEPS.

Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill passed

- The Rajya Sabha on July 28, 2021, passed the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill 2021, thereby amending the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children), Act, 2015.
- The Bill was already passed in the Lok Sabha in March 2021.
- The amendment of the Act was taken up after the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) in a survey of children's shelter homes in India found that over 7,600 children were living in poor living conditions with no access to basic amenities.

Key points

- The Act stresses **shifting the accountability to the district magistrates or additional district magistrates to take responsibility for the well-being of vulnerable children in shelter homes across the country.**
- The district magistrates are now empowered to sign adoption orders under Section 61 of the Juvenile Justice Act thus making the process of adoption faster and more compliant with rules.
- The Act now also calls for all Child Care Institutions to be registered in line with recommendations of the district magistrate.
- The Act also **entrusts DMs with the responsibility to oversee and evaluate the functioning of child welfare committees, district child protection units, specialized juvenile police units, and juvenile justice boards.**
- The Act has redefined the eligibility parameters for the appointment of CWC members.
- Further, the amended provisions of the Act have introduced criteria for **disqualification of CWC members to ensure the appointment of people with integrity and requisite competence.**
- Currently, the Act outlines three categories of offences – **petty, serious, and heinous.**
- The amendment states that offences with a maximum sentence of more than 7 years imprisonment, but no minimum sentence, or a minimum sentence of less than 7 years is provided shall be treated as a serious offence under the Act.

Govt declared 27% reservation for OBCs, 10% quota for EWS in medical seats

- The government announced a 27-per cent quota for OBCs and 10 per cent reservation for the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) category in the All-India Quota (AIQ) scheme for undergraduate and postgraduate medical and dental courses from the current academic year, 2021-22.
- "This will immensely help thousands of our youth every year get better opportunities and create a new paradigm of social justice in our country."
- "This decision would benefit **nearly 1,500 OBC students in MBBS and 2,500 OBC students** in post graduation and also around **550 EWS students** in MBBS and around 1,000 EWS students in post graduation".

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- The **AIQ scheme** was introduced in **1986** under the Supreme Court's directions to provide for **domicile-free merit-based opportunities** to students from any state aspiring to study in a good medical college in another state.

Prakash Javadekar unveiled India's longest high-speed track

- **Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises Shri Prakash Javadekar** inaugurated **NATRAX- the High Speed Track(HST) in Indore** which is the longest such track in Asia.
- **NATRAX**, developed in an area of 1000 acres of land, is a one stop solution for all sorts of high speed performance tests for **widest categories of vehicles from 2 wheelers to heavy tractor trailers**.

About the Track:

- The NATRAX centre has **multiple test capabilities like measurements** of maximum speed, acceleration, constant speed fuel consumption, emission tests through real road driving simulation, high speed handling and stability evaluation during manoeuvres such as lane change, high speed durability testing, etc. and is a Centre of excellence for Vehicle Dynamics.

JP Nadda initiates National Health Volunteers Campaign

- **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief Jagat Prakash Nadda** launched **Rashtriya Swasthya Swayamsevak Abhiyan (a health volunteers programme)** from the party headquarters in Delhi.
- BJP aims to reach two lakh villages in the country by imparting training to four lakh volunteers.

About the campaign:

- The **Swasthya Swayamsevak Abhiyan** is an initiative taken by the **BJP** to prepare health volunteers ahead of the likely third wave of Covid-19.
- Under this campaign they have to **reach 2 lakh villages**.
- He stated that this campaign will become the **world's largest health program**.
- Mr Nadda added that the training of the workers should not only be structural but the volunteer should also have a feeling of service.

AICTE Creating Database to Promote Higher Education in Regional Languages

- The **All India Council of Technical Education** is **creating a database of resources** to allow colleges to offer more programmes in regional languages and **developed a tool to translate engineering content into 11 languages**.
- Teaching in regional languages will offer access to higher education for students from rural, low-income families who are capable of learning, but not fluent in English.

780 New Air Traffic Routes Approved under UDAN

- The Centre announced **780 new air traffic routes** have been approved under the regional air connectivity scheme **UDAN**.
- It is informed **that 359 routes have become functional** in the country after the inception of the scheme.
- Under the **UDAN scheme 59 new airports have been established**.
- Along with increase in civil aviation activities cargo handling services have also been leapfrogged.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- During the Covid pandemic period **cargo handling through air routes was also increased to 19 percent from 2 percent.**
- The **number of cargo operators has been increased to 28** in the country.

Global Tobacco Epidemic 2021 report prepared by WHO

- More than four times as many people are now **covered** by at least one **WHO-recommended tobacco control measure as compared with 2007.**
- The **six MPOWER measures** are monitoring tobacco use and preventive measures; protecting people from tobacco smoke; offering help to quit; warning about the dangers of tobacco; enforcing bans on advertising, promotion and sponsorship; and raising taxes on tobacco.
- Some 5.3 billion people are now covered by at least one of these measures - **more than four times the 1 billion** who were covered in 2007.

About the current year situation:

- **For the first time, the 2021 report** presents new data on **electronic nicotine delivery systems**, such as '**e-cigarettes**'.
- These products are often marketed to children and adolescents by the tobacco and related industries that manufacture them, using thousands of appealing flavours and misleading claims about the products.

For the first time, Agri Exporters from the remote Districts of India connected to the international buyers from USA, the UAE, and Japan

- **The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** under the Department **of Commerce** in partnership with the **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)** and **Invest India** conducted a 2 Day Virtual Outreach Event connecting exporters from the Districts to the buyers outside India.
- This virtual trade fair was held where 197 exhibitors from the **states of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.**
- It provided a platform to small sellers from areas earlier not known for exports, apart from large exporters from India.
- 28 stalls from Jammu and Kashmir and 5 from Ladakh were highlighted in the exhibition.
- It got over **300 visitors and importers from domestic and international buyers inclusive of the USA, the UAE, and Japan.**
- Products under five categories namely **spices and tea, food grains and agro-products, fruits and vegetables, dry fruits, and processed food**, three buyer-seller interactive sessions were held with the support of Indian Embassies from the USA, the UAE, and Japan.

National Gallery of Australia to return 14 Art Works to India including Chola idols

- In the process of Returning stolen Idols, **the National Gallery of Australia** announced it would return **14 works of art from its Asian art collection to Indian Government.**
- These works of art include 13 objects connected to art dealer Subhash Kapoor through his 'Art of the Past' gallery, who was arrested for smuggling racket.

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- One, a bronze (child-saint Sambandar) from a Tamil Nadu temple acquired from late William Wolff, New York-based art dealer.
- The artworks which will be returned to India include six bronze or stone sculptures, a painted scroll, six photographs and a brass processional standard.
- Some of the artworks date back to the Chola Dynasty.

Revision Points

Portfolio	Union Minister	Constituency
Ministry of personnel, public grievances and pensions	Narendra Modi	Varanasi
Ministry of Defence	Rajnath Singh	Lucknow
Ministry of Home Affairs Ministry of Cooperation	Amit Shah	Gandhinagar
Ministry of Road Transport and Highways	Nitin Gadkari	Nagpur
Ministry of Chemical and Fertilizers Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	Mansukh L. Mandaviya	Palitana
Ministry of Finance & Ministry of Corporate Affairs	Nirmala Sitharaman	Andhra Pradesh
Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution Ministry of Commerce and Industry Ministry of Textiles	Piyush Goyal (Additional charge)	Maharashtra
Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers welfare	Narendra Singh Tomar	Morena (Madhya Pradesh)
Ministry of Law and Justice	Kiren Rijju	Arunachal West
Ministry of Railways Ministry of communications & Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	Ashwini Vaishnaw	Odisha
Ministry of Food Processing Industries	Pashu Pati Kumar Paras	Hajipur(Bihar)
Ministry of Social justice and empowerment	Dr. Virendra Kumar	Tikamgarh (Madhya Pradesh).
Ministry of External Affairs	Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar	RS (Gujarat)

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Ministry of Education Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Dharmendra Pradhan	Haridwar
Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Arjun Munda	Khunti
Ministry of Women and child Development	Smriti Zubin Irani	Amethi
,Ministry of Science and Technology & Ministry of Earth Sciences	Dr. Jitendra Singh	Udhampur, J&K
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change Ministry of Labour and Employment	Bhupender Yadav	Rajasthan
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports	Anurag Singh Thakur	Hamirpur (Himachal Pradesh)
Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs	Hardeep Singh Puri	Uttar Pradesh
Ministry of Minority Affairs	Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi	Uttar Pradesh
Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of coal & Ministry of Mines	Prahlad Joshi	Dharwad
Ministry of Culture Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region	G. Kishan Reddy	Secunderabad (Telangana)
Ministry of Animal Husbandry, dairying and fisheries	Parshottam Rupala	Amreli (Gujarat)
Ministry of Jal Shakti	Gajendra Singh Shekhawat	Jodhpur
Ministry of Heavy Industries	Mahendra Nath Pandey	Chandauli
Ministry of Civil Aviation	Jyotiraditya M. Scindia	Gwalior East (Madhya Pradesh)
Ministry of Steel	Ramchandra Prasad Singh	Bihar
Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and	Sarbananda Sonowal	Majuli

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Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)		
Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	Narayan Tatu Rane	Kankavli (Maharashtra)
Ministry of Rural Development Ministry of Panchayati Raj	Giriraj Singh	Begusarai

Important International News

FATF grey list - Philippines included in the list

- The **Philippines** has been included in a **global dirty money watchdog's "grey list"** of countries that will be subjected to increased monitoring to prove its progress against money-laundering and terrorist financing.
- The **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** released its grey list of jurisdictions that will be under increased monitoring and actively working to "address strategic deficiencies in their regimes to counter **money laundering, terrorist financing, and proliferation financing.**"
- In addition to the Philippines, the **FATF added** Haiti, Malta, and South Sudan to the **grey list**.
- This comes **16 years after** the Philippines was removed from the FATF's blacklist in February 2005.
- The Philippines was previously included in the FATF's blacklist in 2000.

World's 2nd biggest hydropower dam in China

- The **first two generating units** of the **world's second-biggest hydroelectric dam** were officially turned in southwestern China, the government announced.
- The **Baihetan Dam on the Jinsha River**, a tributary of the Yangtze, is part of Chinese efforts to curb surging fossil fuel demand by building more hydropower capacity at a time when dams have fallen out of favor in other countries due to environmental complaints.
- The announcement comes ahead of the ruling Communist Party's celebration this week of the official 100th anniversary of its 1921 founding.

About hydropower dam:

- The **most common type of hydroelectric power plant** is an impoundment facility.
- An impoundment facility, typically a large hydropower system, uses a dam to store **river water in a reservoir**.
- Water released from the reservoir flows through a turbine, spinning it, which in turn activates a generator to produce electricity.

World Bank provides USD 300 mn to Bangladesh

- The **World Bank (WB)** will provide **USD 300 million** to the **Bangladesh government** as loan to implement a five-year project to improve livelihood, which is scheduled to begin from July.
- The government will chip in **USD 40 million** for the "Resilience, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Improvement (RELI) Project", raising its total cost to USD 340 million.

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- The **project will provide training** to almost 4,90,000 people on climate risk, adaptation, and resilience building. It will also build 5,120 climate-resilient small-scale infrastructures.
- The **project will also provide skills development training** to the unemployed or under-employed youth and returnee migrants to increase their employability.

World Bank approves USD 800-million loan for Pakistan

- The **World Bank** has approved a loan of **USD 800 million** to cash-strapped Pakistan, financing schemes on clean energy and human capital development.
- The loan amount would be utilized for schemes which are not covered due to the budget deficit for 2021-22 fiscal.
- The **board of directors of World Bank** approved financing for two programmes - **Pakistan Program** for Affordable and Clean Energy (**PACE**) and Securing Human Investments to Foster Transformation (**SHIFT-II**).
- The World Bank **also approved USD 400 million** for **SHIFT-II** which supports a federal structure to strengthen basic service delivery for human capital accumulation.

WHO declared China as malaria-free Country

- China was certified as **malaria-free** by the **World Health Organization**, following a **70-year effort** to eradicate the mosquito-borne disease.
- The country reported **30 million cases** of the infectious disease annually in the **1940s** but has now gone four consecutive years without an indigenous case.

About the status:

- Countries that have achieved **at least three consecutive years of zero indigenous cases** can apply for WHO certification of their malaria-free status.
- They **must present rigorous evidence** — and demonstrate the capacity to prevent transmission re-emerging.
- **China** becomes the **40th territory certified malaria-free** by the Geneva-based WHO.
- The **last countries to gain the status** were El Salvador (2021), Algeria and Argentina (2019), and Paraguay and Uzbekistan (2018).

Bangladesh present 2600 kilos of delicious mangoes to India as memento of Friendship

- India received **2600 kilos of delicious mangoes** from **Bangladesh** as a **memento of friendship between the two neighbouring countries**.
- It was sent through the Petrapole border of Bangaon in West Bengal.
- Deputy Commissioner of Bangladesh's Benapole Custom House **Anupam Chakma** stated, Prime Minister of Bangladesh **Sheikh Hasina** has sent the gift of a **special variety of Haribhanga mangoes for the President and the Prime Minister of India** and other political leaders including the **Chief Minister of West Bengal**.
- Assistant Commissioner Customs Petrapole Anit Jain noted, they are hopeful that the sweetness of the mangoes will **take away the bitterness of Covid-19**.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Italy: Indian Army chief to inaugurate war memorial for Indian soldiers

- During his four-day visit to the UK and Italy, **Indian Army Chief Manoj Naravane** will inaugurate the **Indian Army Memorial at Cassino in Italy**, about 140 km away from Rome.
- The memorial commemorates over **3,100 Commonwealth servicemen** who **took part** in the effort to liberate Italy in World War II.
- Apart from this, **900 Indian soldiers** were also commemorated on this memorial.
- As per the Ministry of Defence, during the four-day visit, he will be meeting his counterparts and senior military leaders of these countries with an **aim of enhancing India's defence cooperation**.
- His visit to the United Kingdom is scheduled for two days (July 5 and 6) during which the COAS will interact with the Secretary of State for Defence, Chief of Defence Staff, Chief of General Staff and other dignitaries.
- In the **Battle of Monte Cassino** during **World War II**, **over 5,000 Indian soldiers** laid down their lives while fighting to save Italy from fascist forces.
- Nearly 50,000 Indians were enlisted for Italy's liberation between September 1943 and April 1945.
- About war memorial:
- The **Memorial's** purpose is to commemorate the sacrifice of those Australians who have died in **war** or on operational service and those who have served our nation in times of conflict. Its mission is leading remembrance and understanding of Australia's wartime experience.

Bangladesh: 1st unit of the Rampal Maitree Power Project to be commissioned in Dec 2021

- **India and Bangladesh** have agreed to expedite work on the **1,320 MW Maitree Power Project** and to ensure the timely commissioning of the first unit in December this year.
- The progress of the project was reviewed at a **meeting between the Power Secretaries of India and Bangladesh**.
- Bangladesh's Power Secretary assured of the necessary support for completion of the project in time and appreciated the progress made by the project so far despite the COVID constraints since last year.
- The Maitree super thermal power project is a **1,320 MW coal-fired power station** under construction in Rampal, Bangladesh.
- The project is an environmentally friendly supercritical technology based thermal power plant, and the first unit of this project would be **commissioned in December 2021**, coinciding with the **Golden Jubilee celebration** of Victory Day of Bangladesh.

World's tallest sandcastle constructed in Denmark with the height of 21.16 metres

- At a **height of 21.16 metres**, and **standing 3.5m higher than the previous record holder**, the **world's tallest sandcastle was unveiled in Denmark**.
- The sandcastle built in Blokhus in northwest **Denmark broke the Guinness World record** previously held by a **sandcastle constructed in Germany in 2019**, which was 17.66m tall.
- Dutch designer **Wilfred Stijger** mentioned his creation was inspired by the corona virus pandemic.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- He stated he put corona virus bacteria as a crown atop the castle to illustrate how the virus is ruling our world, and not allowing us to do what we want to do.
- The Guinness world record was measured by an **authorized surveyor and signed by witnesses** and will be in the book's next edition.
- The Sand Sculpture **Festival** in **Blokhuis** takes place **every summer**.

BRICS countries agreed to STI-led BRICS Innovation Cooperation Action Plan in 12th meeting

- All **BRICS countries** have agreed to the **STI-led BRICS Innovation Cooperation Action Plan** (2021-24) proposed by India during the **12th meeting of the BRICS S & T Steering Committee**.
- Indians have proposed plans to share the experience of each other's innovation ecosystem and promote networking between innovators and entrepreneurs.
- The details of the action plan are created by the **BRICS Science, Technology Innovation Entrepreneurship Partnership (STIEP) Working Group**.
- It was agreed that the proposal could be transferred to the BRICS STIEP Working Group through national STI focal points.
- The **Ministry of Science and Technology (DST)** of India hosted the 12th BRICS S & T Steering Committee on July 8, 2021.
- Science ministries from all BRICS countries participated.

Afghanistan: India evacuates diplomats, security personnel from Kandahar as Taliban captures new areas

- **Afghanistan witnessed a series of terror attacks** in the last few weeks as the US looked to complete the withdrawal of its forces **from Afghanistan** by August-end, ending a nearly two-decade of its military presence in the war-ravaged country.
- **India has pulled out around 50 diplomats and security personnel** from its consulate in Kandahar in Afghanistan in view of the deteriorating security situation and the Taliban gaining control of new areas around the southern Afghan city
- India has been a major stakeholder in the **peace and stability of Afghanistan**.
- It has already invested nearly **USD three billion** in aid and reconstruction activities in the country.

International Air Transport Association (IATA) has launched a Global Mobility Aids Action Group

- The **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** has launched a **global Mobility Aids Action Group** to **examine and improve the transport journey of mobility aids, including wheelchairs**
- This initiative is to **improve the handling of this vital equipment for travellers with disabilities**
- This action group will **provide advice and recommendations to airlines and other stakeholders concerning the establishment of policy, process and standards related to the handling and transport of mobility aids**
- The stakeholders includes accessibility organizations (representing travellers with disabilities), airlines, ground service providers, airports and mobility aids manufacturers

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21st Session of India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) was held recently

- The **21st session of the India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation** was held virtually.
- Both sides held extensive discussions on bilateral trade and investment and economic cooperation in the areas of Food Processing, Textiles, Leather, Railways, Start-ups and promotion of SMEs which play a crucial role in economic growth and employment generation.
- The bilateral market **access issues and non-tariff barriers were also discussed to facilitate trade and investment.**

Addl.Info:

- **India is Italy's fifth largest trading partner** in the **European Union** while **Italy is the fifth largest investor in India.**
- The balance of trade has been in India's favour since the early eighties.
- Earlier, in Feb 2019 the 20th India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation was held in New Delhi during which India and Italy discussed ways to increase cooperation in engineering, infrastructure and agriculture to promote trade and investments between the countries.

China drafts cyber-security industry plan

- China has issued a **3-year action plan** on development of the cyber security sector.
- It expects the size of the cyber security sector to exceed **250 billion yuan by 2023.**
- The Cyberspace Administration of China proposed draft rules calling for all data-rich tech companies with over 1 million users to undergo security reviews before listing overseas.
- This draft plan came in the backdrop of a regulatory probe of **Chinese ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing for violating data privacy laws.**

G20 Finance Ministers approve global corporate tax rate of at least 15% during two-day talks in Venice

- Finance Ministers approved a **tax reform for multinationals** that aims to put an end to tax havens by introducing a **global corporate tax rate of at 15 per cent.**
- The group is mainly made up of member states of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD.

About G20:

- The G20 is made up of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the UK, the US, and the EU. Spain is also invited as a permanent guest.

EAM Dr S. Jaishankar speaks with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides

- External Affairs Minister **Dr S. Jaishankar** had a telephonic conversation with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus **Nikos Christodoulides** on **recent developments in Cyprus.**
- Dr. Jaishankar also discussed cooperation in the context of COVID including on travel.

PM Modi, Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih review bilateral cooperation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and **Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih** "took stock" of bilateral cooperation in a telephone conversation.

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- Mr. Modi called the Indian Ocean island nation the “**central pillar**” of India’s ‘neighbourhood policy’, and **maritime vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region** or ‘SAGAR
- Both leaders reviewed the progress of the India-supported development projects in the Maldives and expressed satisfaction at the rapid pace of implementation despite the constraints of the pandemic.
- Mr. Modi also conveyed his congratulations to President Solih on the **election of Maldivian Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid** as the President of the UN General Assembly

EAM Jaishankar expose the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Georgia

- **External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar** unveiled a **statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Georgia** at a prominent park.
- During his **two-day visit to Georgia**, a strategically important country situated at the intersection of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, Jaishankar held talks with the country's top leadership and also handed over the relics of 17th century St. Queen Ketevan to the government and the people of Georgia at a ceremony in Tbilisi.
- "A fitting conclusion to a memorable visit Joined by VPM/FM @DZalkaliani in unveiling the Mahatma Gandhi statue in a prominent Tbilisi Park".

United Arab Emirates formally opens its embassy in Israel in Tel Aviv

- The **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** has inaugurated its **embassy in Israel**, less than a year after the two countries announced they would establish formal diplomatic relations.
- The embassy is situated in the **Tel Aviv Stock Exchange building**
- The venue in the heart of Israel's financial district highlighted the **central role economic cooperation has played since the UAE became only the third majority-Arab country to recognise Israel**.
- At the ceremony, attended by new Israeli President Isaac Herzog, Emirati Ambassador Mohamed al-Khaja called the embassy opening “an important milestone in the growing relationship between our two countries.

China start the construction of world's 1st commercial small modular reactor

- **China National Nuclear Corporation** has announced that it has started building a multi-purpose small modular reactor demonstration project at Changjiang nuclear plant in South China's Hainan Province.
- This project is the **world's first commercial onshore small modular reactor (SMR)** to start construction.
- It marks a strategic cooperation **agreement between CNNC and the Hainan government**.
- The project uses **CNNC's Linglong One technology**.
- Also known as ACP100, it is a multi-purpose **pressurized water reactor (PWR)** design developed as a result of more than 10 years of independent research and development.
- In 2016, the Linglong One design became the **first SMR to pass a safety review** by the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**.

Britain launches plans to decarbonize its transport systems

- Britain unveiled plans **to decarbonize its transport systems**, phasing out the sale of all polluting road vehicles by 2040 and committing the aviation sector to a **2050 net zero emissions target**.

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- **Transport Secretary Grant Shapps** stated the proposals would provide a **"credible pathway"** for the whole transport sector to reach net zero by mid-century, as the country prepares to host the crucial **COP26 climate summit in November**.
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson last year announced a 10-point plan for **"a green industrial revolution"** to tackle climate change, which included banning petrol and diesel **new vehicle sales by 2030**.

UN-FAO present State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021 Report

- The **State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021 (SOFI 2021) report** presents the first evidence-based global assessment of chronic food insecurity in the year the COVID-19 pandemic emerged and spread across the globe.
- The **SOFI 2021 report** will also **focus on complementary food system solutions** that address the key drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition, i.e. conflict, climate variability and extremes, economic slowdowns and downturns, and COVID-19, and that ensure access to affordable healthy diets for all.
- It will look in-depth at **six transformative pathways to achieve this**, drawing upon best practices and lessons learned from around the world.
- The **report is presented by** the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization.
- **SOFI 2021** will be translated into **all United Nations official languages**.

Singapore initiates one of world's largest floating solar panel farms

- **Singapore** unveiled **one of the world's biggest floating solar power farms**, covering an **area the size of 45 football pitches**, as part of the city-state's push to cut greenhouse gas emissions.
- The **project** is the **country's most ambitious** yet, comprising 122,000 panels on **Tengeh Reservoir** that will produce enough electricity to run its five water treatment plants.
- Singapore is among the **biggest per capita carbon dioxide emitters in Asia** and its land scarcity makes boosting renewable energy sources a challenge.
- The **prosperous financial hub** has turned to setting up plants off its coasts and in reservoirs, and **aims to quadruple solar energy production by 2025**.

Biden extends USA's Child Tax Credit programme

- American President **Joe Biden** extended the **"Child Tax Credit Programme"** because this programme has potential to reduce child poverty in America.
- **Some 35 million American families** have received their first monthly payout from the U.S. government in an **expanded income-support program**.
- The **Child Tax Credit** has been likened to a **universal basic income for children**, within income limits, helping families meet expenses from rent to food and daycare.

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- The Center on Poverty and Social Policy at Columbia University estimates the expansion can reduce **the U.S. child poverty rate by up to 45%**.
- Under the Child Tax Credit program that was broadened under Biden's COVID-19 stimulus, eligible families collect an initial monthly payment of up to **\$300 for each child under six years old and up to \$250 for each older child**.

Ethiopia: PM Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity party wins parliamentary election

- **Ethiopia's governing Prosperity Party** has won the most seats in the country's parliamentary election.
- **PM Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity Party wins** 410 out of the 436 contested seats in Ethiopia's federal parliament.
- The Prosperity Party was formed after the dismantling of Ethiopia's former ruling coalition, which had been dominated by **Tigray politicians**.
- **Disagreements over that decision** signalled the first tensions between **Abiy and Tigray** leaders that eventually led to the conflict in the region in November.
- **Tegbaru Yared**, a researcher with the Institute for Security Studies, wrote this week that there remained "**deep political cleavages**" in Ethiopia.
- The Prosperity Party "should focus on stabilising the country, stopping intercommunal conflicts, managing inflation, engaging the opposition and initiating an all-inclusive national dialogue", Tegbaru wrote.

New quad grouping formed by US, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan

- The **United States, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan**, have agreed in principle to establish a new quadrilateral diplomatic platform focused on enhancing regional connectivity.
- "The parties consider **long-term peace and stability in Afghanistan critical to regional connectivity** and agree that peace and regional connectivity are mutually reinforcing".
- Recognizing the **historic opportunity** to open flourishing interregional trade routes, the parties intend to cooperate to expand trade, build transit links, and strengthen **business-to-business ties**.
- **About Quad Grouping:**
- The **Quad**, officially the **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue**, is a group of four countries.
- The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (**QSD, also known as the Quad**) is a strategic dialogue between the Countries that is **maintained by talks between member countries**.

APEC leaders agree to expand sharing and manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines

- Leaders of the **Asia-Pacific trade group APEC**, including **US President Joe Biden and Russia's Vladimir Putin** have pledged to work to expand sharing and manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines to fight the global pandemic.
- The **leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation** stated that they would encourage the voluntary transfer of vaccine production technologies on mutually agreed terms as the region prepared for future health shocks.
- After a **virtual meeting chaired by New Zealand**, the leaders noted in a joint statement, the pandemic continues to have a devastating impact on our region's people and economies.
- They mentioned they will only overcome this **health emergency** by accelerating equitable access to safe, effective, quality-assured, and affordable COVID-19 vaccines.

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- The APEC leaders met virtually to discuss collective actions to **navigate the COVID-19 pandemic** and its economic impacts.

China inaugurates 600 kph maglev train makes public debut

- The country China unveiled a **super-fast 600 kph maglev train**.
- The world's first high-speed maglev transportation system running at a **speed of 600 kilometers per hour** made its public debut in Qingdao, East China's Shandong Province.
- Here is everything about the **world's fastest ground vehicle**.

About the train:

- Maglev is short for magnetic levitation.
- The technology was first patented in the 1960s.
- It uses superconducting magnets to suspend the train car above the rails.
- The magnets repel and help with motion.
- The **maglev train, developed by China in the coastal town of Qingdao**.
- The train uses electro-magnetic force and levitates above the track.
- Hence, there is no contact between the train and the body.
- China **has used this technology for short distances in the past**, especially between the Shanghai airport and the city.

Liverpool cleared of World Heritage status

- **Liverpool** has been stripped of its coveted **world heritage status** after UNESCO blamed years of development for an **"irreversible loss"** to the historic value of its Victorian docks.
- The UN's heritage body concluded at a meeting in China that the **"outstanding universal value"** of Liverpool's waterfront had been destroyed by new buildings, including Everton football club's new £500m stadium.
- The decision is a humiliating blow for the city and gives Liverpool the ignominious distinction of being only the third place to lose the status in nearly 50 years.
- The other delisted sites were **Oman's Arabian Oryx Sanctuary** in 2007 and the Dresden Elbe valley in Germany in 2009.
- **Liverpool has enjoyed world heritage status since 2004** – placing it alongside the Taj Mahal and Great Wall of China – as recognition for its role as a major trading power during the British empire and the architectural beauty of its waterfront.

About World Heritage Site:

- A **World Heritage Site** is a **landmark** or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- World Heritage Sites are **designated by UNESCO** for having cultural, historical, scientific or other form of significance.

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World's first 3D-printed stainless-steel bridge unveiled in Amsterdam

- A 12-metre 3D-printed pedestrian bridge designed by Joris Laarman and built by Dutch Robotics Company MX3D has opened in Amsterdam six years after the project was launched.
- The bridge, which was fabricated from stainless steel rods by **six-axis robotic arms** equipped with welding gear, spans the Oudezijds Achterburgwal in Amsterdam's Red Light District.
- Named MX3D Bridge, it was **designed by Dutch studio Joris Laarman Lab** in collaboration with MX3D, a technology company co-founded by Laarman, and engineering firm Arup.
- The structure used **4,500 kilograms of stainless steel**, which was 3D-printed by robots in a factory over a period of six months before being craned into position over the canal this year.

Call on Prime Minister by PGA-elect and Foreign Minister of the Maldives

- The **President-elect of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** and Foreign Minister of the Maldives, H.E. Abdulla Shahid, called on Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- **H.E. Abdulla Shahid** is visiting India in his capacity as **President-elect** of the 76th session of the UNGA, following the election held in New York on July 7, 2021.
- Prime Minister felicitated the President-elect on his Vision Statement for a '**Presidency of Hope**', and assured him of India's full support and cooperation during his Presidency.
- The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of reforming the multilateral system, including the United Nations organs, to reflect the current realities of the world and the aspirations of a vast majority of the world's population.

INS Airavat arrived Jakarta with Covid Relief Supplies to Indonesia

- **Indian Naval Ship Airavat** arrived at the **Port of Jakarta, Indonesia** on 24 Jul 2021, **carrying essential COVID-19 relief supplies**.
- The ship has brought five Cryogenic containers **containing 100 MT of Liquid Oxygen and 300 Concentrators** to support Indonesia in its fight against the ongoing pandemic.
- **INS Airavat is a Landing Ship Tank (Large) type of ship** with a primary role to carry out amphibious operations and is capable of carrying multiple tanks, amphibious vehicles and other military cargo.
- The **ship is also deployed for HADR relief operations** and has been a part of various relief efforts across the Indian Ocean Region.

Bangladesh decided to develop alternative social media platform for Facebook and Whatsapp

- The **Bangladesh government** is working to **develop a social media platform** named '**Jogajog**' as an **alternative to Facebook**.
- '**Entrepreneurship Masterclass Series 2**' organized by Women e-Commerce (WI), State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak stated that the **ICT Ministry** has taken the initiative in this direction to make the country self-reliant.
- He stated that the platform will help **the local entrepreneurs** to create their own marketplace for sharing information and data without depending on any foreign platform.

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- He mentioned that the government is also working to develop a communication app 'Alapan' as an alternative to Whatsapp.
- **Zunaid Ahmed Palak** noted that the government also plans to **develop a streaming app** as an alternative to YouTube so that the huge outflow of money due to advertisements from the country could be stopped.

Maldives Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid Meets PM Modi in New Delhi

- The **President-elect of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** and Foreign Minister of the Maldives, **Abdulla Shahid**, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.
- During that meeting PM Modi **emphasised the importance of reforming the multilateral system to reflect the current realities and aspirations of a vast majority of the world's population.**
- Also PM Modi **highlighted the importance of the Maldives as a key pillar of India's "Neighbourhood First policy" and the vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region).**
- PM Modi and Abdulla Shahid **discussed the rapid growth in the India-Maldives bilateral relationship in recent years.**

First time ever, Indian Railways' Oxygen Express to transport 200 MT Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) to Bangladesh in 10 containers

- Indian Railways' Oxygen Express to transport 200 MT Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) to Bangladesh in 10 containers.
- This is **the first time ever** that the Oxygen Express is put into operation in a neighbouring country.
- An indent was placed at Tata in Chakradharpur Division under South Eastern Railway to transport 200 MT of Liquid Medical Oxygen to Benapole, Bangladesh.
- It may be noted that Oxygen Expresses were started by Indian Railways on 24th April, 2021 to provide respite to Indian states requiring medical Oxygen.
- **More than 35000 MT of LMO was transported to 15 states.**
- Around 480 Oxygen Expresses were operationalised.

UNESCO grants World Heritage Status to Madrid's Paseo del Prado and Retiro Park

- **Madrid's tree-lined Paseo del Prado boulevard** and the adjoining **Retiro park** have been added to **UNESCO's World Heritage list.**
- The **UNESCO World Heritage Committee**, holding an online meeting from Fuzhou, China, backed the candidacy that highlighted the **green area's** introduction of nature into Spain's capital.
- The influence the properties have had on the designs of other cities in Latin America was also applauded by committee members.
- UNESCO stated that "Collectively, they illustrate the aspiration for a utopian society during the height of the Spanish Empire".

Philippines is the first country to approve Golden Rice for planting

- The **Philippines** approved commercial cultivation of **vitamin A-rich Golden Rice**, long touted as a **partial remedy for childhood malnutrition.**

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- It comes at a time when scientists in Bangladesh expressed deep frustration over regulators' delay in approving the variety in the country for nearly four years.
- Now, **Filipino farmers** will become the **first in the world to be able to cultivate Golden Rice**, a daily consumption of which can potentially reduce childhood malnutrition prevalent in the Philippines as well as in Bangladesh.
- The **Filipino variety of Golden Rice** was developed by the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rice Research Institute (DA-PhilRice) in partnership with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) to contain additional levels of beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A.
- According to the **World Health Organization's global vitamin A deficiency (VAD) database**, one in every five pre-school children in Bangladesh is deficient in this key vitamin.
- Among **pregnant women, 23.7% suffer from VAD**.
- Globally VAD affects an estimated 190 million children, a major cause of childhood blindness.

Indonesia: Sunseap set to build world's biggest floating solar project

- **Singapore's Sunseap** is planning a **\$2 billion floating solar project** on a reservoir in **Indonesia's Batam Island**.
- If successful it will be the **world's largest to date** and **electricity** could be exported via undersea cable to the nearby island city state of Singapore.
- Sunseap stated it has signed a memorandum of understanding with Batam Indonesia free zone authority, **Badan Pengusahaan Batam (BP Batam)**, to build a floating photovoltaic system and energy storage system.
- The **floating solar system** will have a capacity of 2.2 GWp and span around 1600 hectares, making it the largest in the world to date.
- The energy storage system will have a storage capacity of **more than 4000 MWh**.

Sweden now joins International Solar Alliance

- Leading **European nation Sweden** stated it has ratified the framework agreement for the International Solar Alliance, an initiative of India aimed at promoting renewable energy and sustainable development.
- **Swedish Ambassador to India, Klas Molin**, stated Sweden is to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- He mentioned Sweden hopes to bring its expertise and its experience in **renewable energy and clean energy technologies** to discussions in the ISA to contribute in meeting the challenges related to climate change.
- Prime Minister Lofven reiterated to Prime Minister Modi the need for enhanced global cooperation at their last meeting".

BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting on Traditional Medicine

- **BRICS countries** are all prepared to take ahead, incorporate and amplify the Traditional Medicine System in the fight against Covid-19.
- BRICS countries will be discussing this particular issue in the virtual event, BRICS-Health Ministers Meeting on Traditional Medicine.
- The Ministry of AYUSH, GOI, is on the go to present the success of Indian System of Medicine in mitigation of COVID-19 pandemic.

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- India assumed the rotating Chairship of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) on January 1, 2021.
- India took over the chairship from Russia.
- Each BRICS member takes over the Chair for a year.
- The theme for this Health Ministers' meet is BRICS Requit to COVID-19: Towards Digitalised Holistic Framework for Pandemic Preparedness.

Tajikistan: Rajnath Singh to attend SCO Defence Ministers' meeting

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh attended a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Dushanbe that extensively deliberated on regional security challenges as well as the situation in Afghanistan.
- The defence minister reached the capital city of Tajikistan on a **three-day visit** to attend the conclave of the defence ministers of the member states of the SCO, an eight-nation influential grouping.
- Ahead of the conclave Singh held bilateral **talks with his Belarusian counterpart Lt Gen Viktor Khrenin** and had a brief conversation with Russian Defence Minister Gen Sergey Shoygu.
- India has shown keen interest in deepening its security-related cooperation with the SCO and its **Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS)**, which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.

Brazil landscape garden Sitio Burle Marx bags UNESCO World Heritage status

- Globally renowned for its natural beauty, **Rio de Janeiro received a new international distinction as UNESCO added landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx's former home to its list of World Heritage sites.**
- The **Sitio Burle Marx in western Rio** features **more than 3,500 species of plants native to Rio** and is considered a laboratory for botanical and landscape experimentation.
- The recognition was granted during a meeting of UNESCO's Heritage Committee in China.
- The site was designated a Cultural Landscape, a category that celebrates places allowing interaction between the environment and people.
- "The **garden is characterized by** sinuous forms, exuberant mass planting, architectural plant arrangements, dramatic colour contrasts, use of tropical plants, and the incorporation of elements of traditional folk culture."

Nagaland Bhoot Jolokia chillies exported to London

- **Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri** noted that the **"king of chillies"** from Nagaland, also known as the Bhoot Jolokia (ghost pepper), has been exported to the United Kingdom via Guwahati by air for the first time.
- Sharing images of the fiery chillies, also known as **"Raja Mircha"**, the Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs recalled his visit to a vegetable market in Meghalaya with his wife and former diplomat **Lakshmi Puri in August 2019** when they had a **"brush"** with the chillies at a local shop.
- The export has come as a major boost to the trade of products with **Geographical Indications (GI)** from the north-eastern region.
- The **king of chillies from Nagaland** exported to London via Guwahati for the first time.

US announces USD 25 million aid to support COVID-19 vaccination in India

- US will provide **\$25 million to support India's vaccination programme**

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- Committed to further strengthening of ties between the two countries.
- Also The US government will partner with India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, as well as state governments to support vaccine supply chain logistics, to address misinformation and vaccine hesitancy, and train healthcare workers to deliver vaccines safely and effectively across India.
- The US Agency for International Development (USAID) will also collaborate with key stakeholders, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UNICEF, the WHO, and GAVI to promote equitable vaccine delivery and strengthen pandemic preparedness.
- Since March 2020, USAID has allocated more than \$226 million (about Rs 1,670 crore) in Covid-19 relief to India, including more than \$100 million (about Rs 740 crore rupees) to support India's response to the recent surge and more than \$50 million (about Rs 370 crore rupees) in emergency supplies.

Revision Points

Country	Capital	Currency	Head
UAE	Abu Dhabi	Dirham	Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan
Oman	Muscat	Rial	Haitham bin Tariq Al Said
Gambia	Banjul	Dalasi	Adama Barrow
Hungary	Budapest	Forint	János Áder
Mongolia	Ulaanbaatar	Togrog	Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh
Qatar	Doha	Riyal	Abdullah bin Nasser
Czech Republic	Prague	Koruna	Miloš Zeman
Serbia	Belgrade	Dinar	Aleksandar Vučić
Austria	Vienna	Euro	Alexander Van der Bellen
Norway	Oslo	Krone	Erna Solberg
Cuba	Havana	Peso	Manuel Marrero Cruz
Israel	Jerusalem	Shekel	Naftali Bennett
Ukraine	Kyiv	Hryvnia	
Singapore	Singapore City	Dollar	
Gambia	Banjul	Dalasi	
Lebanon	Beirut	Pound	Najib Mikati
Peru	Lima	Sol	Pedro Castillo
Eswatini	Mbabane & Lobamba	Lilangeni & South African Rand	Cleopas Dlamini
Haiti	Port-au-Prince	Gourde	Ariel Henry

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Vietnam	Hanoi	Dong	Phạm Minh Chính
Nepal	Kathmandu	Rupee	KP Sharma Oli
Tajikistan	Dushanbe	Samoni	Kokhir Rasulzoda
Sweden	Stockholm	Krona	Stefan Löfven
The Netherlands	Amsterdam	Euro	Mark Rutte
Uzbekistan	Tashkent	So'm	Shavkat Mirziyoyev
Ethiopia	Addis Ababa	Birr	Abiy Ahmed
Georgia	Tbilisi	Lari	Salome Zourabichvili
Maldives	Male	Rufiyaa	Ibrahim Mohamed Solih
USA	Washington D.C,	Dollar	Joe Biden
Spain	Madrid	Euro	Pedro Sánchez
UK	London	Pound Sterling	Boris Johnson
Turkey	Ankara	Lira	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
South Korea	Seoul	Won	Moon Jae-in
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh	Riyal	Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
South Africa	Cape town	Rand	Cyril Ramaphosa
Russia	Moscow	Ruble	Vladimir Putin
Indonesia	Jakarta	Rupiah	Joko Widodo
Japan	Tokyo	Yen	Yoshihide Suga
Germany	Berlin	Euro	Frank-Walter Steinmeier
France	Paris	Euro	Emmanuel Macron
Canada	Ottawa	Dollar	Justin Trudeau
Brazil	Brasilia	Real	Jair Bolsonaro
Australia	Canberra	Dollar	Scott Morrison
Argentina	Bueno Aires	Peso	Alberto Fernández
Italy	Rome	Euro	Sergio Mattarella
Afghanistan	Kabul	Afghani	Ashraf Ghani
Denmark	Copenhagen	Krone	Mette Frederiksen
Pakistan	Islamabad	Rupee	Arif Alvi
Mexico	Mexico City	Peso	Andrés Manuel López Obrador
Bhutan	Thimphu	Ngultrum	Lotay Tshering
Bangladesh	Dhaka	Taka	Abdul Hamid
Switzerland	Bern	Franc	Guy Parmelin

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Kuwait	Kuwait City	Dinar	Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah
Philippines	Manila	Peso	Rodrigo Duterte
China	Beijing	Renminbi	Xi Jinping

Important Appointments

National Appointments

Name of the Person	Designation	Predecessor/Others
Anil Kant (Road Safety Commissioner)	Chief of the Kerala police (1 st Dalit Officer)	DGP Loknath Behera
Atul Keshap	US's Charge'd Affairs	
Amitabh Kant	Niti Aayog Chief Executive Officer	Extended for 1 year
Prathmesh Mishra	Chairman, Royal Challengers Bangalore	Anand Kripalu
Ashok Sonthalia	Chief financial officer, Titan	
Swadesh Behera	Chief people officer, Titan	
Vivek Ram Chaudhari	Vice Chief of the Indian Air Force	HS Arora
N Venudhar Reddy	Director General of All India Radio	Joint Secretary in the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management
Andy Palmer	Executive Vice Chairman and CEO, Switch Mobility (Ashok Leyland)	He is the former Aston Martin chief
Nitin Seth	Chief Operating Officer, Switch Mobility (Ashok Leyland)	
Sarwant Singh Saini	Chief Planning Officer, Switch Mobility (Ashok Leyland)	
Roger Blakey	Chief Technical Officer, Switch Mobility (Ashok Leyland)	
Nilotpal Gupta	Head of its Data Science Unit, ICICI Securities	
Pushkar Singh Dhami	11th Chief Minister of Uttarakhand	Youngest Chief Minister of Uttarakhand

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Satish Agnihotri	Managing Director, National High Speed Rail Corporation Ltd	
Kalyan Narayan Bhattacharjee	Lokayukta in Tripura (3rd Lokayukta)	Lokayukta Act has been in force in Tripura since 2008
Harish Laddha	CEO, Airtel Business	
P.S. Sreedharan Pillai	Goa Governor	Governor of Mizoram
Satyadev Narayan Arya	Tripura Governor	Governor of Haryana
Ramesh Bais	Jharkhand Governor	Governor of Tripura
Bandaru Dattatraya	Haryana Governor	Governor of Himachal Pradesh
Thaawarchand Gehlot	Karnataka Governor	serves as Cabinet Minister
Hari Babu Kambhampati	Mizoram Governor	Member of Parliament to the 16th Lok Sabha from Visakhapatnam
Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel	Madhya Pradesh Governor	
Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar	Himachal Pradesh Governor	
Dr. Madhuri Kanitkar	Vice-Chancellor of the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS), Nashik	Deputy Chief, Integrated Defence Staff (Medical) in the Ministry of Defence
Nitin Gadkari	Brand ambassador of Khadi Prakritk Paint	
Shyam Srinivasan	MD and CEO. Federal Bank	Extended for 3 years
Vinay Prakash	Resident Grievance Officer for India, Twitter	Dharmendra Chatur
Piyush Goyal	Leader of the house in Rajya Sabha	
Kamal Batra	President and Head – Assets, Bandhan Bank	
Suman Mishra	Chief Executive as a Whole-time Director, Mahindra Electric Mobility Ltd	Mahesh Babu
Naveen Pandey	Chief executive officer, Unibic Foods	
B Anand	Head, TCG Group Polymer	

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	Projects	
C. Vijayakumar	President and Chief executive officer, HCL Technologies	Shiv Nadar
Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi	Deputy leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha	Piyush Goyal
Kiko Ramírez	Head Coach, Odisha FC	Stuart Baxter
B K Sinha	Press Attache of India's Olympic contingent at Tokyo Olympic	Sinha is a former Haryana DGP
Rahul Saraf	Head of Investment Banking, Citi India	Rahul joined Citi India in June 2005.
Aramane Giridhar	Chairman, National Highways Authority of India (Additional Charge)	He is the Secretary of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
Rasmi Ranjan Das	Members of the UN tax committee	For the 2021 to 2025 term
Dr Sharad Kumar	Director of Chennai Airport	Appointed by the Airports Authority of India
Basavaraj Bommai	Chief Minister, Karnataka	BS Yediyurappa
Nasir Kamal	Director General of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security	Term period up to his superannuation on July 31, 2022
Balaji Srivastava	Additional charge of the Delhi Police	He headed the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security
Saikhom Mirabai Chanu	Additional Superintendent of Police, Manipur	She won the silver medal in the 49 kg category at ongoing Olympics
Ameya Velankar	Head of marketing for India, South Asia, Uber	
Sanjay Rai Sherpuria	National Brand Ambassador for SDG Choupal	He is a community member of UN habitat, WHO, NITI Ayog and MSME ministry
Noopur Chaturvedi	Chief executive officer, Bharat Bill Payment System	He was the country head for small and medium business at

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		PayU
Ramesh Nair	Chief executive officer for India and managing director, market development, for Asia, Colliers	
M. Venkataramana	Tamil Nadu Cricket senior team coach	D. Vasu

43 leaders take oath as ministers in Cabinet Reshuffle

- As many as **43 new members** are all set to be sworn in **Prime Minister Modi's new cabinet** which will be one of the most inclusive with record representation of **SC, ST members**.
- It is learnt from reliable sources that post-expansion, there will be **12 members from the SC community**, including two in the cabinet; eight members will be from **Scheduled Tribe category** in the council of ministers out of which three will be in the cabinet.
- Jyotiraditya Scindia, Pashupati Kumar Paras, Bhupender Yadav, Anupriya Patel, Shobha Karandlaje, Meenakshi Lekhi, Ajay Bhatt, Anurag Thakur are among the ministers, new and old, who will take the oath.

Here's the final list of ministers:

S.No	Minister	Portfolio
1	Narendra Modi: Prime Minister	Also in charge of personnel, public grievances and pensions; Department of Atomic Energy; Department of Space; all important policy issues; and all other ministries not allocated to other ministers
2	Rajnath Singh	Defence Minister
3	Amit Shah	Home Minister, Cooperation Minister
4	Nitin Gadkari	Road Transport and Highways Minister
5	Nirmala Sitharaman	Finance Minister, Corporate Affairs Minister
6	Narendra Singh Tomar	Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister
7	S Jaishankar	External Affairs Minister
8	Arjun Munda	Tribal Affairs Minister
9	Smriti Irani	Women and Child Welfare Minister
10	Piyush Goyal	Commerce Ministry and also holds Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Textiles
11	Dharmendra Pradhan	Education Minister, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister
12	Pralhad Joshi	Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Coal Minister, Mines Minister

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13	Sarbananda Sonowal	Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister, AYUSH Minister
14	Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi	Minority Affairs Minister
15	Giriraj Singh	Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj
16	Mahendra Nath Pandey	Heavy Industries Minister
17	Narayan Tatu Rane	Minister for MSME
18	Sarbananda Sonowal	Ports and Shipping Minister besides holding charge of AYUSH Ministry
19	Virendra Kumar	Social Justice and Empowerment Minister
20	Jyotiraditya M Scindia	Civil Aviation Minister
21	Ramchandra Prasad Singh	Steel Minister
22	Ashwini Vaishnaw	Railways, Communication and Electronics and IT Ministry.
23	Pashu Pati Kumar Paras	Food Processing Industries Minister
24	Kiren Rijju	Law & Justice Minister
25	Raj Kumar Singh	Minister of Power & Minister of New and Renewable Energy
26	Hardeep Singh Puri	Minister for Petroleum and will continue in the Housing and Urban Development ministry
27	Mansukh Mandaviya	Health Minister as well as the Minister for Chemical and Fertilizers
28	Bhupender Yadav	Environment, Forest & Climate Change Minister, Labour & Employment Minister
29	Parshottam Rupala	Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
30	G. Kishan Reddy	Culture and Tourism Minister, Minister for Development of Northeast
31	Anurag Singh Thakur	Information and Broadcasting Minister and Youth Affairs and Sports
32	Minister of State in PMO Dr Jitendra Singh	Independent charge of Ministries of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences.

Minister of State:

S.No	Minister	portfolio
1	Subhas Sarkar	Minister of State for Education
2	Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad	Ministers of State for Finance
3	Rajkumar Ranjan	Minister of State for External Affairs and Education

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	Singh	
4	Bharati Pravin Pawar	Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare
5	Bishweswar Tudu	Minister of State for Tribal Affairs and Jal Shakti
6	John Barla	Minister of State for Minority Affairs
7	Dr. L. Murugan	MOS in the Information and Broadcasting and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying ministry
8	Pankaj Choudhary	Ministers of State for Finance
9	Anupriya Singh Patel	Minister of State for Commerce and Industry
10	Meenakashi Lekhi	MOS in External Affairs and Culture Ministry
11	Annpurna Devi	Minister of State for Education
12	Ajay Bhatt	Minister of State for Defence and Tourism
13	Shripad Naik	Minister of State for Port, Shipping and Waterways and Tourism

International Appointments

Name of the Person	Designation	Predecessor/Others
Anand Kripalu	MD and Global CEO, Blackstone backed EPL	Sudhanshu Vats
Patrick Vieira	Manager, Crystal Palace	Appointed for 3 years
Gaganjot Singh	President of Africa, India and the Middle East region, Michelin	
Neha Parikh	CEO of Waze	Noam Bardin
Stefan Löfven	Prime Minister, Sweden (re-elected)	
Sher Bahadur Deuba	Prime Minister, Nepal	
N.S. Srinivasa Murthy	Honorary Consul General of Vietnam	
Sudhanshu Vats	Deputy managing director, Pidilite Industries	Effective September 1, 2021.
Pragati Rana	Senior Vice President (SVP)-	

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	Strategy, Isobar	
Jean Lin	Board of directors, Dentsu Group	
Deepinder Goyal	Independent director, Magicpin	He is Zomato co-founder and Chief Executive Officer
Ariel Henry	Haiti's new Prime Minister	
Cleopas Dlamini	Prime Minister, Eswatini	Appointed by Eswatini's King Mswati III
Pedro Castillo	Elected President, Peru	
Thippesha Dyamappa	Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Upstox	
Najib Mikati	Prime Minister, Lebanon	Saad Hariri
Abdulla Shahid of Maldives	Presidency of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly	

Resignation/Retirement

Name of the Person	Designation
Tirath Singh Rawat	Uttarakhand Chief Minister
Jim Whitehurst	President, IBM
Manu Sawhney	CEO, ICC
Shiv Nadar	Mamging Director, HCL Technologies
Saad Hariri	PM, Lebanon
BS Yediyurappa	Karnataka Chief Minister

Govt extends LIC chairman superannuation age up to 62 years

- The government has extended the superannuation age of IPO-bound LIC Chairman to up to 62 years by making amendment to the **Life Insurance Corporation of India (Staff) Regulations, 1960**.
- The **changes** made in the **rules** will be called the **Life Insurance Corporation of India (Staff) Amendment Rules, 2021**.
- It is to be noted that the **retirement age for the top executives** of the majority of **PSUs is 60 years**, barring a few exceptions, including the State Bank of India (SBI).
- The government extended the **term of Kumar** from **June 30, 2021, till March 13, 2022**, the date when he completes three years.
- The government has already amended the **Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956** along with the **Finance Act 2021** to facilitate the public offer.

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- As a part of the amendment, the government significantly increased the authorised capital of LIC to Rs 25,000 crore from Rs 100 crore to facilitate the listing.

Kerala govt appointed dowry prohibition officers in all districts

- In view of increasing cases of **dowry harassment** in the state, the Kerala government has amended its dowry Prohibition rules.
- According to the new amended norms, **dowry prohibition officers will be appointed in all 14 districts in the state.**
- State Health Minister Veena George stated the post of dowry prohibition officers had existed on a regional basis in **3 districts- Thiruvananthapuram, Emakula and Kozhikode** and it has now been expanded to all districts.
- "The appointment of the dowry prohibition officers is part of the government's efforts to crack down on dowry in view of increasing cases nowadays".

TMC MP Santanu Sen suspended from Rajya Sabha for remaining part of monsoon session

- On July 23, 2021, Trinamool Congress member MP Shantanu Sen was suspended from the Rajya Sabha for the remaining period of the monsoon session.
- This is done after a motion moved by the government was passed by the House.
- The motion was passed by a voice vote and Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu.

About Santanu Sen :

- Santanu Sen was a councilor in the Kolkata Municipal Corporation.
- He is a Rajya Sabha member from West Bengal.

Important Awards and Honours

Winner	Prize	Awarded By/Theme/Purpose
Bisat hi Bharath (2017 NSS National Awardee)	Diana Prize (selected awardees once every 2 yrs by a panel of former UK PMs)	Youth development from a village in Anantapur
Dr. Rajendra Kishore Panda (Odia Poet)	Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar	Finalised by Dr. H.S. Shivaprakash, Agrahara Krishnamurthy and Shyamal Bhattacharya
Invest India	United Nations Investment Promotion Award	Declared by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
Azhar Maqsumi, a social activist from Hyderabad	United Kingdom Commonwealth Points of Light Award	'Hunger Has No Religion' by Sani Welfare Foundation

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Monks on Mission (made by the young monks at ISKCON Gurugram)	Outstanding Achievement Award at the 24th monthly season of Tagore International Film Festival	written and conceptualized by monk Padasevan Bhakta Das, directed by HG Rambhadra Das
Korean Air	2021 Airline of the Year	
Kaushik Basu	Humboldt Research Award for Economics	Awarded by by Professor Dr Hans-Bernd Schäfer of Bucerius Law School in Hamburg, Germany
Zaila Avant-garde (14-year-old from New Orleans, Louisiana)	2021 Scripps National Spelling Bee honour	First African American winner
Omchery N N Pillai (Journalist & playwright)	Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam (BKS)'s Literary Award for 2021	The Jury was headed by the novelist M Mukundan
Telangana State Cooperative Apex Bank	Best state cooperative bank	By National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
Karimnagar District Cooperative Credit Bank	Best district cooperative credit bank (DCCB) in South India	By National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute principal scientist Kajal Chakraborty	Norman Borlaug award	Developing the nutraceutical products
Aadhimalai Pazhangudiyinar Producer Company Limited and Snehakunja Trust	Equator Prize	for work in the field of conservation and biodiversity
Payal Kapadia's A Night of Knowing Nothing	Oeil d'or (Golden Eye) award for best documentary at the 74th Cannes Film Festival	The award was instituted in 2015 by LaScam
Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh	Olympic Laurel in Tokyo	His extensive work in sport for development
Cachar district of Barak Valley Shibaji Banerjee in South Assam	National Silver SKOCH award	Under health category on the project called "Pushti Nirbhor"
Shibaji Banerjee (Former India	Mohun Bagan Ratna	Abhimanyu Easwaran (West

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goalkeeper)	(posthumously) (First recipient was former captain Sailen Manna)	Bengal) - Best Cricketer; Bidisha Kundu - Best Athlete.
Vice Admiral Vinay Badhwar (India's Chief Hydrographer)	Alexander Dalrymple award	Awarded by the British government in recognition of his works in areas of hydrography and nautical cartography
Sunjeev Sahota (One of the 13 winners) (2015 Booker Prize nominee for The Year of the Runaways)	2021 Booker Prize for fiction	China Room (13 books on this year's long list were chosen by the judging panel: historian Maya Jasanoff (chair); writer and editor Horatia Harrod; actor Natascha McElhone; twice Booker-shortlisted novelist and professor Chigozie Obioma; and writer and former Archbishop Rowan Williams)
Asha Bhosle	Bhushan Puraskar	Awarded by Maharashtra govt
Vaidehi Dongre from Michigan	Miss India USA	
Satpura Tiger Reserve	Natwest Group Earth Heroes Award	Earth Guardian category for best management

Indian Army names firing range in Gulmarg to honour Vidya Balan

- Basking in the **success of her recently released Sherni** and making the **nation proud** by becoming the only actor from **395 new invitees** to join the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, the governing body behind the Oscars, **Vidya Balan** has now achieved yet another feat as a military firing range in Gulmarg, Kashmir, is named after the actress.
- Honouring** the varied accomplishments of **Vidya**, the Indian Army has **named a military firing range in Gulmarg as the Vidya Balan Firing Range**.

ICCR to set up a Bangabandhu Chair at Delhi University to honour Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

- In honour of Bangladesh's founding father **Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** and to commemorate the **50th anniversary of the country's Liberation War** as well as India's diplomatic ties with **Dhaka**.
- Rahman is popularly called '**Bangabandhu**' (friend of Bengal) by the people of Bangladesh, **Delhi University's Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)** will establish the '**Bangabandhu Chair**'.

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- **Dinesh K Patnaik, Director General, ICCR and PC Joshi, acting DU Vice-Chancellor**, will sign a Memorandum of Understanding on July 12 for setting up of the Chair adding the MoU will be for a duration of five academic years.
- “The ICCR will be establishing '**Bangabandhu Chair**' at Delhi University to honour **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**, the father of Bangladesh and to commemorate the **50th anniversary of the Bangladesh Liberation War** and Indo-Bangladesh diplomatic relations”.

Cannes Film Festival 2021 winners list published

- The **2021 Cannes Film Festival** officially came to an end with the **awards ceremony** in which this year's competition jury named the best films and performances of the festival.
- **With Spike Lee serving as president**, the jury featured director Mati Diop, singer/songwriter Mylène Farmer, actress/director Maggie Gyllenhaal, writer/director Jessica Hausner, actress/director Mélanie Laurent, writer/director Kleber Mendonça Filho, actor Tahar Rahim, and actor Song Kang-ho. Find the full list of winners below.
- **Palme d'Or**: “Titane”
- **Grand Prix**: (tie) “A Hero” and “Compartment No. 6”
- **Jury Prize**: (tie): “Ahed's Knee” and “Memoria”
- **Best Actress**: Renate Reinsve, “The Worst Person in the World”
- **Best Actor**: Caleb Landry Jones, “Nitram”
- **Best Director**: Leos Carax, “Annette”
- **Best Screenplay**: Ryusuke Hamaguchi, “Drive My Car”
- **Camera d'Or**: “Murina” by Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović
- **Short Film Palme d'Or**: Tian Xia Wu Ya by Tang Yi
- **Special Jury Mention for Short Film**: “Ceux de Agosto” by Jasmin Tenucci

27 hospitals nominated for Kayakalp-NQAS Award

- A total of 27 government hospitals, community health centres (CHCs) and primary health centres (PHCs) of the district were selected for the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's prestigious **Kayakalp Award under National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) certification scheme** for 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- **About the award**:
- The **Kayakalp-NQAS Award** was introduced on May 15, 2015 by the Centre to ensure hygiene, sanitation and cleanliness in public health facilities in the country.
- Those **district hospitals, sub-divisional hospitals, CHCs, PHCs and health & wellness centres** which have achieved high levels of cleanliness, hygiene and infection control are recognised and felicitated with the award.

Important MOU's

Cabinet approves MoU between India, Gambia

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** has approved the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) **between** Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of

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Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India and the Public Service Commission, Office of the President, **Republic of The Gambia** on Refurbishing Personnel Administration and Governance Reforms.

- The **main objective of the MoU** is to strengthen and promote bilateral cooperation between the **two countries** in Personnel Administration and Governance Reforms, as this will facilitate a dialogue between Indian Government agencies and the agencies of the Republic of the Gambia.
- The **MoU will help in understanding the personnel administration of both the countries** and enable in improving the system of governance through replicating, adapting and innovating some of the best practices and processes.

The areas of cooperation under this MoU would include, but shall not be limited to:

- Improving Performance Management System in Government.
- Implementation of contributory Pension Scheme
- E-recruitment in Government

Reliance inks pact with ADNOC

- **Reliance Industries (RIL)** and **Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)** have signed an agreement to set up a **new petrochemical complex** in Ruwais, Abu Dhabi, to produce chlor-alkali, ethylene dichloride, and polyvinyl chloride (PVC).
- Under the terms of the agreement, this integrated plant will have a **capacity to produce 940,000 tonnes** of chlor-alkali, 1.1 million tonnes of ethylene dichloride, and 360,000 tonnes of PVC annually.
- According to oil sector executives, it would cost upwards of **Rs 30,000 crore** to set up the petrochemical facility.

Singapore signs pact with Bhutan

- **Singapore** has signed an agreement with the **Royal Government of Bhutan** on the establishment of **Model Technical Training Centres (MTTC)** as part of growth between the two countries.
- The **agreement** was signed by **Sonam Tobgay**, Director of Bilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bhutan, and **Simon Wong**, Ambassador of Singapore to Bhutan.
- It is seen as one of the outcomes of Bhutan's opening up to the outside world.
- India with whom Bhutan has a **special relationship has warm ties** with Singapore with the city state setting up vocational training institutes for Indian youth in places like Rajasthan and Assam in recent years.

CRPF signs MoU with C-DAC

- The **Central Reserve Police Force, CRPF** has signed a **MoU** with **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing C-DAC** to train the manpower of the force in advanced technologies and undertake joint projects.
- The **MoU aims** at augmenting the technical capabilities of CRPF by training its manpower in advanced areas like Internet of Things (IoT), Cyber security, Artificial Intelligence, High-Performance Computing and Big Data Analytics.
- The **agreement** will also provide the **expertise of C-DAC in the form of Technology Partner and Knowledge Partner** in developing various ICT solutions of CRPF.
- Ravideep Singh Sahi IG Communication and IT on behalf of CRPF and Dr. Hemant Darbari, DG C-DAC on behalf of C-DAC, signed the 5 Year MoU in the presence of CRPF DG Kuldiep Singh.

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Tourism Ministry signs MoU with Yatra.Com

- The **Ministry of Tourism** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding, **MoU** with **Yatra.Com** to **strengthen the Hospitality and Tourism Industry**.
- The **primary objective of this MoU** is to provide extensive visibility to accommodation units, which have **self-certified** themselves on System for Assessment, Awareness and Training for the Hospitality Industry- SAATHI on the OTA platform.
- The **MoU** also outlines both parties to encourage **Units to register on NIDHI** and **thereby on SAATHI** and encourage local tourism Industry with appropriate safeguards for curbing spread of COVID-19.
- The **Tourism Ministry in a statement** mentioned that the idea is also to gather more information on accommodation units in order to gain actionable insights and design evidence based and targeted policy measures and to promote safe, honourable and sustainable tourism.

Agreement on global digital tax - to boost India-US trade negotiations

- The **US** announced tariffs on six countries, including India, that have imposed or are considering **equalization levy/digital services tax on e-commerce companies** but immediately suspended the taxes for **up to six months** to provide additional time to complete the ongoing multilateral negotiations on international taxation at the **OECD and G20**.
- The **success of the global tax treaty** will pave the way for the **India-US trade negotiations** which were stuck over digital tax.
- “The **digital tax** imposed on **large US multinationals like Google, Facebook, Amazon** was one of the stumbling blocks during the trade negotiations between the two countries.
- After the success of the global **tax treaty**, this matter will be automatically resolved and will pave the way for fresh negotiation”.

Ladakh and HFRI signed an MoU

- Union Territory of **Ladakh and Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI)** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) for **forest cover development in the region**.
- UT Principal Secretary **Dr. Pawan Kotwal** and HFRI Director **Dr. SS Samant** signed the MoU in Leh.
- Dr Pawan Kotwal stated, **MoU is an advisory arrangement** without any financial and legal implications.
- HFRI is an expertise research institute to help **Ladakh towards Carbon neutrality**.
- He said, Increase in forest cover temperatures and melting of glaciers.
- HFRI would study and identify the suitable plant varieties to increase the forest cover in Ladakh and also help in capacity building with training programmes at grass root level.
- Depending on the requirement a regional **HFRI centre in Ladakh** is also in plan.

About HFRI:

- **Himalayan Forest Research Institute** is a **Research institute** situated in **Shimla in Himachal Pradesh**.

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- It **works under** the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India.

Axis Bank signs MOU with Indian Army

- **Axis Bank, India's third largest private sector bank**, reinforced its commitment to the Defence sector by signing an **MOU** with the Indian Army, to offer a defence service salary package with best-in-class benefits and features under its '**Power Salute**' initiative.
- The **MOU** is a reflection of **Axis Bank's constant endeavour** to serve the **Defence Forces**, and help them meet their financial requirements, aspirations and milestones.
- **Axis Bank's digital initiatives** have enabled soldiers at borders and other remote areas to stay connected and access a bouquet of banking solutions.

APEDA inks MoU with NAFED

- For harnessing exports potential of agricultural and processed food products of cooperatives as well **Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)**, the **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)** signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED)**.
- According to the MoU, the key areas of cooperation include facilitating APEDA **registered exporters getting assistance** under all the Govt. of India schemes implemented through NAFED.
- The MoU also envisages ensuring sustainability and growth of exports by Cooperatives by addressing issues such as **technology, skill, quality products and market access**.
- Both the organisations would organize awareness programs **Skill Development Programmes and Workshops at Regional, State and National levels**.

Addl.Info:

- APEDA has been engaged with State Governments for the implementation of AEP.
- The States of Maharashtra, U.P., Kerala, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Punjab, Karnataka, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Manipur, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, M.P., Mizoram and Meghalaya have finalized the **State specific Action Plan for exports** while the action plans of other States are at different stages of finalization.
- At present, **NAFED is creating a network of honey FPOs across Jammu & Kashmir**, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- Around 65 FPOs will be part of honey corridor linking north-west to north-eastern regions.
- NAFED is aiming at bringing all the FPOs associated with honey production for creating requisite infrastructure under the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission, NAFED's subsidiary Federation of Indian FPOs and Aggregators (FIFA) is currently partnering with FPOs and private sector.

India and Nepal sign MoU on 679 MW Arun Hydro Electric Project to SJVN

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- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed for execution of 679 MW Lower Arun Hydro Electric Project in Nepal between **SatluJ Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN)** Central Public Sector Enterprise under Ministry of Power, **Government of India & Investment Board of Nepal (IBN)** in Kathmandu Nepal.
- The Lower Arun Hydro Electric Project is located in Sankhuwasabha and Bhojpur Districts of Nepal. The project will not have any reservoir or dam and will be a tail race development of **900 MW Arun3 HEP**.
- The project will have **four francis type turbines**.
- On completion the Project will generate 2970 million units of electricity per annum.
- It is scheduled to be completed in four years after commencement of construction activities and has been allocated to SJVN for 25 years on Build Own Operate Transfer basis.

MoU signed between ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) and Delhi University (DU) to set up Bangabandhu Chair at DU as a tribute to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first president of Bangladesh

- MoU signed between **ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations)** and **Delhi University (DU)** to set up **Bangabandhu Chair** at DU as a **tribute to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first president of Bangladesh**
- This chair was the celebration of the commonality of the world view between Indian and Bangladesh as both countries stand for **peace, tranquility, equal respect for all belief systems and democracy**.
- The establishment of the **Bangabandhu Chair** is a fitting tribute to the **great leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**.
- The Chair will focus on the common heritage of the two countries and subjects like Anthropology, Buddhist Studies, Geography, and History, Modern Indian languages including Bangla, Music, Fine Arts, Political Science, International relations and Sociology.

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Denmark for cooperation in health and medicine

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between **India and Denmark** in the field of **health and Medicine**.
- An official release stated that the bilateral MoU will **encourage cooperation between India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and the Health Ministry of Denmark** through joint initiatives and technology development in the **health sector**.
- The release stated that the MoU will **strengthen bilateral ties between India and Denmark**.
- It will facilitate in improving the public health status of the people of both countries.

India and Bhutan diplomatic ties: Nirmala Sitharaman and Namgay Tshering jointly launch BHIM-UPI in Bhutan

- **Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** and **Finance Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Namgay Tshering** jointly launched **BHIM-UPI** in Bhutan.
- The launch fulfils the **commitment made by two countries** during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Bhutan in 2019.
- **Bhutan is the first country to adopt UPI standards for its QR deployment**, and the first country in our immediate neighbourhood to accept mobile based payments through the BHIM App.

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- **With the launch of Bhim UPI services**, there has been a new momentum in the **53 year old diplomatic ties between both the nations**.
- And with this, a unique start to the journey of cashless transactions has begun between India and Bhutan and not just limited to Bhutan only.

NTPC signs MOU with Ladakh and LAHDC

- **State-owned NTPC** signed a **memorandum of understanding (MoU)** with **UT of Ladakh and LAHDC** to set up the **country's first Green Hydrogen Mobility project**, strengthening PM Narendra Modi's vision to ensure a carbon-free economy based on renewable sources and green hydrogen.
- **Union Cabinet Minister for Power and New and Renewable Energy, R.K. Singh** congratulated the company.
- Singh said that it is a matter of pride for all of us that Leh is soon to become India's first city to implement a green hydrogen-based mobility project with zero-emission.
- **REL, a 100% subsidiary of NTPC**, signed a **MoU with the Union Territory of Ladakh**, to set up the country's first green Hydrogen Mobility project in the region.
- The **signing of the MoU was also marked with the inauguration of NTPC's first solar installations in Leh** in the form of solar trees and a solar carport.

MoU signed between Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) and Government of Gujarat

- An MoU was signed between Jamnagar based **Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA)** under **Ministry of Ayush and the Government of Gujarat** in the presence of the Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Nitinbhai Patel and Secretary, Ministry of AyushVaidya Rajesh Kotecha on 15th July 2021.
- Through this MoU all the institutions functioning in the Ayurveda campus in Jamnagar have been brought under the umbrella of ITRA, **the only institution under the Ministry of Ayush that has been accorded the status of Institute of National Importance (INI)**.
- This arrangement will result, in due course, in the opening of new doors in the fields of education, research and medicine.
- In the field of Ayurveda, it will be easier to prepare new teaching, medical and research methods and the **study-research process will be intensified, expanding the overall scope of Ayurveda education and research**.
- The study and research process can be made more in-depth and ITRA will be an exemplary institution for Ayurveda education and reshaping research institutes across the country.

Ladakh signs MoU with Sikkim

- **The Ladakh** administration has signed a **MoU with Sikkim State Organic Certification Agency (SOCCA)** to turn the Union Territory into an organic entity.
- A **tripartite MoU** has been signed between **Ladakh and SSOCA** regarding the implementation of **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana** and **Mission Organic Development Initiative (MODI)** in the **Ladakh region** with the aim to convert Ladakh into an organic entity by 2025.
- The **main objective of this MoU** is to get the organic certification after a tie-up with the Centre.

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- Ladakh Agriculture Secretary Ravinder Kumar stated that the **aim is to make Ladakh a certified organic UT by 2025** which will be completed in three phases.
- He mentioned that for **organic certification** the department has divided Ladakh into 3-phases.
- In the **first phase, 85 villages** have been identified with an **aim to convert 5000 hectares of land into organic** and in the **2nd phase, 82 villages** will be covered with an area of **10,000 hectares** and under the **3rd phase, the department has selected 79 villages** which will cover the remaining areas.
- **Sikkim is the first state** that is **100 percent organic** with all of its farmland certified organic.
- The use and sale of chemical fertilizers and pesticides are banned in Sikkim.

IAHE inks pact with University of New South Wales

- The Indian Academy of Highway Engineers (IAHE), under the **Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MORTH)**, has signed an **Agreement** with **University of New South Wales (UNSW)**, Australia for setting up a **Centre for Advanced Transportation Technology and Systems (CATTS)** at IAHE, Noida.
- The **Agreement** is for a project for **capacity building, technology transfer and creation of an enabling environment for establishment of CATTS in IAHE.**
- The UNSW will also deliver a course, certified by it, on smart transport systems and modelling.
- **The broad scope of CATTS is in the following areas:**
- **Building India specific Macro Model** (Computable Equilibrium Model) for the entire Nation Highway network and in-principle National Highways by UNSW, including coding of simulation software, calibration & validation and scenario analysis.
- Building India specific **Urban Pervasive Data Model** for City by UNSW including coding of simulation software, calibration & validation and scenario analysis.
- A course **certified by UNSW on smart transportation systems** and modelling will be delivered by UNSW in the form of three workshops in India and three workshops in Australia.
- Each of the **workshops** will be of **five days' duration and 40 participants** will be allowed to participate.

Gujarat institute signed MoU for Cambodian police training

- The **University of Rashtriyaraksha (RRU)** in Gandhinagar, Gujarat has an **agreement with the Cambodian Police Academy (PAC)** to support police training and capacity building.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was effectively signed.
- **RRU, an in-house security education institution**, supports technology and research in the areas of training, academics, development, security and policing of the Cambodian Academy.
- **Seng Phally, the PAC President**, signed the **MoU** with Bimal Patel, the RRU Vice-Chancellor.
- The **MoU copy** shall be exchanged during the visit of a delegation from either side.
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Union Cabinet nods MoU on coking coal with Russian Energy Ministry

- The **Union Cabinet** approved a pact between **India and Russia** regarding **cooperation on coking coal**, a key steel making raw material, for which domestic players remain dependent on imports from a select group of countries.
- Around **85 per cent of India's coking coal** demand is met through imports.
- The **cooperation with Russia** will help **India reduce its dependence on far-located countries** like Australia, South Africa, Canada and the US for sourcing of coking coal.
- It will also reduce **per-tonne cost of steel production**, as Russia is geographically closer compared to the stated countries.
- The **objective of the MoU** is to strengthen cooperation between India and Russia in the steel sector.
- The activities involved in the cooperation are aimed at diversifying the source of coking coal.

India to sign MoU with Bangladesh

- The **Indian Government** will soon sign a **memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh** to export 10 lakh bales of cotton every year.
- “The **MoU will facilitate a government-to-government transaction**.”
- The memorandum will be signed soon,” stated Pradeep Kumar Agarwal, Chairman-cum-Managing Director, Cotton Corporation of India Limited (CCI).
- The CCI will **handle** the exports to Bangladesh.
- “The MoU was scheduled to be signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Bangladesh earlier this year. But, **due to elections in States such as Bengal, the MoU could not be signed**”.
- **Bangladesh is one of the largest buyers of Indian cotton** for its expanding textile industry, particularly garments.
- The **neighbouring country** has always wanted India to ensure uninterrupted supply of cotton, and the MoU is a step in that direction.

Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University signed MoU to train and place students in Japan

- The **Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University (DSEU)** has signed a **MoU to train and place students in Japan**.
- “The varsity has entered into an exclusive **partnership with** the HI-NO-DE Foundation, **jointly** with Ichishin Holdings Co. Ltd., to implement the technical intern training program (TITP) to train, skill, and place youth of India, **especially those in Delhi**”.
- This **partnership aims to** transform the skill ecosystem through an exchange programme between students from India and Japan, adding that the intent is to provide the best opportunities for the youth to work in Japan.

Andhra Pradesh government signs MoUs with 14 more companies

- With an **objective to ensure women empowerment** and livelihood to **six lakh women on a permanent basis through the YSR Cheyutha scheme**, the **State government** exchanged **MoUs with 14 companies**.
- Officials exchanged papers in the presence of the Ministers' Committee comprising Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy (Panchayat Raj and Rural Development), Botcha Satyanarayana (Municipal Administration and Urban Development)

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K Kannababu (Agriculture) and Seediri Appala Raju (Animal Husbandry) at a programme held in the Panchayat Raj Commissioner's office at Tadepalli.

- The State government, through the **MoUs**, wants to **create a conducive business environment with end-to-end solutions** consisting of capital support, market linkages, skill enhancement and technical support, thereby empowering women and ensuring a sustainable income both at the individual and collective level.

Bank of Maharashtra signed MoU with NABARD

- Financial institution of Maharashtra (**BoM**) has signed **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **Nationwide Financial institution for Agriculture & Rural Improvement (NABARD)** to spice up ongoing developmental initiatives linked to precedence sector lending in Maharashtra.
- The **MoU envisages joint initiatives** for the advantage of farmers, farmer producer organizations, joint legal responsibility teams, self assist teams, rural artisans, weavers, agri-preneurs, agri start-ups, micro, small and medium enterprises within the State, BoM mentioned in an announcement.

Web Werks signs Rs.750-cr MoU with Kamataka

- **Web Werks** plans to build a **Rs.750 crore (\$100m)** data center in Bengaluru, India.
- The regional data center provider signed a memorandum of understanding with the local government of Karnataka, which will help ease the planning permission and regulatory approval process.
- "**Web Werks' Bengaluru data center** will cater to the increasing demand from hyperscalers like **Amazon, Microsoft, Google, and enterprises**."

MeitY unveils map services in UMANG App through MoU with MapmyIndia

- **The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has taken various initiatives in the recent past to ease the lives of citizens by facilitating online delivery of Government services.
- To further **enhance the initiatives** of **Digital India Programme**, the Ministry has enabled map services in **UMANG App** 'through Memorandum of Understanding with MapmyIndia.
- As a result of integration of **UMANG with MapmyIndia**, citizens will be able to find government facilities nearest to their location, such as mandis, blood banks and much more, at the click of a button.
- The **UMANG mobile app** launched in 2017, is a Government of India single, unified, secure, multi-channel, multi-service mobile app, providing access to high impact services of various organizations.
- **UMANG** brings major government services on a single mobile app on the mobile phones of citizens.

About UMANG App:

- **Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance**, is a mobile app, a Digital India initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, by the Government of India for access to central and state government services.
- The **app supports 13 Indian languages** and is available for Android, iOS and Windows.

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- **UMANG** (Unified Mobile Application for New-Age Governance) is **one of the key initiatives** under the Digital India program to develop a common, unified platform and mobile app to facilitate a single point of access to all government services.

NCW signed MoU with Bureau of Police Research & Development for gender sensitisation of police personnel

- The **National Commission for Women** has signed an **MoU** with the **Bureau of Police Research and Development** for gender sensitization of police personnel across the country.
- The **objective** of the programme is to ensure gender sensitization of police personnel with respect to legislation and policies concerning women.
- Bringing attitudinal and **behavioural changes** in police officers while dealing with **crimes against women** is also among the objectives.
- The **Commission** has been regularly organizing gender sensitization programs for police officers to achieve the objective of building trust of women complainants in police.

Prasar Bharati and IIT-K signed MOU for NextGen Broadcasting Technology Center of Excellence

- Memorandum of Understanding, **MOU**, signed between **Prasar Bharati**, India's Public Service Broadcaster **and the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IIT Kanpur)**, a Center of Excellence for Media and Broadcasting Technologies will be established at IIT Kanpur.
- Subsequent to the collaboration agreement, three areas have been identified to be taken up under the aegis of the **Center of Excellence – Direct to Mobile Broadcasting and Convergence** with emerging 5G standards, Artificial Intelligence and advanced algorithms for audio-visual media.

The following research projects will be taken up by IIT Kanpur in these three areas leveraging funding provided by Prasar Bharati :

- Next Generation Broadcast Technology Trial (Direct to Mobile Broadcasting, Convergence with 5G)
- Automatic Speech Recognition for Speech Subtitling (Making Broadcast Content in various Indian Languages Accessible)
- Archival Content Retrieval through Audio and Text Query

ESR India inks MoU with TN govt

- Industrial and logistics real estate platform ESR India stated it has signed an **agreement** with the Tamil Nadu government to **develop two industrial parks** with an **estimated investment of Rs 550 crore**.
- ESR India and the Tamil Nadu government have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to this effect at the Investment Conclave 2021 conference.
- The **MoU is signed for the launch of two industrial parks in Kancheepuram and Krishnagiri districts** of the state over the next five years.
- ESR India mentioned the **MoU will facilitate** its proposed investment at Kancheepuram and Krishnagiri industrial parks by helping in streamlining land acquisition, approvals, clearances, and administrative processes as per existing policies, rules, and regulations of the state government.

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MECL signs MoU with DMG, Goa

- **Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL)** a premier notified mineral exploration agency under the aegis of **Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **Directorate of Mines & Geology (DMG)**, Government of Goa, offering integrated mineral exploration and consultancy services.
- With the signing of MoU, **MECL will assess mineral resources by conducting an array of geo-scientific exploration and will finalise the mineral blocks to be auctioned and establish the state's mineral inventory.**
- The recent amendments to the **MMDR Amendment Act 2021, Mineral (Auction) Second Amendment Rules, 2021 and Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Amendment Rules** will further pave the way for states to fast track the **auction process of their mineral acreages**, thus making role of DMG, Government of Goa pivotal in the process of assessment and allocation of their mineral acreages.

Kotak Mahindra Bank signs MoU with the Indian Navy

- The **Indian Navy** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **Kotak Mahindra** for **salary accounts of all its personnel - both serving and retired.**
- The signing ceremony took place in Delhi in the presence of **Commodore Neeraj Malhotra** (commodore pay and allowances) of the Indian Navy and **Parminder Varna**, business head (corporate salary) at Kotak Mahindra Bank.
- The **bank will reportedly offer special salary account benefits to the Indian Navy** like enhanced complimentary personal accident insurance cover, special education benefit for children, and additional girl child benefit, and attractive rates and zero processing fees on personal loans, home loans and car loans.

Indian Bank inks pact with IIT-Guwahati's Technology Incubation Centre (TIC)

- **Chennai-headquartered Indian Bank** has signed an **agreement** with **IIT Guwahati Technology Incubation Centre (TIC)** for financing start-ups under Bank's loan product "IND SpringBoard".
- The **MoU** was **signed by** **K S Sudhakara Rao**, General Manager (MSME), Indian Bank and **Professor R. Ganesh Narayanan** – Technology Incubation Centre (TIC), IIT-Guwahati.
- Indian Bank's **"Ind SpringBoard"** scheme aims to empower start-ups to realise their research efforts powered by financial support from the bank.
- Under this product, the bank supports **start-ups by extending up to Rs.50 crore** as working capital and fund-based term loan requirements for acquiring fixed assets.

GoAP signs MoU with IIM Shillong

- The **Arunachal government** has signed a **memorandum of understanding (MoU)** with **Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Centre for Policy Research and Analysis-IIM here in Meghalaya** for collaborating as a knowledge partner to build the capacity of the state government officers to set up a satellite centre of the IIM Shillong in Arunachal, and for necessary policy interventions.
- **Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar** signed the **MoU** on behalf of the Arunachal government, while **IIM Shillong Director Prof DP Goyal** signed on behalf of the IIM, in the presence of Chief Minister Pema Khandu.

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CRPF signs MoU with C-DAC to train manpower of force in advanced technologies

- The lead **internal security force** of the country-**Central Reserve Police Force** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** with **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC)**-India's premier tech R&D to train the manpower of the force in advanced technologies and undertake joint projects.
- The **MoU aims** at augmenting the technical capabilities of CRPF by training its manpower in advanced areas like Internet of Things (IoT), Cyber security, Artificial Intelligence, High Performance Computing (HPC) and Big Data Analytics.
- The **agreement will also provide the expertise** of C-DAC in the form of Technology Partner & Knowledge Partner in developing various ICT solutions of CRPF.

IPC, WHO sign MoU for promotion of diversity and equity

- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** and the **International Paralympic Committee (IPC)** signed an agreement to work together to foster diversity and equity through global initiatives promoting health and sport for everybody, everywhere.
- The **two partners will collaborate to improve global access to quality rehabilitation and assistive technology as part of universal health coverage**; and mitigate existing inequalities in relation to access to these life-changing services - a prerequisite for equal opportunities and participation in sports for persons with disabilities, including for Paralympians and Para athletes.
- Parsons and Tedros signed the **MOU in Tokyo**.
- The **Paralympic Games will begin on August 24 and conclude on September 5**.

Union Cabinet approves multilateral MoU of international finance services agencies

- The **Cabinet approved** a multilateral **MoU** signed between the **International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)**, **International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO)**, and **International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS)**.
- It is **one of the biggest multilateral forums** with several regulators and has 124 signatories.
- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** stated 'India joining this will enable all kinds of exchange of information and ease of doing business for those registering themselves in the GIFT City'.
- **GIFT City at Gandhinagar** is India's first operational smart city and International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).
- IFSCA is a unified regulator to develop and regulate financial products, financial services and financial institutions in the international financial services centres in India.

For 'Transfer of Technology' of a revolutionary Nano Urea Liquid fertiliser, NFL and RCF sign MOUs with IFFCO

- **National Fertilisers Limited (NFL)** and **Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers Ltd (RCF)** signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO)** for 'transfer of technology' of a revolutionary and game changer fertiliser Nano Urea Liquid.
- To enhance the adaptability of Nano Urea by farmers, technology transfer from IFFCO to public sector fertiliser companies will be achieved through these MOUs.

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- This technology transfer will ramp up the production leading towards consistent supply resulting in faster adoption and would also result in more savings to farmers and government subsidies.
- Under these agreements, IFFCO will transfer the technology of Liquid Nano Urea to NFL and RCF.
- India has become the first country globally to start commercial production of Nano Urea
- MoUs would result in more savings to farmers and Government subsidies.

BIAL signs a deal with IBM

- To create a new 'Airport in a Box' platform that supports end-to-end travel experience for passengers at the Kempegowda International Airport, IBM has entered into a 10-year partnership with IBM and Kyndryl.
- The partnership is designed to help the Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) improve its productivity, automate its information technology services, increase operational flexibility to handle future growth in passenger traffic and reduce costs.
- The airport operator chose IBM Global Business Services, IBM hybrid cloud capabilities and Kyndryl, the new, independent company that will be created following the separation of IBM's Managed Infrastructure Services business, to design and implement next generation architecture with a dynamic delivery model.

Important Summit & Conference

Seventh Indian Ocean Naval Symposium Concludes in France

- The 7th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), concluded in France starting from 28 June to 01 July 2021.
- It is a biennial event hosted by the French Navy at La Réunion.
- France is the current chair of the Symposium, which assumed the Chairmanship on 29 June 2021 for a two-year tenure.
- From the Indian side, Admiral Karambir Singh, Chief of the Naval Staff, Indian Navy, participated virtually.

About IONS :

- The symposium was first held in 2008 with India as host.
- IONS is a series of biennial meetings, held between the littoral states of the Indian Ocean region.
- The chairmanship of IONS has been held by India (2008-10), UAE (2010-12), South Africa (2012-14), Australia (2014-16), Bangladesh (2016-18) and Islamic Republic of Iran (2018-21).
- The IONS Consists of 23 Permanent members & 9 Observer members.
- IONS Conclave of Chiefs (CoC) is the decision-making body at the level of Chiefs of Navies, which meets biennially.
- The 6th IONS and CoC was conducted by the Iran Navy in April 2018 at Tehran.
- Due to the pandemic, the CoC 2021, will be hosted by French Navy later in 2021.

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Co-WIN Global Conclave : Prime Minister Narendra Modi Addresses

- On July 05, 2021, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed the CoWin Global Conclave virtual meet of representatives from 142 countries.
- The Global Conclave was jointly organized by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and National Health Authority (NHA) with an objective to extend the Co-WIN platform as a digital public good to the world.

Purpose :

- To share India's learnings and experiences with regards to **planning, strategizing and executing the world's largest vaccination drive through Co-WIN.**
- The CoWin platform is being made **open source and available to any and all countries to combat COVID-19.**
- Fifty countries including Mexico, Canada, Uganda, Nigeria are interested in adopting CoWIN to run their inoculation drives.

1st edition of The Indo Pacific Business Summit Organised by CII

- CII in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs is organizing **The Indo Pacific Business Summit** held from 6-8 July 2021 virtually.
- **Theme** of the Indo Pacific Business Summit is **Developing a Road Map for Shared Prosperity.**
- The Summit will have **participation of Government, Enterprises, Business Chambers, Think Tanks & Experts from all the countries in the region.**

Purpose :

- The Summit would seek to **identify current and future trade and investment opportunities within this region.**
- It would dwell upon various thematic and sectoral sessions for discussion like physical and digital connectivity, development of robust supply chains, start-ups, healthcare, skilling, climate change and blue economy vis-a-vis current and future trade & investments opportunities highlighted by the governments within this region.

About Indo Pacific Business Summit :

- This summit was **organised in the backdrop of Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI).**

About Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI) :

- IPOI was **announced by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi during 14th East Asian Summit.**
- This initiative seeks to **ensure security and stability of the regional maritime sector.**
- It is an open, non-treaty-based initiative for countries to work together to find cooperative and collaborative solutions to common challenges in Indo-Pacific region.

BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers Meeting held chaired under India's Presidency

- **Union Minister for Labour & Employment Shri Bhupender Yadav** chaired the BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers' Meeting **under India's Presidency.**
- Ministers of the **member countries** viz. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa participated in the meeting.

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- India **organized** the BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers' Meeting to exchange views on the impact of Covid-19 on global labour market, enhance information sharing, discuss and agree upon specific areas of cooperation between BRICS Member countries.
- Discussion on **four priority areas of cooperation** took place namely, Promoting Social Security Agreements amongst **BRICS Nations**; Formalization of Labour Markets; Participation of Women in the Labour Force; and Gig and Platform Workers: Role in the Labour Market.
- The **significant aspect of the meeting** was the adoption of the BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers' Declaration.
- The **Ministerial Declaration** recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted the efforts made to address unemployment, decent work deficits and inequality.
- It also illustrates the strong determination of **BRICS Member countries** to recover with stronger national economies, inclusive labour markets and social protection systems.

Vice-President Of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu addresses The World Universities Summit 2021

- The Vice President of India addresses the World Universities Summit.
- Universities should become thought leaders in finding solutions to global challenges such as climate change and poverty.
- The theme of the summit was **"Universities of the Future: Building Institutional Resilience, Social Responsibility and Community Impact"**.
- Addressing the participants, Union Education and Skill Development Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan emphasized on the **Government's commitment to transform India's education sector bringing it at par with global standards, encouraging research and innovation and on developing well-rounded responsible citizens, who are also global citizens- Vishwa Manav.**
- Shri Pradhan said that the **New National Education Policy -2020** has heralded a new imagination for the Indian higher education system.
- It outlines the vision of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to make an Atma Nirbhar Bharat.
- **Quality, equity, accessibility and affordability** are the **four pillars of the new education policy** on which a new India will emerge, he added.
- Minister Pradhan stated that with the vision of **Study In India—Stay In India'**, India will move towards becoming a **global destination in education**.
- He said that the **multidisciplinary education and research university (MERU)** will open up **new opportunities for India's youth**.
- MERU will promote interdisciplinary research and make India a global hub of Research and Development
- The NEP will facilitate integration of education with skills and enable India to reap the demographic dividend.

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Union Agriculture Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar addresses the Pre-Summit of United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare **Shri Narendra Singh Tomar** virtually delivered the Ministerial Statement in the Pre-Summit of **United Nations Food System Summit 2021**
- **UN Secretary-General Shri António Guterres, Prime Minister of Italy Shri Mario Draghi** along with representatives of various countries, also addressed the three-day summit.
- The Minister emphasized the importance of Agriculture in achieving the Sustainable **Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 as 12 out of 17 SDGs are directly dependent on agriculture.**
- He said that agriculture **plays an important role in the socio-economic transformation of developing countries.**
- The Minister listed the creation of Agriculture Infrastructure Fund with a corpus of **Rs 1 lakh crore, formation of 10000 Farmer Producer Organizations**, the **PM KISAN Scheme** through which an amount of **1.37 lakh crore** has been credited to the bank accounts of **11 crore farmers.**
- He also highlighted the **“Per Drop More Crop”** scheme for irrigation; **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana** for organic farming as well as the **‘Soil Health Card’ Scheme** to conserve water and soil resources.
- The Minister also stated that the Government of India has launched the **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)** to provide insurance protection for covering the risk of farmers.

National Geo-research Scholars Meet: Importance of earth sciences in finding sustainable development solutions emphasised

- The **5th National Geo-research Scholars Meet (NGRSM)**, based on the theme **“Earth Sciences for Sustainable development”**, was organized through a webinar recently at the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), Dehradun, an autonomous institute of the DST.
- **Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Professor Ashutosh Sharma** emphasised the necessity of earth sciences in the study of groundwater, glaciers, other water resources, climate change and its solution, science and technology, and mitigation of natural hazards at the National Geo-research Scholars Meet (NGRSM).
- The **webinar covered** presentations of researchers in areas like; Natural Resources, Water Management, Earthquake, Monsoon, Climate change, Natural disasters, River systems, and so on.
- The **two-day webinar**, which was attended by **350 participants** from different Universities/Institutes/Organizations of India, included several invited talks by distinguished speakers and research scholars from all over the nation.
- The **interactive session** witnessed numerous queries from budding researchers.

Global Education Summit in London

- The **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)** Global Education Summit will take place on July 28 and 29, 2021
- **The United Kingdom and Kenya** are co-hosting a two-day Global Education Summit in London to raise **US\$5 billion** for the **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)**, which funds public education in up to 90 countries and territories.
- These countries are **home to more than 80 percent of the world’s out-of-school** children.

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- The GPE's commitment to transform education systems should be grounded in a pledge to fulfil the right to free, quality, inclusive education in practice, not just rhetorically.
- Education ministries should also pledge to guarantee universal free primary and secondary education, and immediately reverse any policies that undermine this promise, including those that generate inequalities and perpetuate discrimination.
- **The summit is happening as governments face huge challenges due to Covid-19 pandemic-related disruptions.**
- The on-going disruption to children's education has highlighted the need for governments to devote more attention and resources to address the longstanding inequalities in education systems exacerbated by the pandemic.
- To tackle these challenges, **education ministries should deliver bold national funding pledges that meet international targets and protect education** budgets from possible austerity cuts.
- **Not doing so would short change hundreds of millions of children** whose education was sacrificed during the pandemic, **many of whom have yet to return to school.**

Uzbekistan hosts 'Central-South Asia conference 2021

- On July 15 & 16, 2021, **Uzbekistan** hosted a **two day** high-level International Conference titled "**Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities**" at Tashkent.
- The conference was an initiative of the President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

Key People :

- The Conference was attended by President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani, Ministers from Central Asian, West Asian and South Asian countries, including Minister of External Affairs of India **Dr. S. Jaishankar**.
- The conference Delegates from over **40 countries** and about **30 international organizations**, and heads of think tanks participated.

About Conference :

Aim :

- The forum is aimed at **strengthening historically close and friendly ties, trust** and good-neighborliness between Central and South Asia in the interests of all peoples and countries of both regions.

G20 Environment Ministerial Meeting 2021 held Italy

- A **two day G20 Environment Ministerial Meeting 2021** was organised at **Naples, in Italy** in virtual mode.
- From **India** Side, Union Environment Minister **Bhupender Yadav** participated along with Minister of State for Environment Ashwini Choubey and senior officials of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The meeting was held as part of the **16th G20 Leaders Summit**, scheduled to be held in October 2021, under the Presidency of Italy,
- The **theme** of the meeting is "**People, Planet' and Prosperity**".
- During the meeting discussed and made interventions on '**Natural Capital to Protect and Manage**' and '**Joint Efforts for Sustainable and Circular Resource Use**'.

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Revision Points

Conference/Summits	Venue/Host Country	Chaired By/Theme/Addressed By/Others
7th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium	France	Admiral Karambir Singh participated
CoWin Global Conclave virtual meet	organized by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and National Health Authority	Addressed by PM MOdi
The Indo Pacific Business Summit	Organized by CII & MEA	Developing a Road Map for Shared Prosperity
BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers' Meeting		Chaired by Bhupender Yadav
World Universities Summit		Universities of the Future: Building Institutional Resilience, Social Responsibility and Community Impact
Pre-Summit of United Nations Food System Summit 2021		Addressed by Narendra Singh Tomar
5th National Geo-research Scholars Meet		Earth Sciences for Sustainable development
Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities	Uzbekistan	
Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Global Education Summit	UK & Kenya (Co-host)	
G20 Environment Ministerial Meeting 2021	Naples, Italy	Participated by Bhupender Yadav

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Important Defence News

U.S & Ukraine Navy launches Sea Breeze 2021 maritime exercise in Black sea

- On June 28, 2021, Multinational maritime exercise Sea Breeze 2021 (Ex-SB21) launched by Ukrainian Navy and U.S. Sixth Fleet.
- The exercise is taking place from June 28 to July 10 in the Black Sea region.
- Exercise Sea Breeze 2021 is an annual multinational maritime exercise, involving sea, land, and air components.

Purpose :

- To enhance interoperability and capability among participating forces in the Black Sea region.
- It will focus on multiple warfare areas including amphibious warfare, land maneuver warfare, diving operations, maritime interdiction operations, air defense, special operations integration, anti-submarine warfare, and search and rescue operations.
- Ex-SB21 has the largest number of participating nations in the exercise's history with 32 countries from six continents providing 5,000 troops, 32 ships, 40 aircraft, and 18 special operations and dive teams scheduled to participate.
- The list of 32 Countries are Albania, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Spain, South Korea, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and the United States.
- The Exercise Sea Breeze began in the year of 1997 & brings most Black Sea nations and NATO Allies and partners together to train and operate with NATO members in the pursuit of building increased capability.

About Sea Breeze :

- Sea Breeze is Ukraine's oldest, largest and best-known multinational military exercise since it gained independence from the Soviet Union some 30 years ago.
- The exercises on the northwestern Black Sea coast are an annual event led by Ukraine and the US and are based upon a 1993 memorandum on military cooperation between the two countries.

India's 1st indigenous drone defence dome – 'Indrajaal' developed by Grene Robotics

- India's first indigenous drone defence dome called "Indrajaal", has been developed by Hyderabad-based technology R&D firm Grene Robotics.

About Indrajaal :

Purpose :

- To identify and counter threats, using technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, cybersecurity and robotics.
- It can protect an area of 1000-2000 sq km against the aerial threats by assessing and acting on aerial threats such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), loitering munitions, and Low - Radar Cross Section (RCS) targets.
- The ANTI-UAV systems provide protection to defence bases but it will be beneficial for linear infrastructures like international borders against advanced weaponry.

Features of Indrajaal

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- Real-time situational awareness
- Integrated and Intelligent meshed network
- Integrated all current weapons suite and infrastructure Honeycombed cell structure for seamlessly built
- Synergic combination of 9-10 technologies
- 24×7 persistent and autonomous monitoring, action and tracking

Israel's Rafael unveils new long range missile system Sea Breaker

- Israel's Rafael Advanced Defense Systems has introduced a fifth-generation long-range autonomous precision-guided missile system called Sea Breaker.
- The missile system is **designed to destroy maritime and land-based targets from stand-off ranges of up to 300km.**
- The system is equipped with an **advanced imaging infra-red (IIR) seeker to engage stationary or moving maritime and land targets in a variety of operational scenarios, including advanced Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) arenas.**
- Sea Breaker can be launched **from naval platforms, varying in size, from fast attack missile boats, to corvettes and frigates.**
- The land version is a central part of the **shore defense, based on Rafael's highly-mobile SPYDER launchers.**
- The battery architecture supports standalone launchers, or operation as an integrated solution, with a **command and control Unit (CCU)** and various sensors, based on customer requirements.

DRDO & AICTE launch regular M. Tech. Program in defence technology

- A regular **MTech programme in Defence Technology** has been launched by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
- MTech defence technology programme can be **conducted at any AICTE affiliated institutes or universities, IITs, NITs or private engineering institutes.**
- **Institute of Defence Scientists and Technologists (IDST)** will provide support to the institutes for conducting this programme, which can be conducted in online as well as offline formats.
- The program has six specialized streams - Combat Technology, Aero Technology, Naval Technology, Communication Systems & Sensors, Directed Energy Technology and High Energy Materials Technology.
- The programme will **help in achieving 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.**

Bharat Dynamics Ltd signs Rs 499-crore deal with IAF

- On July 08, 2021, Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) signed a contract worth about **Rs 499 crore with the Ministry of Defence for the manufacture and supply of Akash missiles to the Indian Air Force (IAF).**
- The contract was **signed by Air Commodore Ajay Singhal, Air Commodore, Guided Weapons Maintenance on behalf of Indian Air Force.**

About Akash Missile :

- Akash is a **medium-range mobile surface-to-air missile (SAM) system**, being developed under India's **Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).**

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- The Akash missile is **developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** and produced by **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)**, both for the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force.
- Akash is an indigenously developed **all-weather, air defence weapon missile**, which uses a high explosive, pre-fragmented warhead that can engage multiple threats simultaneously.

INS Tabar conducts maritime partnership with Italian Navy

- On July 07, 2021, Indian Naval Ship Tabar participated in a **military exercise with a frontline frigate of the Italian Navy**.
- INS Tabar joined Italian Navy and entered Port of Naples on July 3 as part of ongoing deployment in **Mediterranean**.
- Commanding officer Captain Mahesh Mangipudi called on senior officers of Prefect of Naples Authority, regional Italian navy headquarters and coast guard headquarters during the stay.
- This exercise **covered several naval operations such as air defence procedures, communication drills, replenishment at sea, and cross deck helo operations by day and night**.
- Exercise was mutually beneficial for **enhancing interoperability and consolidating combined operations against maritime threats**.

About Indian Naval Ship Tabar :

- INS Tabar was **commissioned on April 19, 2004, in Kaliningrad, Russia**.
- Tabar is the **third Indian warship of Talwar-class frigate in the Indian Navy**.

Indian Navy Receives 10th Anti-submarine Warfare Aircraft P-8I from Boeing

- On July 13, 2021, The Indian Navy received the 10th anti-submarine warfare aircraft P-8I from the US-based aerospace company Boeing.

Purpose :

- The aircraft is used for **maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare**.
- In 2009, The **Defence Ministry** had first signed a contract for eight P-8I aircraft & in 2016, it signed a contract for four additional P-8I aircraft.
- India was the **first international customer of Boeing** for this aircraft.
- **Remaining two aircrafts** are expected to be **delivered in the last quarter of 2021**.

About P-8I :

- P-8I is a **long-range maritime reconnaissance and Anti-Submarine Warfare Aircraft**.
- The P-8I is a variant of the P-8A Poseidon used by the **US Navy**.
- The Indian Navy inducted the **first P-8I aircraft in 2013**, and the **ninth P-8I aircraft was received in November 2020**.

US Navy hands over first two MH-60R helicopters to Indian Navy

- On July 16, 2021, To **strengthen India-US defence relationship**, the Indian Navy received the **first two MH-60R Multi Role Helicopters (MRH)** from the **United States Navy** at Naval Air Station in North Island, San Diego.
- It will mark the **beginning of a new era of defence collaboration and partnership between the US and India**.

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- The MH-60R helicopter is an **all-weather maritime helicopter** designed to support multiple missions with state-of-the-art avionics.
- The induction of these helicopters would further **enhance the Indian Navy's three dimensional capabilities**.

Additional Information :

- Under foreign military sales from the US government, in February 2020, the **Indian Navy** and the **US Navy** had signed a **Rs 15,157 crore (\$2.13 billion)** deal to buy 24 MH-60 Romeo helicopters, **manufactured by Lockheed Martin**.

India, Sri Lanka and Maldives conduct trilateral tabletop exercise on maritime security

- The **two-day trilateral tabletop exercise TTX-2021**, among the **top defence officials** from India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives was held from July 14 to July 15.

Aim :

- **Enhancing mutual understanding and exchange of best practices** procedures for countering common transnational crime .
- During the TTX-2021 exercise the three countries **discussed best practices and procedures** for countering common transnational maritime crime like curbing narcotics and assistance in maritime search and rescue.
- It was **coordinated by the Maritime Warfare Centre, Mumbai, the Indian High Commission**
- Also, the exercise gained additional relevance in light of the successful **Operation Sagar Aaraksha 2** executed in support of **MV X-Press Pearl**, the Singapore-flagged cargo ship that caught fire.

INS TABAR Completes Maritime partnership exercise with French Navy

- **INS Tabar**, on completion of port visit to Brest, France undertook maritime partnership exercise with **FNS Aquitaine, a French naval Frigate in the Bay of Biscay on 15 and 16 Jul 21**.
- A twin engine helicopter (NH 90) from FNS Aquitaine and four Rafale fighter aircraft from French Navy also participated in the exercise.
- A wide range of operations like Anti - Submarine, Surface Manoeuvres, Replenishment at Sea approach, Firing on target, Visit Board Search & Seizure (VBSS), Steam Past, Air Defence, Air Picture Compilation, Vertical Replenishment and cross deck operations were exercised by the ships.
- The exercise was mutually beneficial in **enhancing interoperability and towards consolidating combined operations against maritime threats**.

OFT Hands Over 25 Remote Control guns to Indian Navy, Coast Guard

- **Ordnance Factory of Tiruchirappalli (OFT)** handed over the locally assembled **12.7mm stabilised remote control gun (SRCG) system** to the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard for **enhanced surveillance and warfare**.
- The **first batch consisted of 25 weapons** & it was assembled in the Trichy factory through the **transfer of technology (ToT)** initiative with the support of an Israel-based defence company.
- The SRCG system is fitted with a 12.7mm **M2 NATO standard heavy machine gun**, designed to suit marine warfare.
- The system is manufactured and supplied to the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard through the transfer of technology from Elbit Systems, Israel in various phases.

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'Exercise Shield' maritime exercise held between India, Sri Lanka & Maldives

- Top defence officials from **India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives** participated in a **virtual trilateral tabletop exercise** where they discussed best practices and procedures for countering common transnational maritime crime like curbing narcotics and assistance in maritime search and rescue.
- The **two-day exercise, TTX-2021**, from July 14 to July 15 aimed at enhancing mutual understanding and exchange of best practices procedures for countering common transnational crime was **coordinated by the Maritime Warfare Centre, Mumbai, the Indian High Commission.**
- The **exercise focused on maritime crimes** like curbing narcotics and assistance in maritime search and rescue in the region.

Setting Up of a New Sainik School in Karnataka

- A reference was received from the State Government of Karnataka to the central government for setting up of a **Sainik School in Shivamogga district** of Karnataka.
- In response to the reference reply, the Central government informed that there **is no plan under consideration to open more Sainik Schools other than the ones** operational in the State of Karnataka, under the ambit of the existing scheme of things.
- Government is proposing to bring a **new scheme for setting up Sainik Schools** in the country in **partnership with NGOs/Private Schools/State etc.**
- The endeavour is to provide schooling opportunities in **'CBSE Plus' type of** educational environment by involving **desirous Government/Private Schools/NGOs** to partner in establishing/aligning their system with Sainik Schools ethos, value system and national pride.
- It envisages enrolling existing/upcoming schools to be **run to the line of Sainik Schools curriculum.**
- The schools are proposed to be affiliated to Sainik Schools Society.
- Detailed guidelines and requisite approvals are at an advanced stage.

About Sainik School:

- The objective of the Sainik Schools is to prepare the students to **lead as officers in the Defence Services of the country.**
- The schools select smart and promising students through a national entrance examination and mold their personality in order for them to become leaders of the Nation.

Boosting Indigenous Capabilities in Defence Production

- **The Government has taken several policy initiatives and brought in reforms to promote indigenisation and self-reliance in defence manufacturing, under AatmaNirbhar Bharat Mission in the defence sector**
- Ministry of Defence has notified a **'First Positive Indigenisation list'** of 101 items on 21st August, 2020 and **'2nd Positive Indigenisation list'** of 108 items on 31st May, 2021 for which there would be an embargo on the import beyond the timelines indicated against them. This is a big step to promote indigenisation in defence sector.

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- This offers a great opportunity to the Indian defence industry to manufacture these items using their own design and development capabilities to meet the requirements of the Indian Armed Forces.
- **SRIJAN portal to promote indigenisation was** launched on 14 August, 2020. As on date, 10,929 items, which were earlier imported, have been displayed on the portal for indigenisation.
- **1,776 components & spares have been indigenised** in the year 2020-21 as a result of efforts of indigenisation by DPSUs, OFB & SHQs through their own process of indigenisation
- In order to promote indigenous design and development of defence equipment 'Buy {Indian-IDD (Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured))}' category has been accorded top most priority for procurement of capital equipment.
- FDI: The Government of India has enhanced **FDI in Defence Sector up to 74% through the Automatic Route for companies seeking new defence industrial license and up to 100% by Government Route.**
- Department of Defence Production has notified 46 items under the latest Public Procurement Order 2017 notified by **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, for which there is sufficient local capacity and competition and procurement of these items shall be done from local suppliers only irrespective of the purchase value.
- **Defence Investor Cell (DIC) has been created in Feb-2018 the Ministry to provide all necessary information including addressing queries related to investment** opportunities, procedures and regulatory requirements for investment in the sector.
- Technology Development Fund (TDF) has been created under DRDO to promote self reliance in Defence Technology through participation of Public/Private industries especially MSMEs and start-ups.
- For the year 2021-22, the allocation for domestic procurement has been enhanced compared to previous years and is **about 64.09% i.e. Rs 71438.36 crore** of the allocated amount for military modernisation.

Investment for Procurement of Indigenously Manufactured Defence Equipment

- In line with **Government of India's initiative of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'**, it has been decided to earmark an amount of **Rs 71,438.36 crore** for domestic capital procurement out of the total allocation of **Rs 1,11,463.21 crore** for Capital Acquisition.
- Capital procurement of defence equipment are undertaken from various domestic as well as foreign vendors, based on threat perception, operational challenges and technological changes and to keep the Armed Forces in a state of readiness.
- **During last three financial years i.e. 2018-19 to 2020-21, 102 contracts** have been **signed with Indian vendors** for capital procurement of defence equipment such as aircrafts, missiles, tanks, bullet proof jackets, guns, navy vessels, radars, networks etc.
- In order to provide impetus to self-reliance in defence manufacturing as part of '**Atmanirbhar Bharat**' initiative, two Positive Indigenization Lists have been promulgated.
- The lists intend to implement the ban in a staggered manner up to December 2025.

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- The aim behind promulgation of the lists is to apprise the Indian Defence Industry about the anticipated requirements of the armed forces, so that they are better prepared to realize the goal of indigenization.
- It provides a great opportunity for the Indian Defence Industry to manufacture the items in the list by using their own design and development capabilities or adopting those developed by the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO), to meet the requirements of the armed forces in the coming years.

DRDO successfully flight-tests surface-to-air missile Akash-NG

- Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested the **New Generation Akash Missile (Akash-NG)**, a surface-to-air Missile from Integrated Test Range (ITR) off the coast of Odisha on July 21, 2021.
- The flight trial was conducted at around 12:45 PM from a land-based platform with all weapon system elements such as Multifunction Radar, Command, Control & Communication System and launcher participating in deployment configuration.
- In order to capture flight data, ITR deployed a number of Range stations like Electro Optical Tracking System, Radar and Telemetry.
- The flawless performance of the entire weapon system has been confirmed by complete flight data captured by these systems.
- During the test, the missile demonstrated high manoeuvrability required for neutralising fast and agile aerial threats.
- Once deployed, the Akash-NG weapon system will prove to be a force multiplier for the air defence capability of the Indian Air Force

DRDO successfully flight-tests indigenously developed MPATGM for minimum range

- In a major boost towards **Atma Nirbhar Bharat and strengthening of Indian Army**, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested indigenously developed low weight, fire and forget **Man Portable Anti Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM)** on July 21, 2021.
- The missile was launched from a man portable launcher integrated with a thermal site and the target was mimicking a tank.
- The missile hit the target in direct attack mode and destroyed it with precision.
- The test has validated the minimum range successfully.
- All the mission objectives were met.
- The missile is incorporated with **state-of-the-art Miniaturized Infrared Imaging Seeker** along with advanced avionics.
- The test brings the development of indigenous third generation man portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile close to completion.

Features of Man Portable Anti Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM):

- Low weight, fire and forget Man Portable Anti-tank Guided Missile
- Miniaturised Infrared Imaging seeker
- Major boost to Army and Atma Nirbhar Bharat

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Last blast of Sela Tunnel's escape tube conducted by DG Border Roads

- The last blast of the escape tube of under-construction Sela Tunnel was conducted by Director General Border Roads (DGBR) Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry through video conferencing from New Delhi on July 22, 2021.
- This breakthrough will facilitate faster completion of Sela Tunnel by undertaking simultaneous activities in two tubes *i.e.*, a two-way tube of 1,555 meters and an escape tube of 980 meters, besides 8.8 kms of approach roads.
- The DGBR had initiated the first blast of the escape tube during his visit on Army Day in January 2021.
- This tube **has already crossed the 425-meter excavation mark.**
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had laid the foundation stone of Sela Tunnel on February 09, 2019 to provide all weather connectivity to Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh through the Balipara-Charduar-Tawang Road.
- **The construction of the tunnel started on April 01, 2019 with the first blast taking place on October 31, 2019.**
- The excavation pace of Sela Tunnel has been swift as it has resulted in the breaking down of the escape tube of the 1,555 meters tunnel on July 22, 2021, much ahead of schedule.
- Despite COVID-19 restrictions and adverse weather conditions, the pace of works has increased in the last 6-10 months
- **On completion, Sela Tunnel will be the longest bi-lane road tunnel in the world at an altitude above 13,000 feet.**
- This unique tunnel constructed using the latest New Austrian Tunneling Method (NATM), is much below the snow line allowing all weather travel without the challenges of snow clearance.
- The Sela Tunnel will prove to be a boon for the people of Tawang as **it will reduce travel time and ensure speedier movement across the Sela Pass.**
- **It will play a crucial role in the development of not just Arunachal Pradesh, but the entire North-East.**
- In case of natural calamities and adverse weather, it can prove to be a vital link for evacuation of personnel.

Indian navy exercises with royal navy carrier strike group

- Indian Navy participated in a two-day bilateral **Passage Exercise (PASSEX)** with Royal Navy Carrier Strike Group (CSG)-21 led by HMS Queen Elizabeth in the Bay of Bengal from 21 to 22 Jul 21.
- The bilateral Maritime Exercise was designed to hone the ability of the two navies to operate together in the maritime domain.
- **The maiden exercise between Indian Navy and the Royal Navy's latest Aircraft Carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth** included participation of CSG-21 comprising **Type 23 Frigates and an Astute-class submarine** in addition to the other surface combatants.
- Indian Navy was represented by **IN Ships *Satpura, Ranvir, Jyoti, Kavaratti, Kulish* and a submarine. Anti-Submarine Warfare capable Long Range Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft P8I** also participated in the exercise.
- With the presence of the CSG-21 in the Indian Ocean, the on-going exercise has afforded excellent opportunity to engage over the entire spectrum of maritime operations including ASW, Anti-Air and Anti-Surface warfare.
- The exercise also witnessed the maiden participation of the F 35 B Lightning which operates from the deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

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Indian Naval Ship Talwar in Mombasa to Participate in Exercise Cutlass Express 2021

- Indian Naval Ship Talwar is participating in Exercise Cutlass Express 2021 along the East Coast of Africa.
- The exercise is an annual maritime exercise conducted to promote national and regional maritime security in East Africa and the Western Indian Ocean.
- The 2021 edition of the exercise involves participation of 12 Eastern African countries, US, UK, India and various international organisations like International Maritime Organisation (IMO), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Interpol, European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR), Critical Maritime Routes Indian Ocean (CRIMARIO) and EUCAP Somalia. Indian Navy is participating in the exercise in a 'trainer role'.
- The exercise focuses on East Africa's coastal regions and is designed to assess and improve combined maritime law enforcement capacity, promote national and regional security and increase interoperability between the regional navies.
- Participation of India's Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) would contribute in achieving the same.
- As part of the exercise, the ship is visiting Mombasa, Kenya, wherein various other professional interactions are also planned with the Kenya Navy.

INS TABAR Participates In Navy Day Celebrations of the Russian Navy

- INS Tabar reached St Petersburg, Russia on 22 July to participate in the 325th Navy Day celebrations of the Russian Navy.
- Post Navy Day celebrations, Tabar will participate in Exercise INDRA scheduled to be held on 28 and 29 Jul 21 in the Baltic sea with two Russian Navy ships.

Induction ceremony of rafale aircraft into 101 sqn

- The Indian Air Force formally inducted Rafale aircraft into No. 101 Squadron at Air Force Station Hasimara in Eastern Air Command (EAC)
- 101 Squadron is the second IAF Squadron to be equipped with Rafale aircraft.
- The Squadron was formed on 01 May 1949 at Palam and has operated Harvard, Spitfire, Vampire, Su-7 and MiG-21M aircraft in the past.
- The glorious history of this Squadron includes active participation in 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak wars.

Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) – Key Facts

- The Department of Defence Production which comes under the Ministry of Defence has given its approval for a central sector scheme named 'Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)' and gave a budgetary support of Rs. 498.80 crore for the next 5 years starting from 2021-22 to the year 2025-26.

About iDEX:

- The iDEX initiative was launched by the Prime Minister in April 2018.

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- It aims to achieve self-reliance and foster innovation and technology development in Defence and Aerospace by engaging Industries including Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), start-ups, individual innovators, R&D institutes and academia.
- iDEX is funded and managed by the DIO (**Defence Innovation Organisation**), and functions as the executive arm of DIO.

36th edition of India – Indonesia coordinated patrol

- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Saryu, an indigenously built **Offshore Patrol Vessel** is undertaking coordinated patrol (CORPAT) with **Indonesian Naval Ship KRI Bung Tomo** from 30 to 31 July 2021.
- It will also have the participation of Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both nations.
- The 36th edition of INDIA-INDO CORPAT seeks to bolster the maritime cooperation between the two navies and forge strong bonds of friendship across the Indo Pacific.

About CORPAT:

- India and Indonesia have been carrying out Coordinated Patrols along the **International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL)** twice a year since 2002, with an aim of keeping this vital part of the Indian Ocean Region safe and secure for commercial shipping, international trade and conduct of legitimate maritime activities.
- CORPATs (Co-Ordinated PATROL) help build understanding and interoperability between navies, and measures to prevent and suppress **Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU)** fishing, drug trafficking, maritime terrorism, armed robbery and piracy.
- As part of Government of India's vision of **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**, Indian Navy has been **proactively engaging with countries in the Indian Ocean Region** to enhance maritime security in the region.

12th Edition of Exercise INDRA NAVY

- The 12th edition of exercise **INDRA NAVY**, a biennial (Every Two Years) bilateral maritime exercise between Indian Navy and Russian Navy was held in the Baltic Sea from 28 to 29 July 2021.
- This exercise was undertaken as part of the visit of INS Tabar to St Petersburg, Russia to participate in the 325th Navy Day celebrations of the Russian Navy.
- The Exercise between the two countries was initiated in 2003.
- The Indian Navy was represented by the **stealth Frigate INS Tabar** whereas the Russian Federation Navy was represented by **Corvettes RFS Zelyony Dol** and **RFS Odintsovo of the Baltic Fleet**.
- The exercise progressed over two days and included various facets of fleet operations such as anti-air firings, underway renewal drills, helicopter ops, boarding drills and seamanship evolutions.

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Important Science and Technology News

Ministry of Heavy Industries launches 6 tech innovation platforms for globally competitive manufacturing

- On July 02, 2021, The Central Government launched 6 technology innovation platforms that will focus on the development of technologies for globally competitive manufacturing in India.
- The platforms have been developed by IIT Madras, Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI), International Centre for Automotive Technology (iCAT), Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), BHEL and HMT in association with IISc Bangalore.
- Over 39,000 experts, students, industries, institutes, and labs have already registered on these platforms.

Minister Of Ayush Launches 5 Important Portals On Ayush Sector

- On July 05, 2021, Union Minister of Ayush (IC) Shri Kiran Rijju launched five portals of importance and four publications were released Virtually.
- The Minister launched CTRI portal pertinent to Ayurveda Dataset along with AMAR, RMIS, SAHI and e-Medha portals.
- Those four publications related to the Traditional Indian Medicine System of India.

About Portals:

- Ayurveda Dataset on **Clinical Trial Registry of India- CTRI** is a primary Register of Clinical Trials under the world health Organization's International Clinical Trials Registry Platform.
- Creation of Ayurveda Data Set in **CTRI facilitates** the usage of Ayurveda Terminologies to record clinical study based on Ayurveda interventions.
- This is a great step towards a worldwide visibility for **Ayurveda based Clinical Trials**.
- **CCRAS-Research Management Information System-** A collaborative effort of ICMR and CCRAS, this portal will be a **one stop solution** for Research and Development in Ayurveda based studies.
- **Free of cost research guidance** by experienced Scientists, Clinicians of Ayurveda can be availed through this portal. Research tools, reference material are also in place in this portal.
- **E-Medha** (electronic Medical Heritage Accession) **Portal- Online public access catalog** for more than 12000 Indian medical heritage books **through NIC's e-granthalaya platform**.
- **AMAR (Ayush Manuscripts Advanced Repository) Portal-** This Portal is of immense value and it has digitized information on rare and hard to find **Manuscripts and catalogues** of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa in libraries or in **individual collections across India or in other parts of the world**.
- **SHAI (Showcase of Ayurveda Historical Imprints) Portals-** This portal showcases inscriptions, Archeo-botanical Information, Sculptures, Philological sources and advanced Archeo Genetic studies.
- This portal will be of tremendous use in understanding of Indian Knowledge system with a focus on indigenous health care practices.

Four publications were also released by the Ministry of Ayush.

- Proceedings of International workshop on **Preservation and Promotion of SOWA-RIGPA** in Asia

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- Compendium of Important Cereals mentioned in Ayurveda-Series-1, volume-1
- **Ayurveda Sangraha**: An important classical textbook of Ayurveda which is mentioned in the Schedule 1 of Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940. Up till now this book was available in Bengali language. Now it has been transliterated to Devanagari Script.
- **PathapathyaVinishcaya**- An important book of Ayurveda and has details of diet and lifestyle.

Virgin Orbit launches 7 satellites from 747 jet In 3rd Mission

- Richard Branson's Virgin Orbit delivered 7 satellites from 747 jets from three countries namely the United States, Netherlands & Poland.
- Virgin Orbit sent its first batch of satellites into orbit & It is the second successful rocket launch from a plane.
- The jets are took off from California's Mojave Desert
- **LauncherOne** is a 70-foot-long (21-m-long) two-stage rocket, capable of delivering up to 1,100 pounds (500 kg) of freight to orbit.
- The drop occurred at an altitude of about 37,000 feet (11,000 meters).
- The satellites are from the U.S. Defense Department, the Royal Netherlands Air Force and Poland's SatRevolution company.

China launches new meteorological satellite - Fengyun-3E

- On July 05, 2021, China launched the new Fengyun-3E (FY-3E) meteorological satellite from the SLS-2 launch site at China's Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre.
- The China National Space Administration informed, the satellite is launched onboard the Long March-4C carrier rocket, which placed it into its planned orbit.

About the Satellite :

- Fengyun-3E(FY-3E) will be the world's first meteorological satellite.
- The Satellite Equipped with 11 remote sensing payloads & it is the fifth in the series and the third operational satellite.
- The satellite is designed to serve for eight years.
- It will provide atmospheric temperature, humidity, and other meteorological related parameters, which will contribute to China's weather forecast capacity.
- The FY-3E will monitor the global coverage of snow and ice, sea surface temperature, and natural disasters.
- In addition to that, the satellite will monitor solar and space environments and their effects, as well as ionospheric data to meet the needs of space weather forecasts and supporting services.
- The mission marked the 377th flight mission for the Long March rocket series

World's first database of genomic variants of oral cancer Created by DBT-NIBMG

- On July 07, 2021, The National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (NIBMG) in West Bengal's Kalyani created a database of genomic variations in oral cancer, the first-of-its-kind in the world, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).

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About DBT-NIBMG :

- dbGENVOC is a browsable **online database of GENomic Variants of Oral Cancer** and is a **free resource**.
- The database which will be **updated annually with variation data** from new oral cancer patients from different regions of India and southeast Asia

New solar thermal components testing facility at Hyderabad

- A newly established **Concentrated Solar Thermal (CST) based test rig facility at Hyderabad** can help the growing **solar industry in India to test capability and performance of solar thermal components** like solar receiver tubes, heat transfer fluids, and concentrating mirrors.
- The facility was **set up by the International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI)**, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology (DST).
- It will validate the indigenous components by parallelly comparing the performance (heat gain and heat loss properties) of the standard components with varying the operating parameters (e.g., flow rates of Heat Transfer Fluids (HTFs) operating temperature, pressures, etc.).

ICAI to launch mobile app For Students : CA Day 2021

- **On July 01, 2021**, on the occasion of **CA Day**, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) will launch a **mobile app for students of Foundation, Intermediate and Final course students**.
- **About ICAI-BOS:**
- The mobile app named, “**ICAI-BOS**” will have to **potential to provide next-generation interactive learning and innovative ways to improve quality services to the students and to establish a strong connection**.
- The app can be **downloaded by students from google play for android users**.
- In this mobile app the students can have **interactive learning and coaching facility at a single platform**, access the downloaded file of Assignments, Faculty notes, and any study material without internet connection, ad-free learning while viewing lectures.
- This mobile app is exclusively for CA students where they can track announcement and push notifications, **live coaching classes, all education contents, download faculty notes and assignments, attempt topic-wise MCQ based online tests and assess his/her performance, vide recorded lectures as per his/her convenience at any point of time**.

FAA Introduces New tool limits disruptions caused by Space operations

- The **Federal Aviation Administration** of the **US** introduced a new tool, **Space Data Integrator**, which will help track **rocket launches and Space vehicles returning to Earth in a better way**.
- The new technology was **first used on June 30** for the launch of SpaceX’s Transporter 2.
- The new tool automates the **near-instantaneous delivery of data about a Space vehicle’s flight path to the nation’s air traffic control system**.
- It will be able to **safely reopen the airspace more quickly and reduce the number of aircraft and other airspace users affected by a launch or reentry**.
- **Note :**

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- **SpaceX** was the **first company to share flight telemetry data with the FAA**.

Tech Mahindra to launch Block chain based system to track vaccine supply

- Vaccine manufacturers can use the system to track inventory, vendor payments through **Internet-of-Things (IoT) integration and smart contracts**.
- The company has partnered with **startup StaTwig** to implement '**VaccineLedger**' globally.
- "The partnership aims to roll out **blockchain-based traceability** solution for global vaccine supply chain transparency, predict and prevent failures in supply chains, including problems related to expired vaccines, stock out and counterfeiting.
- The blockchain-based application will build peer-to-peer bridges on current systems that support real-time data sharing, authentication and validation.

Cuba develops world's first conjugate vaccine

- **Cuba** has developed the **world's first conjugate Covid-19 vaccine Soberana 2 (Sovereign 2)**.
- It is delivered with a booster shot of Soberana Plus, is about 91 per cent effective against symptomatic Covid-19 cases.

About Soberana 2

- In total, the Soberana 2 is delivered through a three dose regimen. Two shots of Soberana 2 and one of Soberana Plus, when taken in a 0-28-56 day regimen, have an efficacy of 91.2 percent.
- Soberana 2 is developed by the Finlay Institute in partnership with the Centre for Molecular Immunology and the National Biopreparations Centre

Rare superluminous supernova spotted by Indian researchers

- The **Indian researchers** have **spotted an extremely luminous, powerful, hydrogen deficient, fast-evolving supernova** that shines with the energy borrowed from an exotic type of neutron star with an ultra-powerful magnetic field.
- **Supernovae (SNe)** are highly energetic explosions in the universe releasing an enormous amount of energy.
- Such **types of supernovae called SuperLuminous Supernova (SLSNe)** are very rare.
- **Deeper investigations** could **explore** the underlying **physical mechanisms**, possible predecessors, and environments hosting such rare explosions and their possible associations with other energetic explosions like **Gamma-ray bursts (GRBs)** and **Fast Radio Bursts (FRBs)**.

Shankar Balasubramanian and David Klenerman declared winners of 2020 Millennium Technology Prize for their development of revolutionary sequencing techniques

- Cambridge University chemists **Shankar Balasubramanian and David Klenerman** were declared the **winners of the 2020 Millennium Technology Prize**, a prestigious global science and technology prize awarded for their development of revolutionary sequencing techniques which means DNA
- The prize, awarded by **Technology Academy Finland (TAF)** at two-year intervals since 2004
- Sir Balasubramanian, an India-born British professor of medicinal chemistry, and Sir Klenerman, a British biophysical chemist, co-invented the Solexa-Illumina Next Generation DNA Sequencing (NGS), technology enabling fast,

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accurate, low-cost and large-scale genome sequencing, the process of determining the complete DNA sequence of an organism's make-up, which is proving crucial in humanity's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The winning NGS technology has had, and continues to have, a huge transformative impact in the fields of genomics, medicine and biology.
- One measure of the scale of change is that it has allowed a million-fold improvement in speed and cost, when compared to the first sequencing of the human genome.

Virgin Galactic space tourism company founder Richard Branson conducts space flight along with four other crewmates including Indian-origin woman Sirisha Bandla

- The nearly 71-year-old Mr. Branson and five crewmates, including aeronautical engineer Sirisha Bandla, from his Virgin Galactic space tourism company reached an **altitude of about 88 kilometres over the New Mexico desert** enough to experience three to four minutes of weightlessness and see the curvature of the Earth and then safely gilded back home to a runway landing.

WHO issues recommendations on Human Genome Editing

- Reports recommend governance and oversight of human genome editing across nine discrete areas such as **human genome editing registries, international research & medical travel; education, engagement & empowerment; illegal, unregistered, unethical or unsafe research and intellectual property.**
- It also focuses on **systems-level improvement** which is required to build capacity across India to **ensure safety & efficacy of human genome editing.**
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) has released two new companion reports, providing first global recommendations that will help in establishing human genome editing as a tool for public health.
- Somatic gene therapies involve modification in a patient's DNA to treat or cure any disease.
- This technique has been successfully used to cure HIV, sickle-cell disease and transthyretin amyloidosis.
- It could also improve treatment for cancers.

Potential benefits of human genome editing are:

- New strategies for diagnosis, treatment & prevention of genetic disorders
- New avenues of treating infertility
- New ways of promoting disease resistance
- Contribution towards development of vaccines and enhanced knowledge of human biology.

GAGANYAAN MISSION : ISRO successfully conducts 3rd test on Vikas Engine

- **On July 14, 2021, The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted the third long-duration hot test on the liquid propellant Vikas engine** that would launch the ambitious **Gaganyaan programme.**
- As part of the engine qualification requirements, the test of the liquid propellant Vikas engine was done for the core **L110 liquid stage of the human rated GSLV MkIII vehicle.**
- The engine was **fired for 240 seconds at the test facility of Isro Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu.**

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Additional Information :

- The Gaganyaan mission aims to **demonstrate Isro's capability to send humans to low-earth orbit onboard an Indian launch vehicle and bring them back to Earth.**
- Four Indian astronaut-candidates have already undergone generic space flight training in Russia as part of the Gaganyaan programme.
- Formal announcement of the Gaganyaan programme was made by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi during Independence Day address on August 15, 2018.**

IISc-Mynvax's heat-tolerant Covid vaccine

- **A heat-tolerant COVID-19 vaccine formulation** developed by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru has proven effective against all current SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern, according to a study in animals.
- The research, published in the ACS Infectious Diseases journal, showed the vaccine formulations by IISc-incubated biotech start-up Mynvax triggered a strong immune response in mice.
- Vaccine also remained stable for up to a month at 37 degrees Celsius while at 100 degrees Celsius it remained stable for up to 90 minutes.
- The IISc-My Nvax vaccine was developed using a part of viral spike protein called receptor-binding domain (RBD).
- It allows the virus to connect with the host cell to infect it. It differs from other vaccines because it only uses a specific part of the **RBD (string of 200 amino acids) instead of the entire** spike protein.
- Development of a heat-tolerant vaccine or thermostable or warm vaccine is significant for remote or resource-limited locations having extremely hot climates that lack reliable cold storage supply chains.

IIT Madras Develops AI-based algorithm to identify Cancer-causing Alterations

- Researchers at the **Indian Institute of Technology Madras** have developed a mathematical model called '**NBDriver**' to **identify cancer-causing alterations in cells.**

Researchers Team :

- This research was **led by Prof. B. Ravindran, Head, RBCDSAI**, and Mindtree Faculty Fellow IIT Madras and Dr. Karthik Raman, Faculty Member, Robert Bosch Centre for Data Science and AI (RBCDSAI), IIT Madras, and also the Coordinator, Centre for Integrative Biology and Systems Medicine (IBSE), IIT Madras. Mr. Shayantan Banerjee, a Master's Student at IIT Madras, performed the experiments and analysed the data.
- The results have been recently **published in the reputed peer-reviewed International Journal Cancers.**
- The algorithm, **driven by artificial intelligence, uses an unexplored technique of leveraging DNA composition.**
- The new algorithm will **help to pinpoint genetic alterations responsible for cancer progression.**
- The model will help in identifying the most appropriate treatment strategy for a patient through an approach known as "**precision oncology**" and "**tailoring treatments**" not only to a specific illness but also to a person's genetic make-up is challenging and requires extensive cataloguing of the 'driver' variants of interest.

Russia victoriously test-fires Zircon hypersonic cruise missile

- The **Russian defense ministry Successfully test fired the Zircon hypersonic cruise missile.**

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- The missile had been **fired from the Admiral Gorshkov, a warship in the White Sea.**
- It successfully hit a target more than **350 kilometers (about 217 miles) away.**

About Zircon hypersonic cruise missile :

- Zircon meaning **invincible.**
- It could hit targets at sea and on land with a range of **1,000 kilometres and a speed of Mach 9.**
- It plans to equip both warships and submarines with the Zircon.

A virtual platform - Kala Vishwa launched by ICCR for traditional and folk artists

- **On July 18, 2021, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) launched a new campaign called 'KALA VISHWA', from its Mumbai Centre.**
- It will **help to present traditional folk arts of India to foreign students and also be of help to the neglected artists.**

About Kala Vishwa :

- Kala Vishwas is a **special campaign under the Horizon Series that will be held for a duration of six months.**

Aim :

- To reach out to **traditional folk artists, local artistes / artisans and those coming from rural areas** and give them an opportunity and a platform to perform under this campaign, especially during the challenging time of COVID-19.
- It **focus on traditional art forms of Maharashtra and Goa**

Key People :

- Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President, ICCR and Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children and Youth & Sports inaugurated the first programme under the "Kala Vishwa" campaign.

Russia's S-500 missile system Successfully test fired

- **On July 20, 2021, Russia successfully test-fired its new S-500 air defence missile systems, from a southern training range, Kapustin Yar & hit a high-speed ballistic target as planned.**

About S-500 missile system :

- The S-500, also known as **Prometey or 55R6M "Triumfator-M".**
- It is a Russian surface-to-air missile/anti-ballistic missile system which is the most advanced **anti-missile system** in the world and is capable of countering attacks from space.
- The S-500 missile system is under development by the **Almaz-Antey Air Defence Concern.**
- It has a maximum firing range of **600 kilometres.**

Indian start-up makes affordable and dual powered defibrillator; sanmitra 1000hct

- **DBT-BIRAC-funded Jeevtronics Pvt. Ltd. has developed SanMitra 1000 HCT, the hand-cranked dual powered (grid+hand cranked) defibrillator.**
- The **affordable, low-weight device** is considered **more reliable than traditional defibrillators by experts** as it can be used even in the areas where electricity is unavailable.
- The device works with **both AC mains and a hand-cranked generator** built into the unit, and does not require any battery change.

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- The start-up has reported that the device's battery has been tested for a large number of charge-discharge cycles thereby making it cost-effective.
- The device is **ideal for hospitals located in cities and remote areas**.
- So far, over 200 devices have been deployed across India and Africa, as per the stats provided by the start-up.
- Jeevtronics, an **ISO13485 certified company**, has already received four patents in US and India, and had been **facilitated financially by BIRAC under the schemes of BIG and IIPME (Early Transition stage)** in the past.
- SanMitra 1000 HCT is designed to international IEC standards for medical devices and the patented technology costs **INR 99,999+ taxes, which is 1/4th of the big brands, as reported by the start-up**.
- These defibrillators can be usually preferred over chest compressions (CPR), and can even prove fruitful in treating COVID-19 patients suffering from issues related to rate or rhythm of the heartbeat (Arrhythmias).
- As per the start-up, they have also developed the only Make-In-India "ambulance grade" defibrillator, named as JeevtronicsSanMitra 1000 HCT EMS, which has been tested at ARAI and will be priced at fraction of the cost of MNC brands.

Features of the Defibrillator

- Low weight
- Can be used even in areas without electricity
- Does not require any battery change
- Can even prove fruitful in treating COVID-19 patients suffering from issues related to rate or rhythm of the heartbeat
- Ideal for city and remote area hospitals
- In-built generator provides the Device advantage over traditional defibrillator
- Receives four patents in India and United States

Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar develops AMLEX

- Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar has developed a first-of-its-kind Oxygen Rationing Device – AMLEX.

Purpose :

- To **save the oxygen which gets wasted unnecessarily & to increase the life of medical oxygen cylinders three times**.
- The device can operate on **both portable power supply (battery) as well as line supply (220V-50Hz)**.
- AMLEX, was a system developed specifically for oxygen cylinders synchronising the flow of oxygen with inhalation and exhalation of the patient, thus conserving a large amount of oxygen in the reservoir for a long-lasting operation.
- As AMLEX **supplies a required volume of oxygen to the patient during inhalation** and trips when the patient exhales CO₂, it saves the flow of oxygen at that time.

Developers :

- IIT Ropar's assistant professor **Dr Ashish Sahani** led the team that developed the device comprising PhD students of Biomedical Engineering Department Mohit Kumar, Ravinder Kumar and Amanpreet Chander
- The **demand for liquid medical oxygen increased four times to 2,800 TPD**.

Jeff Bezos launches to space aboard New Shepard rocket ship

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- Billionaire **Jeff Bezos** has made a **short journey to space**, in the first crewed flight of his rocket ship, **New Shepard**.
- He was **accompanied by Mark Bezos, his brother, Wally Funk**, an 82-year-old pioneer of the space race, and an 18-year-old student.
- They travelled in a capsule with the biggest windows flown in space, offering stunning views of the Earth.
- New Shepard, **built by Bezos' company Blue Origin**, is designed to serve the burgeoning market for space tourism.

DRDO indigenously develops Titanium alloy for aerospace industry

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has indigenously developed a **High Strength Metastable Beta Titanium Alloy**
- It can be used in **forging aerospace structures**.
- The alloy has been developed by the **Hyderabad-based Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory (DMRL)** premier of DRDO.
- The beta titanium alloys are unique due to their **higher strength, ductility, fatigue, and fracture toughness** – making them increasingly attractive for aircraft structural applications.

Components of Beta titanium alloy :

It Contains,

1. Vanadium
2. Iron
3. Aluminium

Benefits of Using Beta titanium alloy :

- Potential for significant weight savings (Expected around 40%)
- Lower lifetime cost
- High strength-to-weight ratio
- These alloys were being used by many developed nations in recent times as a beneficial substitute for the relatively heavier traditional structural steels.
- The Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) had **identified over 15 steel components** that may be replaced by the alloy forgings.

Space technology applications being used for digital education in the country

- Government said that space technology applications being used for digital education in the country.
- Satellite communication is being used for **beaming the educational contents in digital mode by 19 States and A&N Islands under Tele-education Programme**.
- Further, the **Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N)** is also beaming 51 educational channels using satellite communication.
- Apart from this, **Indian Institute of Remote Sensing** is actively involved in training beneficiaries (such as UG/PG and Doctorate students, working professionals, academicians, school teachers and school students) on **Space Technology** and its Applications using digital platforms.

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- During the last one year, **about 2.42 lakh participants benefitted** from these programmes.
- **The Space Sector is opened up for larger participation of non-governmental entities** which is expected to bring in wide opportunities to provide space based applications including digital education.

NESAC will noted Shillong into the “Space Tech capital of the east”: Union Minister Shri G. Kishan Reddy

- **Shri G Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of Culture, Tourism and Development of North East Region** stated that **NESAC (North Eastern Space Applications Centre)** has enabled the States to address issues and challenges of the North Eastern region with the support of space technology.
- “**The organization can also provide** the required strategic inputs for the entire region for its overall development and strategic planning”.
- Shri Kishan Reddy informed that between **2014 and 2021**, the assets of NESAC almost tripled from Rs 41.6 crores to Rs 112 crores.
- And this is a clear example of the Prime Minister’s commitment and his mantra, “**Sabka Saath, Sab Ka Vikas, Sab ka Vishwas**” being implemented on the ground.
- **Activities of NESAC** are focused on the practical applications of space technology in agriculture, and allied fields like silk farming where it can help in early detection of diseases, etc.

IIT-Kanpur launches technology innovation hub

- On July 23, 2021, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K) launched the **first technology innovation hub to find cyber security solutions for anti-drones technologies, intrusion detection system, block-chain and cyber physical system.**
- After a rigorous application process **13 start-ups and 25 research and development principal investigators were selected**, to set up start-ups cohorts in cyber security.
- IIT Kanpur’s C3iHub is committed to **create a vibrant ecosystem of cyber security start-ups fostering world class innovations.**
- A large number of these start-ups will also be focusing on the creation of anti-drone technology which will be **deployed to protect the critical infrastructures along the nation’s border.**
- The start-ups, **supported by C3iHub at IIT Kanpur**, will innovate to disrupt the cyber security space, **focusing on design and development of services and products to safeguard India’s critical infrastructure.**

Kerala Veterinarian John Abraham Gets Patent For Biodiesel From Slaughtered Chicken Waste

- A veterinary-doctor-turned-inventor, **John Abraham**, has received the **patents for inventing biodiesel from slaughtered chicken waste.**
- After seven-and-a-half years, the Indian Patent Office finally granted us the patent.

Why chicken waste Used :

- Birds and pigs have single stomachs which offer higher fat saturation and this is easy to render oil under room temperature.
- **100 kg of chicken waste can produce 1 liter of biodiesel.**

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Benefits :

- Slaughtered chicken waste gives an average mileage of 38 km per litre.
- It Cost 40 percent less than conventional diesel
- It causes 50 percent less pollution.

ISRO signs on eight companies to begin work on its merchandise programme

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation's** customised space-themed merchandise programme in partnership with industry has taken off with multiple companies on board.
- In that will be able to purchase authorised products, such as **scale models, T-shirts, mugs, space-themed educational games, science toys**, and etc connected to ISROs missions and work
- **Eight companies** have registered with ISRO on a non-exclusive basis.
- Indic Inspirations (Pune), 1947IND (Bengaluru), and Ankur Hobby Centre (Ahmedabad) etc.
- In that ISRO shares the themes, general arrangement drawings, images or any other design for enabling these companies.
- To make scaled models , 3D and 2D drawings are being used.

Purpose of the Programme :

- It can play a **game-changing** role in creating awareness and kindling interest of students, children and public, in the domain of space science & technology, and propagating its achievements.

Google's Parent company Alphabet Launches New robotics software company Intrinsic

- Google's parent company **Alphabet's** secretive research unit launches New robotics software company named **Intrinsic**
- It mainly focused on **developing software for robots**.

About Intrinsic :

- Intrinsic developing software tools to make industrial robots **easier to use, cheaper** and more **flexible**.
- It is working to unlock the creative and economic potential of industrial robotics for millions more businesses, entrepreneurs, and developers."
- It has been testing software in real-time mechanics that uses various techniques like deep learning, automated perception, motion planning, reinforcement learning, force control and simulation.

Note :

- **Wendy Tan White**, is the **Current chief executive officer** of Intrinsic.

Government developed indigenous climate model

- The **Government** has developed an **indigenous climate model** that **will predict the impact of climate change on monsoon in the country**, informed **Dr. Jitendra Singh**, the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences.
- The model, **Earth System Model or IITM-ESM** has been developed at the Centre for Climate Change Research (CCCR), Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

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- **Earth System Model** is developed by the scientists at **IITM, Pune** in collaboration with the international research community.
- It is the **first climate model from South Asia** that has contributed to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sixth assessment report (AR6) and participated in the Coupled Model Inter-comparison Project –Phase 6 (CMIP6) experiments.

Benefits of IITM-ESM:

- The **development of the IITM-ESM model** is advantageous to scientists and researchers studying the impact of climate change on the environment.
- It is an **important tool** in the understanding of the physical, chemical, and biological mechanisms that govern the rate of change of elements of Earth's system.
- Furthermore, this development will help in **enhancing the fundamentals of the climate system**, its multi-scale variability, global and regional climatic phenomena, and making projections of future climate change.

Scientists developed Ultra-sensitive, easy to use sensor can detect arsenic in food & water in 15 minutes

- **Department of Science and Technology** stated, A scientist with the Mohali-based **National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute** has developed an ultra-sensitive and easy-to-use sensor for detecting arsenic contamination in water and food within 15 minutes.
- The **sensor** is highly sensitive, selective and is applicable for various water and food samples.
- It can be easily operated and one can know about contamination by matching the **colour change on the sensor's surface with reference labels**.
- 'The **sensor developed by Dr Vanish Kumar**, a recipient of the INSPIRE Faculty fellowship of the Department of Science and Technology, and currently positioned at the National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute, Mohali, can be tested with three modes- spectroscopic measurements, colour intensity measurement with the help of colorimeter or mobile application, and with naked eyes'.

About the kit:

- Identification of **arsenic before consumption** of water and food is imperative to protect people from possible health issues associated with arsenic.
- However, none of the **existing methods of detection** can be easily used.
- The **developed testing kit is 500 times more sensitive** in comparison to the improved version of the molybdenum-blue test, which is one of the most common and traditional tests used for detecting arsenic ions.

Group of Indian astronomers' spotting first short duration gamma-ray burst from a stellar collapse

- The Ministry of Science & Technology stated A **group of astronomers**, including from India, has **detected a very short, powerful burst of high-energy radiation** that lasted for about a second and had been racing towards the earth for nearly half the present age of the universe.
- The **burst detected by NASA's Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope** on August 26, 2020 turned out to be one for the record books – the shortest gamma-ray burst (GRB) caused by the death of a massive star.

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About the Ray:

- **GRBs are the most powerful events** in the universe, detectable across billions of light-years.
- Astronomers classify them as **long or short based on** whether the event lasts for more or less than two seconds.
- They observe long bursts in association with the demise of massive stars, while short bursts have been linked to a different scenario.
- The **identification of this short event GRB** which involved several scientists across the world, including Shashi Bhushan Pandey from Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), an institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), as well as scientists from other Indian institutions, showed for the first time that a dying star can produce short bursts too.

Indian scientists discovered bipyrazole organic crystals

- Researchers from the **Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Kolkata** collaborated with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur**, to develop **piezoelectric molecular crystals** called **bipyrazole organic crystals**.
- This research, **supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST)** through its Swarnajayanti Fellowship to CM Reddy and Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) grants.
- The study was published in the **journal Science**.

About piezoelectric molecular crystals :

- Piezoelectric crystals are a **class of materials** that **generate electricity** when it undergoes a mechanical impact.
- That repair themselves from mechanical damages without need for any external intervention.

ISRO to Launch a Satellite for Natural Disaster Monitoring Satellite this Year

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** will launch a **Geo-imaging Earth Observation Satellite (EOS-03)** in the coming months as the agency reassesses work following the Covid-19 induced lockdown.
- The EOS-03 satellite will **enable near-real-time monitoring of natural disasters like floods and cyclones** that have become common in the Indian subcontinent as it goes through major environmental and weather changes.
- In addition to natural disasters, EOS-03 will also enable monitoring of water bodies, crops, vegetation conditions, and forest cover changes.
- The Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) developmental flight is scheduled in the fourth quarter of 2021 and it will be launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre located in Sriharikota.

Malaysia Registers World's First Affordable New Drug for Hepatitis c

- **Malaysia** has registered the **world's first affordable & effective new drug for hepatitis C**.
- This offers hope for accessible treatment to the many people around the world who are affected by Hepatitis c.
- The drug has been named **ravidasvir** & it has been approved to be used along with an existing drug named sofosbuvir.
- This approval came five years after the Malaysian government had partnered with **Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi)** to develop the drug.

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Note :

- World Hepatitis Day is observed on **Jul 28** every year and this year's theme is "Hepatitis Can't Wait".
- **About Hepatitis c :**
- Hepatitis C is an **inflammation of the liver** caused by the hepatitis C virus.
- Globally, an estimated 58 million people have chronic hepatitis C virus infection, with about 1.5 million new infections occurring per year.
- In Future the WHO plans to **eliminate** the disease by **reducing new infections by 90%** and **deaths by 65 % by the year 2030**.

Important Environment News

New plant subspecies - *Rungia longifolia* subsp. *keralensis* identified in Western Ghats

- Researchers from the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI) and the University of Kerala have discovered a New Plant Subspecies *Rungia longifolia* subsp. *keralensis* in Western Ghats.
- It was initially found in the Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary in Kollam district in February 2016.
- It has been Published in the International Journal of Plant Sciences, Abrahamia published by Department of Botany, Kerala University.

About *Rungia longifolia* subsp. *keralensis* :

- The sub-species belongs to the *Rungia longifolia* herb species, endemic to Sri Lanka.
- It is classified under the **Acanthaceae** plant family.
- The new subspecies, known to have **pinkish white flowers**, usually flower and bear fruit between August and February.

Two new insect species of snail discovered in Western Ghats

- On June 30, 2021, a group of scientists found a new snail genus and species from the Amboli hill area in Maharashtra, Western Ghats.
- The new genus, *Varadia*, has been named after herpetologist Dr Varad Giri, meanwhile the species has been christened as *Varadia amboliensis*.
- After five years of research, the findings were published in the European Journal of Taxonomy.

About the insect :

- The newly described species is a **semi slug** belonging to the eu pulmonate molluscan group Stylommatophora.
- It is **endemic to the Northern and Central Western Ghats**.
- The new species have **Unique genetic anatomy & Potential to detect minor climate fluctuations**.
- The snail is around **7 cm long, omnivorous feeding** & it can be differentiated by its unique external appearance, shell, reproductive system & most active at night time.

Rare Species of black-bellied coral snake found in Uttarakhand

- A group of **researchers discovered Black-bellied Coral snake** in forests of Uttarakhand.
- The snake was **observed in the Bhadrachal Block of Benog Wildlife Sanctuary** in the Mussoorie Forest Division.

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About the Snake :

- At present, there are **107 species of coral snakes** in the world. In India, only **7 coral snake species** are found.
- The snake belongs to the **Elapidae family** of *Sinomicrurus* genus, namely, *S. nigriverter*.
- According to a **2015 report of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare on the management of snakebite**, there are **more than 2000 species of snakes** in the world.
- About **300 of these species** are found in India, of which **52 are venomous**.
- The venomous snakes found in India belong to **three families 'Elapidae', 'Viperidae' and 'Hydrophiidae' (sea snakes)**.
- Further, all snakes are protected by the law. Cobra, Rat snakes, and Checkered keelback are protected in **Schedule II of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, and the rest are protected by **Schedule IV**.

Researchers found two spider species in Assam's Chirang Reserve Forest

- Recently **Two new underground spider species** named *Gravelyia boro* and *Dexippus kleini* have been **discovered** in the Jharbari range of western Assam's Chirang Reserve Forest, **Assam**.

Research Team :

- **Dulur Brahma** (Assistant Professor) and **Paris Basumatary** (research scholar), from Bodoland University's Department of Zoology, have authored the studies.
- Both species have been described in the **Acta Arachnologica** published by the **Arachnological Society of Japan**.

About Gravelyia boro :

- *Gravelyia boro* is the **newly discovered burrow spider**.
- It belongs to the **Nemesiidae family** comprising **184 species** worldwide & It **lives underground**, about 10-15 cm below the **sandy-loam** surface.
- It has an opening up to 1 cm wide under the cover of some herbs and shrubs.

About Dexippus kleini :

- *Dexippus kleini* is an oriental **jumping spider**.
- It is a **member of Salticidae (largest family of all spiders on earth)**.
- It has been recorded for the **first time** after it was originally described **129 years ago** by Swedish arachnologist, **Tord Tamerlan Teodor Thorell**.
- It is a slow mover but capable of jumping up to **25 mm** in length to hunt its prey.

Study: Global warming can cause malaria, dengue to billions

- Malaria and dengue predicted to affect billions more people if global warming continues uncurbed
- An **estimated 8.4 billion people could be at risk from malaria and dengue by the end of the century** if emissions keep rising at current levels, according to a new study published in *The Lancet Planetary Health*.
- The research team estimates that this worst-case scenario would mean the population at risk of the diseases might increase by up to 4.7 additional billion people (relative to the period 1970-1999), particularly in lowlands and urban areas, if temperatures rise by about **3.7°C by 2100** compared to pre-industrial levels.

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- In the scenario where emissions are reduced the most – greenhouse gas emissions decline by 2020 and go to zero by 2100 and global mean temperature increases by 1°C between 2081 and 2100
- An additional **2.35 billion people** are predicted to be living in areas suitable for malaria transmission.
- For dengue in this scenario, the modelling suggests 2.41 additional billion people could be at risk.
- The study highlighted that if emission levels continue to rise at current levels, tropical high-elevation areas (more than 1,000 metres above sea level) in areas such as Ethiopia, Angola, South Africa, and Madagascar could experience up to 1.6 additional climatically suitable months for malaria transmission in **2070-2099 compared with the period 1970–1999.**

India to explore indigenous deposits of Phosphatic rock

- Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers and Health & Family Welfare **Shri Mansukh Mandaviya** chaired a high-level meeting to assess the situation of raw materials in the country for the manufacturing of Fertilisers.
- The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Shri Bhagwanth Khuba along with Senior officials of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Ministry of Mines, Geological Survey of India, National Remote Sensing Centre and Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited.
- The Minister stated that India is committed to reduce dependency on fertilizer imports and to gain '**Atma Nirbharta**' in **all fertilizers.**
- To achieve this goal, we have to focus on scaling up production of fertilizers through indigenous raw materials.
- Currently India **is dependent on other countries for raw materials to produce DAP and SSP primarily.**
- India of the 21st century needs to reduce its dependencies on import.
- In order to achieve that goal, India has to explore indigenous deposits of Phosphatic rock and Potash and make it available to indigenous **industries to produce DAP (Di-Ammonium Phosphate), SSP (Single superphosphate), NPK (nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K)) and MOP (Muriate of Potash)to cater the needs of Indian farmers."**
- It is pertinent to mention that **Rock Phosphate is the key raw material for DAP and NPK fertilizers.**
- **Currently India is 90% dependent** on imports for this raw material.
- Volatility in international prices affects domestic prices of fertilizers.
- It hinders the progress and development of the agriculture sector in the country and puts extra pressure on our farmers.
- He also underlined the importance of commercial exploration of Phosphorite deposits.
- He called for taking all the necessary steps for ramping up the production in the **existing 30 lakh MT of Phosphorite deposits.**
- The Union Government has handed over fertilizer mineral resource bearing GRs to the tune of 536 million tonnes to various states.
- These deposits are available in **Rajasthan, central part of peninsular India, Hirapur (Madhya Pradesh), Lalitpur (Uttar Pradesh), Mussoorie syncline, Cuddapah basin (Andhra Pradesh).**

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- It was further decided that the **Department of Mining and Geological Survey of India** is going to expedite the exploration in the potential potassic ore resources in **Rajasthan's Satipura, Bharusari & Lakhasar** and **Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh & Karnataka**.

Ashwini Kumar Choubey announces 31.6% rise in e-waste generation last year

- Minister of State for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, **Ashwini Kumar Choubey** informed, **India generated 10,14,961.2 tonnes of e-waste**, which is an **increase of 31.6%** when compared to the year 2019 to the Rajya Sabha.
- The e-Waste (Management) Rules were notified in **2016**.
- The Environment Ministry has notified **21 types of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) as e-waste**.
- The Ministry has been promoting and encouraging the establishment of an efficient e-waste collection mechanism, which is environmentally safe and sound.
- Recycling through authorised dismantlers and recyclers of e-waste, will minimise the illegal recycling and recovery operations and reduction of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic components.

Note :

- Presently, **400 dismantlers/recyclers** of e-waste are **operating in 20 States**.
- India's 14 Tiger Reserves get Global CA/TS recognition for good Tiger Conservation**
- The 14 Tiger Reserves** in India which received the accreditation of the Global Conservation Assured|Tiger Standards (CA|TS).
- Tiger Conservation a Symbol of Conservation of Forests**.
- During **all India tiger estimation 2018**, leopard population was also estimated within the forested habitats in tiger occupied states of the country.
- The overall **leopard population in the tiger range landscape of India in 2018** was estimated at **12,852 (SE range 12,172 - 13,535)**.
- This is a significant increase from the 2014 figure that was **7,910 (SE 6,566-9,181)** in forested habitats of 18 tiger bearing states of the country.
- The 14 tiger reserves which have been accredited are Manas, Kaziranga and Orange in Assam, Satpura, Kanha and Panna in Madhya Pradesh, Pench in Maharashtra, Valmiki Tiger Reserve in Bihar, Dudhwa in Uttar Pradesh, Sunderbans in West Bengal, Parambikulam in Kerala, Bandipur Tiger Reserve of Karnataka and Mudumalai and Anamalai Tiger Reserve in Tamil Nadu.

India can save Rs 89.4 billion a year by shutting old coal plants: Study

- According to the Study **India can potentially save Rs 8,940 crore (\$1.2 billion)** a year by **shutting down some old coal-burning power plants** and allowing **newer ones to run for longer hours**.
- The study was **conducted by New Delhi-based Council on Energy, Environment and Water**

About the Study :

- According to that report, the country should accelerate **decommissioning 30 gigawatts of inefficient coal-fired capacity** and set aside another **20 gigawatts of plants as reserve**.

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- CEEW examined **194 gigawatts** of coal power plants over a 30-month period ending February 2020.
- It avoids 42 million tons of coal being burnt every year, a key source of the financial savings besides the positive impact on emissions and environment.

Benefits :

- Help reduce greenhouse-gas emissions,
- Clean up the country's air
- Reduce soil and water pollution.
- Cost savings
- Improve capacity use of the thermal fleet

Note :

- Currently, **India** has a **203-gigawatt coal power fleet**, which accounts for **53%** of its installed generation capacity and about **70%** of its electricity output.

Important Rankings and Indexes

ITU's Global Cybersecurity Index 2020 : US Ranks Tops & India ranked at 10th position

- On **June 29, 2021**, India was ranked as the **10th best country** in the world in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2020, released by International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
- The **United States** has topped with a score of 100 in the GCI 2020
- The **UK and Saudi Arabia** tied on the **second position** with a score of 99.54, while **Estonia** was ranked **third** in the index.
- As per the ranking, **India has moved up by 37 places** to rank as the **tenth best country** in the world in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2020.
- India scored **97.5 points** out of 100 points.

About Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2020 :

- The GCI 2020 is the **fourth edition** of the annual index and ranked **194 countries**.
- The GCI **measures the commitment** of countries to cybersecurity at a global level.
- GCI assessment is done on the **basis of performance** on five parameters of cybersecurity including legal measures, technical measures, organisational measures, capacity development, and cooperation.

Global Startup Ecosystem Index 2021 : US tops & India Ranks 20th Position by Startup Blink

- India has jumped three spots to be ranked at the **20th spot** with a score of **8.833** among the top 100 countries in the Global Startup Ecosystem Index 2021 by Startup Blink.
- The 2021 Global Startup Ecosystem Index **ranks 1,000 cities and 100 countries worldwide**.
- In the **2020 Index** India was at **23rd spot**.

Country Wise Top 5 Rankings :

1. USA with a Index Score of 124.4

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2. UK with a Index Score of 28.7

3. Israel with a Index Score of 27.7

- Canada and Germany ranked 4th & 5th position continue to be in the top five countries respectively like last year.
- **City Wise Top Rankings :**
- Overall, **City wise San Francisco, United States with a score of 328.9 has topped** the cities list, Followed by New York , Beijing, Los Angeles , and London.
- In **India Bengaluru (10th) is the highest ranked Indian City**, Followed by New Delhi and Mumbai are present in 14 & 16th Position respectively.

About the report :

- Each country is ranked based on **three parameters : quantity, quality and business environment**.
 1. Quantity Parameters comprises elements such as number of start-ups, number of co-working spaces, number of accelerators, etc.
 2. Quality Parameters number of employees per start-up, the presence of unicorns, etc
 3. Business environment Parameters include internet speed and freedom, level of English proficiency, research and development investment, number of patents per capita etc.

Most popular media “News on Air Radio Live-stream” on Global Rankings

- In the **latest Rankings of top countries in the world** (excluding India) where All India Radio Live-streams on **NewsOnAir App are most popular**,Fiji has jumped from **5th position to 2nd**, while Saudi Arabia has made a comeback in top 10.
- **Kuwait and Germany** are new entrants, while **France and New Zealand** are no longer in the top 10.
- **The United States continues to be number 1.**
- In what is an important feat, **All India Radio's Telugu and Tamil live-stream services** are popular in the **United States**, while **AIR Punjabi service** is popular in the **United Kingdom**.
- In major changes in rankings of top AIR streams globally (excluding India), **AIR News 24*7** has moved **one position up** from **Rank 7 to 6**, while **AIR Tamil has slipped from spot 6 to 10**.
- More than **240 Radio Services of All India Radio** are live-streamed on NewsOnAir App, PrasarBharati's official App.
- These All India Radio Streams on NewsOnAir App have a large number of listeners not just in India, but globally, in more than 85 countries and 8000 cities across the globe.

AmbitionBox bags UST for top employee choice awards

- **UST, a leading digital transformation solutions company** announced that it has been awarded as one of the '**Best Places to Work in India 2021**', in the country's first employee choice awards by **AmbitionBox.com**, a rapidly growing career advisory platform.
- **UST was ranked among the Top 12 Best IT/ITES Companies and Top 3 in the large IT/ITES companies in India.**
- **Companies are ranked based on ratings and reviews** shared by employees who have worked in the company, during the year 2020.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

About AmbitionBox:

- **AmbitionBox** is a career advisory platform in India that helps job seekers discover great places to work.
- The reviews on **AmbitionBox capture employee sentiment** across key workplace metrics including culture, career growth, compensation, work-life balance, development of skills, work satisfaction and job security.

India reach 90.32 % in UNESCAP's latest Global Survey on Digital & Sustainable Trade Facilitation

- India has seen a **"significant improvement"** in the **UNESCAP's Global Survey on Digital & Sustainable Trade Facilitation** with a 90.32 percent score.
- After evaluation of 143 economies, the Survey 2021 has **highlighted India's significant improvement** in the scores on all five key indicators -- transparency, formalities, institutional arrangement and cooperation, paperless trade and cross-border paperless trade.
- India has scored 90.32 per cent in the global survey on **Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation**.
- This is a remarkable jump from 78.49 per cent in 2019.
- Under the transparency indicator, the country scored 100 per cent in 2021, up from 93.33 percent in 2019.
- The score for **'paperless trade'** improved to 96.3 per cent in 2021, from 81.48 per cent in 2019.
- The score in the **institutional arrangement and cooperation indicator** improved to 88.89 per cent, from 66.67 percent in 2019.

WTO Report : India Enters Top 10 Agricultural Produce Exporters of 2019

- According to the **World Trade Organisation (WTO) report**, on the trends in world agricultural trade in the past 25 years, **India** has entered the **top 10 list** of the countries exporting agricultural produce in the year 2019.

Top Four Nations in the List :

1. The European Union (EU) – 16.1% share (ranked 2nd in 1995)
 2. The United States – 13.8% share (topped the list in 1995 with 22.2%)
 3. Brazil – 7.8% share
 4. China- 5.4%
- **India** ranked **ninth** (Earlier this place was New Zealand) with a **share of 3.1% in global agricultural exports** with a sizable share in the export of rice, cotton, soya beans and meat
 - In 2019, **India** was the **largest exporter of rice with 33%** of total share, followed by Thailand (20%) and Vietnam (12%) as against Thailand (38%), India (26%), and the US (19%) in 1995.
 - The top 10 exporters accounted for more than 96% of exports in both 1995 and 2019.
 - **India** is also the **third-largest cotton exporter (7.6%)**, and the fourth-largest importer (10%) in 2019.
 - In the largest traded Agri product, **soya beans, India (0.1%)** has a meagre share, but was ranked **ninth** in the world.
 - In the “meat and edible meat offal” category, India secured 8th rank in the world with a global share of 4%.
 - However, India lagged behind as a value-added contributor to world agricultural exports, with its share of international value-added content material in agri-exports being low at 3.8%, primarily due to high tariffs on Agri imports to boost the domestic markets and local farmers.

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Important Schemes List

Andhra CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launches 'YSR Bima' scheme

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister **YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** launched the '**YSR Bima**' scheme with new guidelines, where the government itself will directly pay the **insurance amount to the family** of deceased to make the insurance claims easier.
- The Chief Minister stated that the government has **prioritised public health care**, thus soon after forming the government, the annual income for "**Aarogyasri**" has been pegged at **Rs 5 lakh** and increased the number of treatments to 2450.

About scheme:

- '**YSR Bima**' scheme, under which the government will **directly pay insurance amounts to families** of the deceased to make the claim settlement easier.
- In order to support **1.32 lakh families** through the YSR Bima scheme, the government allocated **Rs.750 crore** for the year 2021-22.
- In the last two years, the State government had spent **Rs 1307 crore** for YSR Bima.

Eligible for the scheme:

- All unorganized workers in the State in the age group of **18 to 70 years**, drawing a monthly **wage of less than Rs. 15,000/- per month** who enrolled through Praja Sadhikara Survey are **eligible** under the **Scheme**.

J&K: JAKEDA to install 5,000 Solar Power Pumps under PM-KUSUM scheme

- In the **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir**, Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency (**JAKEDA**), is planning to install **5,000 Solar Power Pumps** under **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthan Mahabhiyaan (PM-KUSUM) scheme** in J&K in the first phase out of which 2,500 pumps will be installed in the current fiscal.
- CEO, JAKEDA, **Babila Rakwal** disclosed during the **launch of a publicity cum awareness programme** for PRIs and farmers of Ramban district in the presence of Deputy Commissioner, Mussarat Islam.
- Worth to mention, the **PM-KUSUM scheme** has been launched by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) for the upliftment of farmers in the country.

About the scheme:

- Under the scheme, Subsidized Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps** in the **capacity range of 2 HP to 10 HP** shall be installed throughout the country.
- The **scheme provides 50 per cent subsidy** from the Central Government, **30 percent from J&K Govt.** and only **20 per cent as farmer's share**.
- The scheme shall be implemented in J&K by JAKEDA, Department of Science & Technology.
- This step will **provide** an additional source of income to farmers who will be in a position to use this energy for other purposes.

Karnataka CM unveiled Electric Bike Taxi scheme in Bengaluru

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- In a bid to **generate employment, bring down pollution and reduce dependence on private vehicles**, chief minister BS Yediyurappa unveiled the **Karnataka Electric Bike Taxi scheme-2021** in Bengaluru.
- The unveiling of the policy comes after several attempts were made to resist the **granting of licences to initiate two-wheeler taxis in the city**.
- Yediyurappa stated that the **new policy will lead to self-employment, eco-friendly environment, fuel conservation and strengthening public transport**.
- The chief minister added that the **main objective** is to reduce travel time for the public.
- "This scheme will give **opportunities for individuals, partnership firms and companies to participate**.
- The vehicles registered under this scheme will be in the transport category for which the government has given several exemptions like permit, tax and is also giving financial benefits for the electric vehicles manufacturers".

Haryana govt launch 'One Block, One Product' scheme

- Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala **stated To encourage and promote small industries in the rural areas**, the Haryana government will soon introduce the **'One Block, One Product' scheme**.
- **Under the scheme**, the state government plans to connect every block of the state with some industrial vision and the government is working expeditiously on this scheme, he added.
- The Deputy Chief Minister informed that in the **last one year**, Haryana's **'One District, One Product' Scheme** which is being implemented under MSME, has come up as a model across the country.

Telangana CM Launches 'Telangana Dalit Bandhu' scheme

- **Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao** took on the opposition for levelling allegations against him that the launch of **Telangana Dalit Bandhu scheme** aimed at benefitting Dalits was politically motivated.
- **CM KCR named the Dalit empowerment scheme** that was decided by the cabinet recently as **Telangana Dalita Bandhu scheme** and chose to launch the scheme on a **'pilot project'** basis in poll-bound Huzurabad constituency.
- The scheme, which was to be called Dalit Empowerment Scheme, has now been renamed as Dalita Bandhu scheme.
- As part of the scheme, eligible Dalit families would be given **Rs 10 lakh in cash directly to their accounts**.
- The Chief Minister stated the State government was implementing every scheme after brainstorming on each aspect for several days and months.

About the scheme:

- **Huzurabad constituency** has only a total of **around 2 lakh voters**.
- Out of the total, **CM KCR's scheme will benefit nearly 21,000 families**, which accounts for around 60,000 to 80,000 people, if this scheme is implemented soon.
- Interestingly, the CM had mentioned that all over the state the **Dalita Bandhu scheme** will be **implemented as decided earlier with Rs 1200 crore**.
- However, in poll-bound Huzurabad, the CM has now said that **additional Rs 1500 to Rs 2000 crore** would be spent in the constituency on the scheme.

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MP state government initiate 'Devaranya' scheme to promote Ayurveda

- In order to promote AYUSH in Madhya Pradesh and to link it with employment, the government has made a 'Devaranya' scheme.
- CM Shivraj launched the scheme.
- The CM stated that more and more people should get health benefits through Ayurveda and 'Devaranya' scheme has been made to provide employment to the people living in the tribal areas of the state.
- The CM mentioned that where there is a treasure trove of medicines in our forests, the tribal brothers and sisters understand their importance and use.
- A complete value chain for the production of AYUSH medicines will be developed in the state through Devarnya Yojana.
- Self-help groups will also play an important role in this work.

Important Books and Authors

Authors/Released by	Books
Sundeeep Misra	Fiercely Female: The Dutee Chand Story (Published by Westland Books On on 'SoftCover)
Dr. Gauri Shankar Sharma	Janaksuta Sut Shaurya (released by Shivraj Singh Chouhan)
Kavitha Rao (Published by Westland Books)	Lady Doctors: The Untold Stories of India's First Women in Medicine
Dhaval Kulkarni (Published by Pan Macmillan)	Nathuram Godse: The True Story of Gandhi (A biography of Mahatma Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse)
Sushant Singh & Shruthi Rao	India To The Rescue (Published by Juggernaut Books)
Rajpal punia & Damini punia (Published by Penguin Random House India)	Operation khukri - The True Story behind the Indian Army's Most Successful Mission as part of the United Nations
Jairam Ramesh (Published under Penguin's 'Viking' imprint)	The Light of Asia: The Poem that Defined the Buddha
Ashok Chakravarti	The Struggle Within: A Memoir of the Emergency ((Published By Harpercollins)
Shivam Shankar Singh and Anand Venkatanarayanan (Published by HarperCollins)	The Art of Conjuring Alternate Realities: How Information Warfare Shapes Your World

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Late Baljit Kaur Tulsi (Published by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts)	The Ramayan of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji (1 st copy received by PM Modi)
Aditi Shah Bhimjyani (Launched by Kareena Kapoor Khan)	Pregnancy Bible (Published by Juggernaut Books)
Ashok Chakravarti	The Struggle Within: A Memoir of the Emergency (Published by HarperCollins)
Thummeti Raghothama Reddy (English Translation) (Publisher – Yadlapalli Venkateswara Rao)	Terrace Garden: Midde Thota (M Venkaiah Naidu received the book) (Originally written in Telugu)
Chryseis Knight	The Great Big Lion (Published by Penguin Random House)
Senior journalist, J.S. Ifthekhar	Urdu Poets and Writers – Gems of Deccan (Published by Woven Words Publishers OPC Private Limited)
Kanti Bajpa	India Versus China: Why They Are Not Friends (Published by the Juggernaut publishers)
DGP Haryana Manoj Yadava (Unveiled by Haryana Chief Minister)	UNTOLD stories of Haryana Police
Former RBI governor Bimal Jalan	The India Story (Published by Rupa)
Hari Pulakkat (Published by Hachette India)	SPACE. LIFE. MATTER : The Coming of Age of Indian Science
Khem Lata Wakhlu (Published by Harper Collins India, released on Soft Cover)	A Kashmiri Century - Portrait Of A Society In Flux
Dr. C K Garyali (A founder trustee of EDIT (Equitas Development Initiative Trust))	Bank with a Soul: Equitas (Released by Duvvuri Subbarao, Former Governor, RBI)
Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra	The Stranger In The Mirror (Published by Rupa Publications)
Ashok Lavasa (Former election commissioner)	An Ordinary Life: Portrait of an Indian Generation

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India Introduces 10 translated books of modern Indian literature to SCO

- On June 29, 2021, Indian Ambassador to China Vikram Misri introduced a translated version of 10 peerless collections of Modern Indian Literature to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Secretary General Vladimir Norov at the SCO secretariat in Beijing.
- It Involves English, Russian and Chinese translations of 10 classic works of modern literature written by prominent Indian authors in different languages.
- The project was commissioned by India's premier literary institution, Sahitya Akademi and completed by the end 2021.
- The translated books included,
 1. Arogyaniketan (Bengali) written by Tarashankar Bandyopadhyay,
 2. Ordained by Fate (Urdu) by Rajender Singh Bedi,
 3. Illu (Telugu) by Rachakonda Vishwanatha Sastry,
 4. The Last Exit (Hindi) by Nirmal Varma,
 5. Longing for Sunshine (Assamese) by Sayed Abdul Malik,
 6. Mystery of the Missing Cap and different quick tales (Odia) by Manoj Das,
 7. The Last Flicker (Punjabi) by Gurdial Singh,
 8. Of Men and Moments (Tamil) by Jayakanthan,
 9. Parva: A Tale of War, Peace, Love, Death, God and Man (Kannada) by S L Bhyrappa
 10. The Promised Hand (Gujrati) by Jhaverchand Meghani.

Important Peoples' in News

First transgender Woman Athlete Laurel Hubbard to compete at Olympics

- On June 21, the National Olympic Committee of New Zealand (NZOC) nominated the weightlifter Laurel Hubbard for the New Zealand Olympic team to compete in the women's 87-kilogram category.
- New Zealand's Laurel Hubbard has become the first ever transgender athlete picked to compete at an Olympics.

About Hubbard :

- Hubbard competed in international weightlifting for the first time in 2017.

Achievements :

- At the 2017 Australian International & Australian Open in Melbourne, she competed at the heaviest 90 kg+ category, winning the gold medal.
- Hubbard won two gold medals at the 2019 Pacific Games in Samoa.
- In 2020 she won the gold medal in the women's +87 kg event at the Roma 2020 World Cup in Rome, Italy.

Madhya Pradesh all-rounder Anshula Rao becomes first Indian woman cricketer to get banned for doping

- Madhya Pradesh all-rounder Anshula Rao became the first women cricketer to be handed a four-year ban after failing the dope test.

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- On June 28, 2021, She was **banned** by the National Anti-Doping Agency for faking a dope test which dates back to July 2020.
- Rao thus **becomes the first woman cricketer** to have been punished for doping.
- She was found **guilty of consuming a banned anabolic steroid '19- Norandrosterone**, on March 14 at Baroda in 2020.
- She was last seen playing cricket in the **under-23 T20 tournament** hosted by BCCI.

Indian-origin American 12-Year-old Abhimanyu Mishra becomes youngest Grandmaster in Chess

- On June 30, 2021, 12-year-old Indian origin boy, Abhimanyu Mishra became the youngest-ever Grandmaster in chess.
- Abhimanyu **became the youngest GM at the age of 12 years 4 months and 25 days**.
- He **broke** the 19-year-old record set by Russian GM Sergey Karjakin in 2002 to become the youngest Grandmaster.
- Karjakin had secured the Grandmaster title at the age of 12 years and 7 months.
- Abhimanyu went on to **defeat 15-year-old Indian GM Leon Luke Mendonca**.
- Abhimanyu won his first GM norm in the April Vezerkepzo tournament and the second at the May 2021 First Saturday tournament.
- His third GM norm in Budapest, having already crossed the required 2500 ELO rating barrier.

Indian Wrestler Sumit Malik Ban by UWW for doping

- Indian wrestler Sumit Malik who qualified for the Tokyo Olympics within the 125kg freestyle class, has been **banned for two years** by the world wrestling governing body United World Wrestling (UWW) & it is **effective from July 03, 2021**.
- The 28-year-old has been banned for **failing a dope test**.
- His B sample also **returned positive for a prohibited stimulant**.
- In a jolt to the Indian wrestlers' campaign in the Tokyo Olympics, 125kg freestyle wrestler Malik had tested positive for the banned substance methylhexanamine (MHA).
- As per World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) list of prohibited substances, MHA is prohibited in-competition only as a **specified stimulant**.

Sirisha Bandla became 2nd Indian woman to fly into space

- Sirisha Bandla was the **second Indian-origin woman** to head to space as part of Virgin SpaceShip Unity on July 11.
- Andhra Pradesh-born Bandla will be **one of the six space travellers** aboard 'VSS Unity' of Virgin Galactic, **scheduled to take off from New Mexico** alongside the company's founder Richard Branson.
- The **Telugu woman** from Andhra's Guntur district who was brought up in Houston will become the second India-born woman to fly into space after Kalpana Chawla.
- **Rakesh Sharma and Sunita Williams** were the other Indians who went **into space prior to Bandla**.

Toni Kroos announces retirement from international football

- Germany's World Cup-winning midfielder Toni Kroos announced **retirement from international football**.
- Kroos, 31, will continue to play in club football, where he **represents Spanish giants Real Madrid**.

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- Kroos was part of the Germany national team that had defeated Argentina 1-0 to claim the 2014 FIFA World Cup trophy.

About Toni Kroos :

- The midfielder represented Germany in 106 matches, scoring 17 goals.
- Kroos won two consecutive league titles, a UEFA Champions League title, two DFB-Pokal titles.
- In 2014, he joined Real Madrid in a transfer worth €25 million.
- He was a key member of the German squad which won the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil.

Sophie Ecclestone, Devon Conway win ICC Player of the Month Award for June

- England left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone & New Zealand opening batsman Devon Conway have been named as the ICC Players of the Month in June.

About Sophie Ecclestone :

- In December 2018, the International Cricket Council (ICC) named her the Emerging Player of the Year.
- She became the youngest woman to take 50 wickets in WT20I cricket, which she achieved in 34 matches.
- In February 2019, she was awarded a full central contract by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) for 2019.
- She became the world's number one bowler in Women's Twenty20 International (WT20I) cricket At the end of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in March 2020.
- Sophie Ecclestone is the second English female to win the title after Tammy Beaumont, who was awarded the title in February 2021.

Bangladesh's Mahmudullah announces retirement from Test Cricket

- During the third day of a one-off test match between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe, Senior Bangladesh all-rounder Mahmudullah has announced his retirement from Testcricket.
- To leave the Test game mid way, has been criticized by Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) President Nazmul Hassan

About Mahmudullah :

- Mahmudullah, is a Bangladeshi cricketer and the current T20I captain & he was the best Bangladesh batsman in the 2015 World Cup.
- Mahmudullah became the first Bangladeshi batsman to score a century in the Cricket World Cup.
- He is the first Bangladeshi batsman to score two consecutive century in the World Cup.

Pankaj Singh, Former India pacer retires from all forms of cricket

- On July 10, 2021, Former India and Rajasthan pacer Pankaj Singh Pankaj Singh announced retirement from all forms of cricket.

About Pankaj Singh :

- The 36-year-old played for India in two Tests and one ODI in his career.
- He made his Test debut against England in 2014 while his first game in international cricket had come in 2010.
- He played 117 first-class games and picked 472 wickets.
- Pankaj played an important role in Rajasthan's two consecutive Ranji Trophy wins in 2010-11 and 2011-12 seasons.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- He was also a part of Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) and Rajasthan Royals in the Indian Premier League (IPL).
- In December 2018, he became the first seam bowler to take 400 wickets in the Ranji Trophy.

Sandesh Jhingan bags AIFF men's footballer of the year for 2020/21 season

- Senior India defender Sandesh Jhingan was named the AIFF men's Footballer of the Year, while midfielder Suresh Singh Wangjam was picked as the Emerging Player for 2020-21 season.
- It is the first time that the towering central defender has received the AIFF Player of the Year award, having won the Emerging Player of the Year Award in 2014.
- The award winners were chosen on the basis of votes from the Indian Super League and I-League club coaches.
- He was part of the Indian sides that lifted the Intercontinental Cup in 2018 and played out a memorable draw at the home of the Asian champions Qatar in 2019.

19-year-old Shehroze Kashif from Pakistan become the world's youngest person to summit K2

- On July 27, 2021, A 19-year-old Pakistani Shehroze Kashif became the youngest person to reach the summit of K2 with Supplemental oxygen.
- Before Kashif, Sajid Sadpara, was the youngest person to have climbed K2 at the age of 20.

About Shehroze Kashif :

- Shehroze Kashif from Lahore.
- At the age of 17, Kashif scaled the world's 12th-highest mountain, the 8,047-metre (26,400 foot) Broad Peak & then after which he was called "The Broad Boy"
- He started climbing mountains at the age of 11 with the first one being Makra Peak, followed by Musa ka Musalla and Chembra Peak at age 12, Mingli Sar in Shimshal at age 13 and Khurdopin Pass at age 15 and Khusar Gang in alpine style at 18 years of age.

Important Acquisitions & Mergers

Govt to sell up to 4% stake in NMDC via OFS

- State-owned miner NMDC announced government plans to offload 4 percent stake in the company through an offer for sale (OFS).
- The promoter proposes to sell up to 11,72,24,234 equity shares of the company.
- The floor price for the offer shall be Rs 165 per equity share, NMDC informed the stock exchanges.
- The President of India, acting through and represented by the Ministry of Steel, Government of India, is the promoter of NMDC Ltd.

Thailand's PTT acquires 41.6% stake in Indian Avaada energy company

- Global Power Synergy Public Co Ltd, a unit of Thailand's state-owned utility major PTT, has acquired 41.6% stake in Avaada Energy Pvt Ltd, an Indian renewable energy producer.

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- GRSC has invested by way of subscription of new shares **approximately 41.6% of equity interest in Avaada with total investment of approximately THB 14,825 million (approx \$454 million)**

CCI approves Summit India Tripura's 23.5 % stake in OTPC

- Fair trade regulator **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** approved the **acquisition of 23.5 percent stake in ONGC Tripura Power Company Ltd by Summit India (Tripura).**

Important Web Portals and Mobile Apps

MSME minister launches integrated services of Udyam Registration Portal

- On the occasion of **MSME Day, Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Nitin Gadkari** has launched the integrated services of **Udyam Registration Portal** with Common Service Centre Portal.
- He launched it in a Virtual Conference titled '**Indian MSMEs- Growth Engines of Economy**'.
- It has been launched to increase the penetration of benefits of various government schemes amongst MSMEs in far-flung areas.

Udyam registration certificate:

- An enterprise whose turnover is above the threshold **limit of Rs. 40 lakh** needs to register under GST.
- A significant number of MSMEs have an annual turnover less than the threshold limit and thus exempted from registration **under the GST Act.**

Benefits of obtaining Udyam Registration:-

- The **business owner can avail** octroi and tax concession in states laws as applicable.
- Claim stamp duty and registration fees waiver.**
- Exemption of 1% interest rate on Overdraft.
- Can avail subsidy** from NSIC and credit ratings & Eligible for IPS subsidy.

Department of Justice launches "Enforcing Contracts Portal"

- On 28th June, 2021 an exclusive "Enforcing Contracts Portal" was inaugurated by Shri Barun Mitra, Secretary (Justice) at the Department of Justice, Delhi.

Aim :

- To promote ease of doing business and improve the 'Contract Enforcement Regime' in the country.

About Enforcing Contracts Portal :

- The portal provides **easy access to latest information on commercial cases in Dedicated Commercial Courts of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata.**
- Department of Justice, **Ministry of Law and Justice**, as the nodal department has been monitoring an array of legislative and policy reforms to strengthen the "Enforcing Contracts" regime for Ease of Doing Business in India in coordination with e-Committee, Supreme Court of India and the High Courts of Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Karnataka.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Flipkart launches Shopsy App

- Flipkart has launched a digital platform Shopsy, to enable Indians to start their online businesses without any investment.
- Flipkart aims to enable over 25 million online entrepreneurs to benefit through e-commerce by 2023.
- The platform's users will have access to 15 crore products across fashion, beauty, mobiles, home, to name a few.
- Users are required to register on the Shopsy app using their phone numbers, whereas entrepreneurs can set up their business, as long as they have access to a network of people.
- Flipkart stated that Shopsy aims to provide new users to digital commerce consumers access to products by simplifying the process through interactions with a trusted person.

Ayush Ministry to launch Ayurveda dataset on Clinical Trials Registry Portal

- The Ayurveda dataset on CTRI Portal will be launched online by Ayush Minister Kiren Rijiju.
- The Minister will also launch four more Portals, all developed by the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS).

About the Portal:

- This Ayurveda Dataset of CTRI has been jointly developed by ICMR and CCRAS, Ministry of Ayush.
- CTRI is a primary register of Clinical Trials under WHO's International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP) and the creation of Ayurveda dataset in CTRI facilitates usages of Ayurveda terminologies to record clinical study metadata based on Ayurveda interventions.
- Until now the clinical trials in Ayurveda were dependent on terminology borrowed from modern medicine.
- The key feature of this digital platform is the provision of a selection of the Ayurveda Health conditions from a drop-down of 3866 Ayurveda morbidity codes incorporated from the NAMASTE portal (a portal developed by the AYUSH Ministry) in which morbidity statistics pertaining to Ayurveda has been classified according to International Classification of Diseases standards.

J&K introduced Geotagged photographs through 'PROOF' mobile app

- In Jammu and Kashmir, the Union Territory Administration accorded sanction to uploading of Geotagged photographs through 'PROOF' (Photographic Record of On-site Facility) mobile application while preferring bills in the concerned Treasuries against the budget allotted through BEAMS application.
- The necessary training and hand-holding will be immediately provided to all the DDOs enabling them to upload photographs through this application from 15th of this month.
- The 'PROOF' application will be available for downloading on the BEAMS Portal.

Central Government Launches Online Course Mobile App 'Matsya Setu' For Aqua Farmers

- On July 06, 2021, Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Giriraj Singh launched a mobile app 'Matsya Setu for aqua farmers.
- The app has been developed by the ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA), Bhubaneswar, with the funding support of the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), Hyderabad.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

About Matsya Setu :

- The Matsya Setu is an online course app with the objective to bring the latest freshwater aquaculture technologies to the aqua farmers of the country.
- Matsya Setu app has species-wise/ subject-wise self-learning online course modules, where renowned aquaculture
- This app explains the basic concepts and practical demonstrations on breeding, seed production and grow-out culture of commercially important fishes like carp, catfish, scampi, murrel, ornamental fish, and pearl farming.
- The modules are divided into small video chapters for the convenience of the learners, along with additional learning materials.
- Quiz/Test options are also provided for self-assessment.
- In that app Farmers can also ask their doubts through the app and get specific advisories from experts.
- The platform also hosts the necessary information about enhanced management practices that are required to sustain the quality of soil and water along with feeding and health management in aquaculture operations.

Defence Ministry implements Web based Integrated System 'SPARSH'

- The Defence Ministry has implemented SPARSH, an integrated system for automation of sanction and disbursement of defence pension.
- This web-based system processes pension claims and credits pension directly into the bank accounts of defence pensioners without relying on any external intermediary.
- It has been implemented with agreement between Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA), State Bank of India (SBI) and Punjab National Bank (PNB).
- Under the agreement, the pensioners can approach various branches of these two banks for obtaining any service relating to their pension issues.
- SPARSH envisages establishment of Service Centres to provide last mile connectivity to pensioners who may be unable to directly access the SPARSH portal for any reason.

Defence Minister launches AI-powered grievance management application- CPGRAMS

- On July 15, 2021, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh launched an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered grievance management application CPGRAMS (Centralized Public Grievance Redress & Monitoring System) in New Delhi developed by the Ministry of Defence with the help of IIT-Kanpur.
- Previously, a tripartite MoU was signed between IIT Kanpur, MoD (Department of Defence) and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DAR&PG)

Key people :

- Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar; Additional Secretary, DARPG Shri V Srinivas, Additional Secretary MoD Smt Nivedita Shukla Verma, Director, IIT Kanpur Prof Abhay Karandikar also present the event.

Rajasthan govt develops mobile app "Raj Kisan Organic" for purchase, sale of organic products

- Individual farmers or farmer groups can register themselves by downloading this app from Google play store and directly sell their products to registered buyers.

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- Now purchase and sale of organic products in Rajasthan **can be done online using Raj Kisan Organic mobile application, developed by the agriculture department** for coordination and negotiation between farmers and the buyers.
- **Rajasthan agriculture minister Lalchand Kataria** stated as the demand for organic products was increasing more and more farmers were switching to organic farming with **more than 20,000 becoming members of around 90 organic producer groups** registered with the Rajasthan State Organic Certification Organization.
- However, these farmers found it difficult to find a structured market to sell their produce, a problem that the new app named **Raj Kisan Organic** promises to solve by providing an interface to farmers and the consumers of organic produce.

Bank of Baroda, U GRO Capital jointly launch co-lending platform 'Pratham'

- **U GRO Capital**, a **BSE listed**, technology enabled **small business NBFC**, announced the launch of a co-lending partnership for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) with Bank of Baroda.
- Termed as **'Pratham'**, the loan disbursements have commenced on the occasion of Bank of Baroda's 114th Foundation Day.
- The program has been launched under Reserve Bank of India's revised co-lending guidelines.
- **Pratham, a Rs 1000 crore co-lending program** will allow the MSMEs to avail customized lending solutions at a competitive rate of interest with a significant reduction in turn-around time.
- The **loan amount ranges from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 2.5 crore** to be offered at an interest rate starting from 8% with a maximum tenure of 120 months.

Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath launches MyGov-Meri Sarkar' portal

- On July 26, 2021, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister **Yogi Adityanath** launched the **'MyGov-Meri Sarkar'** portal.
- **About the Portal :**
- By this portal, the government will receive feedback from the people and inform them about the various schemes of the government.

Aim :

- Enhance the **engagement of common citizens with the state government.**
- It will be a major platform to disseminate the schemes of governance
- It will help to know the opinion of common citizens.
- The portal would help the people of the state to communicate their views, suggestions and feedback.
- It would become an innovative platform for public participation and good governance.

Revision Points

Applications/Web portals	Launched By/Developed By
Udyam Registration Portal	Niti Gadkari
Enforcing Contracts Portal	Department of Justice

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Shopsy	Flipkart
CTRI Portal	Ayush Ministry
PROOF	Jammu & Kashmir
Matsya Setu	Giriraj Singh
SPARSH	Defence Ministry
Raj Kisan Organic	Rajasthan
Pratham	Bank of Baroda & U GRO Capital
'MyGov-Meri Sarkar	Uttar Pradesh
Centralized Public Grievance Redress & Monitoring System	Rajnath Singh

Important Sports News

Cricket

ICC T20 World Cup moved away from India to UAE and Oman

- On June 29, 2021, International Cricket Council (ICC) announced, the **venue for ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 has been shifted to the United Arab Emirates and Oman.**
- The tournament is **scheduled to be held from October 17 to November 14.**
- The tournament was **originally set to be staged in India**, but had to be shifted, given the consequences of the second wave of Covid-19 on the country.
- The BCCI will remain the hosts of the event, which will now be held across four venues - Dubai International Stadium, the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi, the Sharjah Stadium and the Oman Cricket Academy Ground.

BCCI Forms Seven-member Working Group for Domestic Cricket

- On July 10, 2021, The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) formed a **seven-member working group for domestic cricket.**

Purpose :

- The main focus of the group will be the **remuneration of domestic players for the previous season wherein tournaments were cancelled, due to COVID-19.**

List of seven-members :

1. Rohan Jaitley (North Zone),
2. Yuvvir Singh (Central Zone),
3. Jaydev Shah (West Zone),
4. Devajit Saikia (North-East Zone),
5. Avishek Dalmiya (East Zone),
6. Santosh Menon

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7. Mohammed Azharuddin (South Zone).

West Indies Cricketer Chris Gayle becomes 1st batsman to score 14,000 runs in T20 cricket

- West Indies Cricketer Chris Gayle becomes 1st batsman to score 14,000 runs in T20 cricket.
- He achieved the feat during the third T20I match between the West Indies and Australia in St Lucia.

About Chris Gayle :

- Chris Gayle is the only player to score a triple century.
- Gayle is the first ever batsman to hit 1000 sixes in T20 cricket.
- He was awarded the Most Valuable Player in the 2011 Indian Premier League and held the Orange Cap in 2012.
- In 2013, IPL he scored Highest Individual Score of 175 runs in T20 format.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam becomes fastest cricketer to score 14 ODI centuries

- On July 13, 2021, Pakistan captain and star batsman Babar Azam became the fastest batsman to complete 14 ODI centuries
- He reached his feat in his 81st ODI innings.
- Previously, former South Africa opening batsman Amla held the record who took 84 innings to reach this feat.

Fastest Players to hit 14 ODI tons:

1. Babar Azam - 81 innings
2. Hashim Amla- 84 innings
3. David Warner - 98 innings
4. Virat Kohli - 103 innings

Others

Nihal Sarin Clinches Silver Lake Open 2021 Chess Tournament

- On June 30, 2021, 17 year old Nihal Sarin won the gold medal in the Silver Lake Open chess tournament held in Serbia.
- In the final round, he defeated Branko Damljanovic of the host.
- Sarin won eight of the nine points to finish with a score of 8.0/9.

List of Top 3 Winners :

1. Nihal Sarin
 2. Raunak Sadhwani
 3. Abhimanyu Puranik
- Another Indian, Raja Harshit finished tenth.
 - The open international rating event, 131 players from 27 countries participated.

Indian Navy's athlete MP Jabir first Indian male to participate in 400m hurdles in Tokyo Olympics

- On July 01, 2021, 25-year-old Naval sailor from Kerala, MP Jabir qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in 400m hurdles.
- Jabir would be the first Indian male athlete to participate in the 400m hurdles in Olympics.

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- He is **currently ranked 34th** in the World Athletics' Road to Olympics rankings where 40 athletes qualify.
- Jabir qualified through the **World ranking quota** where there are 14 spots available.
- **Before that PT Usha**, the legendary athlete from Kerala, competed in the 400-metre hurdles at the Los Angeles Olympics.
- Jabir is the second person from the state to compete in the Olympics in the same event.

About MP Jabir :

- In **2017**, Jabir **worked for the Indian Navy** and was posted at Kochi.
- Jabir **won the bronze medal at the 2017 Asian Athletics Championships in 400 metres hurdles**.
- In the **2019 Asian Athletics Championships in Doha**, he **won the bronze medal** and he also achieved the qualification standard for 2019 World Athletics Championships.
- Jabir has **participated in many National and International Athletic championships** representing the Indian Navy and the Services earning many laurels.

WAKO India Kickboxing Federation gets government recognition

- On **July 02, 2021**, The Ministry of Youth affairs & Sports has decided to grant recognition to WAKO India Kickboxing Federation as National Sports Federation (NSF) for promotion and development of the Kickboxing sport in India.
- WAKO India Kickboxing Federation is **affiliated to the World Association of Kickboxing Organizations (WAKO)**, the world body for kickboxing.
- WAKO has been a provisionally **recognised member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC)** since November 30.
- The recommendation to **approve WAKO as a fully recognised member of the Olympic family** had been taken by the IOC in June.
- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board at its meeting on 10th June 2021 has approved the recommendation for WAKO to become a fully recognized member of the Olympic family of sport.
- The full recognition of WAKO will be finally decided by the IOC Session in Tokyo in July 2021.

Norwegian star Karsten Warholm Breaks 29-year Old 400m Hurdles World Record

- On **July 01, 2021**, Norwegian star Karsten Warholm broke the 400m men's hurdles world record, by **clocking 46.7 seconds** at the Bislett Games in Oslo.
- The previous record was **held by American athlete Kevin Young**, he **clocked 46.78 secs**, was set at the **1992 Olympics in Barcelona**.

About Karsten Warholm :

- Karsten Warholm is the **world record holder in the 400 m hurdles**.

Achievements :

- In March, Warholm **won eight gold medals in the Norwegian Youth Indoors Championships in 2013**.
- At the **2013 World Youth Championships in July**, he won gold in the boys.

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- In July, he won silver in the 400 m at the 2015 European Junior Championships with a time of 46.50 s.
- He has won gold in the event at the World Championships in 2017 and 2019, as well as the 2018 European Championships.

2021 Austrian Grand Prix : Max Verstappen Wins

- On July 04, 2021, Max Verstappen won the 2021 Austrian Grand Prix.
- In second place was Mercedes-Benz AMG's Valtteri Bottas followed by Lando Norris.
- This is the 3rd Consecutive & fifth win of Verstappen in the 2021 Formula One season.

About Max Verstappen :

- At the age of 17 years, he became the youngest driver to compete in Formula One.
- At the age of 18, he won the 2016 Spanish Grand Prix on his debut for Red Bull Racing, becoming the youngest-ever driver and the first Dutch driver to win a Formula One Grand Prix.
- In June 2021, Red Bull driver Max Verstappen won the Styrian Grand Prix 2021 held at Spielberg, Austria. Followed by Mercedes drivers Lewis Hamilton & Valtteri Bottas finished 2nd & 3rd Place.
- On 23 May 2021, Verstappen became the first Dutch F1 driver to lead the World Championship, after winning the Monaco Grand Prix.

Tokyo Paralympics: Mariyappan Thangavelu named India's flag-bearer

- On July 02, 2021, Top para high-jumper Mariyappan Thangavelu was named the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent in the Tokyo Paralympics.
- The decision was taken at the executive committee meeting of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI)
- Thangavelu had won the 2016 Rio Paralympics T-42 high jump gold.
- He is the only the 3rd Indian to win a gold medal in Paralympics

Note :

- Tokyo Paralympics begin on 24 August 2021 & ends on 5 September 2021
- Para-Athletics Chairman : R Satyanarayana

Tokyo Olympics: Mary Kom, Manpreet Singh to be India's flag-bearers

- On July 05, 2021, Indian Olympic Association (IOA) announced Mary Kom, the six-time world boxing champion, and Manpreet Singh, the men's hockey team skipper, will be India's flag-bearers at the opening ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics.
- Bajrang Punia, a silver medallist at the 2018 World Wrestling Championships, will be the flag-bearer at the closing ceremony on August 8.
- This is for the first time that India will have two flag-bearers, one male and one female, at Olympics Games, to ensure "gender parity".
- Around 126 athletes are taking part in the Tokyo Olympics Games, comprising 56 percent male and 44 percent female athletes.

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Women's Speed Chess Championship: Hou Yifan Wins 2021 FIDE Chess.com

- Grand Master Hou Yifan won the FIDE Chess.com Women's Speed Chess Championship.
- She defeated GM Harika Dronavalli from India by 15-13.

About Hou Yifan :

- Hou Yifan is a Chinese chess grandmaster
- She is a four time Women's World Chess Champion.
- Hou clinched the \$20,000 first prize in a tight match where she won the final two bullet games.
- She is the youngest female player ever to qualify for the title of grandmaster.
- Also, she is the youngest ever to win the Women's World Chess Championship
- She achieved the titles of Woman FIDE Master in January 2004, Woman Grandmaster in January 2007, and Grandmaster in August 2008.
- Hou is the third woman ever to be rated among the world's top 100 players, after Maia Chiburdanidze and Judit Polgár.

Levon Aronian wins Goldmoney Asian Rapid

- Levon Aronian became the winner of the Goldmoney Asian Rapid chess tournament held in virtually.
- The Armenian grandmaster defeated the Russian chess player Vladislav Artemiev.
- He will receive a \$ 30,000 prize for winning first place.

About Goldmoney Asian Rapid :

- Goldmoney Asian Rapid is the 7th round of the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour organized by Magnus Carlsen.
- The total prize fund is 1.6 million dollars, Goldmoney Asian Rapid - 100 thousand dollars.

Wimbledon 2021 : Novak Djokovic Beats Matteo Berrettini to win Men's Single Title

- On June 11, 2021, Novak Djokovic (Serbian) beat seventh seed Matteo Berrettini 6-7, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 to win his sixth title at Wimbledon and a record-equalling 20th Grand Slam title.
- With this win he equalled his total major men's singles titles record with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

List of Wimbledon 2021 Winners :

- Men's Single – Novak Djokovic (Serbia) defeated Matteo Berrettini
- Women's Single – Ashleigh Barty (Australia) defeated Karolína Plíšková (Czech Republic)
- Men's Double – Nikola Mektić and Mate Pavić defeated Marcel Granollers and Horacio Zeballos
- Women's Double – Hsieh Su-wei and Elise Mertens defeated Veronika Kudermetova and Elena Vesnina
- Mixed Double – Neal Skupski and Desirae Krawczyk defeated Joe Salisbury and Harriet Dart

Pawan Singh, selected as first ever Indian juror for upcoming Tokyo Olympic Games

- Pawan Singh, has been selected as the first ever Indian juror for the upcoming Tokyo Olympic Games.
- A total of 26 jury members will officiate at the Olympics, of which six will be from Japan and the rest from other countries.

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- To become a jury, people have to **clear various jury exams at different levels** which are part of the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF) courses.
- People also have to prove their skills through their work after which they are considered to work at various events across the globe.

2021 Copa América : Argentina beats Brazil

- On July 10, 2021, Lionel Messi-led Argentina beat Neymar's Brazil 1-0 to win the Copa America final match, held at the Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.
- Angel Di Maria scored the **only goal** of the match & this is **Lionel Messi's first major trophy with Argentina**.

Rank	Country
Champions	Argentina (15th Title)
Runners-up	Brazil
Third	Colombia
Fourth	Peru

About 2021 Copa América :

- The 2021 Copa América was the **47th edition of the Copa América, the international men's football championship organised by South America's football ruling body CONMEBOL**.
- The tournament took place in **Brazil from 13 June to 10 July 2021**.
- It was the **first time since 1991 that no guest nation took part in the tournament**.

2022 Khelo India Youth Games to Organized by Haryana

- The **Haryana government will organise the Khelo India Youth Games 2021 in February 2022**.
- In 2022 Khelo India Youth Games **8,500 players will participate of which 5,072 will be athletes, including 2,400 females and 2,672 males**.
- Previously, it was scheduled to be held from November 21 to December 5, 2021, but has been shifted due to the possible third wave of Covid-19 pandemic.
- Various sports activities in the **under-18 category** will be held in the Games.
- In addition, the government also announced that **BRICS Games-2021 will be organised during Khelo India**.

Indian-American Samir Banerjee wins junior Wimbledon boys single title

- On July 11, 2021, Indo-American tennis player **Samir Banerjee won the Wimbledon boys' singles title 2021 against compatriot Victor Lilov at the All England Club**.
- The 17-year-old Banerjee won **7-5, 6-3 on No. 1 Court in the all-American final that lasted in one hour 22 minutes**.
- He broke his rival **thrice and dropped serve only once in a facile win**.

About Samir Banerjee :

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- Banerjee is from **New Jersey** & he is the **first American junior champion at Wimbledon since Reilly Opelka in 2015, and 12th overall.**
- At the **junior French Open, Banerjee, ranked 19 in the world, had crashed out in the first round.**

Italy crowned in UEFA Euro 2020 Final

- **Italy won the European Championship trophy defeating England 3-2 in penalty shoot-out in the Euro 2020 final at Wembley Stadium in London.**
- **Gianluigi Donnarumma, Italy goalkeeper, saved two England penalties en route to a 3-2 shootout**
- In that tournament **Cristiano Ronaldo has won the Golden boot & Best player was Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma.**
- It was the first final to be decided on penalties since Czechoslovakia beat West Germany in 1976.

About UEFA Euro 2020 Final :

- The UEFA Euro 2020 Final was a **football match** that took place at Wembley Stadium in London, England, on **11 July 2021 to determine the winners of UEFA Euro 2020.**
- It was the **16th final of the UEFA European Championship.**

India to host badminton World Championships in 2026

- **On July 13, 2021, the sport's global governing body, BWF, announced India will host the World Badminton Championships in 2026.**
- This will only be the **second time** that India will be hosting the world championship.
- India had hosted the BWF World Championships in **Hyderabad in 2009.**

Note :

- The **2023 Sudirman Cup**, which was **originally allotted to India, will now be hosted in Suzhou, China.**
- India has so far won **10 World Championships medals** with reigning champion **PV Sindhu** leading the chart with a gold, two silver, and two bronze medals, while Prakash Padukone won India's first medal at the World Championships in 1983.

Tokyo Olympics : Deepak Kabra becomes first Indian gymnastics judge

- **Deepak Kabra** became the **first Indian to be selected for judging the gymnastics competition of the Olympic Games.**
- The men's artistic gymnastics will be officiated by Kabra at the Tokyo Games, which begins on July 23.

Note :

- **Pranati Nayak** earned a **bronze medal on vault at the 2019 Asian Artistic Gymnastics Championships**

Anurag Thakur launches official song on Indian contingent at Tokyo Olympics

- **On July 14, 2021, Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur launched Team India's official cheer song 'Hindustani Way' for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics.**
- The song has been **composed by Grammy Award winner AR Rahman and sung by young singer Ananya Birla.**

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- The launch of Team Indian official cheer song was a **culmination of hard work** by all the stakeholders in the **last 18 months**.

Key People :

- IOA President **Narinder Batra**, Rajeev Mehta (IOA secretary) and MoS for home, Youth affairs and Sports **Nisith Pramanik** also present the event.
- The Tokyo Olympics will be held from **July 23 to August 8**.

Documentary on Traditional Polo Game of Ladakh by LA Polo

- **LA Polo Delhi** in collaboration with **Himalayan sports and cultural development organization and Polo Promotion Committee Kargil** are working on a **promotional documentary** in Ladakh.
- In Drass & Kargil, for this they are **shooting different aspects of the Game** in context with Ladakh particularly related to **the traditional natural game of Polo**.
- An exhibition polo match was played between **LA Polo Delhi and Himalayan Sports Drass** at **Goshan International Polo Stadium, (Shagaran)**
- The aim of the match was to **generate interest among local youth towards the sport in the region**.

Lewis Hamilton Clinches British Grand Prix 2021

- On **July 18, 2021**, **Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain)**, won the **British Grand Prix 2021** for a record-extending **eighth time** at the **Silverstone Circuit** in the **United Kingdom**.
- Monaco based **Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)** stood **second place** followed by Hamilton's team mate **Valtteri Bottas** from **Finland**.
- This win is the **99th of seven-times world champion** Hamilton's **Formula One career**, **fourth of the current campaign** and one of the more controversial in his long list of achievements.

About Lewis Hamilton :

- Lewis Hamilton holds the records for the **most wins (99)**, **pole positions (100)**, and **podium finishes (172)**.
- Hamilton was **listed in the 2020 issue of Time** as one of the **100 most influential people globally**, and was knighted in the **2021 New Year Honours**.
- He was **elected FIA Personality of the Year** three times **2014, 2018, 2020**.
- In 2020 , he received the **DHL Fastest Lap Award & FIA Pole Trophy**.
- He won the **Sportsman of the Year Award** in 2020.

Viswanathan Anand wins Sparkassen Trophy

- On **July 18, 2021**, India's GM **Viswanathan Anand** defeated **Vladimir Kramnik of Russia** to win the **Sparkassen Trophy** in his **fourth and final round** held in **Dortmund, Germany**.
- It is a brand new format of **four-game chess match**.
- Playing white in a **Tarrasch variation**, Anand, a former world champion, settled for a **draw in 40 moves**, to win the **match 2.5-1.5**.
- The event was **played as part of the "No-Castling" Chess** devised by the **Russian GM**.

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About Castling :

- Castling is a move in the game of chess involving a player's king and either of the player's original rooks.
- It is the only move in chess in which a player moves two pieces in the same move

Mongolia, Tajikistan and Switzerland as new members of ICC

- On July 18, 2021, The International Cricket Council (ICC) welcomed its newest member countries Mongolia, Tajikistan and Switzerland at the ICC's 78th Annual General Meeting held.
- With this, ICC now comprises a total 106 Members including 94 Associates.
- Mongolia & Tajikistan and Switzerland as the 22nd and 23rd & 35th members of the Asia region respectively.

2032 Olympic and Paralympic games hosted by Australia's Brisbane city

- On July 21, 2021, the International Olympic Committee approved the Australian city of Brisbane as the host city for the 2032 Summer Olympics and Paralympic Games.
- Brisbane is the third Australian city to host the Olympic Games after Melbourne in 1956 and Sydney in 2000.
- Meanwhile selection means Australia becomes only the second country in the world, after the United States, to stage the summer Olympic Games in three different cities.
- Several cities and countries had publicly expressed an interest in staging the 2032 Games including
 1. Indonesia,
 2. Hungary's capital Budapest,
 3. China,
 4. Qatar's Doha
 5. Germany's Ruhr valley region.
- But in a new process adopted by the IOC that does not openly pit candidates against each other, Brisbane had already moved ahead of any rival back in February, having been selected as a "preferred host".

Madhya Pradesh Rubina Francis wins gold at Peru event

- 21-year-old Madhya Pradesh shooter Rubina Francis, won gold in the 10-metre air pistol para women's event at World shooting Para Sport Cup held in Lima, Peru from June 12 to 17.
- She scored 238.1 points and beat the world record of Aysegul Pehlivanlar of Turkey,
- Also She securing the Paralympic quota for India at the Tokyo games 2020.

About Rubina Francis :

- Rubina started learning the basics of shooting in 2006 in a camp organised by an academy in Jabalpur.
- In 2017, she started practising at MP Shooting Academy.
- In 2017, she helped set a junior world record in the 10m air pistol women team event at the World Shooting Para Sports Championship in Bangkok, winning gold.

Aman Gulia and Sagar Jaglan Become India's new World Cadet champions

- Young wrestlers Aman Gulia (Sonepat wrestler) and Sagar Jaglan were crowned the new world champions in their respective categories at the Cadet World Championship in Budapest, Hungary.

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- Gulia **defeated American Luke Joseph Lilledahl** for a 5-2 win in the 48kg final.
- On the Other hand, **Jaglan defeated James Mockler Rowley 4-0** in the 80kg summit clash to clinch the gold.
- In addition to that in the **Women's Category Young wrestlers Tannu and Priya** became the latest world champions as India's spectacular run continued at the Cadet World Championship.
- Tannu defeated Valeryia Mikitsich in the 43kg title & Priya grabbed the 73kg title with a 5-0 win over Belarus' Kseniya Patapovich.

Mirabai Chanu wins India's first medal at Tokyo Olympics

- On July 24, 2021, India's ace weightlifter **Saikhom Mirabai Chanu** won a **silver medal** in the **Women's 49 kg category**, at Tokyo 2020 Olympics.
- The 26-year-old Mirabai Chanu lifted a **total of 202kg (87kg+115kg)**.
- This is the **first medal for India at the ongoing Olympics Game in Tokyo**.
- **China's Zhihui Hou** bagged gold, lifting a total of **210kg**.
- **Indonesia's Windy Cantika Aisah** won **bronze** with a total of **194kg**.

Japan's Emperor Naruhito opens 32nd Summer Olympic Games at Tokyo

- Japanese Emperor **Naruhito** & IOC president **Thomas Bach** have officially opened the **32nd Summer Olympic Games** in the newly-built National Stadium **Tokyo**.
- The theme of the ceremony was unitedly moving forward despite the challenges thrown at the world.
- The opening ceremony highlighted **Japan's grandeur, rich culture, and legacy**.
- Members of the Japanese self defense forces raised the national flag on the Protocol Stage as the national anthem 'Kimi Ga Yo' played in the background.
- The country's famous singer **Misia sang the national anthem**.
- A total of **19 Indian athletes**, including **flag-bearer iconic boxer M C Mary Kom** and men's hockey team captain Manpreet Singh, besides six officials, participated in the ceremony.
- The country has a 228-strong delegation in Tokyo, including over 120 athletes.
- **Japan** is hosting the Olympics for the **fourth time**.
- Previously, the country hosted the Winter Olympics twice (Sapporo-1972 and Nagano-1998), as well as the 1964 Summer in Tokyo.

Indian Olympic Association announces cash rewards for medal-winners - Tokyo Olympics

- The Advisory Committee of the **Indian Olympic Association (IOA)** has recommended cash awards for **Indian athletes** participating in the Tokyo Olympics.

Cash Rewards :

- In the global sports event Athletes winning **gold medals** will be awarded **₹75 lakh**.
- **Silver medal winners** will be given **₹40 lakh**,
- **Bronze medal winners** will receive **₹25 lakh**.
- Each of the participating National Sports Federations (NSFs) bonus amount of ₹25 lakh.

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- Medal-winning NSFs will be granted further support of ₹30 lakh each.
- A support of ₹15 lakh each will be given to other member National Sports Federations.
- In addition to that Each athlete in the Indian contingent to the Tokyo Olympics will get ₹1 lakh.

Tokyo 2020 Olympics : Momiji Nishiya becomes Japan's youngest gold medalist

- On July 26, 2021, **Momiji Nishiya**, a 13 years 330 days old Japanese skateboarder won the **gold medal at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics**.
- **Rayssa Leal** (13 years and 203 days) of **Brazil** won **silver** and **Funa Nakayama** (16 years) of **Japan** clinched the **bronze**.
- Previously, In men's competition Japan's **Yuto Horigome** won the Olympics' 1st ever skateboarding gold.
- With this Japan is the gold medal holder in both the categories.

Four New Sports Introduced in Tokyo Olympics

- The **Tokyo Olympics** are introducing four new sports namely **skateboarding, surfing, karate and sport climbing**.
- With this, the Tokyo Games now has **339 medal events**.

Karate :

- Karate is a martial art that originated in Okinawa during the Ryukyu Dynasty.
- It makes its Olympic debut in Tokyo, joining judo, taekwondo and wrestling.
- It consists of two disciplines for both men and women: kata (forms) and kumite (sparring).
- The three days competition will be held at **Nippon Budokan**.

Skateboarding :

- Skateboarding is an Olympic debut sport recruited by organizers to attract young audiences.
- It is a **high-flying tricks and stunts event** & the competitors have a age-range between 12 to 47.
- Men's and women's Olympic skateboarding will consist of two events: park and street.
- The sport will feature three disciplines: Speed, Bouldering and Lead.

Surfing :

- The competition will take place in the ocean, so for that , the condition of the waves, the direction and strength of the wind, and the ebb and flow of the tide are considered.
- Surfing was popularised by **Duke Kahanamoku (the father of modern surfing)**, from Hawaii, who won **three gold medals in swimming at the Stockholm 1912 and Antwerp 1920 Games when competing for the US**.
- Since 1995, the International Surfing Association has been lobbying for the inclusion of this sport.

Sport Climbing :

- Sport climbing has been dubbed the epitome of the Olympic motto “citius, altius, fortius” (faster, higher, stronger).
- In speed climbing, two athletes secure themselves to ropes and race each other on a fixed route to the top of a **15-meter high wall**.
- The sport of skateboarding will make its Olympic debut at the Tokyo 2020 Games.

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Vantika Agarwal bags national women online chess title

- **Delhi's Vantika Agarwal** stunned a strong field to win the **National women online chess title**.
- In a field headed by **R. Vaishali** and featuring past National champions like Tania Sachdev, Bhakti Kulkarni, Padmini Rout and seasoned names like Mary Ann Gomes, Soumya Swaminathan and Esha Karavade, ninth seed Vantika scored 9.5 round from 11 rounds.
- Her victims included Bhakti and P. V. Nandhidhaa, seeded three and five. Her lone loss came against former National champion Swati Ghate.
- Arpita Mukherjee, seeded 18, took the second spot with nine points.
- Sreeja Seshadri topped a three-way tie at 8.5 points to take the third spot.

Priya Malik Clinches Gold at World Cadet Wrestling Championship

- On July 25, 2021, 16-year-old **Indian Wrestler Priya Malik** clinched **gold** at the **2021 World Cadet Wrestling Championships in Budapest, Hungary**.
- She **defeated Kseniya Patapovich 5-0** in the summit clash of women's **73kg weight category** to win the **yellow medal**.
- The Indian team bagged as many as 13 medals, including 5 Golds at the Championship.

Weightlifter Polina Guryeva wins first-ever Olympics medal for Turkmenistan

- Weightlifter **Polina Guryeva** won a **silver medal** for the Central Asian nation in the Tokyo Olympics.
- Guryeva lifted a **total 217 kilograms** in the **59-kilogram category**, edging **Mikiko Andoh of Japan** for **second place**.
- **Turkmenistan** has finally won its **first Olympic medal** since independence from the Soviet Union.
- **Kuo Hsing-Chun of Taiwan** won **gold** by lifting **236kg**.

Japan's Yuto Horigome wins Olympics' First Gold for Skateboarding

- 22-year-old **Yuto Horigome of Japan** won the **gold medal in skateboarding** with a score of 37.18 points at the Olympic Games held at **Ariake Urban Sports Center, in Tokyo**.
- He is the first person to win a Gold Medal in skateboarding at the Olympics, during the 2020 Summer Games.
- **Kelvin Hoefler** of Brazil won **silver** while **Jagger Eaton** of the United States clinched the **bronze**.

Awards & Honours :

- Horigome was named "**Skater of the Year**" at the Japan Action Sports Awards in 2017 and 2018.

Chinese Shooter Yang Qian Wins Gold Medal of Tokyo Olympics

- On July 24, 2021, 21-year-old **Chinese Shooter Yang Qian** won the first **gold medal** of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in **women's 10m air rifle** with a **score of 251.8**.
- Russia's **Anastasiia Galashina** stood **second** with 251.1 and **Switzerland's Nina Christen** came **third** with a score of 230.6.

Football

2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup to be held in Mumbai and Pune

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

- On July 06, 2021, The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 Local Organising Committee (LOC) announced that the **Mumbai Football Arena and Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Balewadi, Pune** will be the **new venues and host cities for the competition**.
- Previously Bhubaneswar & Ahmedabad were selected as the venue of 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup.
- The decision was confirmed taking into careful consideration the existing challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It was part of efforts to **minimise the travelling time for teams and officials between the venues, whilst ensuring the optimum environment to implement the BioMedical Bubble** for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Note :

- 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup **takes place from 20th Jan to 6th Feb 2022**.

AFC Women's Club Championship 2020-21 Gokulam Kerala FC to represent India

- In **AFC Women's Club Championship 2020-21**, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) has nominated the women's team of '**Gokulam Kerala FC**' to represent India.
- Kozhikode-based club** will be the **first Indian club to have both their men's and women's teams playing in the AFC tournament**.
- The winners of the Indian Women's League compete in the tournament, but since the fifth edition of the tournament was not held, the AIFF has nominated the GKFC, the champions of the fourth edition.
- The 5th edition was originally supposed to be held in **Bhubaneswar by Odisha Sports** in close coordination with AIFF, but it had to be postponed owing to the second wave of the pandemic which hit hard.

AIFF Awards 2020-2021 : Ngangom Bala Devi, Manisha Kalyan named winners of annual AIFF awards

- 31-year-old **Ngangom Bala Devi** has been named as the **All India Football Federation (AIFF) Women's Footballer of the Year 2020-21**.
- This is the **third time** that Bala Devi has been named the AIFF Women's Footballer of the year.
- Meanwhile, 19-year-old **Manisha Kalyan** won the **Women's Emerging Player of the year awards**.
- Both the winners were chosen by the national team head coach Maymol Rocky in consultation with AIFF Interim Technical Director Savio Medeira.
- The AIFF Award for the **Best Referee 2020-21** went to **Tejas Nagvencar** while Sumanta Dutta was adjudged for the Best Assistant Referee award.

Revision Points

Organizations	Headquarters	President/CEO/Head
Board of Control for Cricket in India	Mumbai	Sourav Ganguly
International Cricket Council	Dubai, UAE	Geoff Allardice

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National Anti-Doping Agency	New Delhi	Navin Agarwal
National Olympic Committee of New Zealand	Auckland	Mike Stanely
Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute	Thiruvananthapuram	Dr R Prakash Kumar
International Telecommunication Union	Geneva, Switzerland	Houlin Zhao
NITI Aayog	New Delhi	Narendra Modi
Financial Action Task Force	Paris, France	Marcus Pleyer
International Air Transport Association	Montreal, Canada	William M. Walsh
U GRO Capital	New Delhi	Abhijit Ghosh
Bombay Stock Exchange	Mumbai	Vikramajit Sen
Punjab National Bank	New Delhi	S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao
Competition Commission of India	New Delhi	Ashok Gupta
Oil and Natural Gas Corporation	New Delhi	Shashi Shanker
National Mineral Development Corporation	Hyderabad	B Sahoo
All India Football Federation	New Delhi	Praful Patel
Asian Football Confederation	Kuala Lumpur	Salman Bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa
Indian Olympic Association	New Delhi	Narinder Batra
World Association of Kickboxing Organizations	Monza, Italy	Ennio Falsoni
International Olympic Committee	Lausanne, Switzerland	Thomas Bach
World Trade Organisation	Geneva	Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	Bangkok, Thailand	Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana
UST Global	California	Krishna Sudheendra
Paralympic Committee of India	New Delhi	Rao Inderjit Singh
North Eastern Space Applications Centre	Umiam, Meghalaya	K.K.Sarma (Director)
Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory	Hyderabad	G Madhusudhan Reddy
Defence Research and Development Organisation	New Delhi	Upendra Kumar Singh
Indian Space Research Organisation	Bengaluru	K Sivan

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World Health Organization	Geneva	Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
SpaceX	California	Elon Musk
Federal Aviation Administration	Washington DC	Steve Dickson
Institute of Chartered Accountants of India	New Delhi	Nihar N Jambusaria,
All India Council for Technical Education	New Delhi	Anil Sahasrabudhe
IBM	New York	Arvind Krishna
Bangalore International Airport Limited	Bengaluru	Hari Marar
Central Reserve Police Force	New Delhi	Kuldiep Singh
Centre for Development of Advanced Computing	Pune	Hemant Darbari
Kotak Mahindra Bank	Mumbai	Uday Kodak
Indian Navy	New Delhi	Karambir Singh
Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited	Nagpur	Dr. Ranjit Rath
Prasar Bharati	New Delhi	Shashi Shekhar Vempati
National Commission for Women	New Delhi	Jayanti Patnaik (1 st Executive)
NTPC	New Delhi	Gurdeep Singh
United Nations	New York	António Guterres
Food and Agriculture Organization	Rome	Qu Dongyu
Indian Army	New Delhi	Manoj Mukund Naravane
Himalayan Forest Research Institute	Shimla	Mohinder Pal (Director)
Yatra.Com	Gurugram	Dhruv Shringi
Reliance Industries	Mumbai	Mukesh Ambani
Abu Dhabi National Oil Company	Abu Dhabi, UAE	Bader Saeed Al Lamki
HCL Technologies	Noida	C Vijayakumar
Waze	Palo Alto, USA	Neha Parikh
Titan	Bengaluru	C K Venkataraman
All India Radio	New Delhi	N Venudhar Reddy
Ashok Leyland	Chennai	Vipin Sondhi
Twitter	San Francisco, USA	Jack Dorsey
Bandhan Bank	Kolkata	Chandra Shekhar Ghosh
Citi Bank	New York	Jane Fraser
National Highways Authority of India	New Delhi	Aramane Giridhar

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – July 2021

Important Obituaries

Name	Field
K V Sampath Kumar	Editor of 'Sudharma' (Sanskrit Daily)
Raj Kaushal	Bollywood film producer
Donald Rumsfeld	Two-time defence secretary, USA
M Prasannan (Kerala)	Former Indian national team midfielder
Dilip Kumar	Bollywood actor
Richard Donner	Hollywood director and producer (Superman Director)
Virbhadra Singh	Former Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister and senior Congress leader
Keshav Datt	Two-time Olympic gold medallist in hockey
Jovenel Moïse	President of Haiti (Assassinated)
Dr Panayambally Krishnakutty Warrier	Doyen of ayurveda medicine and managing trustee of Vaidyaratnam P S Varier's Arya Vaidya Sala
Moran Mar Baselios Marthoma Paulos II	Supreme Head of the Indian Orthodox church
Yashpal Sharma	Former Indian batsman
Paul Orndorff (USA)	Former WWE Wrestler (WWE Hall of Fame in 2005)
Shirley Fry Irvin	Tennis Hall of Famer & Grand Slam winner
Mamnoon Hussain	Former president of Pakistan & Muslim League-Nawaz's central leader
Surekha Sikri	Actress
Danish Siddiqui	Indian photojournalist
Gautam Benegal	National Award-winning writer, cartoonist, animation filmmaker
Gira Sarabhai	Co-founder of the renowned National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad
Kalaimamani' Sikkil Shri R Bhaskaran	Carnatic Classical Violinist
Bhageerathi Amma	Kerala's oldest women learner
Urmil Kumar Thapliyal	Theatre personality and litterateur
Satish Kalsekar	Marathi poet
Jayanthi	Multilingual actress
Fakir Alamgir	Folk music legend and freedom fighter