

PLA



PAHUJA
Law Academy

APRIL' 2021

— ENGLISH CURRENT AFFAIRS —



**GUIDANCE BY EXPERIENCED JUDGES,
ADVOCATES AND ACADEMICIANS.....**

Head Office :

211-212, D-1, 2nd Floor, Virat Bhawan, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-110009

PAHUJA LAW ACADEMY

“CURRENT AFFAIRS’

APRIL’ 2021

NATIONAL NEWS

Draft Electricity (Rights of Consumers) (Amendment) Rules, 2021

- The net metering of roof top has been allowed up to 500 KW in the new rules.
- Gross Metering means a mechanism where the total solar energy generated from a grid interactive rooftop solar system and the energy consumed are accounted separately.
- Net metering is defined as the mechanism where solar energy is exported to the grid from grid interactive rooftop solar PV (Photo Voltaic) system.
- The energy imported from the grid and the energy exported to the grid are valued at two different tariffs.
- These amendments have been made to the Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020.
- No connection shall be provided without meters.

Ministry of Power:

- Minister of State (I/C): RK Singh (Aarah, Bihar)
- Recently, MoP launched Gram Ujala Scheme [Mar 2021]

‘MICE Roadshow – Meet in India’ & Inaugurates Chhatrasal Convention Centre

- Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (Independent Charge), Prahlad Singh Patel, and Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh jointly inaugurated the ‘Chhatrasal Convention Centre’ at Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh. They also launched the “MICE Roadshow Meet in India” at the Chhatrasal Convention Centre at Khajuraho.
- Chhatrasal Convention Centre was developed under Ministry of Tourism’s Swadesh Darshan Scheme.
- The Scheme is an Initiative by the Ministry of Tourism & was launched in 2014-15.
- MICE Roadshow Meet in India was organized by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in association with Madhya Pradesh Tourism and India Convention Promotion Bureau. Note – MICE is an acronym of Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions.
- ‘Meet in India’ was Planned to launch during the event. This will be the distinct sub-brand under ‘Incredible India’ to promote the country as a MICE destination.
- It will help to transform Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh as an iconic tourist destination under
- ‘Development of Iconic Tourist Destinations Scheme’.
- Iconic Tourist Destinations Scheme is a Centrally funded scheme under the Ministry of Tourism to develop India’s Iconic Tourist destinations into World Class tourist destinations. As of March 2021, a total of 19 Iconic destinations have been selected under this program.

Shaheed Ashfaq Ulla Khan Zoo, 1st Zoo in Purvanchal, UP

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated Shaheed Ashfaq Ulla Khan Zoological Park in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh which is named after freedom fighter Shaheed Ashfaq Ullah Khan to create possibilities for tourism in the region.
- It became the third zoo of the state after Kanpur Zoological Park and Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Prani Udyan and the first zoo in the Purvanchal region.
- The construction of the zoo has been completed in four years with the estimated cost of Rs 260 crore.

Bihar set to become India's 1st State to have 2 Green Energy Efficient Towns

- Bihar is set to become India's 1st State to have 2 Green Energy Efficient towns the 2 towns are Rajgir & Bodh Gaya. They will start getting Solar Energy through 1st of its kind Renewable energy project from 2023.
- The green energy supply required for running the towns will be developed and supplied by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI).
- To implement the project, the state government of Bihar will construct 500 MW solar energy plants at Lakhisarai & Bhagalpur.

India Initiates 3rd phase of Indian Beamline Project in Japan

- 3rd phase of the Indian beamline project was initiated in Japan with special focus on research based on Industrial Applications. In this phase Indian researchers will be trained with Advanced X-ray techniques used in Material research. It is set up under India-Japan Scientific and Technological Cooperation.
- This Phase will increase the number of young researchers from India to be trained in advanced X-ray techniques of material research. At present, only 50 % of Indian researchers who apply receive beamtime.
- Indian Beamline is a multipurpose beamline that facilitates in various categories of experiments based on X-ray sources.
- It is located at the Photon Factory of High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK), Tsukuba, Japan.
- Indian Beamline was constructed & maintained by Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics (SINP), Kolkata and Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bangalore.

Arunachal Pradesh gets first formal indigenous knowledge system school 'Nyubu Nyvgam Yerko'

- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu along with Union MoS for Sports & Youth Affairs Kiren Rijiju has inaugurated the state's first formal indigenous language and knowledge system school called 'Nyubu Nyvgam Yerko' at Rang Village, Seppa in East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- It literally means 'Nyubu' (priest), 'Nyvgam' (person having wisdom and knowledge) and 'Yerko' (learning institution).
- The school will help in promoting and preserving indigenous traditions, culture and language.

'India Centre for Migration (ICM)' celebrates Foundation Day

- India Centre for Migration (ICM), a Think-Tank set up by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) celebrated its foundation day, as part of India@75 celebrations. An event was held to celebrate the foundation day of ICM. During the event 2 Knowledge products were launched.
- A Report on 'The Impact of COVID-19 on India's International Migration'
- Report on 'Student Handbook for Studying Abroad'
- Previously known as Council for Promotion of Overseas Employment, it was renamed as 'India Centre for Migration (ICM)' in 2012.
- It is engaged in capacity building, training and awareness generation programmes on International migration.

Amboli in Maharashtra named as Biodiversity Heritage Site

- Maharashtra declared Amboli region in Western Ghats in Sindhudurg district as a Biodiversity Heritage Site. This comes at the backdrop of the discovery of a rare colourful freshwater fish species "Schistura Hiranyakeshi" in the region.
- Schistura Hiranyakeshi comes under the sub-species of rare Schistura, a freshwater loach that lives in water bodies with abundance of Oxygen.
- Schistura Hiranyakeshi, was named after the Hiranyakeshi river that flows near Amboli village.
- Other Biodiversity Heritage Sites in Maharashtra are Glory of Allapalli in Gadchiroli district, Landor Khori Park in Jalgaon, Ganesh Khind in Pune & Myristica Swamp Vegetation in Sindhudurg district

About Biodiversity Heritage Sites:

- Any unique, ecologically fragile ecosystem – terrestrial, coastal and inland waters and marine body can be designated as a Biodiversity Heritage Site by the State Government.
- The State Government in consultation with local bodies may notify the areas of biodiversity importance as Biodiversity Heritage Sites.

Manyamkonda Jatara – Idol shifting festival from Odisha to Andhra Pradesh Held

- Manyamkonda Jatara, the famous idol shifting Tribal festival between the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected villages in Odisha & Andhra Pradesh conducted successfully.
- In the Inter-state festival, 4 Idols of deities – Kannamaraju, Bapiraju, Pothuraju and Muthyalamma, were moved from Malkangiri in Odisha to Polluru village, Mothugudem mandal of Andhra Pradesh.

17th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meet

- External Affairs Minister (EAM), S. Jaishankar virtually addressed the 17th BIMSTEC (The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Ministerial Meeting held virtually from Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Meeting was chaired by Sri Lanka virtually.

BIMSTEC is group of 7 Asian countries,

- 5 South Asia Countries – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka
- 2 Southeast Asia Countries – Myanmar and Thailand.
- Sri Lanka is the Current Chair of BIMSTEC; 5th BIMSTEC Leaders Summit will be hosted by Sri Lanka.
- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was set-up in 1997.
- **Headquarters**– Dhaka, Bangladesh
- **Secretary General**– H. E. Mr. Tenzin Lekphell

ULPIN: Unique 14-digit ID for all Land Records by March 2022

- Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development announced, The Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN), 14-digit unique identification number to every plot of land in India. Currently, the ULPIN scheme has been launched in 10 States and will be extended all over the country by March 2022.
- All land will be identified based on longitude & latitude coordinates, solving issues related to outdated & disputed lands.
- ULPIN is a part of India's Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP).

About DILRMP:

- Launched in 2008 as the National Land Record Modernization Programme (NLRMP).
- To digitize & modernize land records and develop a centralised land record management system.
- DILRMP has been extended till 2023-24.

Government Extends Validity of ECLGS till June, 2021

- The Ministry of Finance has extended the validity of Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) by another 3 months till June 30, 2021 or till such time that an amount of INR 3 Lakh crore (Target Credit Line) is sanctioned under the Scheme. Additionally, the scope of ECLGS has been widened through introduction of ECLGS 3.0.
- ECLGS 3.0 covers business enterprises in Hospitality, Travel & Tourism, Leisure & Sporting Sector.
- Last date of disbursement under the scheme has been extended to September 30, 2021.
- Extension of credit of upto 40% of total credit outstanding (earlier it was 20%) across all lending institutions as on February 29, 2020.
- It will be applicable for accounts that had past dues of up to INR 500 Crore as of February 29,

2020.

- Tenor of Loans – 6 years including a moratorium period of 2 years.
- Revised operational guidelines for ECLGS 3.0 will be issued by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd (NCGTC).

6-Digit HSN code mandatory in Invoices for Businesses with over INR 5 Crore Turnover

- Finance Ministry has made it mandatory for Businesses with turnover of more than INR 5 Crore to furnish 6-Digit HSN/SAC (Harmonised System of Nomenclature Code/Service Accounting Code) on invoices issued for supplies of taxable goods and services.
- Both HSN & SAC codes are used to classify goods & services under the GST regime.
- Businesses with Turnover of up to INR 5 Crore in the Financial Year 2020-21 would be required to furnish 4-digit HSN code on B2B invoices.
- Dealers with turnover of less than INR 1.5 Crore do not need to adopt HSN codes for their commodities.
- Businesses with turnover between INR 1.5 Crore & 5 Crore use 2-digit HSN codes for their commodities.

Harmonised System of Nomenclature Code:

- Introduced by the World Customs Organization (WCO) in 1988.
- It was initiated for systematic classification of goods at both national & international levels.
- Universally, 6-digit HSN codes are common.
- India has been using HSN codes since 1986 to classify commodities for Customs & Central Excise. Recently, it has been used for GST filing also.
- It removes the need to upload details about the goods, which will make the filing of GST returns easier.

Service Accounting Code:

- It is issued by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) for classifying each service under GST.
- Each service has a unique SAC which can be used in invoices delivered for the services..

National Register for Driving Licenses

- The Ministry of Road Transport recently announced that the National Register for Driving Licenses is to be created. This is being done to remove duplication of driving licenses in the country. Most of the states are already on the SARATHI portal of National Informatics Centre. These states have been instructed to migrate to the newly created national register.
- The register will include separate section to show the names of the people whose driving licenses were revoked. Also, the register will red-flag them. This will help to minimise rash driving in the country.
- Indian driving license norms permit use of electronic document for a learner's license, medical certificate and renewal of driving license. The complete process of obtaining the learner's license has been made online. The driving licenses shall be renewed one year before the date of expiry. The need to furnish vehicles for inspection at the RTO (Regional Transport Office) for registration has been cancelled.

The different types of permanent driving license in India are as follows

- **Motorcycle without gear:** The applicant should be at least sixteen years old to get this license. Also, he or she should get a consent from his or her parent or guardian.
- **Motorcycles with gear:** The applicant should be at least eighteen years old to get this license.
- **Commercial Heavy Vehicles:** The applicant should have completed eighth standard and should be at least eighteen years old.
- The eligibilities and rules to obtain a driving license have been provided under Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. According to the act, a theoretical test (15 multiple choice questions) on basic driving and traffic rules should be conducted at the RTO when a person applies for license.

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways:

- **Union Minister: Nitin Jairam Gadkari (Nagpur)**
- **MoS: General (Dr.) V.K. Singh (Ghaziabad)**

National Informatics Centre

- National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (**MeitY**) is the technology partner of the Government of India. It was established in **1976** with an objective to provide technology-driven solutions to Central and State Governments in various aspects of development.
- Its state-of-art IT infrastructure includes Multi-Gigabit PAN India Network NICNET, National Knowledge Network, National Data Centres, etc.
- NIC has also developed several digital platforms for the socio-economic development of the country with '**One-Nation One-Platform**' initiative to empower citizens digitally.
- **Director General:** Dr Neeta Verma

Mahendragiri: Odisha's Second Biosphere Reserve

- The Odisha state government has proposed a second biosphere reserve in the southern part of the state at Mahendragiri.
- It is a mountain in the Gajapati district of the state. It is at an altitude of 1,501 metres. Mahendragiri is also the second-highest peak in the state.
- The area of the proposed 2nd biosphere reserve of the state- Mahendragiri Biosphere Reserve is approximately 470,955 hectares.
- At some time, the protected archeological remains of Mahendragiri were listed in the tentative list of Unesco World Heritage Sites, thus, it is easy to declare it as a biosphere reserve.
- Soura people are the inhabitants at Mahendragiri. Soura is a particularly vulnerable tribal group as well as the Kandha tribe.
- Similipal Biosphere Reserve is the first biosphere reserve of Odisha. It was notified on May 20, 1996. It has an area of a 5,569-square kilometre.
- Established by countries and recognised by UNESCO under its Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme launched in 1971, biosphere reserves aim to promote sustainable development in a region. India boasts 18 such reserves that shelter diverse species and conserve all forms of life. Besides offering amazing opportunities for scientific studies and researches, these reserves provide exciting wildlife game drives in the many national parks and wildlife sanctuaries they house.
- Till now there were 18 biosphere reserves in India.
- Nilgiri, Tamil Nadu-Kerala is the first to be Included
- Kachchh, Gujarat is the largest in area

Biggest Floating Solar Power Plant of India

- The biggest floating solar power plant of India is to be set up at Ramagundam in Telangana.
- The capacity of the solar power plant is 100 MW.
- It is expected to be opened in May 2021.
- The solar power plant is being set up at the Ramagundam Thermal Power Plant reservoir.
- The solar power plant is to be set up in 450 acres of the reservoir.
- The project is commissioned by NTPC (National Thermal Power Corporation).
- The cost of the project has been estimated as Rs 423 crores.
- The largest solar power plant in the world is being set up by India on Omkar Eshwar Dam on Narmada river in Madhya Pradesh. The cost of this project is estimated to be Rs 3,000 crores. The project is expected to start its power generation by 2022-23.
- The World Bank, Power Grid and International Finance Corporation are providing financial aid for the project.
- The first floating solar power plant in India was installed in Kolkata in 2014. Currently, the largest floating solar power plant of India is located in Banasura Sagar reservoir in Wayanad, Kerala. The capacity of this plant is 500 KW.

About NTPC:

- NTPC is India's largest power utility with an installed capacity of 65,810 MW (including JVs), plans to become a 130 GW company by 2032. Established in 1975, NTPC aims to be the world's largest and best power major.
- **Chairman & MD (CMD):** Gurdeep Singh

Recent Events:

- The world's largest floating 600 MW solar energy project to be constructed at Omkareshwar Dam on Narmada river in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh will begin power generation by year 2022-23. **[Jan, 2021]**
- India's commitment to attain the target of 175 GW of installed renewable energy capacity by 2022 (and 450GW by 2030) including 100 GW of solar installed capacity.

Tribes India Contest by TRIFED

- The TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation Limited), Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the Government of India have launched two interesting competitions for the tribal people. They are "Be the Brand Ambassador of Tribes India" and "Be a Friend of TRIBES INDIA" contest. The contests were launched in association with MyGov.in.
- The contests were launched mainly to promote tribal crafts, lifestyle and culture. These contests will help in increasing the awareness about tribal heritage, crafts and art among the general public.
- This contest invites stories featuring a tribal product across the country. The story should highlight the experience of the customer in using the tribal product.
- The contest is primarily held by TRIFED. TRIFED works towards improving the livelihoods of tribal people.

About TRIFED:

- TRIFED was established in August 1987 under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984 by the Government of India as a National level Cooperative body under the administrative control of the then Ministry of Welfare of India, with the basic mandate of bringing about socio-economic development of tribals of the country by institutionalizing the trade of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) & Surplus Agricultural Produce (SAP) collected/cultivated by them.
- **Chairman :** R C Meena
- **Managing Director:** Vinai Kumar Saxena

Recent events:

- TRIFED exchanges MoU with Craft Village to foster tribal livelihood development through harnessing synergies **[Mar, 2021]**
- TRIFED initiates Marketing & Logistics intervention for promoting products of North – East in collaboration with DoNER and India Post **[Jan, 2021]**
- TRIFED and IFFDC sign MoU to promote livelihood generation of tribal people **[Jan, 2021]**
- TRIFED Signs MoU With MOFPI For Upliftment Of Tribal Lives Through The Implementation Of The PM- FME Scheme **[Dec, 2020]**

Indian Railway Electrification: New record

- The Indian Railways has achieved the highest ever electrification of sections during 2020-21. It has covered 6,015 kilometres of electrification in a single year. This is 37% higher than that achieved in 2019-20.
- The Broad-Gauge network of Indian Railway currently stand at 63,949 kilo metres. Of this 71% has been electrified.
- Totally 45,881 kilometres has been electrified. Of this 34% were electrified in the last three years.
- The Indian Railways has also commissioned a record of 56 Traction Substations in 2020-21. In 2019-20, this was 42. Thus, the traction sub stations have increased by 33%.
- A Traction Substation is an electrical substation. It converts electric power provided by the electric power industry to a suitable power to be used in electric trains.

- The first railway electrification in India began between Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus and Kurla in 1925.
- In 2017, Indian Railways announced that the entire rail network in the country is to be electrified by 2022. The deadline has been extended to 2024.
- The CORE is the centralised agency for railway electrification of Indian Railways. It was founded in 1961. The headquarters of CORE is located in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.
- Electric Locomotives are mainly manufactured in Chittaranjan Locomotive Works located in West Bengal. It was founded in 1950. It is the largest locomotive manufacturer in the world. In 2019-20, it produced 431 locomotives.

Indian Railway Electrification: New record

- **Track Gauge:**
- In railway transport, **track gauge** is the spacing of the rails on a railway track and is measured between the inner faces of the load-bearing rails.

About Indian Railways:

- The first railway on Indian sub-continent ran over a stretch of 21 miles from Bombay to Thane.
- **Union Minister:** Piyush Goyal (Maharashtra)
- **Chairman and CEO, Railway Board :** Suneet Sharma

Labour Ministry sets up 3 Expert Committees to review standards under OSH & WC Code, 2020

- The Ministry of Labour & Employment has constituted 3 Expert Committees to review standards under Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH & WC) Code, 2020.
- The committees will review the existing rules & regulations on safety, health and working conditions standards, pertaining to factories, docks & Construction work.

The heads of the 3 expert committees are

- Dr R K Elangovan, Director General, Directorate General Factory Advice and Labour Institutes (DGFASLI) will head the Expert Committee for Factories & Dock Works. (The Factories Rules framed under The Factories Act, 1948)
- P L N Murthy, Vice President & Head Domestic Operations, L&T Hydrocarbon, Chennai will head the Expert Committee for Building & Other Constructions Works. (Dock Workers (Safety, Health Welfare) Regulations 1990)
- D K Shami, Fire Advisor to Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) – Head of Expert Committee for Fire Safety. (The Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Central Rules, 1998)

Argyreia sharadchandraji – New Plant Species

- Researchers Dr Pramod R Lawand and Dr Vinod B Shimpale discovered a new species of flowering plants belonging to the genus “Argyreia”, in Western Ghats at Kolhapur district, Maharashtra. The species is named as “**Argyreia Sharadchandraji**” to honour Sharad Pawar, former Union Agriculture Minister of India.
- Sharad Pawar belongs to Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)
- Their findings were listed in the research paper “Argyreia sharadchandraji (Convolvulaceae), a new species from the Western Ghats, India” in the Journal of the
- Indian Association for Angiosperm Taxonomy.
- The Ecologically sensitive zone, Western Ghats, adds up another discovery of rare species for the 1st time in India.

About Argyreia genus:

- Totally 40 sub-species come under Argyreia, most of them are endemic to Asian Countries.
- Of this 40, 17 species are endemic to India & the current findings increased the count to 18.

Western Ghats:

- The Western Ghats also known as Sahyadri is a mountain range that covers an area of 160,000

km² (62,000 sq mi) in a stretch of 1,600 km (990 mi) parallel to the western coast of the Indian peninsula, traversing the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is sometimes called the Great Escarpment of India.

India contributes USD 300, 000 to UN Women

- T.S. Tirumurti, India's Permanent Secretary to the United Nations (UN) stated that India has contributed USD 300, 000 (NR 2.2 Crores) to the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (also known as UN Women).
- With this, India reaffirms its support for Gender Equality and Women empowerment. India has been working for Women Empowerment at the Global Stage,
- In September 2020, India along with Afghanistan was elected as Members of the UN Commission on Status of Women, a body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- In August 2020, India co-sponsored a UNSC (United Nations Security Council) Resolution tabled by Indonesia for the Greater Participation of women in peacekeeping forces.

NIIFL made its 1st investment in Health sector

- The National Investment & Infrastructure Fund Ltd (NIIFL) made its first investment in the Indian healthcare sector by its investment of ₹2,100 crores in Manipal Hospitals through its direct private equity fund, Strategic Opportunities Fund(SOF).
- In January 2021 Manipal Health Enterprises Private Limited acquired the Columbia Asia Hospital.

About National Investment & Infrastructure Fund Ltd

- It was India's first infrastructure specific investment fund or a sovereign wealth fund that was set up by the Government of India.
- It is a collaborative investment platform for international and domestic investors, it invests across asset classes such as infrastructure, private equity and other diversified sectors, with the objective to generate attractive risk-adjusted returns.

Recent Events

- Shanghai-based NDB committed to invest \$100mn in NIIF Funds of funds [**Feb 2021**]
- Cabinet has given its approval to the proposal for equity infusion by Government of Rs 6000 crores in NIIF Debt Platform sponsored by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) [**Nov 2020**]
- **Establishment** – 2015
- **Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **MD and CEO** – SUJOY BOSE

Integrated Health Information Platform

- The Integrated Health Information Platform is to operate under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme.
- The Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme operates under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- The platform aims to strengthen the disease surveillance in the country. This is to be achieved by establishing a decentralised state-based surveillance system for epidemic prone diseases.
- The key features of the platform are real time data reporting through use of mobile applications, geo-tagging of health facilities, etc.
- The platform will hold information about prevalence of disease in different districts of the country. The information is to be collected through ASHA workers and ANMs.

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme

- Integrated Disease Surveillance Project (IDSP) was launched in November 2004
- To strengthen/maintain decentralized laboratory based IT enabled disease surveillance system for epidemic prone diseases to monitor disease trends and to detect and respond to outbreaks in early rising phase through trained Rapid Response Team (RRTs)

- Under IDSP data is collected on epidemic prone diseases on weekly basis (Monday– Sunday). The information is collected on three specified reporting formats, namely “S” (suspected cases), “P” (presumptive cases) and “L” (laboratory confirmed cases) filled by Health Workers, Clinicians and Laboratory staff respectively.

India sets new record in ethanol blend with petrol

- By November 2021, India shall reach an average blending of 8%. So far, the best ever ethanol blend with petrol in India was 5.2%.
- In states of Karnataka, Gujarat, Goa, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Daman and Diu, Himachal Pradesh, 9.5% to 10% ethanol is being blended with petrol.
- The Government has fixed a target of 10% blending of fuel grade ethanol with petrol by 2022 and 20% blending by 2025

Recent Events

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways notified the use of E20 and issued mass emission standards for the same. **[Mar 2021]**
- Recently, the Department of Food & Public Distribution has notified a modified scheme for extending financial assistance for producing 1st Generation (1G) ethanol. **[Jan 2021]**
- A draft document of MORTH states vehicles running on fuel with 20%, 85%, 95% blending of blending of ethanol and the ones running on 100% pure ethanol would get the identification mark such as E20, E85, E95, and E100. **[Dec 2020]**

Background:

- Ethanol is a clear, colourless liquid with a characteristic, agreeable odour. The Government of India launched Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme in 2003 for undertaking blending of ethanol in Petrol to address environmental concerns due to fossil fuel burning, provide remuneration to farmers, subsidize crude imports and achieve forex savings.
- The major source for production of bio-ethanol in India is from molasses, a by-product of sugarcane. The availability is dependant on the cane and sugar production that are cyclical in nature.

Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (Jaiv Indhan- Vatavaran Anukool fasal awashesh Nivaran) Yojana

- The JI-VAN Yojana was launched for the period from 2018-19 to 2023-24 under Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
- The scheme focuses to incentivise 2G Ethanol sector and support this nascent industry by creating a suitable ecosystem for setting up commercial projects and increasing Research & Development in this area.
- Under this Yojana, 12 Commercial Scale and 10 demonstration scale Second Generation (2G) ethanol Projects will be provided a Viability Gap Funding (VGF) support in two phases

NIIFL made its 1st investment in Health sector

- The National Investment & Infrastructure Fund Ltd (NIIFL) made its first investment in the Indian healthcare sector by its investment of ₹2,100 crores in Manipal Hospitals through its direct private equity fund, Strategic Opportunities Fund(SOF).
- In January 2021 Manipal Health Enterprises Private Limited acquired the Columbia Asia Hospital.

About Manipal Health Enterprises Private Limited (MHEPL):

- **Headquarters** – Bangalore, Karnataka
- **Chairman**– Dr. H Sudarshan Ballal
- **MD & CEO** – Dilip Jose
- It was India’s first infrastructure specific investment fund or a sovereign wealth fund that was set up by the Government of India.
- It is a collaborative investment platform for international and domestic investors it invests across asset classes such as infrastructure, private equity and other diversified sectors, with the objective to generate attractive risk-adjusted returns.

Recent Events

- Shanghai-based NDB committed to invest \$100mn in NIIF Funds of funds **[Feb 2021]**
- Cabinet has given its approval to the proposal for equity infusion by Government of Rs 6000 crores in NIIF Debt Platform sponsored by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) **[Nov 2020]**
- **Establishment** – 2015
- **Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **MD and CEO** – SUJOY BOSE

FDA approves ADHD Drugs

- The ADHD drug that has been approved by the FDA is called Qelbree. Qelbree was developed by Supernus Pharmaceuticals of Rockville, Maryland. The controversies over the approval of Qelbree are due to the fact that it carries a warning of “potential for suicidal thoughts and behaviour”.
- The ADHD affects more than six million American children and adolescents in the United States. These children struggle to pay attention and complete tasks. They also show signs of impulsiveness and fidgeting.
- There are two categories of ADHD Drugs. They are Stimulants and Non-Stimulants. According to FDA, the stimulant medications increase dopamine levels in brain. Dopamine is a brain chemical that is associated with motivation and attention. However, stimulant medications can bring side effects such as high blood pressure, headaches, insomnia and decreased appetite. Most of the ADHD drugs are classified as Schedule II substances as they pose risk of abuse and dependence.
- Non-stimulant ADHD drugs include duanfacine, atomoxetine and clonidine.
- The ADHD affects 2% to 7% of children globally. In India more male child were found to have ADHD. 83.3% of the patients in India discontinue taking their medicines within the first month. The Indian parents cite the following reasons for stopping the medication:
- Lack of effectiveness, Side-effects, Problems at the hospital, Fear that the child might become addicted.

About FDA:

- Janet Woodcock (Acting Commissioner)

Online Dispute Resolution Handbook of NITI Aayog

- The Handbook highlights the need for the businesses to adopt Online Dispute Resolution mechanism. According to the handbook, the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) is the resolution of disputes outside courts. This is mainly used to solve small and medium cases using digital technology. The Online Dispute Resolution adopts techniques of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) such as mediation, negotiation, and arbitration.
- The United Nations Commission on International Law adopted the UNCITRAL Conciliation Rules in 1980 and Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration in 1985. The UN has recommended the use to the Model Law and the rules to solve disputes that arises in international commercial relations.
- India enacted the Arbitration and Conciliation Act in 1996. The act incorporates several uniform principles of Alternate Dispute Resolution of UNCITRAL.
- The Alternate Dispute Resolution was brought as an alternative to going to court. However, it has become expensive lately. On the other hand, Online Dispute Resolution is inexpensive.

Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank Launches SARTHAQ initiative for Implementation of NEP 2020

- Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched a National Education Policy (NEP) Implementation Plan for School Education called ‘Students’ and Teachers’ Holistic Advancement through Quality Education (SARTHAQ)’. It will help in achieving goals & objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- SARTHAQ has been developed by the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education.

- It has been released as part of celebrations leading to 'AmritMahotsav' on 75 years of Indian Independence.
- It is the Plan of Action of NEP 2020 and outlines an implementation plan for the next 10 years.
- Ramesh Pokhriyal also chaired a high level meeting on implementation of NEP 2020 in New Delhi.
- It has been developed after a wide & intensive consultative process with states & UTs.
- A Teacher's fest 'Shikshak Parv' was organized in September, 2020 for discussing recommendations of NEP 2020.
- SARTHAQ will focus on outlining goals, outcomes & timeframe i.e links recommendations of NEP with 297 Tasks along with responsible agencies, timelines and 304 outputs of these Tasks.
- Development of New National & State Curriculum Frameworks for School Education, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Teacher Education and Adult Education, which will help in curriculum reforms.

Environment Ministry Amends Emission Norms for Thermal Power Plant

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change extends the compliance timeline of Thermal Power plants with reduced penalties for non-compliance. Previously, the Coal based power plants were advised to be in compliance with the emission norms by December 2022 or closure of the plant.
- Thermal Power Plants are categorized under 3 groups:
- Category A – Plants within the 10 km radius of the National Capital region & cities with a million plus population should install emission control equipment by December 31, 2022
- Category B – Plants within 10 km radius of critically polluted areas or non-attainment cities will have to meet the standards by December 31, 2023
- Category C – All other plants not scheduled for retirement will have to meet the norms by December 31, 2024.
- Pollutants like Sulphates and Nitrates can travel long distances in air.
- Plants earmarked for retirement, shall comply with the emission norms by December 31, 2025.
- Recently, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar Participated in Climate & Development Ministerial Meet in Run up to COP26 [Apr 2021]

Thermal power station

- Thermal power is the "largest" source of power in India. There are different types of thermal power plants based on the fuel used to generate the steam such as coal, gas, and Diesel, natural gas. About 71% of electricity consumed in India is generated by thermal power plants.
- The Vindhyachal Thermal Power Station in the Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh, with an installed capacity of 4,760 MW, is currently the biggest thermal power plant in India. It is a coal-based power plant owned and operated by NTPC.
- The 4,620 MW Mundra Thermal Power Station located in the Kutch district of Gujarat is currently the second biggest operating thermal power plant in India. It is a coal-fired power plant owned and operated by Adani Power.

Copyright (Amendment) Rules, 2021

- Currently, the Copyright regime of India is governed by Copyright Act, 1957 and the Copyright rules 2013.
- The main objective of the amendment of Copyright Rules is to ensure smooth and flawless compliance in the light of technological advancement in digital era.
- The new rules will help India adopt towards electronic means as primary mode of communication. It is highly important to achieve the goals of Digital India.
- The Copyright societies will have to make an Annual Transparency Report for each financial year.
- The amendments have harmonised the Copyright rules with the provisions of Finance Act, 2017. This has been achieved by merging Copyright Board with the Appellate Board.
- The compliance requirements of registration works have been largely reduced. The applicant now has the liberty to file the first ten and last ten pages of source code with no blocked out or redacted portions.

- The time limit of the Central Government to respond to an application has been extended. When an applicant applies to get registered as a copyright society, the central government shall now respond in 180 days. This has been done to provide enough time so that the application can be comprehensively examined.
- According to World Intellectual Property Organisation, Copyright protects two types of rights. They are Economic rights and moral rights. Economic rights allow the owners to derive financial reward from the use of their works. On the other hand, the moral rights allow authors to take certain actions to protect their link with their work.

HIV: 3 out of every 1,000 pregnant women in Meghalaya test positive for HIV

- According to the State's Assembly Committee on Women Empowerment, there are five thousand plus cases of HIV/AIDS in Meghalaya. The number of cases in the state is increasing alarmingly.
- The Government of Meghalaya has been suggested to frame a policy to address the issue of HIV/AIDS.
- The committee has recommended to conduct a study to find out the reason on why HIV is more prevalent among the pregnant women in the state.
- The major concern that needs immediate action is the prevalence of HIV among sex workers in the East Khasi hills.
- According to MACS (Meghalaya AIDS Control Society), there are more than two hundred sex workers in the state that test HIV positive.
- There are schemes of the Central Government that try to rehabilitate sex workers in the state. However, it is currently not functioning due to very slow flow of funds from the centre.

Meghalaya Health Policy:

- In March 2021, the Meghalaya State Government adopted a new Health Policy. The policy does include AIDS. However, it has not prioritised the issue. The seriousness of the problem does not reflect in the policy. Also, the policy lacks to provide a detailed plan to eliminate AIDS in the state. The policy simply states the following:
- The policy will aim to achieve "Global Target of 2020" where 90% of the people living with HIV will receive antiretroviral therapy.

Project Sunrise:

- Project Sunrise was launched in 2016 for prevention of AIDS specially among people injecting drugs in the 8 North-Eastern states.
- The AIDS prevention special project aimed to diagnose 90 per cent of such drug addicts with HIV and put them under treatment by 2020.
- Project Sunrise aims at bringing the people living with HIV/AIDS into the national mainstream and create more awareness about the disease in these N-E states.
- It will be implemented in the North East in addition to the existing projects of the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO).
- The project has been sponsored by US based Centre for Disease Control and would be implemented by Family Health International 360.
- It will cover one lakh people living with HIV/AIDS by giving them treatment and care facilities free of cost.
- Other initiatives to be covered include enhancing capacity of state-level institutions in high burden areas, community mobilization, intervention among females injecting drugs.

Jal Jeevan Mission: State-Wise Planning Exercise started for 2021–22

- The exercise is to be conducted by a committee chaired by the Secretary of Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
- The Committee will take up two states or Union Territories per day.
- The Committee is to do a rigorous scrutiny of the proposed Annual Action Plan for the year 2021-22 prepared by the States and the Union Territories. The plan will then be finalised.
- The Government of India has allocated Rs 50,000 crores to the Jal Jeevan Mission for the financial year 2021-22.

- In addition, Rs 26,940 crores has been assured under the Fifteenth Finance Commission.
- In 2021-22, the Government of India has planned to invest more than Rs 1 lakh crore to ensure tap water supply to rural homes.
- Recently, Ministry of Jal Shakti decided to deploy IoT (Internet-of-Things) devices for Monitoring Rural Drinking Water Supply Systems [Apr 2021]

About Jal Jeevan Mission:

The broad objectives of the Mission are:

- To provide minimum **55 litre per capita per day** (lpcd) through **functional household tap connection** (FHTC) to every **rural** household.
- To **prioritize** provision of FHTCs in quality affected areas, villages in drought prone and desert areas, Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) villages, etc.
- To provide functional tap connection to **Schools, Anganwadi centres, GP buildings, Health centres, wellness centres and community buildings**
- **Greywater** (waste water) management
- **Support activities**, i.e. IEC, HRD, training, development of utilities
- The fund sharing pattern between Centre and State is 90:10 for Himalayan (Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh) and North-Eastern States, 100:0 for UTs and 50:50 for all other states
- Recently in the Union Budget, the government announced another scheme – **Jal Jeevan Mission Urban (JJM-U)** for 2.68cr households with an expenditure of Rs 2.87 lakh crore over 5 years 2021-26

KVIC's RE-HAB

- Project RE-HAB is Reducing Elephant-Human Attacks using Bees. It was launched at four spots in the Nagarhole National Park of Karnataka. The project aims to prevent elephant human conflicts without creating harm to either of them. The project is highly cost effective.
- The project uses bee boxes as fence to prevent elephants from entering human habitation. The buzz of the bees irritates elephants. Also, elephants fear that the bees might sting them in the inner side of the trunk and in their eyes.
- The bee boxes were provided as a part of Honey Mission.
- The Honey Mission was launched by KVIC in 2017. The main aim of the mission is to provide awareness and training in bee keeping.
- The Nagarhole National Park is also called the Rajiv Gandhi National Park. It was established in 1955. In 1999, the GoI declared the park as a Tiger Reserve under Project Tiger. In 2021, the Srivilliputhur Meghamalai Tiger Reserve was added to the list.
- Nagarhole National Park is a part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

HONEY MISSION:

- The Prime Minister had given a clarion call "SWEET KRANTI" after which Honey Mission was launched by KVIC from May 2017 under Beekeeping program. It adopts a cluster approach

OBJECTIVES

- Utilization of available natural resources
- Creating sustainable employments
- Providing supplementary income for farmers
- Adopting scientific Bee Management practices
- Creating awareness about Honey and other Hive Products
- Creating awareness about the benefits of beekeeping in cross pollination
- Developing linkages with like minded organizations.

About KVIC:

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament
- **Chairman:** Vinai Kumar Saxena

India-US to focus on Climate Finance

- According to International Energy Agency, India is the third largest emitter of Carbon Dioxide. US is the largest emitter of Carbon Dioxide in the world. China follows US as the second largest emitter of Carbon Dioxide. India has set an ambitious target to produce 175 GW of renewable energy by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030.
- According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Climate Finance is the finance that aims at reducing the emissions and maintains the increase of resilience of human and ecological systems.
- India has set ambitious targets of reducing its carbon emissions. It is estimated that India will require 2.5 trillion USD between 2015 and 2030 to achieve its Nationally Determined Contributions.
- John Kerry visited India aiming at consultations that will increase climate ambition ahead of "Leader's Summit on Climate".
- The Leader's Climate Summit is hosted by the US. The US President Joe Biden has invited forty world leaders including PM Modi to the Leader's Climate Summit. The Summit is a key milestone to the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP-26, that is to be held in Glasgow in November 2021. The main objective of Leader's Climate Summit and COP-26 is to catalyse efforts to keep limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius goal.
- During the Summit, the US is to announce its ambitious 2030 Emissions target as its new Nationally Determined Contribution.

About International Energy Agency:

- Headquarter: Paris
- Executive Director: Fatih Barol

West Central Railway Becomes First Fully Electrified Indian Railways Zone

- The electrification of the West Central Railways (WCR) was completed and WCR became the first fully electrified Indian railway zone. The WCR boasts a 3012 Route km electrified Network.
- After Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety (CCRS) Inspection and Commissioning of electrification of Kota – Chittaurgarh railway section (Srinagar – Jalindri) in Rajasthan WCR became the 1st of the 18 railway zones to achieve 100% electrification.
- The government ensures that the entire rail network will be fully electrified by December 2023 and the entire rail network will run on renewable energy by 2030.
- Recently, The East Coast Railway (ECoR) became first zone to commission End of Train Telemetry (EOTT) [Dec 2020]

About Indian Railways:

- The first railway on Indian sub-continent ran over a stretch of 21 miles from Bombay to Thane.
- **Union Minister:** Piyush Goyal (Maharashtra)
- **Chairman and CEO, Railway Board :** Suneet Sharma

ReNew Power Pvt. Ltd To Invest \$9 Billion in Wind and Solar Projects

- ReNew Power Pvt. Ltd stated that, it will invest \$9 Billion in Wind and Solar Projects through 2025 in order to help the government of India's Green Push Initiative.
- To reduce the emission & create climate friendly environment.
- To more than triple its renewable power capacity to 18.5 gigawatts by 2025.
- ReNew has about 5.4 gigawatts of operational wind and solar plants, while 4.5 gigawatts of projects are under development.
- India, the world's third-biggest emitter of greenhouse gases, aims to reduce its dependence on coal and expand renewable power capacity almost five-fold to 450 gigawatts by 2030.
- International Energy Agency (IEA) notified that, New Generation of India will spend 5% annual growth in power demand through 2040.

India's First Municipal Green Bond was Issued by Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh

- Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation, a civic body in Uttar Pradesh (UP), has become India's first

municipal corporation to issue municipal green bonds.

- Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation issued municipal green bonds in BSE and raised Rs 150 crore (Base Issue: 100 Crore with the greenshoe option of 50 Crore).
- The corporation has received Rs 19.5 crore incentive from the Union government for raising funds through municipal bonds.
- The merchant bankers to the bond issue were A K Capital Services Ltd and HDFC Bank Ltd.
- Funds of these green bonds will be used for the construction of a tertiary sewage treatment plant (estimated to cost approximately Rs 239.93 crore) to benefit industries in Ghaziabad.
- The Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation (GMC) has entered into an understanding with Sahibabad Industries Association for the purpose of achieving various goals and objectives relating to the water supply.
- After this issuance, Ghaziabad became the 10th city in India and the 2nd city in UP to raise Municipal Bonds (Lucknow 1st in UP)
- Other 9 cities that issued municipal bonds in India – Pune, Hyderabad, Indore, Amravati, Bhopal, Visakhapatnam, Ahmedabad, Surat and Lucknow.
- The Bangalore Municipal Corporation issued municipal bonds for the first time in 1997
- Indore, Madhya Pradesh became the first state to get its municipal bonds listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE).

About the Ghaziabad's bond:

- The coupon rate – **8.1%** per annum
- Rating: The bond was rated AA by India Ratings and AA(CE) by Brickworks
- Maturity – **10 years.**
- The interest earned on these bonds is fully taxable and long term capital gains tax (LTCG) of 10% applies to them (if selling after holding for more than a year)

Greenshoe Option

A greenshoe option is an over-allotment option. In the context of an initial public offering (IPO), it is a provision to sell investors more shares than initially planned by the issuer if the demand for a security issue proves higher than expected.

GoI to launch National Programme on Artificial Intelligence

- Under the National Programme on Artificial Intelligence, a Centre for Transformational Artificial Intelligence to tap the data in various models is to be made available for the Artificial Intelligence model.
- The Government of India has also planned to launch Digital India 2.0. This will boost National Programme on Artificial Intelligence.
- The main aim of Digital India 2.0 is to take cybersecurity, digital service offerings and infrastructure to next level.
- To achieve this, the MSME Ministry will set up Rs 1,000 crores of fund. The fund will provide access capital to these companies.

Flipkart to Set-up Asia's Largest Fulfillment Center

- Haryana state govt. has approved allotment of 140 acres of land for e-commerce major, Flipkart for setting-up Asia's largest fulfillment center in Manesar, Gurugram, Haryana.
- The land, belonging to Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (HSIIDC), has been allotted at a price of ₹3.22 crore per acre.
- Also, Amazon has its largest office in the world, spanning 1.8 million square feet, in Hyderabad, India

Mandatory Gold Hallmarking from June 1

- Gold Hallmarking is providing purity certification to the gold jewellery and artefacts.
- Only three grades of jewellery will now be hall marked under the new regulations. They are 14-carat, 18-carat and 22-carat. Earlier, ten grades of gold jewellery were hall marked.
- The new Gold Hallmark will contain four marks. They are purity in carat, BIS mark, assay centre's name and the identification mark of the jeweller.

- The system is also available for consumers who want their old jewellery hallmarked.
- A person found violating the provisions will have to pay a minimum fine of Rs 1 lakh or five times the price of the article.
- The BIS Act, 2016 made gold hallmarking mandatory in India.
- The Hallmarking scheme for gold artefacts is run by BIS since 2000.
- Also, the BIS Hallmarking Regulations, 2018 called for hallmarking of silver jewellery and silver artefacts and also gold jewellery and gold artefacts.

About BIS:

- The Bureau of Indian Standards is the national Standards Body of India working under the aegis of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Government of India. It is established by the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016 (earlier Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 1986) which came into effect on 23 December 1986.
- **Headquarter** – New Delhi
- **Ex-Officio President** - Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
- **Director General** - Pramod Kumar Tiwari

VP M.Venkaiah Naidu releases commemorative postage stamp of Rajyogini Dadi Janki

- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu released a commemorative postage stamp on the memory of Rajyogini Dadi Janki, the former Chief of Brahma Kumaris commemorating her Spiritual works & fight social evils like gender discrimination, casteism and communalism at New Delhi.
- The VP highlighted that Brahma Kumaris are a unique religion that is headed by Women.
- Brahma Kumaris is one of India's newest religions, formed as a result of the spiritual movement started in Hyderabad in the 1930's.

India Energy Dashboards (Version 2.0) by NITI Aayog

- The new version of the India Energy Dashboard provides data between the financial years 2005-06 and 2019-20.
- It will provide technical and financial data of electricity utilities.
- The India Energy Dashboard will also provide data from schemes such as Saubhagya, PRAAPTI, UJALA and Vidyut PRAVAH.
- Recently, NITI Aayog launched Online dispute resolution [Apr 2021]

About NITI Aayog:

- Est – 1 Jan 2015
- Chairman – Narendra Modi
- Vice Chairman – Rajiv Kumar
- CEO – Amitabh Kant

About SAUBHAGYA:

- Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana – 'Saubhagya was on 25th September, 2017. Under Saubhagya free electricity connections to all households (both APL and poor families) in rural areas and poor families in urban areas will be provided.
- Providing last mile connectivity and electricity connections to all un-electrified households in rural areas.
- Providing Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) based standalone system for un-electrified households located in remote and inaccessible villages / habitations.
- Free electricity connections under the scheme would be identified using SECC 2011 data. Un-electrified households not covered under SECC will have to pay Rs. 500 which shall be recovered by DISCOMs in 10 instalments through electricity bill
- The beneficiary household will get five LED lights, one DC fan, one DC power plug. It also includes the Repair and Maintenance (R&M) for 5 years.
- All DISCOMs including Private Sector DISCOMs, State Power Departments and RE Cooperative Societies shall be eligible for financial assistance
- Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) has been designated as nodal agency for the Saubhagya scheme.

About UJALA:

- Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) was launched in 2015. It is implemented by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)
- UJALA scheme aims to promote efficient use of energy at the residential level.
- It may be noted that the scheme was initially labelled DELP (Domestic Efficient Lighting Program)
- Every domestic household having a metered connection from their respective Electricity Distribution Company is eligible to get the LED bulbs under the UJALA Scheme.
- UJALA appliances can be purchased at Rs 70 per LED bulb, Rs 220 per LED tubelight and Rs 1110 per Fan.
- EESL provides free-of-cost replacements of defected devices for a period of one year
- By Dec 2020, EESL had distributed over 36.69 crore LED bulbs across India

About VIDYUT Pravah

- Mobile application “Vidyut PRAVAH”- Electricity, Price Availability and Highlights” was launched in 2016. The mobile application provides highlights of the power availability in the country on real time basis.
- The Vidyut PRAVAH mobile application provides data pertaining to market price of power from power exchange, value of current all India demand in GW and all India and State shortage including peak hour and total energy shortage.

Harsh Vardhan Announced the Constitution of High-level Steering Committee For Eco-health Initiatives In India

- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) announced the constitution of a high-level steering committee for eco-health initiatives in India.
- The announcement was made during the Indian Council of Medical Research(ICMR)’s International Symposium – “One Health in India: Research informing biosafety, preparedness and response” chaired by Union Minister Harsh Vardhan.
- The secretariat of the committee will be hosted at the ICMR.
- It will be supported by the National Institute of One Health, which will be established in Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- The Union Minister also launched the special issue of ICMR’s Indian Journal of Medical Research. The journal discusses the One Health approach, confirms diverse research on biosafety, preparedness and response.

COVAXIN: Transfer of Technology from Bharat Biotech to Haffkine

- COVAXIN is one of the two drugs that is currently administered in India.
- It is manufactured by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research.
- COVAXIN can be stored in 2 to 8 degrees Celsius temperature. This is one of the main reasons why India has chosen COVAXIN and COVISHIELD. Both these vaccines are highly suitable for Indian temperatures. Other vaccines such as Moderna require minus twenty degree Celsius and Pfizer require minus seventy degrees Celsius.
- Haffkine is one of the oldest biomedical research institutes of India. It was established in 1899 by Dr Waldermar Mordecai Haffkine. He initially formed the institute as Plague Research Laboratory. It was established as a bacteriological research centre. It is now affiliated to University of Mumbai.
- The institute is located in Sans Pareil. Sans Pareil was the official residence of Governor of Bombay. It was built as a part of Jesuit Monastery on Parel Island. Jesuit is a member of the Society of Jesus.
- William Hornby was the first Governor of Bombay to take up Sans Pareil as his residence.
- In 1885, the Governor residence was moved to Malabar Hill. And thus, Haffkine moved into the building to set up the Plague Research Laboratory.

C-DAC launches 3 New Initiatives on Occasion of its 34th Foundation Day

- C-DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing) launched 3 new initiatives namely Cyber Security Operation Centre (CSoC), Parallel Development Environment (ParaDE) & Automatic Parallelizing Compiler (CAPC) on occasion of its 34th Foundation Day.
- The event was virtually presided over by Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology.
- CSoC is a Cyber Security Centre in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. It will offer end-to-end security solutions including managed security services. It includes a centralized security monitoring system which will respond to all cybersecurity incidents & will provide advanced threat detection for organizations which use its services.
- ParaDE is an integrated Development Environment (IDE) which will help in creating parallel applications for supercomputing.
- CAPC is a software using which users can convert applications with sequential programming code (written in C programming language) into parallel programming applications.
- **CDAC Director General** : Dr. Hemand Dabari
- **HQ** - Pune

Government has operationalised 75,532 Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centres across India

- Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan stated that the Government has operationalized around 75, 532 Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centre (AB- HWCs) across India since 2018. He stated that India is on track to achieve its target of operationalizing 1.5 Lakh Health and Wellness Centre (HWCs) by December 2022.
- He stated it during an event held to mark the 3rd Anniversary of the launch of AB-HWC.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 1st AB-HWC at Jangla, Bijapur district, Chhattisgarh on April 14, 2018.
- 19 states & 5 UTs were felicitated for having achieved the AB-HWC state-level targets for the year 2020-21.
- Inauguration of a HWC Portal which provides a public interface to access useful information on services provided at HWCs.
- During the event, several states were felicitated for exceptional performance under AB-HWC
- Mizoram, Meghalaya, Rajasthan for conduct of wellness activities at AB-HWCs for April, 2020 to February, 2021.

About Ayushman Bharat:

It has two components – PMJAY and HWCs

AB – PMJAY:

- Nodal Agency – National Health Authority (CEO- RS Sharma)
- Cashless insurance upto Rs 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary health care
- Beneficiaries through Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC 2011)
- It subsumed two schemes - Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and the Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme (SCHIS)
- Pradhan Mantri Aarogya Mitras (PMAMs) who will be primary point of facilitation for the beneficiaries to avail treatment at the hospital.

Health & Wellness Centres:

- Target: 1.5 lakh HWCs by 2022

Government has operationalised 75,532 Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centres across India About Ayushman Bharat:

It has two components – PMJAY and HWCs

AB – PMJAY:

- Nodal Agency – National Health Authority (CEO- RS Sharma)
- Cashless insurance upto Rs 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary health care

- Beneficiaries through Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC 2011)
- It subsumed two schemes - Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and the Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme (SCHIS)
- Pradhan Mantri Aarogya Mitras (PMAMs) who will be primary point of facilitation for the beneficiaries to avail treatment at the hospital

Health & Wellness Centres:

- Target: 1.5 lakh HWCs by 2022

ROPAX Jetty Project on River Dhamra

- The project will reduce passenger travel time from six hours to one hour. The connecting points of the jetty are located in the northern and southern banks of river Dhamra.
- The Dhamra river is a joint stream formed by the confluence of Baitarani and Brahmani rivers.
- It empties into the Bay of Bengal.
- It lies in the Bhadrak district of Odisha.
- The Gahirmatha sanctuary is located near the mouth of Dhamra river.
- Also, the Bhitarkanika wildlife sanctuary lies on the Dhamra estuary.
- The Wheeler island is also located at the mouth of Dhamra. The Wheeler Island is a DRDO launch centre.
- It is the most important nesting site of Olive Ridley sea turtles. The Gahirmatha beach separates Bhitarkanika Mangroves and the nesting site of the turtles.

Goa gets first of its kind Advanced Antiquities Management System in India

- The Directorate of Archives and Archaeology (DAA), Government of Goa inaugurated the Advanced Antiquities Management System (AAMS) in India, the first of its kind facility in India for the storage of antiquities.
- It was developed by Shailendra Phatak of I-Tech Business Solutions, Pune, Maharashtra at a cost of Rs.27 lakh.
- To ensure better preservation of historically significant objects.
- The AAMS collected the information about the antiquities and maintained a library of information on the antiquities using software which was used for industrial devices.
- At present, the database of the facility provides information on 83 antiquities.
- It also has 12 sculptures found under a waterfall in North Goa and objects from 13th Century temples.
- The 18th century antiquities found at the Alorna Fort are in the system.

About Directorate of Archives and Archaeology (DAA), Goa:

- The Directorate of Archives and Archaeology (DAA) in Goa is the oldest Archives in India.
- Established on 25th February 1955.

Gender Samvaad Event

- The Ministry of Rural Development recently launched the Gender Samvaad Event. It is a joint initiative between DAY-NRLM and IWWAGE. The main objective of Gender Samvaad event was to create awareness on gender related interventions under the DAY-NRLM.
- DAY-NRLM is Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana National Rural Livelihood Mission. IWWAGE is Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy.

About Gender Samvaad:

- It provides opportunities to understand the best practices of other states to improve women agencies. For instance, facilitating women's access to land rights and their engagement in Farmer Producer Organisations, establishing strong institutions for public service delivery, best practices around Food, nutrition, health and water and sanitation.
- More than sixty million women are now part of DAY-NRLM. It plays a major role in organising them into Self Help Groups. These platforms facilitate livelihood support services for women and facilitates financial opportunities.

About DAY NRLM:

- A restructured version of Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) launched in 2011
- Target is to mobilize 10-12 crore rural households into self-help groups by 2024-25.

Main features and sub-components:

- Universal Social Mobilisation
- Participatory Identification of Poor
- Revolving Fund (RF) and Community Investment Fund (CIF)
- Aajeevika Skill Development Programme (ASDP)
- encouraging public sector banks to set up Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs)
- Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)
- National Rural Economic Transformation Project” (NRETP)
- RBI provides

Drugs and Cosmetics Act: New Regulatory Regime for eight medical items

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare recently notified eight items to be regulated under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. According to the ministry, this had come into effect on April 1, 2021 under the Medical Devices Rules, 2017 that was enacted in 2017.
- The new eight medical items that has come under the regulation of Drugs and Cosmetics Act are as follows:
 - Bone Marrow Cell Separator
 - X-Ray machine
 - Dialysis machine
 - PET Equipment
 - Defibrillators
 - MRI Equipment
 - CT Scan Equipment
 - All Implantable Medical Devices
- According to the new order, the manufacturers and importers are required to take manufacturing license from Central Licensing Authority or State Licensing Authority.
- In 2020, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare announced that the medical equipment will be qualified as “Drugs” under Section 3 of Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940:

- It regulates the import, manufacture and distribution of drugs in the country.
- The main objective of the act is to make sure that the drugs and cosmetics sold in the country are safe.
- The Drugs Technical Advisory Board is the highest decision-making body in matters related to the technical details of the drugs. The board was constituted under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

Government Extends Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 till September 30, 2021

- Government extended the existing Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2015-20 for another six months up to September 30, 2021 from March 31, 2021. Exports during April-February 2020 dipped by 12.23 per cent to \$256 billion. Imports during the period too declined by 23.11 per cent to \$340.8 billion, leaving a trade deficit of \$84.62 billion.
- FTP 2015-20 provides a framework for increasing exports of goods and services as well as generation of employment and increasing value addition in the country.

RO-PAX Jetty Project - Dhamra river

- The Jetty will connect Kaninali in Bhadrak district and Talachua in Kendrapara district, Odisha under the ‘Sagarmala’
- Total capital cost: It was about Rs 110.60 crore in which the centre has sanctioned Rs 50.30 crore and the Odisha government will fund another 50% cost of the project.

Indian Railways runs Oxygen Express

- The Ministry of Railways recently announced that it is to create a Green Corridor to ensure fast movement of Oxygen Express trains. These Oxygen Express trains are to be operated to help the country handle the issue of shortage of oxygen.
- The Indian Railways is to move empty tankers from Boisar and Kalamboli railway stations. They are located near Mumbai. These tankers are to be sent to Jamshedpur, Vizag, Bokaro and Rourkela to load medical oxygen

Tourism and Culture Ministry inaugurates online exhibition on Ramayana

- The Union Minister of Tourism and Culture Shri Prahlad Singh Patel recently inaugurated the first online exhibition of Ramayana.
- The exhibition will show case 49 miniature paintings. These paintings have been collected from the National Museum in New Delhi.
- The paintings were dated between 17th century and 19th century.
- In 2008, UNESCO declared Ramlila as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Ramlila festivities are particularly popular in Varanasi, Ayodhya, Madhubani, Satna, Almora and in major cities of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.
- Ramlila is now a part of Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia as well. This is mainly because of the Hindu communities that moved to these countries in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- There are thirteen Indian cultural heritages that are placed under UNESCO Intangible cultural heritage list.
- The other UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritages of India are as follows:
 - 1) Buddhist Chanting (by the Buddhist lamas in Ladakh region)
 - 2) Chhau Dance
 - 3) Kalbelia (a song and dance form of Rajasthan)
 - 4) Kumb Mela
 - 5) Koodiyattam of Kerala
 - 6) Mudiya (a dance of Kerala)
 - 7) Nawruz (Persian new year)
 - 8) Ramman (festival of Uttarakhand)
 - 9) Sanskritana
 - 10) Traditional copper and brass utensil making
 - 11) Yoga
 - 12) Vedic Chanting

UNESCO:

- Established - 1945
- Headquarter- Paris
- Director-General- Audrey Azoulay

Income-tax Settlement Commission to be replaced with the new dispute resolution system

- The finance ministry notified the rules for winding up of the Settlement Commission which handled income tax and wealth tax disputes. It will be replaced by a new dispute resolution system with assessing taxable income up to Rs 50 lakh and disputed income of up to Rs 10 lakh.
- It can grant immunity from prosecution from any income tax or wealth tax related offence and also from imposition of penalty under any central law.

Tribunal Reforms Ordinance, 2021

- The President of India recently promulgated “The Tribunals Reforms (Rationalisation and conditions of Service)” Ordinance, 2021. It dissolved appellate authorities under nine acts and transferred their functions to high courts.

The ordinance dissolved appellate tribunals under nine acts as follows:

- Cinematograph Act, 1952
- Copyrights Act, 1957

- Trade Marks Act, 1999
- Customs Act, 1962
- Airports Authority of India Act, 1994
- Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999
- Control of National Highways (Land and Traffic) Act, 2002
- Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Act, 2001
- Patents Act, 1970
- Also, the ordinance said that the chairperson and members of tribunals will be appointed by the Central Government based on the recommendations made by a Search-cum Select Committee. The committee will consist of Chief Justice of India, secretaries nominated by the central governments, secretary of the ministry under which the tribunal is constituted and the outgoing chairperson or a retired CJI or a retired Supreme Court judge.
- Apart from these nine acts, the Tribunal Reforms Ordinance, 2021 also amended Section 184 of the Finance Act, 2017. It has added the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission within the purview of Finance Act, 2017. It has removed the following bodies from the purview of Finance Act, 2017:
 - Airport Appellate Tribunal established under the Airports Authority of India act, 1994
 - The Film Certification Appellate Authority established under the Cinematograph Act, 1952
 - The Authority of Advanced Ruling established under the Income Tax Act, 1961
 - The Appellate Board established under the Trade Marks Act, 1999,

Ordinance:

- Article 123 of the Constitution grants the President certain law making powers to promulgate Ordinances when either of the two Houses of Parliament is not in session and hence it is not possible to enact laws in the Parliament.
- Ordinances must be approved by Parliament within six weeks of reassembling or they shall cease to operate.
- As maximum gap between two session of a house can be 6 months therefore maximum life of a ordinance can be 6 months and 6 weeks
- Also, the Governor of a state can issue Ordinances under Article 213, when the state legislative assembly (or either of the two Houses in states with bicameral legislatures) is not in session.

Cabinet approves Subsidy for Urea produced via Coal Gasification

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs recently approved subsidy for Urea that are to be produced by TFL. It is Talcher Fertilizer Plant.
- The TFL is to commission a new fertilizer plant in Odisha. This plant will produce urea through coal gasification. It will be the only plant in India to produce nitrogenous soil nutrient through coal gasification process.
- Talcher Fertilizers is a joint venture of Fertilizer Corporation of India, Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers, GAIL and Coal India.
- Talcher Fertilizer will establish a urea plant base on coal gasification technology at an estimated investment of Rs 13,277 crores.
- The plant is expected to be completed by 2023.
- The tender to construct the TFL project has been provided to China-based Wuhan Engineering.

India elected to three bodies of the UN ECOSOC

- India was recently elected to the three bodies of the United Nations. They were the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Executive Board of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and the Executive Board of World Food Programme. All these three bodies operate under United Nations Economic and Social Council.
- India was elected to all these three bodies by acclamation. Acclamation is honouring someone. Electing a member country through acclamation does not use a ballot. However, other member countries were elected through secret ballot to these bodies.
- India's term to these bodies begins on January 1, 2022.
- When a member with clean slate is presented for an election in the United Nations, the vote takes place through acclamation. Clean Slate means there is no history of evidence of any problems or

broken rules. The Secret ballot shall be dispensed when election by acclamation takes place in the United Nations. Election by Acclamation is not allowed in all UN bodies. Election by Acclamation is completely excluded in some of the UN bodies such as the Human Rights Council.

- The other countries that were elected to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice through secret ballot were Cuba, Chile, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Brazil. Countries such as Bahrain, Austria, Bulgaria, Belarus, France, Canada, Libya, Ghana, Qatar, Pakistan, Togo and Thailand were elected by acclamation.
- The countries that were elected to this board through acclamation were Ukraine, Turkmenistan, Thailand, South Africa, Poland, Monaco, Kenya, Guyana, Gambia, Egypt, Colombia, Cameroon, Bangladesh, Australia, Dominican Republic and Afghanistan.
- It must be noted that India is serving a 2-year term as a non-permanent member of the UN since Jan 1, 2021.

About UN ECOSOC

- The Economic and Social Council is at the heart of the United Nations system to advance the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.
- It is the central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals.
- It is also responsible for the follow-up to major UN conferences and summits.
- The UN Charter established ECOSOC in 1945 as one of the six main organs of the United Nations.
- **President:** Munir Akram (currently the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations)
- **Headquarter** – New York

US Commission proposes adding India to CPC list

- The US Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommended Biden Administration to place four countries including India under “Countries of Particular Concern” (CPC). The other three countries were Russia, Vietnam and Syria.
- Also, the USCIRF recommended to redesignate ten countries as “Countries of Particular Concern”. They were China, Iran, North Korea, Burma, Eritrea, Tajikistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, and Nigeria.
- The USCIRF was established by the US Government in 1998 after the enactment of International Religious Freedom Act. It mainly aims to review the violations of religious freedom internationally. It makes recommendations to President, US Congress and the Secretary of State.
- According to the report, the Citizenship Amendment Act that was passed in 2020 led to nationwide protests. The act was passed to fast-track citizenship to non-Muslim migrants residing in the country. These migrants were from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

‘Form-based codes’ for the development of Railway land

- The Indian Railways Station Development Corporation (IRSDC) has developed 1st of its kind ‘form-based codes’ for the commercial development of railway land. IRSDC has adopted a form-based codes approach as per the guidebook issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- The initiative aims to transform railway lands or railway station areas into Railopolis.
- The form based approach has been developed by IRSDC with support from Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation.
- IRSDC is the nodal agency for redevelopment of railway stations, it is also the main Project Development Agency (PDA) of Indian Railways.

The codes/guide books have been compiled into six parts namely–

- Station planning, national transit-oriented development policy for railway and station redevelopment, codes for commercial development of railway land, codes for architectural design of commercial assets, green building codes & codes for railway heritage assets.
- Testing of codes is being done at ongoing station redevelopment projects at Nagpur, Chandigarh,

Amritsar, Gwalior, Bijwasan, Anand Vihar.

- It will assist in the Development of railway lands into Railpolis.
- A Railopolis is a mini smart city with mixed-use development where people can reside, work, and play.
- A Joint Venture of Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA), a statutory authority under Ministry of Railways & the Ircon International Limited (IRCON), an Government of India undertaking.

About Indian Railways Station Development Corporation (IRSDC)

- **MD & CEO** – S K Lohia
- **Chairman (of Board of Directors)** – Mr Pradeep Kumar
- **Head Office** – New Delhi

Harsh Vardhan Addressed the 5th Global Forum on TB Vaccine Virtually

- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) addressed the 5th Global Forum on TB Vaccines virtually from 20th April to 22nd April 2021.
- The forum is convened by Stop TB Partnership Working Group on New Vaccines in association with International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) & Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (TBVI).
- This is the World's largest gathering of the stakeholders working towards research and development of TB Vaccine.
- Harsh Vardhan is the Chairman of Stop TB Partnership Board.
- The 6th Global Forum on TB Vaccines will be convened in Toulouse, France from 22 – 24 February 2022.
- Union Minister Harsh Vardhan called upon the global community to ensure fundings to develop the TB vaccine by 2023 and to eradicate TB in India by 2025 and globally before 2030.
- Lakshadweep became the 1st TB Free Union Territory in India.
- Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) 1st TB Free District of India.
- "TBMukt Bharat" campaign launched by Indian Govt. to eradicate TB in India.

About Global Forum on TB Vaccines:

- **Co-Chairpersons**– David Lewinson; Mark Feinberg; Nick Drager

About Stop TB Partnership:

- **Executive Director**-Dr Lucica Ditiu
- **Headquarters**– Geneva, Switzerland

Chandigarh Released First of Its Kind Draft Cycling Policy in India

- Chandigarh has released a first of its kind draft cycling policy, this is the first time for a city to draft a cycling policy in India. The draft recognises cycling as one of the environment friendly and quickest modes of transport in urban areas.
- The policy was drafted by the Chandigarh Smart City Limited.
- To enhance the safety of the cyclists by creating safe refuge points for women and persons with disabilities through 24x7 CCTV surveillance.
- The draft also highlights the need to identify and remove the social and physical barriers that prevent the individuals to adopt cycling.

Finance Ministry expands Scope of ECLGS 2.0, includes Healthcare Sector

- The Ministry of Finance has extended the Scope of ECLGS 2.0 component of Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) by including SMA-1 (Special Mention Accounts-1) of the **Healthcare sector**.
- ECLGS 2.0 already **includes borrowers from 26 sectors** identified by RBI (Reserve Bank of India) constituted **K V Kamath Committee**. It includes sectors like Power, Construction, Textiles, Logistics and others.
- The revised Operational guidelines are issued by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd (NCGTC).
- **Validity Extension of ECLGS** – In March, 2021, the Ministry of Finance had extended the

validity of ECLGS (ECLGS 1.0, 2.0 & 3.0) by another 3 months till June 30, 2021 or till an amount of **INR 3 Lakh crore (Target Credit Line)** is reached. Till February 2021, INR 2.46 Lakh crore of 3 Lakh crore were sanctioned under the scheme.

- Under the scheme, Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) such as Banks, Financial Institutions and NBFCs (Non- Banking Financial Companies) are given Incentives for providing additional funding facilities to MSME borrowers (in the form of GECL – Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line).
- For this purpose the Government has set a Corpus of INR 41, 600 Crore for the next 4 FYs from 2020-21 to 2023-24.

About NCGTC:

- A common trustee company in the of National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd [NCGTC] was set up by the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance to act as a common trustee company to manage and operate various credit guarantee trust funds.
- NCGTC was incorporated under the Indian Companies Act, 1956 on March 28, 2014 with a paid-up capital of ₹10 crore.

Current Trust Funds under the trusteeship management of NCGTC:

- 1) **Credit Guarantee Fund for Skill Development (CGFSD)**
Guarantees for Skill Development Loans by the member banks of IBA up to ₹ 1.5 lakh extended without collateral or third-party guarantee and the fund has a Target of 10-20 lakh loans to be guaranteed in a year.
- 2) **Credit Guarantee Fund for Education loans (CGFEL)**
Guarantees for Education Loans by the member banks of IBA up to ₹ 7.5 lakh extended without collateral or third-party guarantee and the fund has a Target of 10 lakh loans to be guaranteed in a year.
- 3) **Credit Guarantee Fund for Factoring (CGFF)**
Guarantees for domestic factored debts of MSMEs.
- 4) **Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU)**
Guarantees for loans up to the specified limit (currently ₹ 10Lakh) sanctioned by Banks / NBFCs / MFIs / other financial intermediaries engaged in providing credit facilities to eligible micro units. Further, Overdraft loan amount of ₹ 5,000/- sanctioned under PMJDY accounts shall also be eligible to be covered under Credit guarantee Fund.
- 5) **Credit Guarantee Fund for Standup India (CGFSI)**
Guarantees for credit facilities of over ₹ 10 lakh & upto ₹ 100 lakh sanctioned by the eligible lending institutions, under the Stand Up India Scheme (SC/ST/Women for setting up Greenfield enterprises).

Goa – India's only State to have a Uniform Civil Code

- Recently, Chief Justice of India S A Bobde appreciated the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) of Goa, Goa is the only Indian State to have a UCC. The UCC calls for the formulation of one law for India, which would be applicable to all religious communities in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption.
- Goa Civil Code (also known as Goa Family Law) is based on the Portuguese Civil Code which was introduced in 1870.
- In Indian Constitution, UCC is placed among the non-justiciable Directive Principles of State Policy – Article 44.
- Recently, Goa got first of its kind Advanced Antiquities Management System in India [Apr 2021]
- Recently, Centre gave Rs 300 cr to Goa for its diamond jubilee celebration [Feb 2021]
- Goa became the first state in India to achieve 100% Jal Jeevan Mission target in 2020.

India's 40th Scientific Expedition to Antarctica returns to Capetown

- The 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica (40-ISEA) hosted by the Ministry of Earth Sciences successfully returned to Cape Town, South Africa, after completing a journey of 12,000 nautical miles in 94 days, including stopovers.

- The 40-ISEA was on board the MV Vasiliy Golovnin, a chartered ice-class vessel and began their journey from the Mormugao Port of Goa to Antarctica on 7 January, 2021.
- On the way to Antarctica, This team deployed four autonomous Ocean Observing DWS (Directional Wave Spectra) wave drifters between 35 degree and 50 degree south latitudes in collaboration with Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad.
- The expedition had a team of 20 personnel at Bharati led by Atul Suresh Kulkarni and 21 personnel at Maitri led by Ravindra Santosh

ASEAN Initiative on Myanmar

- The Government of India recently welcomed the ASEAN Initiative on Myanmar.
- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations released a five-point statement on Myanmar crisis. Under the statement, the ASEAN countries have demanded “Immediate Cessation of Violence”.

The five points of the initiative are as follows:

- To end violence
- Organise a constructive dialogue among all parties
- To appoint a special ASEAN Envoy to facilitate the all-party dialogue Acceptance of aid
- The Special ASEAN Envoy will visit Myanmar with the Military leader
- The military of Myanmar dismissed the Government headed by Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021.
- The five-point consensus was created between the ASEAN countries and the current military leader who seized power. There have been massive protests in the country since the military coup. The consensus is being criticised that ASEAN is encouraging military coup. Also, the consensus did not mention a timeline. It also neglected the political prisoners in Myanmar.
- Brunei is the current chair of ASEAN.
- Myanmar gained independence from Britain in 1948. Between 1962 and 2011, the country was ruled by armed forces. It was the ruling military that changed the name of Burma into Myanmar.
- Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of Father of Myanmar (Aung San) returned to Myanmar in 1988. She was put under house arrest by the military in 1989. In 2010, Suu Kyi was freed. In 2012, she won a by-election and took a seat in the Parliament.
- In 2015, the National League for Democracy party won the elections. However, the military barred Suu Kyi from presidency. A post of State counsellor was created for Suu Kyi to run the Government.
- In February 2021 elections, the National League for Democracy won the elections again. The Tatmadaw (Name of Myanmar military) declared state of emergency. It also declared that the power is being transferred to the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.

About ASEAN:

- ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand
- ASEAN member states (10): Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Brunei, Philippines, Indonesia.

Government targets 17 Million Tonnes of Mustard Production by 2025-26

- Indian Government is planning to bring around 9 million hectares of land under Mustard Cultivation & raise Mustard production capacity to around 17 Million Tonnes (mt) by 2025-26 in India.
- For 2021-22, the government has set a target of covering an area of 7.58 million hectares with a production of 12.24 mt.
- India is one of the major oilseeds growers and importer of edible oils. India's vegetable oil economy is the world's fourth-largest after the USA, China & Brazil.
- Rajasthan alone produces 40.82% of total mustard in India, It is the highest Mustard seed producing state in India followed by Haryana & Madhya Pradesh.
- Mustard is a Rabi crop.

MOUs & PARTNERSHIP

JKTPO Signed MoU with TPCI for Agro & food Processing Sector and Film Tourism Sector

- Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Trade Promotion Corporation of India (TPCI) for the Agro & Food Processing Sector and Film Tourism Sector.
- The MoU was signed by Ankita Kar, Managing Director (MD) of JKTPO and Mohit Singla, Chairman of TPCI.
- The MoU was signed during the inauguration of J&K Pavilion at South Asia's largest Integrated FB Trade Show "Indus-food 2021" held at Indian Exposition Mart, New Delhi.
- Under this MoU both JKTPO and TPCI will work together to enhance the reach of the International Community in India.

About Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO):

- It is a joint venture of the Government of J&K, Indian Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) and Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC).
- **Managing Director**– Ankita Kar
- **Headquarters**– Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir

ICM & IOM to collaborate for joint Study on Migration

- The India Centre for Migration a research think tank of the Ministry of External Affairs entered into collaboration with International Organisation for Migration for the joint study on "Strengthening data-informed and migrant-centred migration management frameworks in India".

About The India Centre for Migration (ICM):

- **Chairman**– Sanjay Bhattacharyya
- **Headquarters**– New Delhi

Bureau of Civil Aviation Security & Yamuna International Airport sign LoA

- A Letter of Agreement was signed between the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security & Yamuna International Airport Private Limited in New Delhi. Under this LoA Bureau of Civil Aviation Security will take up security responsibilities of Jewar Airport, Uttar Pradesh.
- The contract for construction of the Jewar Airport, officially Noida International Greenfield Airport, has been awarded to YIAPL, which is a joint venture of the Airport Authority of India (AAI), the Government of Uttar Pradesh, and Zurich international airport.

Ujjivan SFB Collaborates with nStore

- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (Ujjivan SFB) partnered with nStore Technologies Private Limited (nStore) to digitise offline retailers and small businesses in India.
- Under this collaboration, Ujjivan SFB will offer the mobile application 'nLincs', to its current account holders who own local businesses and enable them to sell their products online.
- To support local businesses like Kirana and General Stores, medical shops, stationary shops, fruits and vegetable stores and hardware stores.

About Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (Ujjivan SFB):

- **Managing Director & CEO**– Nitin Chugh
- **Headquarters**– Bengaluru, Karnataka
- **Tagline**– Build a Better Life

About nStore:

- **CEO**– Pradeep Sampath
- **Headquarters**– Chennai, Tamil Nadu

NSE Academy Signs MoU with GIFT SEZ Limited

- NSE Academy Limited (NAL), wholly owned subsidiary of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with GIFT Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Gujarat International Finance Tec-City Co. Ltd (GIFT city) to mentor financial services professionals in GIFT City.
- The MoU lays down the foundation of NSE Academy Ltd and GIFT city to support the incapacity building of trained manpower by developing, launching and conducting training programs related to International financial Service.

About NSE Academy Limited:

- **Managing Director & CEO**– Abhilash Misra
- **Headquarters**– Mumbai, Maharashtra

GE Power India Signs Maintenance Contract With Reliance Bangladesh LNG & Power

- GE Power India had signed a 22-year maintenance services agreement with Reliance Bangladesh LNG & Power Ltd for the upcoming 718-megawatt (MW) combined cycle power plant at Meghnaghat, Narayanganj, Bangladesh. Reliance Bangladesh LNG & Power Ltd, a joint venture between India's Reliance Power Limited and Japan's JERA Co., Inc.
- It is expected to start in early 2023 and the plant will utilize re-gasified liquified natural gas to generate the equivalent electricity needed to supply more than 850,000 homes in Bangladesh.
- GE Digital will provide the digital solution to support the growth of the power sector in Bangladesh.

About Reliance Bangladesh LNG & Power Ltd:

- **CEO** – Ranjan Lohar
- **Headquarter** – Dhaka, Bangladesh

About GE Power India:

- **Managing Director** – Mr. Prashant Jain

India, US agree to revise India-US Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP)

- India and the United States (US) have agreed to revise the India-US Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP). The revised SEP will have a greater focus on promoting clean energy with low-carbon pathways & accelerating green energy cooperation.
- It was established in April 2018 at the direction of then-President Donald J. Trump & Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

SEP organizes interagency engagement across 4 primary pillars of cooperation. They are

- Power and Energy Efficiency
- Oil and Gas
- Renewable Energy
- Sustainable Growth

CDC tied up with Northern Arc for PBI to support MFIs

- The CDC Group, the UK government's development finance institution, has made a partnership with Northern Arc Capital Limited for investing a total of Rs 320 crore under pooled bond issuance to support six leading Indian microfinance institutions (MFIs). CDC's Rs 320 crore investment in a pool of NACL is its first-ever transaction in India.
- The investment will support MFIs by providing over 6.3 lakh micro-loans to low-income households (primarily female and rural borrowers).
- CDC Group ("CDC") will invest in the non-convertible debentures ("NCDs") of six leading Indian microfinance institutions: Annapurna Finance, Arohan Financial Services, ASA International, Asirvad Microfinance Limited, Chaitanya India and Fusion Microfinance.
- To facilitate finance to the small businesses especially for women to empower them by uplifting their livelihoods.

About Pooled Bond Issuance (PBI):

- It is a kind of bond issuance in the form of pooled funds, in which pooled funds are the funds in a portfolio from many individual investors for the purposes of investment.
- Examples: Mutual funds, hedge funds, exchange-traded funds, pension funds, and unit investment trusts.

About CDC Group:

- Headquarters – London, United Kingdom
- CEO – Nick O'Donohoe

About Northern Arc Capital Limited (NACL):

- Headquarters – Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- CEO – Kshama Fernandes

DRDO to partner with Private Sector in Missile Production

- The DRDO has opened up its partnership with the private sectors in order to develop complex military systems under the Make in India project.
- Recently DRDO helped TATA and Baba Kalyani industries to develop ATAGS howitzer. It is an artillery gun for the Indian Army.
- In August 2020, DRDO identified 108 military systems for production by domestic industries.
- DRDO recently banned 101 military systems and weapons such as light combat helicopters, cruise missiles, transport aircraft. This is to be achieved in a staggered manner by 2024. This was done to promote the domestic defence industry. Now, this partnership will boost the foreign companies (where the import ban was imposed) to set up manufacturing units in India. They can also partner with DRDO.
- A target of 25 billion USD turn-over has been set in defence manufacturing.

Recent Events:

- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) inks pact with DRDO to mitigate avalanche, landslide in highways [Mar 2021]
- DRDO tests Solid fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) Technology [Mar 2021]
- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will strengthen its ties with the IIT Bhubaneswar (IIT-BBS) further to develop it as a centre of excellence for promoting defence research [Feb 2021]
- DRDO develops India's first machine pistol ASMI [Jan 2021]
- DRDO successfully conducted the maiden launch of the new generation of surface-to-air Akash missile from integrated test range off the coast of Odisha [Jan 2021]

About DRDO:

- Established in 1958
- Chairman – G. Sateesh Reddy
- Headquarter – New Delhi
- The Defence Research and Development Organisation has developed a lightweight Bullet-Proof Jacket for the armed forces. The BPJ, weighing around 9 kg, meets the qualitative requirements of the Indian Army.
- The BPJ was developed by Defence Materials and Stores Research and Development Establishment (DMSRDE), Kanpur.
- The Front Hard Armour Panel (FHAP) jacket was tested at the Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), Chandigarh and met the relevant Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) standards.
- The FHAP technology has reduced the weight of the medium-sized BPJ from 10.4 kg to 9 kg.

Uttar Pradesh Regulation of Urban Premises Tenancy (second) Ordinance 2021

- The ordinance makes it mandatory to sign contract will to rent out a property. This is being done to safeguard the interests of both the tenant and the owner.

- The ordinance will establish rent authority and rent tribunal to solve disputes. Currently there are no clear mechanisms for conflict resolution.
- The ordinance will help 1.1 crore vacant homes in the urban region to get suitable tenants in the state of Uttar Pradesh.
- It will encourage people to invest in more properties for renting purposes.
- The ordinance is very much similar to the Draft Model Tenancy Act.
- The Model Tenancy Act was framed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. It is yet to be passed in the parliament. The key features of the Model Tenancy Act are as follows:
- Formation of Rent Authority. Every tenancy agreement should be reported to this rent authority.
- For non-residential tenancy, the residential housing security deposit is to be capped at one month interval and for residential housing security deposit is to be capped at two months interval.
- The landlords should provide access to basic amenities. The landlords cannot hike the property rent in the middle of a tenancy term.

Atal Innovation Mission, CIPS join hands for Innovation in Public System

- The CIPS and Atal Innovation Mission signed a Statement of Intent to promote innovation in the area of public system. This is to be achieved with the help of knowledge and experience of AIM and CIPS.
- The CIPS and AIM will organise round tables involving local level administration officials. This is to create awareness about the innovative products and solutions. Also, it will help them understand the standard policies and processes around procurement. Ultimately, it will aid in quicker implementation of innovative solutions.
- They will together host e-exhibitions supported by relevant startups. Through this their innovations are to be showcased.

Centre for Innovation in Public System:

- It is an autonomous Centre for Administrative Staff College of India. It was established by Government of India in 2010. It was established based on the recommendation made by the Thirteenth Finance Commission for the years 2010-15. The Finance Commission also suggested to release a grant of Rs 20 crores to establish Centre for Innovation in Public System.
- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog is Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and was setup in 2016.
- Towards this end AIM has taken a holistic approach to ensure creation of a problem-solving innovative mindset in schools and creating an ecosystem of entrepreneurship in universities, research institutions, private and MSME sector.

It has the following initiatives under it:

- Atal Tinkering Labs (**ATL**) - at school level
- Atal Incubation Centres (**AIC**) - "An ecosystem of Startups and Entrepreneurs"
- Atal Community Innovation Centres (**ACIC**) - serving Unserved and Under-Served regions of India
- Atal New India Challenges (**ANIC**) - Product and Service Innovations with National Impact
- **ARISE** ANIC challenges - to stimulate startup/ MSME industry innovation
- **Mentor of Change** (Mentorship and Partnerships - with Public, Private sector, NGOs, Academia, Institutions)

Recent Events:

- ISRO adopted 100 ATLs across the country [**Jan 2021**]
- Atal Innovation Mission launched The Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook 2.0 [**Jan 2021**]

NCML Signed MoU With ASCI

- The National Collateral Management Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Agriculture Skill Council of India to provide skill training in the agriculture sector.
- To bridge the gap between the current vocational education programs and the corresponding industry requirements and expectations.
- To provide practical professional skill training and recognition of prior learning as per Pradhan

Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY).

- Recently, govt launched PMKVY 3.0 [Jan 2021]

About NCML:

- Corporate Office: Gurgaon
- Regd. Office: Mumbai

About ASCI:

- Headquarter: Gurgaon

PMKVY 3.0:

- Launched in 717 districts, 28 States/eight UTs
- It targets training of 8 lakh candidates over a scheme period of 2020-2021 with an outlay of Rs. 948.90 crore.
- The 729 Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKKs), empaneled non-PMKK training centres and more than 200 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) under Skill India will be rolling out PMKVY 3.0 training to build a robust pool of skilled professionals.
- District Skill Committees (DSCs), under the guidance of State Skill Development Missions (SSDM), shall play a key role in addressing the skill gap and assessing demand at the district level.
- Two components – Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (CSCM) and Centrally Sponsored State Managed (CSSM)

India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership in Water Sector

- During the summit, India and Netherlands launched a strategic partnership on water. Under the partnership, the countries agreed to alleviate the joint working group on water to ministerial level. It also aimed to broaden bilateral cooperation in new areas of water.
- Under the partnership the countries will focus on water budgeting, converting wastewater to energy and decentralized treatment technologies and cost effective water technologies.
- Netherlands is the world leader in water management. One-fourth of Netherlands lies under sea level. Yet, the Dutch have successfully comprehended water related challenges and have tested technologies and solutions in delta management, desalination, flood control.

U GRO Capital Partnered with SBM Bank India

- U GRO Capital in partnership with SBM Bank India launched “RO Smart Business” credit card for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The Credit Card is powered by RuPay, along with EnKash. These are specially designed for underbanked micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- It will empower MSME entrepreneurs by providing financial assistance to solve multiple financial challenges.
- These can be availed by the U GRO Capital borrowers against a fixed deposit with SBM Bank India.

About U GRO Capital:

- **CEO** – Abhijit Ghosh
- **Head quarter** – Mumbai, Maharashtra

FlexiLoans.com Partnered with PayPal to Offer Collateral Free Loan to MSME's & Freelancers

- FlexiLoans.com, a digital lending platform focused on Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) partnered with PayPal, a leading digital payments company to offer collateral-free business loans to MSMEs, freelancers, women entrepreneurs and sole proprietors.
- This partnership is in line with PayPal's commitment to provide innovative credit solution capabilities to Indian merchants who sell cross-border using PayPal.
- This partnership enables the borrowers to access term loans from Rs 50000 to Rs 1 crore.
- This benefits the merchants across more than 1500 cities and towns in India.

- The loan tenure ranges from 6 months to 36 months.
- Recently, PayPal Launches Cryptocurrency Checkout Service in US [Apr 2021]

About PayPal:

- **President & CEO**– Dan Schulman
- **Headquarters**- San Jose, California

About FlexiLoans.com:

- **Founders**– Manish Lunia, Ritesh Jain, Deepak Jain & Abhishek Kothari
- **Headquarters**– Mumbai, Maharashtra

SwitchON signed an MOU with PNB for Solar Pump Financing through Loss default guarantee fund

- SwitchON Foundation has partnered with Punjab National Bank to offer finance to the marginal farmers for buying solar pumps.
- PNB will be financing solar pumps through the SwitchON Foundation's – First Loss Default Guarantee Fund. The basic aim of this fund is to help unbanked small marginal farmers without any collateral and to promote clean energy.
- It is a first of its kind agreement between a private non-profit organisation and a public sector bank to set up a Guarantee Fund (usually guarantee fund will be set up by the Government)
- PNB is offering a payback period of 7 years with a zero down payment for up to 1.6 lakhs of loan for small and marginal farmers.
- Previously, SwitchON partnered with RBL and Axis Bank to sanction loans for over 100 solar pumps, but it is the first time that along with a Nationalized Bank for the financial partnership.
- It will also accelerate the achievement of the official target of the central PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan) Scheme of India is to achieve 30.75 GW of solar energy generation by 2022.

The First Loss Default Guarantee Fund:

- The first loss guarantee is a mechanism whereby a third party compensates lenders if the borrower defaults i.e. (insurance against a loss).
- This clause makes the lender financially responsible for any loan losses up to a certain percentage (decided, upfront, based on the perception of risk), which typically ranges between 8-20% of the portfolio.

About SwitchON Foundation:

- **Office Location** – Kolkata, West Bengal
- **Managing Director** – Vinay Jaju

India: Expert panel recommends approval to Sputnik V vaccine

- The Sputnik V is a Russian vaccine. The Dr Reddy's Laboratories partnered with the Russian Direct Investment Fund to conduct clinical trials on the vaccine and for its distribution rights in India. The vaccine has proved 91.6% of efficacy during its phase 3 trials.
- Currently, the vaccines COVAXIN of Bharat Biotech and COVISHIELD of AstraZeneca are under administration. They have been given Emergency Use Authorisation. Emergency Use Authorisation is an interim approval of vaccine.
- The other drugs that received Emergency Use Authorisation in India are Favipiravir, Remdesivir and Itolizumab.

HUL, Google collaborated with MyGov India to launch AI for Agriculture Hackathon

- Hindustan Unilever Limited & Google partners with MyGov India to jointly formulate an Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven Agriculture Hackathon
- The hackathon is aimed at conserving freshwater usage, and addressing water scarcity problems in India.
- 3 organization has decided to partner on March 22, 2021 during the World Water Day, 2021.

About MyGov India:

- Launched by the Government of India in July 2014, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- It is a web portal, specifically designed for citizens to interact with Industrial experts to contribute to Social & Economic transformation of India.

About Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL):

- **Chairman & MD** – Sanjiv Mehta
- **Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra

About Google:

- **Founders** – Larry Page, Sergey Brin
- **Launched** – 1998
- **Parent Organisation** – Alphabet Inc.

Russian President Putin signs Law paving way to rule until 2036

- Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a legislation which will enable him to run for two or more consecutive six-year terms, effectively permitting him to remain in office till 2036.
- The legislation formalizes changes to the Russian Constitution which were endorsed by people through a referendum held in 2020.
- Before the signing of the new legislation, a President could serve only a maximum of two consecutive six-year terms.
- Putin completes his ongoing Fourth Term as President of Russia in 2024.
- Putin has already governed Russia either as President or as Prime Minister for more than 20 years, making it the longest period a leader has been in power since Joseph Stalin.
- Putin was first elected as Prime Minister of Russia in 1999 and as President in 2000.
- Russia's Presidential Term was lengthened to 6 years (from 4 years) in 2008

Russian Parliament:

- The Federal Assembly is the national legislature of the Russian Federation
- It consists of the State Duma [450 seats], which is the lower house, and the Federation Council [170 seats], which is the upper house.
- Both houses are located in Moscow.
- The Chairman of the Federation Council is the third most important position after the President and the Prime Minister.

Mobisafar partnered with YES BANK, NPCI to launch 'Mobisafar Virtual RuPay Prepaid Card'

- Mobisafar Services Private Limited, a Fintech start-up made a partnership with YES BANK & with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for RuPay to launch 'Mobisafar Virtual RuPay Prepaid card'.
- The prepaid card will provide an easier way to access the wallet through both the mobile app and desktop with a reloadable limit.
- Inauguration of the The Mobisafar Virtual RuPay Prepaid card was done by the former Cricketer Kapil Dev along with Abhishek Pandey and Ajitesh Pandey, (founders of Mobisafar).

Recent Events:

- YES Bank Bought RInfra's Reliance Centre at Santacruz [Apr 2021]
- Yes Bank has tied-up with GVFL to strengthen Fintech-led innovation and support the growth of the Indian startup ecosystem. [Apr 2021]
- Yes bank unveils YES MSME scheme [Jan 2021]
- Yes bank appoints Niranjana Banodkar as new CFO [Dec 2020]

About Mobisafar Services Private Limited:

- **Headquarters** – Ludhiana, Punjab
- **CEO** – Abhishek Kumar Pandey

NITI Aayog's AIM & Denmark sign SoI for promoting Innovation & Entrepreneurship

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog & Embassy of Denmark signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) for promoting innovation and entrepreneurship among aspiring entrepreneurs in India. The SoI was signed at the premises of NITI Aayog in New Delhi and is part of the Indo-Danish Bilateral Green Strategic Partnership.
- Under the partnership, Innovation Center Denmark in India will collaborate with AIM to
- Support the current and future initiatives of AIM, NITI Aayog.
- Develop Global Innovation Green economy partnerships that will address Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- The partnership will be executed through Innovation Center Denmark (ICDK) under the aegis of the Embassy of Denmark.
- The collaboration will help Indian innovators get access to Danish technical expertise and allow Danish Innovators to work on India-specific solutions.
- In December 2020, AIM partnered with ICDK, Denmark Embassy in India and the Denmark Technical University (DTU) to launch AIM-ICDK Water Innovation Challenge.
- It was aimed at identifying innovative solutions for solving challenges related to water in India.
- The winners will be part of the Indian delegation for the Next Generation Water Action at IWA (International Water Association) Water Congress scheduled to be held in May 2021 in Copenhagen, Denmark.
- Both entities have identified 10 innovations through the Water Innovation Challenge.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog is Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and was setup in 2016.
- Towards this end AIM has taken a holistic approach to ensure creation of a problem-solving innovative mind set in schools and creating an ecosystem of entrepreneurship in universities, research institutions, private and MSME sector.

It has the following initiatives under it:

- Atal Tinkering Labs (**ATL**) - at school level
- Atal Incubation Centres (**AIC**) - "An ecosystem of Startups and Entrepreneurs"
- Atal Community Innovation Centres (**ACIC**) - serving Unserved and Under-Served regions of India
- Atal New India Challenges (**ANIC**) - Product and Service Innovations with National Impact
- **ARISE** ANIC challenges - to stimulate startup/ MSME industry innovation
- **Mentor of Change** (Mentorship and Partnerships - with Public, Private sector, NGOs, Academia, Institutions)

Bharti Global backed OneWeb signs MoU with Kazakhstan

- United Kingdom (UK) based OneWeb, a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite communications operator, co-owned by Bharti Global has signed an MoU with the Kazakhstan Government and other subsidiaries for accelerating connectivity services in the country commemorating the 60th Anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's first human spaceflight.
- The MoU also aims to Digitize Kazakhstan's economy & assist Kazakhstan to become a pioneer of the latest satellite communications technologies.
- OneWeb's partnership with the Government of Kazakhstan began in 2020.
- The subsidiaries with which OneWeb has signed MoU are Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry, Kazakhstan; Joint-stock Company Republican Center of Space Communication (JSC RCSC), National Company Kazakhstan Gharysh Sapary (KGS) & Ghalam LLP, a space component supplier.

About OneWeb

- **CEO** – Neil Masterson
- **Executive Chairman** – Sunil Bharti Mittal
- **Head Quarter** – London, United Kingdom

BPCL partnered with Accenture for its Digital transformation in Sales Network

- Accenture made a partnership with Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) to transform the sales and distribution network of the oil and gas company digitally.
- Accenture will be using its capabilities in artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud technologies to build, design and implement a digital platform, called IRIS for BPCL.
- The platform will be integrating the real-time data from BPCL's countrywide network, to provide a consolidated view of its extensive operations.

About BPCL:

- Headquarter – Mumbai
- Chairman – K Padmakar

About Accenture:

- Headquarter – Dublin, Ireland
- CEO – Julie Sweet

Agriculture Ministry sign MoU with Microsoft for farmer welfare

- The project is to be launched in hundred villages of six states.
- The six states selected for the project are Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana and Andhra Pradesh.
- In 2019, Microsoft India launched Project ReWeave to help handloom weavers. The project aims to revive handloom weaving ecosystem in India. An E-Commerce platform was launched under the project. It will help weavers to increase their income.
- Microsoft has partnered with AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) to empower educators and learners with future ready skills.
- It has joined with the National Skill Development Corporation to provide digital skills to more than one lakh underserved women in India. Under the programme, Microsoft will provide a series of live training sessions and help create opportunities for women and young girls.
- India ranks second in farm output in the world. More than 50% of workforce in India are employed in agriculture. They contribute 17% to 18% of GDP of India.
- India exports 38 billion USD worth agricultural products. This makes India the seventh largest agricultural exporter in the world.

About MoAFW:

- Union Minister – Narendra Singh Tomar (Morena, MP)
- MOS – Kailash Choudhury (Barmer, Rajasthan)

Atal Innovation Mission, Bayer partner to work towards healthcare & agriculture innovations

- Bayer, a German life sciences company, signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) for a strategic partnership with Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog to foster **Innovation & Entrepreneurship** across healthcare & agriculture sectors.
- The SoI also includes the promotion of science education, advancing digital solutions & agri-tech to strengthen supply chains, and healthcare projects.
- Bayer will support the current & future programs of AIM in agriculture and healthcare sectors.
- It is 1st of a kind collaboration in sectors of agriculture & healthcare between AIM & Bayer.
- Under AIM's Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) program, Bayer will explore opportunities to mentor school children & inculcate design thinking, problem solving, adaptive learning skills amongst them. It will also support and adopt mutually agreed schools.
- As part of AIM's 'Atal Incubation Centres (AIC)' & 'Atal Community Innovation Centres' programmes, Bayer will mentor young innovators and startups and collaborate with them to further the cause of innovation.
- It will also explore association with techno-preneurs from Niti Aayog's ANIC-ARISE (Atal New India Challenges in Applied Research and Innovation for medium and Small Enterprises) programs in the area of digital solutions in agriculture and healthcare sectors.

About Bayer Global:

- **Chairman** – Werner Baumann
- **Headquarters** – Leverkusen, Germany

Recent Events:

- NITI Aayog's AIM & Denmark sign SoI for promoting Innovation & Entrepreneurship [Apr 2021]
- CSIR Adopted 295 ATLs [Apr 2021]
- Chetan Vaishnav Mission Director [Apr 2021]
- The CIPS and Atal Innovation Mission signed a Statement of Intent to promote innovation in the area of public system. This is to be achieved with the help of knowledge and experience of AIM and CIPS. [Apr 2021]
- ISRO adopted 100 ATLs across the country [Jan 2021]
- Atal Innovation Mission launched The Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook 2.0 [Jan 2021]
- ATL + NIC + CBSE + MeITY launched CollabCad 3D e-book [Jan 2021]

About NITI Aayog:

- Est – 1 Jan 2015
- Chairman – Narendra Modi
- Vice Chairman – Rajiv Kumar
- CEO – Amitabh Kant

India-Kazakhstan Defence Ministers explores on Defence Industrial Collaboration

- Nurlan Yermekbayev, Defence Minister of Kazakhstan visited India, where he along with Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held talks to enhance Defence Industrial Collaboration between the countries. Both sides discussed improving defence ties through Training, Military Exercises & Capacity building programs.

Recent Events:

- Bharti Global backed OneWeb signs MoU with Kazakhstan to Accelerate connectivity services [Apr 2021]
- Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan trans-border trade center [Apr 2021]

Gaganyaan: ISRO signs agreement with France

- The French Space Agency is to supply with space equipment to the Indian crew. According to France, these equipment were tested and are still operating in the International Space Station.
- The CNES will also supply fireproof carry bags to shield equipment from radiation and shock.
- CNES will also exchange information on food packaging and nutrition programme.
- India and France share a robust ties in the area of space cooperation. The first space agreement between the countries was signed in 1964.
- India is to launch jointly Oceansat 3-Argo mission in 2021. It will track movement of ships globally and particularly those ships moving in the Reunion Islands of France in the Indian Ocean Region.
- India and France have agreed to work on inter-planetary missions to Venus and Mars.
- India had already signed agreements with Russia to train four astronauts for the Gaganyaan mission. India is also in talks with Australia to have a ground station for the Gaganyaan mission at the Cocos Island.

INOXCVA signs MoU with Mitsui to enhance small scale LNG applications development

- INOXCVA (INOX India Pvt. Ltd) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Japan's Mitsui & Co (Asia Pacific) Pte. Ltd with an aim to enhance small scale LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) applications development and provide stimulus to gas based economy in India.
- The two entities will also share technical and commercial expertise for establishing a virtual pipeline to service the growing demand of LNG in India.
- The MoU also calls for deployment of small scale LNG infrastructure including logistics and receiving facilities at customer end.

About INOXCVA (INOX India Pvt. Ltd):

- **Executive Director** – Siddharth Jain
- **Headquarters** – Vadodara, Gujarat

About Mitsui & Co Ltd (Global):

- **President & CEO** – Kenichi Hori
- **Headquarters** – Tokyo, Japan

AIM, Dassault Foundation signed SoI for promoting STEM-based Entrepreneurship

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog has signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) with Dassault Systems Foundation to work towards creating a digitally rich ecosystem of Innovation in India & to promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) based innovation and entrepreneurship among the youth of India.
- The partnership also aims to encourage intercountry collaborations amongst schools and school students for collaborative science/technology learning, skilling and cultural interactions among students.

About Dassault Systemes Foundation, India:

- **Executive Director** – Hemant Gadgil
- **Chairman of Board of Directors** – Sudarshan Mogasale
- **Global Headquarters** – Velizy-Villacoublay, France

Recent Events:

- Atal Innovation Mission, Bayer partner to work towards healthcare & agriculture innovations [Apr 2021]
- NITI Aayog's AIM & Denmark sign SoI for promoting Innovation & Entrepreneurship [Apr 2021]
- CSIR Adopted 295 ATLs [Apr 2021]
- Chetan Vaishnav Mission Director [Apr 2021]
- The CIPS and Atal Innovation Mission signed a Statement of Intent to promote innovation in the area of public system. This is to be achieved with the help of knowledge and experience of AIM and CIPS. [Apr 2021]
- ISRO adopted 100 ATLs across the country [Jan 2021]
- Atal Innovation Mission launched The Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook 2.0 [Jan 2021]
- ATL + NIC + CBSE + MeITY launched CollabCad 3D e-book [Jan 2021]

Oberoi Group signed an MoU with EESL for clean energy initiatives

- Oberoi Group has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) to reduce its overall carbon footprint by implementing clean energy efficiency initiatives across its properties.
- EESL will provide technical support and energy efficiency initiatives for each hotel and resorts of Oberoi Group.
- EESL will collaborate with Oberoi Group Hotels to evaluate opportunities for saving energy and lowering emissions.
- It is the Government of India's Energy Service Company (ESCO) and the world's largest ESCO.
- It is a joint venture of 4 public sector undertakings (PSUs), they are NTPC Limited, Power Finance Corporation, REC Limited & POWERGRID Corporation of India Limited & EESL works under the Ministry of Power.

About Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL):

- **Headquarters** - New Delhi
- **Chairman** – Rajeev Sharma
- **Managing Director** – Rajat Kumar Sud

About The Oberoi Group:

- **Headquarters** – New Delhi
- **MD & CEO** – Vikram Oberoi

USFB Made First Digital Lending Partnership with NIRA

- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (USFB), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ujjivan Financial Services Limited made a partnership with a fintech, NIRA to strengthen its digital footprint and onboard its customers for Personal Loans. This was USFB's first Digital Lending Partnership.
- Salaried customers can apply for a personal loan by using the NIRA app, which will fund the low-income salaried class. (The Lowest eligible Income to receive the loan Varies from Rs.11,000-Rs.20,000).
- USFB launched "Garima Saving Accounts", a woman Saving Account to provide the financial needs of women. The account offers various customised benefits for women which includes a maximum of 7% rate of interest on the savings account.
- Capital Small Finance Bank followed by Equitas Small Finance Bank were the first two SFBs formed in India.
- Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank (SMCB) was India's 1st Urban Co-operative Bank (UCB) Converted into SFB under the Voluntary Transition Scheme of RBI.

About Ujjivan Small Finance Bank(USFB):

- **Headquarters**– Bengaluru Karnataka
- **MD & CEO**– Nitin Chugh
- **Tagline** – Build a Better Life

About NIRA:

- **Headquarters** – Bangalore, Karnataka
- **CEO and Co-founder** – Rohit Sen

India and Sri Lanka Conduct Joint Scientific Research on Nine Projects

- As per the recent information provided by the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology, the Government of India and Sri Lanka have decided to provide bilateral support with the two countries' scientists for the joint research on nine projects and 3 workshops in various fields. The decision was taken based on the scientific strength of project coordinators, availability of national priorities, and budget between the two countries.

The fields are;

- Food Technology;
- Plant-based medicines;
- Metrology;
- Space Research & Applications;
- Robotics & Automation;
- Industrial Electronics;
- Renewable Energy;
- Waste Management;
- Information and Communication Technology;
- Any other project with national relevance (with Justifications).

RBL Bank partners with Mastercard to offer first of a kind payment solution

- RBL Bank announced its partnership with Mastercard to provide first of its kind payment solution in India through the Pay by bank app. It is a mobile based consumer friendly payment solution.
- Through this payment solution – the Pay by Bank app, customers of RBL bank will be able to do contactless transactions both in store and online across the world.
- Also there will be increased approval rates as each transactions are authenticated by the account holders. This facility can be availed with any merchant who accepts mastercard and also allows

contactless online payments worldwide.

SBI General Insurance signed a Corporate Agency Agreement with UBKGB

- SBI General Insurance has signed a Corporate Agency Agreement with Uttarbanga Kshetriya Gramin Bank (UBKGB) to retail its insurance products.
- Through this agreement, SBI General Insurance's products will be distributed in West Bengal through UBKGB.
- SBI General Insurance will offer a comprehensive range of general insurance products and through which the UBKGB will offer them to its customers.

Facebook Initiates Renewable Energy Purchase Agreement in India

- Facebook made an agreement to buy renewable energy in India, the company's first deal in South Asian nations. It will purchase from a 32-megawatt wind power project, located in Karnataka.
- Facebook and Mumbai-based CleanMax joined hands on for supplying renewable power into India's electrical grid. The projects will be owned by CleanMax and Facebook will acquire the power off the grid using environmental attribute certificates, or carbon credits.
- According to the information provided by International Energy Agency, Data centers driving tech companies like Facebook consumes as much as 1% of the world's total energy.
- Facebook has initiated similar kinds of partnerships with energy providers in Singapore such as Sunseap Group, Terrenus Energy and Sembcorp Industries that can produce 160 MW of solar power.
- The electricity produced from these plants will power Facebook's first Asian data centre that is set to start operations in 2022.
- **Facebook CEO** – Mark Zuckerberg
- **Facebook's head of renewable energy** – Urvi Parekh

Ministry of Tourism signs MoU with Cleartrip, Ease My Trip

- The Ministry of Tourism signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with 2 Online Travel Companies – Cleartrip and Ease My Trip for boosting the Hospitality & Tourism Industry of India.
- Provide visibility to Tourist accommodation units which have self-certified themselves on SAATHI App (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for the Hospitality Industry) on the OTA Platform (Online Travel Agency).
- It mandates Cleartrip & Ease My Trip to encourage Units to register on NIDHI (National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry)
- Registration of entities on SAATHI & NIDHI platform is to promote safe, honourable and sustainable tourism.

SAATHI App:

- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism with the Quality Council of India to assist the hospitality industry to operate safely and instill confidence among Staff, employees and guests about the safety of the hotel/unit.
- It was launched on World Tourism Day which was observed on September 27, 2020.
- UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) stated that Lockdowns could have created a loss of around USD 1.2 Trillion or 1.5% of GDP for the World Tourism sector.
- Flipkart is set to acquire 100% stake of Cleartrip's shareholding (valued at USD 40 Million).

About Cleartrip:

- **Chairman** – Michael Eberhard
- **Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra

About Ease My Trip:

- **CEO** – Nishant Pitti
- **Headquarters** – New Delhi

India, Germany MoU on Cities combating plastic entering the marine environment

- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH India on behalf of German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety signed an agreement titled “Cities Combating Plastic Entering the Marine Environment” on Technical cooperation over a virtual event in New Delhi.
- It is in line with the objective of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban.
- According to the MoU, the project to be implemented mainly focuses on sustainable solid waste management.
- It will help India achieve the goal of phasing out single use plastics by 2022.
- The project is being launched under the Joint Declaration made by the countries regarding cooperation in the field of Prevention of Marine Litter. The declaration was signed by India and Germany in 2019.
- The project is to be implemented mainly in the states of Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- It will mainly support cities such as Port Blair, Kochi and Kanpur.
- The project will help the cities in improving their system of garbage collection, segregation. It will also work towards enhancing marketing of plastic wastes.
- India is the twelfth largest source of marine litter in the world. By 2025, it is expected to become the fifth largest source of marine litter.

LIC Partners with Paytm for handling e-payments

- India's Largest Insurer, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has appointed Paytm to carry out its digital transactions. The partnership aims to cope with the increasing demand of digital payment.
- To provide an easy payment process, a broader range of payment options, and more players (wallets, banks, etc) in payment channels to the customers of LIC.

Australia-India Indo Pacific Oceans Initiative

- Australia recently launched the Australia-India Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative Partnership. The programme will support free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific. The Government of Australia has provided a grant of 1.4 million Australian dollars (Rs 8.12 crores) to support the initiative.
- The Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative was launched by PM Modi at the East India Summit on 2019. The Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative aims to strengthen maritime boundaries. It has three main common goals namely welfare promotion, wealth creation and cooperation win-win strategies.

Blue Nature Alliance- Global Marine initiative

- The Blue Nature Alliance is a global partnership of five core partners and few other Non-Profit Organisations. The core partners are Conservation International, The Global Environment Facility, the Pew Charitable Trusts, Minderoo Foundation and Rob and Melani Walton Foundation.
- The Blue Alliance was launched on April 20, 2021.
- The alliance aims to protect 5% of the world ocean in five years. The alliance aims to target seven ocean locations. They are as follows:
 - Antarctica
 - Seychelles
 - Canada
 - Palau
 - Western Indian Ocean
 - Fiji
 - Tristan da Cunha, an island in the South Atlantic Ocean
- The world is covered by more than 70% of oceans.
- According to the Marine Protection Atlas, more than 7% of the world oceans have been designated as “protected areas”. However, in reality only 2.7% are “fully protected”.

Israel Greece sign Defence Deal

- Israel and Greece have signed their biggest ever defence procurement deal. The agreement amounted to 1.65 billion USD. It will strengthen economic and political ties between the countries. Also, the countries launched a joint exercise.
- Under the agreement, a training centre for the operation of Hellenic Air Force (the Air Force of Greece) is to be established by the Israeli Defence Contractor Elbit Systems for a period of twenty-two years. The training centre is to be modelled on the flight academy of Israel.
- Under the agreement, Elbit of Israel will supply kits to operate and upgrade T-6 aircrafts of Greece.

Flipkart Partners With Adani Group to Strengthen its Presence In India

- Flipkart, an e-commerce marketplace, made a strategic two-prong partnership with Adani Group to strengthen its supply chain and technology infrastructure.
- Under the two-prong partnership one was with Adani Logistics Limited for forming fulfilment center and the other was with Adaniconnex Private Limited for data centers creation.
- As per the partnership, Adani Logistics Limited will be constructing a 534,000 sq. ft. fulfilment centre in its Mumbai logistics hub and lease it to Flipkart. It is expected to be operational in Q3 of FY22.
- Flipkart planned to develop its third data centre at the Chennai facility of Adaniconnex Private Limited, to strengthen its e-commerce business in India.
- Adaniconnex Private Limited Is a new Joint Venture formed between EdgeConneX and Adani Enterprises Limited.

Recent Events:

- Flipkart for setting-up asia's largest fulfillment center in Manesar, Gurugram, Haryana [Apr 2021]
- CCI approved the acquisition of 89.6 per cent equity shareholding of Gangavaram Port Limited (GPL) by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zones (APSEZ) Limited. [Apr 2021]
- Adani Group Became 3rd Indian Conglomerate To Cross 100 Billion USD mcap [Apr 2021]

About Flipkart:

- **Headquarter:** Bangaluru
- **CEO:** Kalyan Krishnamurthy
- **Founders:** Sachin Bansal & Binny Bansal

India-US 2030 Climate Partnership

- India and the United States launched the US-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership during the Leaders' Summit. The US President hosted the Leaders Summit on Climate. The world leaders from around forty countries attended the summit.

The Partnership will proceed through the following:

- Strategic Clean Energy Partnership
- Climate Action and Finance Mobilisation Dialogue
- India will deploy 450 GW of renewable power under the partnership with the US.
- Both the countries will work together to achieve their respective targets. Through the partnership, the countries will demonstrate how the world can align swift climate action taking into account sustainable development priorities.

US Targets:

- During the Summit, the US announced that it has set an ambitious target of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions by 50% to 52% in 2030 as compared to that of 2005 level. This was double the 2015 goal set by the former President of the US Barack Obama. The successor of Obama, Donald Trump had withdrawn from Paris Agreement. According the US, these steps will help the country achieve net zero emission by 2050.
- The US recently re-joined the Paris Agreement.

Co-lending Partnership between HDFC & Indiabulls HFL

- Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) Ltd and Indiabulls Housing Finance Limited (Indiabulls HFL) entered into a strategic co-lending partnership to offer housing loans to homebuyers.
- The loans under the co-lending will be in the funding ratio of 80:20 in which 80% of the loan is with HDFC's and 20% with Indiabulls HFL's.
- Indiabulls will service the loan account throughout the life cycle of the loan and it holds 20% of the credit risk by way of direct exposure.
- The loans will be offered at a 7-8 per cent prime lending rate.
- In the case of co-lending between NBFC's and Banks – in September 2018, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated to share a minimum of 20% of the credit risk by way of direct exposure on NBFC's books till maturity and the balance on the bank's books.
- Recently, Bank of Maharashtra entered into co-lending arrangement with LoanTap [Feb 2021]
- IIFL Home Finance and Standard Chartered Bank entered into a co-lending arrangement for extending credit to MSME loans. This was one of the first co-lending arrangements in the industry [Jan 2021]

Co-Lending Model:

- The Reserve Bank in November 2020 came out with a Co-Lending Model (CLM) scheme under which banks can provide loans along with NBFCs to priority sector borrowers based on a prior agreement.
- The primary focus of the scheme is to improve the flow of credit to the unserved and underserved sector of the economy and make available funds to the ultimate beneficiary at an affordable cost, considering the lower cost of funds from banks and greater reach of the NBFCs
- The CLM is an improvement over the co-origination of loan scheme announced by the RBI in September 2018 and seeks to provide greater flexibility to the lending institutions.
- Under the CLM, banks will be permitted to co-lend with all registered NBFCs (including HFCs) based on a prior agreement.
- The co-lending banks will take their share of the individual loans on a back-to-back basis in their books. However, NBFCs shall be required to retain a minimum of 20 per cent share of the individual loans on their books.
- NBFCs will be the single point of interface for the customers

About Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC):

- **Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **Managing Director** – Ms. Renu Sud Karnad
- **Vice-Chairman & CEO** – Mr. Keki M. Mistry
- **Tagline** – With You, Right Through

About Indiabulls Housing Finance Limited:

- **Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **Vice-Chairman & Managing Director** – Gagan Banga

ITCN programme launched by NIUA in partnership with BvLF

- The Infant Toddler and Caregiver-friendly Neighbourhoods (ITCN) Training and Capacity Building Programme was launched virtually by National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) in partnership with Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF).
- This programme is aimed to enhance the capacities of city officials and young professionals for developing young children and family-friendly neighbourhoods within cities in India.
- The programme also provides certified training and capacity building modules.

About NIUA:

- NIUA was appointed as an apex body in 1976 to support and guide the Government of India in its urban development plans
- Located in New Delhi

- Director – Hitesh Vaidya

ADB partners with Habitat for Humanity to provide housing loans to vulnerable communities

- Asian Development Bank(ADB) and Habitat for Humanity International made a partnership to help Microfinance Institutions(MFI) in providing housing loans to low income families in rural and semi urban areas of Bangladesh,India,Indonesia and Philippines.
- In the first phase Commercial banks will provide \$30 million financing for housing loans to MFIs
- Recently, ADB Approved a USD 484-Million Loan to Improve Connectivity in CKIC

About Habitat for Humanity:

- **Chief Executive Officer:** Jonathan Reckford
- **Chief Operating Officer:** Patrick Canagasingham
- **Headquarters:** Atlanta,Georgia

IIT Kharagpur & NCDC Sign MoU To Promote Sustainable Developments

- The IIT Kharagpur and the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote greater collaboration towards sustainable development in cooperatives, agriculture, and allied sectors.
- They will collaborate and supplement the utilization of resources and facilities to 'Formation and Promotion of Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO).
- The partnership will provide internship opportunities to students or alumni under theSAHAKAR MITRA - NCDC Scheme on Internship Programme (SIP).
- The Agricultural and Food Engineering (AgFE) Department will join with NCDC to empower rural India through cooperatives and FPOs.
- The MoU will involve advancement of training, action research, studies, policy analysis, policy advice, consultancy, monitoring, evaluation, system development and technology development.

Recent Events:

- NCDC has secured Euro 68.87 million (Rs 600 cr) loan from Deutsche Bank [Apr 2021]
- IIT Kharagpur's Professor Suman Chakraborty selected for the 30th GD Birla Award for Scientific Research [Apr 2021]
- NCDC launched various schemes in 2020 like Sahakar Pragya, Sahakar Mitra and Ayushman Sahakar.

About Sahakar Mitra Scheme:

- It aims to help cooperative institutions access new and innovative ideas of young professionals while the interns will gain experience of working in the field to be self-reliant
- It gives young professionals an opportunity to work in the environment of cooperatives as a paid intern
- It is a four month paid internship program for graduates in fields like Agriculture etc or having an MBA degree in relevant fields.

About National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC):

- **Establishment** – 1963 as a development finance statutory institution under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- **Managing Director**– Sundeep Kumar Nayak
- **Head Office**– New Delhi

About Indian Institute of Technology(IIT) Kharagpur:

- **Headquarters**– Kharagpur, West Bengal
- **Director** – Prof. Virendra Kumar Tewari

Google pay creators partners with Federal bank to launch Neobank Fi for millennials

- Sujith Narayanan and Sumit Gwalani , co-creators of Google Pay have announced the launch of Fi , a NeoBank for salaried millennials in partnership with Federal Bank.

- A Neo Bank is a kind of digital bank that works virtually. It doesn't have any branches. It doesn't have a banking license of its own but it partners with other commercial banks to provide licensed services.
- State Bank of India and Kotak Mahindra have launched their own neobanking initiatives, called YONO and 811 respectively.
- Fi Neo Bank was founded in 2019 and has raised USD 13.5 million in its seed round led by Sequoia India and Ribbit Capital.
- **Co Founders:** Sujith Narayanan, Sumit Gwalani
- **Headquarters:** Bengaluru, Karnataka
- Recently, Aceware FinTech Services, a Kerala-based fintech services company, launched Kerala's first neobank called Ace Money Neobank, in partnership with YES Bank and ICICI Bank.

India's first NeoBanks:

- **Chqbook (Chqbook.com)**– India's first Neobank for small business owners like kiranas, merchants, chemists, and others running proprietorships.
- **FamPay** – India's first Neobank for teenagers.
- **Finin** – India's first full-fledged consumer neobank (along with SBM Bank).

HSI IDC signed a MoU with WTC for Trade and Investment in Faridabad

- The Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSI IDC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Trade Center (WTC) to promote trade and bring in National and International investment in Faridabad, Haryana.
- This is a part of the efforts of the Government of Haryana to generate long term economic momentum to sustain the economic growth in Faridabad.
- This partnership will provide a platform to HSI IDC and support WTC Faridabad and investors through a single window clearance system for the required application, sanctions, incentives, and permissions according to the existing policies and regulations of the Government of Haryana.

About Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSI IDC):

- **Managing Director**– Anurag Agarwal
- **Head Office**– Panchkula, Haryana

IIT Guwahati Signed MoU With NFR

- Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, (IITG) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the North East Frontier Railway (NFR) to collaborate on research projects aiming at improving maintenance and operations of train running in the region and other fields.
- To make stations plastic-free IIT-G will be providing alternate biodegradable polymer-based technologies to NFR.
- It also aims to develop world class railway stations in the areas under the NFR.

Recent Events:

- IIT Kharagpur & NCDC Sign MoU To Promote Sustainable Developments [Apr 2021]
- IIT Kharagpur's Professor Suman Chakraborty has been selected for the 30th GD Birla Award for Scientific Research [Apr 2021]
- DRDO partnered with IIT Bhubaneswar (IIT-BBS) to develop it as a centre of excellence for promoting defence research [Feb 2021]

About IIT Guwahati:

- **Director:** T.G. Sitharam
- **Location:** Assam

SCHEMES & PORTALS

Union Cabinet approves PLI Scheme for Food Processing Industry

- Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Central Sector Scheme 'Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI)' with a total outlay of INR 10,900 Crores.
- The key objectives of the Scheme are – Creation of global food manufacturing champions & supporting Indian brands of food products in the International markets.
- Duration – six-year period from 2021-22 to 2026-27.
- It will be implemented through Project Management Agency (PMA).
- It will facilitate expansion of processing capacity to generate processed food output of INR 33,494 crores. The scheme will incentivise the manufacturing of 4 Major Food Products. They are
- Ready to Cook (RTC) / Ready to Eat foods (RTE)
- Processed Fruits & Vegetables
- Marine Products
- Mozzarella Cheese

Production Linked Incentive Scheme

- Keeping in view India's vision of becoming 'Atmanirbhar' and to enhance India's Manufacturing Capabilities and Exports, an outlay of INR 1.97 lakh crore has been announced in Union Budget 2021-22 for PLI schemes for **13 key sectors** for a period of 5 years starting from fiscal year (FY) 2021-22. These 13 sectors include already existing 3 sectors named (i) Mobile Manufacturing and Specified Electronic Components, (ii) Critical Key Starting materials/Drug Intermediaries & Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients, and (iii) Manufacturing of Medical Devices and 10 new key sectors which have been approved by the Union Cabinet recently in November 2020.
- The 10 other sectors are:
(i) Automobiles and Auto Components, (ii) Pharmaceuticals Drugs, (iii) Specialty Steel, (iv) Telecom & Networking Products, (v) Electronic/Technology Products, (vi) White Goods (ACs and LEDs), (vii) Food Products, (viii) Textile Products: MMF segment and technical textiles, (ix) High efficiency solar PV modules, and (x) Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery.
- In the union budget on February 1, FM announced that the government aims to spend **₹1.97 lakh crore** on various PLI schemes over the next 5 years, starting from this fiscal.

Rajasthan becomes 1st State to commission Farm Based Solar Power Project under PM KUSUM Scheme

- Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Ltd (RRECL) commissioned India's 1st Farm-based Solar Power Project under the PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri-Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mahabhiyan) Scheme at Bhaloji Village, Kotputli in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- It has a capacity of 1 megawatt
- The project is the 1st of 623 farm-based solar projects selected by RRECL for generating 722 MW capacity in Rajasthan under the 1st phase of the PM-KUSUM Scheme.
- It has been developed at an investment of nearly INR 3.7 Crore.
- The power generated by the project will be purchased by Rajasthan Vidhyut Vitran Nigam Ltd (at the rate of INR 3.14 per unit).

PM KUSUM

Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) had launched Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mahabhiyaan (PM-KUSUM) scheme for the promotion of solar energy last year. The scheme aims to add solar and other renewable capacity **30.8 GW** by 2022

The Scheme consists of three components:

- **Component A:** 10,000 MW of Decentralized Ground Mounted Grid Connected Renewable Power Plants of individual plant size up to 2 MW (now solar power projects smaller than 500 kW may be allowed by States)

- **Component B:** Installation of 20 lakh standalone Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps of individual pump capacity up to 7.5 HP (exception – higher allowed, upto 5 HP per person in the group)
- **Component C:** Solarisation of 15 Lakh Grid-connected Agriculture Pumps of individual pump capacity up to 7.5 HP (exception – higher allowed, upto 5 HP per person in the group)

SANKALP SE SIDDHI launched by TRIFED

- It is a hundred-day drive. The main aim of the drive is to activate the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras located in tribal villages.
- It aims to cover 1,500 villages in India in hundred days.
- Around one hundred and fifty teams have been formed to roll out the drive. These teams will identify the locations for clustering them as TRIFOOD and SFURTI units.
- SFURTI is Scheme for Fund for the Regeneration of Traditional Industries.
- TRIFOOD is a joint initiative of Ministry of Food Processing and TRIFED. It was launched in August 2020. The TRIFOOD parks will produce processed foods from minor forest produce and also from the food gathered by the tribal people in that region.
- After the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras are activated in the selected 1,500 villages, these kendras will work towards achieving Rs 200 crores of sales target.
- The Van Dhan Vikas Kendras were established under the Van Dhan Yojana. The Government of India provides capacity building training and skill upgradation facilities for the tribal population in these Van Dhan Vikas Kendras.
- A Van Dhan Vikas Kendra is formed by fifteen tribal Self-Help Groups. Each group consists of twenty artisans or tribal food gatherers.
- The first Van Dhan Vikas Kendra was established in Bijapur district, Chhattisgarh.

About SFURTI:

- The artisans are organized into SPVs which can be (i) a Society registered under Societies (Registration) Act, 1860, (ii) a Co-operative Society under an appropriate statute, (iii) a Producer Company under Section 465 (1) of Companies Act, 2013 (18 of 2013), (iv) a Section 8 Company under the Companies Act, 2013 (18 of 2013) or (v) a Trust.
- Under the Scheme, the Ministry supports various interventions including setting up of infrastructure through Common Facility Centers (CFCs), procurement of new machineries, creating raw material banks, design intervention, improved packaging, improvement of marketing Infrastructure, improved skills and capacity development through training and exposure visits, etc.
- SFURTI clusters are of two types i.e., Regular Cluster (500 artisans) with Government assistance of up to Rs.2.5 crore and Major Cluster (more than 500 artisans) with Government assistance up to Rs.5 crore.
- Recently in , Shri Nitin Gadkari this evening inaugurated 50 artisan-based SFURTI clusters, spread over 18 States
- SFURTI is run by KVIC.

About KVIC:

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament
- **Chairman:** Vinai Kumar Saxena

About TRIFED:

- TRIFED was established in August 1987 under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984 by the Government of India as a National level Cooperative body under the administrative control of the then Ministry of Welfare of India, with the basic mandate of bringing about socio-economic development of tribals of the country by institutionalizing the trade of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) & Surplus Agricultural Produce (SAP) collected/ cultivated by them.
- **Chairman :** R C Meena
- **Managing Director:** Pravir Krishna

Recent events:

- TRIFED launched TRIBES INDIA Contest with two sub-events. [Apri, 2021]
- TRIFED exchanges MoU with Craft Village to foster tribal livelihood development through harnessing synergies [Mar, 2021]
- TRIFED initiates Marketing & Logistics intervention for promoting products of North – East in collaboration with DoNER and India Post [Jan, 2021]
- TRIFED and IFFDC sign MoU to promote livelihood generation of tribal people [Jan, 2021]
- TRIFED Signs MoU With MOFPI For Upliftment Of Tribal Lives Through The Implementation Of The PM- FME Scheme [Dec, 2020]

Harsh Vardhan Inaugurates Event for Promoting DSIR-PRISM Scheme

- Union Minister for Science & Technology, Dr Harsh Vardhan virtually inaugurated the Alignment and Awareness Event for Publicity of DSIR-PRISM Scheme (Department of Scientific and Industrial Research- Promoting Innovations in Individuals, Startups and MSMEs) held at IIT Delhi.
- The event was organized by DSIR, Ministry of Science and Technology in partnership with 3 major National Initiatives namely Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA), Ministry of Education; RuTAG, IIT Delhi; and Smart India Hackathon (SIH), Ministry of Education.
- Guest of Honour at the event – Sanjay Dhotre, Union Minister of State for Education, Communications, Electronics and Information Technology.
- PRISM is an initiative of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR).
- Under the Scheme, An Innovator of Indian nationality (student, professional and common citizen) is provided technical, strategic, and financial assistance by DSIR-PRISM for developing ideas, prototypes, pilot scaling, and patenting.
- It is aimed at transforming an individual innovator into a successful technopreneur by promoting, supporting, and funding implementable and commercially viable innovations which are created for society.
- Grant will be provided in 2 Phases (Phase-I & Phase-II) catering to both the initial innovation stage and advanced enterprise setup phase.
- Phase-I (INR 2 Lakhs – INR 20 Lakhs) & Phase-II (Maximum of INR 50 Lakhs).

About Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR):

- **Secretary** – DrShekhar C Mande
- **Headquarters** – New Delhi

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin: 92% Target achieved

- A target of 1 crore houses was set for completion in Phase I of the scheme. Of this, 92% target has been completed. This was mainly possible because of the timely release of funds required for the scheme. In 2020-21, Rs 19,269 crores was made available as budgetary support. Later an extra budgetary support of Rs 20,000 cores was provided. This is the highest budget allocation to the scheme in any year since its launch.
- The Permanent Wait List of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana was prepared based on the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC), 2011.
- According to the census, 2.14 crores of beneficiaries were eligible to receive the benefits of PMAY-G.
- To identify the beneficiaries those who are eligible and not included in the survey, the Awaas+ survey was conducted.
- The Awaas+ survey was conducted by all the states and Union Territories to identify the beneficiaries not included in the Permanent Wait List. The survey identified 0.81 beneficiaries. They were included in the Permanent Wait List in July 2020. With this the Permanent Wait List of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana was ceiled at 2.95 crores.

PAMY-G

- In view of Government's commitment to providing "Housing for All" by the scheme 2022, the of has Indira Awas Yojana has been re-structured into Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana –Gramin (PMAY-G) w.e.f. 1st April 2016

- The minimum size of the house has been increased to 25 sq.mt (from 20 sq.mt) with a hygienic cooking space.
- The unit assistance has been increased from Rs. 70,000 to Rs. 1.20 lakh in plain and from Rs 75,000 to Rs 1.30 lakh in hilly states, difficult areas and IAP district.
- The beneficiary is entitled to 90.95 person day of unskilled labour from MGNREGS.
- The assistance for construction of toilet shall be leveraged through convergence with SBM-G, MGNREGS or any other dedicated source of funding. Convergence for piped drinking water, electricity connection, LPG gas connection etc. different Government programmes are also to be attempted.
- The cost of unit assistance is to be shared between Central and State Government in the ratio 60:40 in plain areas and 90:10 for North Eastern and the Himalayan States.

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana: 1.12 crore employment generated

- More than 28 crore 68 lakh loans have been sanctioned since the launch of Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana.
- Of the total loans provided, 68% were provided to women entrepreneurs.
- 51% of the total loans provided under the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana were provided to SC, ST and OBC borrowers.
- The Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana has helped to generate 1 crore 12 lakh net additional employment between 2015 and 2018. Of this, women accounted for 62%.

Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY)

- Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) is a scheme launched on April 8, 2015 for providing loans up to 10 lakh to the **non-corporate, non-farm, small/micro** enterprises.
- These loans are classified as MUDRA loans under PMMY.
- These loans are given by Commercial Banks, RRBs, Small Finance Banks, MFIs and NBFCs.
- The borrower can approach any of the lending institutions mentioned above or can apply online through this portal www.udyamimitra.in
- Under the aegis of PMMY, MUDRA has created three products namely 'Shishu' (upto Rs 50,000/-), 'Kishore' (upto Rs 5,00,000/-) and 'Tarun' (upto Rs 10,00,000)

Poshan Pakhwada Celebrated from March 16-31, 2021

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) celebrated 'Poshan Pakhwada' (Nutrition Fortnight) across India under POSHAN Abhiyaan (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition) or National Nutrition Mission from March 16-31, 2021.
- It is a mission for creating awareness on nutrition & its importance on Children, Lactating mother and adolescent child.
- Key Focus Areas for Poshan Pakhwada 2021 – Addressing Nutritional Challenges through Food Forestry and Organizing Poshan Panchayats.
- MWCD was the nodal ministry for coordinating activities during the Poshan Pakhwada. In the State/UT, Department of Women & Child Development/Social Welfare Department will be the nodal department for Poshan Pakhwada.
- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is aiming to launch POSHAN Abhiyaan for the Elderly.

POSHAN ABHIYAN

It was launched by the Prime Minister on the occasion of the International Women's Day on **8 March, 2018** from Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan. The goal of Poshan Abhiyaan is to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Children (0-6 years) and Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM) in a time bound manner in next three years period beginning 2017-18 with fixed targets as under:

Objective Target

1. Prevent and reduce Stunting in children (0- 6 years) By 6% @ 2% p.a.
2. Prevent and reduce under-nutrition (underweight prevalence) in children (0-6 years) By 6% @ 2% p.a.

3. Reduce the prevalence of anemia among young Children (6-59 months) By 9% @ 3% p.a.
4. Reduce prevalence of anemia among Women and Adolescent Girls in age group of 15-49 yrs. By 9% @ 3% p.a.
5. Reduce Low Birth Weight (LBW). By 6% @ 2% p.a.
 - September month is celebrated as Rashtriya POSHAN Maah each year
 - Recently, all major Schemes of WCD Ministry classified under 3 Umbrella Schemes viz.

Mission Poshan 2.0, Mission Vatsalya and Mission Shakti [Mar 2021]

National Programme on High Efficiency Solar PV Modules

- The programme aims to achieve manufacturing capacity in Giga Watt scale in high efficiency solar PV modules.
- The total outlay of the scheme has been estimated as Rs 4,500 crores.
- The programme aims to bring additional 10,000 MW capacity of integrated solar PV manufacturing units in India.
- It will bring in direct investment of Rs 17,200 crores in solar Photo Voltaic manufacturing projects.
- The solar Photo Voltaic manufacturers are to be selected through transparent competitive bidding process. The scheme will reward manufacturers with higher efficiencies of solar Photo Voltaic modules. Also, they will be incentivised for sourcing their material from the domestic markets.
- Recently, NTPC commissions 70 MW of Bilhaur Solar PV project in UP [Apr 2021]

Highest Contribution through Small Savings Schemes

- National Savings Institute under the Ministry of Finance, announced West Bengal as the largest contributor to the Small Savings Schemes with Rs. 90,000 crore contribution during 2017-18.
- Over the years, West Bengal is the highest contributor to the schemes, with 12-15% of India's total contribution.
- It is followed by Uttar Pradesh, with a gross collection of Rs 69,660.70 in 2017-18.
- Small Savings Schemes are Central govt. Schemes, where funds are collected through the National Small Savings Fund (NSSF) providing a Higher rate of Interest & Tax benefits.

About NSSF:

- National Small Savings Fund (NSSF) in the Public Account of India was established in 1999
- The Fund is administered by the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance. Small savings instruments can be classified under three heads:
 1. Postal deposits (comprising savings account, recurring deposits, time deposits of varying maturities and monthly income scheme)
 2. Savings certificates like: National Small Savings Certificate (NSC) and Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP)
 3. Social security schemes like: Public Provident Fund (PPF) and Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme (SCSS)

India announced Mukti Joddha Scholarship to 2000 Bangladeshi Students

- The Government of India announced scholarships to 2000 Bangladeshi students, the direct descendants of Mukti Joddha or Liberation War-fighters of Bangladesh under the new Mukti Joddha Scholarship scheme.
- This new version scheme was launched in 2017 during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India and it aims to benefit 10,000 Bangladeshi students over a period of 5 years.
- Under this scheme, 1,000 Higher Secondary students will receive a one-time amount of Tk 20,000 and 1,000 UG students will receive an amount of Tk 50,000 directly into their bank account.
- Mukti Joddha scholarship scheme was launched in 2006 under which higher secondary students received 10,000 Taka (Tk) per year for 2 years and Undergraduate (UG) students received Tk 24,000 per year for 4 years.
- The Government of India has sanctioned Tk 35 crore for both the scheme combined.
- During the first day of his 2-day visit to Bangladesh Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced

the Swarna Jayanti scholarship, a research fellowship for youths of Bangladesh which is awarded by the Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, India.

- The fellowship is annually awarded to outstanding research by young scientists in Biology, Chemistry, environmental science, engineering, mathematics, medicine and physics.

Recent Events:

- The multinational military exercise “Shantir Ogroshena, 2021” was begun at Bangabandhu Senanibas, Bangladesh. [Apr 2021]
- GE power sign maintenance contract with Reliance Bangladesh LNG & Power [Apr 2021]

PLI Scheme for Solar Manufacturing

- The Union Cabinet approved the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy's proposal for the implementation of INR 4, 500 Crore PLI Scheme ‘National Programme on High-Efficiency Solar PV (Photovoltaic) Modules’
- It aims to achieve the manufacturing capacity of the Gigawatt (GW) scale in high-efficiency solar PV modules.
- The National Programme on High-Efficiency Solar PV Modules aims to reduce import dependence in a strategic sector like electricity.
- Solar PV manufacturers will be selected through a bidding process.
- Incentives will be disbursed for 5 years post commissioning of solar PV manufacturing plants, on sales of high- efficiency solar PV modules.
- Additional 10, 000 MW capacity of integrated solar PV manufacturing plants.
- Direct Investment of around INR 17, 200 Crore in Solar PV manufacturing projects.
- The demand of INR 17, 500 Crore over 5 years for ‘Balance of Materials’
- Direct employment of about 30, 000 people & indirect employments to about 20, 000 persons.
- Import substitution of around INR 17, 500 Crore every year.

PLI Scheme for White Goods

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for White Goods (Air Conditioners & LED Lights) with a budgetary outlay of **INR 6, 238 Crore**.
- It will be implemented as a pan India scheme.
- A number of global and domestic companies, including a number of MSMEs are likely to benefit from the scheme.

Objective:

- To make manufacturing in India globally competitive by removing sectoral disabilities, creating economies of scale & ensuring efficiencies.
- It is expected to attract global investments, generate large scale employment opportunities and enhance exports substantially.

Key Points:

- **An incentive of 4% – 6% on incremental sales of goods** manufactured in India for a period of 5 years to companies engaged in the manufacturing of Air Conditioners & LED Lights.
- Different segments have been set apart for different types of components separately to specifically target global investments into desired areas.

White Goods:

- White goods are large home appliances such as stoves (British: cookers), refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, tumble driers, dishwashers, and air conditioners. They are large electrical goods for the house which were traditionally available only in white. Even though you can purchase them today in a wide range of different colors, they continue being called *white goods*.
- The term contrasts with **brown goods**, which are relatively light electronic consumer durables such as computers, digital media players, TVs and radios.

Production Linked Incentive Scheme:

Keeping in view India's vision of becoming 'Atmanirbhar' and to enhance India's Manufacturing Capabilities and Exports, an outlay of **INR 1.97 lakh crore** has been announced in Union Budget 2021-22 for PLI schemes for **13 key sectors** for a period of 5 years starting from fiscal year (FY) 2021-22.

Harsh Vardhan launches Tribal Health Collaborative – 'Anamaya'

- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare along with Arjun Munda, Union Minister of Tribal Affairs virtually launched 'Anamaya', the Tribal Health Collaborative. It is a multi stake holder initiative of Tribal Affairs Ministry.
- Supporting Partners – Piramal Foundation & Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). As part of the initiative, Tribal Ministry will
- Set up a National Council on Tribal Health to drive policy initiatives in Tribal Health.
- Establish a Health Cell to monitor healthcare delivery in tribal areas.
- Devising mechanisms to implement the Tribal Health Action Plan.
- During the meeting, Dr Harsh Vardhan highlighted the joint efforts taken by the Ministries of Tribal Affairs and Health & Family Welfare to jointly address the health gaps of tribal communities.
- In March 2021, Dr Harsh Vardhan launched the 'Tribal TB Initiative' as a step towards the goal of 'TB Mukh Bharat' by 2025.
- Anamaya is an initiative bringing together governments, philanthropists, national and international foundations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to end all preventable deaths among the tribal communities of India.
- It aims to build a sustainable, high-performing health eco-system to address the key health challenges faced by the tribal population of India. It will begin its operations with 50 tribal, Aspirational Districts (with more than 20% ST population) across 6 high tribal population states.
- Over a 10-year period, the work of the THC will be extended to 177 tribal Districts as recognised by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Little Guru: World's First Gamified Sanskrit Learning Application

- Little Guru is a gamified application.
- It teaches Sanskrit in an interactive platform. This makes learning easier.
- The app was launched during the celebrations of the 71st Foundation Day of ICCR.
- It is world's first Gamified Sanskrit learning application.
- There are several Chinese kids learning Indian culture in the country. During the 71st foundation celebrations of ICCR, Chinese kids of age 6-7 years who are learning Indian dance forms in India performed Indian dances. Their dance performances were based on the theme "Azadi ka Amrit".

About Indian Council for Cultural Relations:

- The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was founded in 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, independent India's first Education Minister.
- **President:** Vinay Sahasrabudhe
- **Director General:** Dinesh K Patnaik

DGFT Trade Facilitation App launched

The DGFT Trade Facilitation application provides the following features :

- Real-time trade policy updates and event notifications.
- Virtual Assistance to trade related queries
- Raise and track help requests in real time.
- DGFT is the government body that implements the foreign trade policy of India. It promotes exports of India. It operates under Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Current DG is Amit yadav
- DGFT was known as the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports till 1991.
- It provides licenses to the import and export businesses in India. It holds complete data about the importers and exporters in the country.

- It provides EIC number. EIC is Exporter Importer Code. It is a ten-digit number that is needed for all people conducting import or export business in the country.
- It controls the DEPB rates. DEPB is Duty Entitlement Pass Book. It is an export incentive scheme of Government of India.

DGFT Trade Facilitation App launched

The DGFT Trade Facilitation application provides the following features:

- Real-time trade policy updates and event notifications.
- Virtual Assistance to trade related queries
- Raise and track help requests in real time.
- DGFT is the government body that implements the foreign trade policy of India. It promotes exports of India. It operates under Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Current DG is Amit yadav
- DGFT was known as the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports till 1991.
- It provides licenses to the import and export businesses in India. It holds complete data about the importers and exporters in the country.
- It provides EIC number. EIC is Exporter Importer Code. It is a ten-digit number that is needed for all people conducting import or export business in the country.
- It controls the DEPB rates. DEPB is Duty Entitlement Pass Book. It is an export incentive scheme of Government of India.

Piyush Goyal launches 'e-SANTA' Web Portal for Aqua Farmers

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal virtually inaugurated the web portal called 'e-SANTA' (Electronic Solution for Augmenting NaCSA farmers' Trade in Aquaculture). It is an electronic marketplace providing a platform to connect Aqua Farmers and the Buyers (both at National & International levels).
- e-SANTA is a completely paperless and end-to-end trade platform.
- It is an initiative of NaCSA (National Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture) which is an extension of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- The portal will help farmers to list their products and quote their prices & will enable exporters to directly purchase quality products from the farmers based on their requirements (based on size, location, harvest dates, etc).
- One of the major aims behind the launch of the portal is to eliminate middlemen.
- This initiation will enhance traceability (ability to trace the history/application/location of an object) which is a key factor in International Trade.

About National Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture (NaCSA):

- **Established Year** – 2007
- **CEO** – K. Shanmukha Rao
- **Location** – Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh

About Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA):

- **Established Year** – 1972
- **CEO** – K. S. Srinivas
- **Location** – Kochi

PLI Scheme: Critical Bulk Drugs approved

- The approved applicants will set up pharmaceutical manufacturing plants in the country. They will invest around Rs 348 crores in establishing these units. These plants are expected to create employment for more than 3,042 people. The operation of these plants is expected to commence from April 2023.
- The only issue is that the Indian pharmaceutical industry is heavily dependent on foreign countries, especially China, for its Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients. The launch of these sixteen plants will reduce dependence of India over foreign countries.
- The Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients are the same as that of the bulk drugs. India was actually

self-reliant in API in 1990s. However, with cheaper products China captured the Indian pharmaceutical markets in foreign countries. China created an unbeatable low-cost API manufacturing industry. This was mainly through tax incentives and aggressive government funding. The cost of operation of Chinese Pharmaceutical companies is one-fourth the Indian cost!

Online Grievance Management Portal of NCSC launched

- The portal was launched on the occasion of 130th birth anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar.
- The Scheduled Caste community in the country can register their complaints in the portal from any part of the country.
- The portal was designed by Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Application and Geoinformatics (BISAG-N, Gandhinagar). The institute operates under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

National Commission for Scheduled Caste:

- The commission was established under Article 338 of the Constitution of India. The main objective of the commission is to investigate and monitor issues pertaining to the safeguard of Scheduled Castes in the country.
- The 65th Constitution Act, 1990 amended Article 338 of the constitution. The amendment replaced the commission from its one-member system to multi-member system.
- The 89th amendment of the constitution introduced in 2003 separated the National Commission for Scheduled Caste into two different commissions. One was National Commission for Scheduled Caste and the other was National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.
- The Commission consists of a chairperson, vice-chairperson and three other members. All the members of the commission are appointed by the President of India.
- **NSCS Chairman** – Vijay Sampala

Scheduled Castes:

- The Scheduled Castes comprise about 16.6% of India's population according to the 2011 census
- Punjab had the highest percentage of its population as SC (32%)
- Uttar Pradesh had the highest population of SC.

MANAS Application launched

- MANAS stands for Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System.
- It is a comprehensive and national digital wellbeing platform.
- It was launched virtually by Prof K Vijay Raghavan, principal scientific advisor (PSA) to the Government of India
- The MANAS integrates indigenous tools developed and researched by various national bodies and research institutions.
- The current version has identified two age groups — ages 15 to 20, termed as Mann-Marg, and ages 20 to 35, termed as YoungISTAN.
- The MANAS app was jointly executed by NIMHANS Bengaluru, C-DAC, AFMC (Armed forces Medical Institute, Pune). However, it was mainly developed by C-DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing).
- The app is supported with tele consultation especially for mental health related problems.
- The app was launched during the 34th Foundation celebrations of C-DAC.

Narendra Singh Tomar launches “National Nursery Portal”

- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched the “National Nursery Portal” which was developed by the National Horticulture Board for connecting Nursery operators with consumers. Through this portal, Consumers can get information, price & quality of a Plantation, while Suppliers can analyse the market demand of products.

About National Horticulture Board:

- Established: April 1984
- Headquarter: Gurugram

- President :Union Agriculture Minister

Italy: First Food Park in India

- Italy recently launched the first “Mega Food Park” in India involving food processing facilities. It is the first Italian-Indian Food Park project launched in the country.
- The name of the project is “Mega Food Park”.
- The Mega Food Park is a scheme implemented by the Ministry of Food Processing. The main aim of the scheme is to establish direct linkage from farms to processing and consumer markets.
- Under the scheme, the Government of India provides Rs 50 crores to each food park
- The pilot project “The Mega Food Park” was launched over a virtual platform in the presence of Vincenzo de Luca, Ambassador of Italy to India, and Neena Malothra, the Ambassador of India to Italy.
- A Letter of Intent between the ICE Office in Mumbai and Fanidhar Mega Food Park, in Gujarat was also signed during the launch event.
- The project is promoted by the Italian Embassy, New Delhi and ICE Office, Mumbai.
- The project also involves the Emilia Romagna Region, SACE, ANIMA (Italian Association representing companies operating in the metalworking sector) and FederUnacoma (Italian Agricultural Machinery Federation of Manufacturers).

Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme

- The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy recently released the first tranche of Rs 672 crores under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme for the year 2021-22. This reimbursed the fees for 10.88 lakh students. So far, a total of Rs 4, 879 crores have been disbursed under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme.
- The main objective of Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme is to provide scholarships to all the students who are not able to pay their fees because of their financial burden. The scheme mainly focuses on students seeking higher education. It aims to provide fee reimbursement to more than 14 lakh students of the state.
- The scheme will directly credit the amount into the accounts of students’ mothers. Earlier, the money was transferred to the owners of the colleges.
- The number students that benefited from the scheme in 2021 has increased by 77,000 as compared to that of 2020. In 2021, this number has increased to 10.88 lakhs.
- Apart from the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme, Andhra Pradesh has also launched Jagananna amma Vodu Scheme. Under the scheme, Rs 15,000 will be provided annually to the poor to help children studying in Class 1 to 12.
- Andhra Pradesh is using two-pronged strategy to improve education in the state. One is by providing financial assistance to mothers of the students. On the other hand, the Andhra Pradesh Government is introducing English as a medium of instruction in government schools.
- The second instalment of the scheme is to be released in July 2021 and the third instalment is to be released in December 2021.

Insurance Scheme for Health Workers under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana

- The Government of India is to extend the insurance scheme for health workers under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana for another one year.
- The current COVID Warrior Insurance Scheme that was launched by Government of India in 2020 was to end by March 24, 2021. Thus, the GoI is extending the scheme.
- The GoI had provided one month window to invite final claims under the scheme till April 24, 2021.
- However, now the scheme has been extended for a period of one year after increasing concerns against the closure of the scheme.
- The claims are settled by New India Assurance and the scheme targets 22 lakh health workers.

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana: Free Food Grains till June

- The Government of India recently announced that it will provide five kilo grams of free food grains under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana till June 2021. The free food grains are being provided to those covered under the National Food Security Act, 2013. This is to

continue till June 2021.

- Around eighty crore beneficiaries are being provided with free food grains (rice or wheat) at a scale of 5 kg per person per month. This is over and above the monthly entitlements under the National Food Security Act. These are the beneficiaries that are covered under both Antyodaya Anna Yojana and Priority Householders.
- The extension of the scheme is to cost an additional Rs 26,000 crores. The Government of India has announced that it will bear all the expenditure. Also, the central assistance is to be provided to states and union territories on account of intrastate transportation.
- The scheme was launched in March 2020. It is operated by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- It was launched for a period of April 2020 to June 2020 at an estimated cost of Rs 1.7 lakh crores.
- The scheme was extended till November 2020 with an additional allocation of Rs 90,000 crores.
- The scheme provided 5 kg of rice or wheat and one kilo grams of chana to each family per month.
- It was a part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

AP CM Jagan Mohan Reddy Launched YSR Zero Interest Crop Loan Scheme

- YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh launched the YSR Zero Interest Crop Loan Scheme for farmers.
- The government of AP has provided a financial assistance of Rs.65000 crore to the farmers under various schemes.
- The government has also established a market intervention fund with Rs.3000 crore and providing a minimum support price for crops to help the farmers.

Large Area Certification (LAC) Scheme of PGS-India- A&N gets certification

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare recently announced that around 14,491 hectares of land in Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been certified as organic. This is the first large contiguous territory to be certified under government scheme.
- The organic certification was provided under the Large Area Certification Scheme of the Participatory Guarantee System certification programme.
- Under the scheme, each village is considered as one cluster or group. The farmers have to adhere to the standard requirements without the need to undergo a conversion period to get certified. This was launched under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana.
- Basically, under the standard norms of organic production systems, the areas with chemical input usage history will have to undergo a transition period of two to three years to get qualified as organic. This transition period has been removed under the Large Certification Scheme.

What is Participatory Guarantee Scheme?

- It is a scheme that certifies organic products. The scheme is implemented by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare. The certification is in the form of statement or logo. The certification is issued based on the Food Safety and Standards (Organic Foods) Regulations.
- These regulations were notified by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India in 2017.
- Individual farmers or group of farmers smaller than five members are not covered under PGS.

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana:

- It is a component of Soil Health Management (SHM) under National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)
- The scheme was launched in 2015 to promote natural farming.
- Currently there are more than 30 lakh hectares of registered areas holding organic certification.
- India today ranks fifth in terms of area under natural farming and first in terms of total number of producers.
- Under PKVY Organic farming is promoted through adoption of organic village by cluster approach and PGS certification.
- Fifty or more farmers will form a cluster having 50 acre land to take up the organic farming under the scheme.

WHO Unveiled Global Immunization Strategy to Save 50 Million Lives By 2030

- The World Health Organisation unveiled the Global Immunization Strategy led by the United Nations to reach around 50 million children who missed their vaccination against measles, yellow fever and diphtheria.
- WHO along with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the vaccine alliance Gavi states that the global immunization strategy has the potential to save around 50 million lives in less than 10 years.
- To achieve 90% coverage for essential vaccines given in childhood and adolescence by 2030.

Recent Events:

- World Health Organisation recently identified twenty-five countries with the potential to eradicate malaria by 2025 (E-2025)
- WHO celebrated World Immunization Week in April
- WHO released Guidelines on Zoonosis

CBIC introduces ICEGATE a Common Portal for filing Registrations & Bills of Entry

- Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) notified to regulate all registrations, filing of bills of entry, and other documents through a single portal, "ICEGATE portal".
- Aim – To facilitate ease of doing business in the country through transparent & seamless online mode.
- ICEGATE or Indian Customs and Central Excise Electronic Commerce/Electronic Data Interchange (EC/EDI) Gateway is a single portal for all customs documentation & duty payments.

About Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC):

- **Chairperson-** M. Ajit Kumar
- **Headquarters-** New Delhi

Ministry of Jal Shakti to deploy IoT devices for Monitoring Rural Drinking Water Supply Systems

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti is set to deploy sensor-based IoT devices to monitor the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in more than six lakh villages. With this, it aims to monitor the rural drinking water supply systems in villages.
- For this, National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM) partnered with Tata Community Initiatives Trust (TCIT) & Tata Trust to complete pilot projects in villages of 5 states – Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra & Himachal Pradesh (Pilot projects went live in September 2020).

Jal Jeevan Mission:

- It was launched on August 15, 2019. It comes under the Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- It aims to provide 'Functional Household Tap Connection' (FHTC) to every rural household by 2024.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

HMEL became the first Indian buyer of Guyanese oil

- HPCL-Mittal Energy Limited (H MEL) a joint venture between state-run Hindustan Petroleum Corp and steel tycoon L.N. Mittal, became India's first company to buy cargo from the oil producers of Guyana.
- H MEL bought the 1 million-barrel cargo of Guyana's Liza light sweet crude which had started its sail on March 2 on Marshall Islands-flagged tanker, Sea Garnet and it is set to arrive around April 8 to India's Mundra port(Gujarat).
- H MEL operates 226,000 barrels per day(bpd) in the Bathinda refinery which is in the northern state of Punjab.

Facebook & Google to set-up Underground Cables to connect USA with Southeast Asia

- Facebook has partnered with Google & other regional telecom companies to connect the United States of America with Southeast Asian countries through undersea cables. These underground cables will improve internet connectivity in Singapore, Indonesia.
- At the initial stage, 2 undersea cables: Echo and Bifrost, will be connecting the US with Indonesia through a diverse sea route
- Facebook deploys 3000 Kms of fibre in Indonesia to develop public Wi-Fi hot spots.
- "Echo"– Constructed by Facebook in partnership with Google & XL Axiata, an Indonesian telecom company. It is expected to get completed by 2023.
- "Bifrost"- Constructed by Facebook in partnership with Indonesia's Telin & Singapore's Keppel. It is expected to get completed by 2024.
- The Pacific Light Cable Network (PLCN) – funded by Facebook and Alphabet, Google's parent company – was originally intended to link the United States, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the Philippines. These plans were withdrawn last year following national security concerns raised by the Trump administration.

Climate Change: Japan sees the earliest Cherry Blossoms ever

- The Japan Meteorological Agency recently announced that the Cherry Blossom season of Japan is in full bloom. Usually, the Cherry trees of Japan reach their full bloom in April. This time the Cherry Blossom has occurred ten days earlier. This is the first time the Cherry trees have bloomed this earlier in Japan. Previously, the earliest Cherry Blossoms in Japan occurred before 1,200 years.
- According to Osaka University of Japan, the flowering of the Cherry trees was this earlier in 812 AD. This is mainly due to Climate Change and global warming. The average temperature of Japan increased from 47.5 degrees Fahrenheit in 1953 to 51.1 degrees Fahrenheit in 2020.
- The Cherry Blossom in Japan is called Sakura.
- During the Cherry Blossom season, Japan organises Hanami or flower viewing. Hanami has a long history in the land of Japan. Hanami was started in 710 AD.
- Cherry Blossom is a flower. The Cherry Blossom trees are ornamental Cherry trees. They are different from edible Cherry trees.
- The leaves of the Cherry trees secrete a hormone that stops the flowers from blooming further. The secretion of this hormone stops when the temperature increases. After the weather becomes warm, the flowers bloom completely. This year, due to climate change, the flowers reached this stage earlier than usual as the hormones stopped secreting.
- In India, Cherry Blossom is common in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Garo Hills and Khasi Hills in the north east and is held during autumn, that is, in October and November. Shillong is known for its Cherry Blossom.

Recent Events:

- Manipur: CM N Biren Singh Virtually Inaugurates Cherry Blossom Festival at Mao [Jan, 2021]

World Highest Bridge: Chenab Bridge Arch Closure Completed

- The overall weight of Arch is 10,619 metric tonnes.
- “Tekla” software was used for structural detailing of the arch.
- The steel used in the arch can withstand -40 ° C
- The Arch span is 467 metres and arch length is 480 metres. The Arch of the bridge is highly important to sustain vertical loads.
- Design life of the bridge is 120 years.
- The Chenab bridge is located in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir. The height of the bridge is 359 metres.
- The deck height, that is, the height above the river bed is 359 metres. The length of the bridge is 650 metres.

Russia registers world's first Covid-19 vaccine for animals: Carnivac-Cov

- Russia has registered the world's first vaccine for animals **Carnivac-Cov** against COVID-19, by agricultural regulator Rosselkhoz nadzor. Russia already has three coronavirus vaccines for humans, Sputnik, EpiVacCorona and CoviVac.

La Soufriere Volcano erupts in Southern Caribbean

- La Soufriere volcano on the eastern Caribbean island of St. Vincent & Grenadines. The Volcano was dormant since 1979.
- It started showing signs of activity in December 2020.
- When the volcano erupted in 1979 it created 100 million USD of damages.
- Earlier to 1979 eruptions, the La Soufriere volcano erupted in 1902 and killed more than thousand people.
- La Soufriere means “Sulphur Outlet” in French.
- It has erupted five times since 1718.
- The La Soufriere Volcano is a stratovolcano. A stratovolcano, also known as a composite volcano, is a conical volcano built up by many layers of hardened lava, tephra and volcanic ash.
- It is the youngest and northernmost volcano in the island.
- La Soufriere Volcano is in the Caribbean tectonic plate.

Central Mine Planning and Design Institute gets Drone Use Permission

- No Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) shall carry payload except as permitted by DGCA.
- No person shall drop from a UAS in motion.
- Only Nano class drones can operate in India. However, a qualified remote pilot will be permitted to operate heavy drones.
- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has full powers to inspect the manufacturing of Unmanned Aerial System or its maintenance facility.
- One must be at least eighteen years old to own a drone.
- The Food Startups have been permitted to conduct trials for drones.
- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation will issue a separate set of rules to enable use of drones for delivering medical supplies or e-commerce.

Central Mine Planning and Design Institute:

- It is a subsidiary of Coal India Limited. It is a Public Sector Undertaking. It has been rated as a Schedule B and Mini Ratna-II company. It is engaged in field of environmental engineering and provides consultancy and engineering services all over the world.

UAE names first Female Astronaut

- Noura al-Matroushi was selected as the first female astronaut of UAE from four thousand other applicants. She is to be trained with NASA for future space exploration missions. Noura is to be accompanied by Mohammed al-Mulla. Both astronauts are to be trained with Johnson Space Centre of NASA located in Houston, Texas.
- She is currently working as an engineer at the National Petroleum Construction Company.
- UAE does not have any manned mission in near future. However, the country has plans to send unmanned space mission to the moon in 2024. Also, UAE has launched “Amal Satellite” to the

Mars in 2020.

- In 2019, Hazza al-Mansoori was the first UAE astronaut to enter the space. He spent eight days at the International Space Station.
- Noura is the first Arab woman to enter space. However, the first Muslim woman to enter space was Anousheh Raissyan. She was also the first Iranian woman to enter space. She is an Iranian American telecommunications entrepreneur. In 2006, she paid 20 million USD to travel to the International Space Station as a self-funded tourist.

Central Asia: Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan trans-border trade center

- The Center is to be constructed in an area of 400 hectares of land. It will have a capacity to accommodate 35,000 people and five thousand trucks. After completion, the center will become a large trade and industrial platform to implement joint projects of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.
- The center is located near the border check post of Gisht Kuprik.
- After China and Russia, Kazakhstan is the third largest trade partner of Uzbekistan.
- Uzbekistan holds one of the largest Uranium reserves in the world. In 2019, India and Uzbekistan signed a Nuclear Agreement. Under the agreement, Uzbekistan agreed to export 2,000 tonnes of Uranium to India.
- Uzbekistan supports permanent membership of India in the United Nations Security Council.
- The countries had set a bilateral trade target of 1 billion USD by 2020.
- Central Asia is highly important to India as it serves as a land bridge between Asia and Europe. India is to use the Chabahar port as a gateway to access the Eurasian markets. Also, the development of International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) will help India increase its trade with Central Asia.

INSTC

- INSTC project was initiated by Russia, India and Iran in September 2000 in St. Petersburg. The agreement was signed on 16th May 2002.
- The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) is a 7,200-km-long multi-mode network of ship, rail and road route for moving freight between India, Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia and Europe. The route primarily involves moving freight from India, Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia.
- It ends in Mumbai.

New Zealand introduces World's 1st Climate Change Law for Financial Sector

- New Zealand becomes the 1st country in the world to introduce a Climate Change Law for regulating the Financial Sector. As per the new law, All banks, insurers, investment managers with total asset value greater than NZ\$1 billion (USD 703 million) shall report the impacts of climate change on their investments to the government.
- The law will be passed by 2022 & Companies have to submit the report by 2023.
- Previously, New Zealand has set targets to provide carbon-neutral public transport by 2025 & procure only zero- emissions public transport buses.
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in its 2015 Paris Conference, introduced the "Climate Action Plan 2050" that targets reducing the global temperature by 1.5 degree Celsius.

China opens 5G Signal base at Ganbala radar station, World's Highest Radar Station

- China opened its 5G Signal base at the World's Highest Radar Station, "Ganbala radar station" which is located at a height of 5,374 meters, in the remote Himalayas of China's Tibet autonomous region.
- Stable high-speed 5G connectivity can be accessed by Soldiers of Chinese army, which will help them to be in-touch with the global information society.
- People's Liberation Army of China constructed the 5G signal station at Ganbala, which is located in Tibetan border with India & Bhutan.

WHO Guidelines on Zoonosis

- Zoonosis is an infectious disease that transfers from non-human animals to humans. These

pathogens may be viral, bacterial or parasitic. They spread to humans through direct contact, water, food and environment.

- Suspension of trade in live caught wild animals of mammalian species for food or breeding.
- To shut down food markets that sell wild animals of mammalian species.
- The guidelines issued were in line with the concept of “One Health”. This term was first used in 2003-2004. It was associated with the emergence of SARS and Avian Influenza H5N1. SARS is Severe Acute Respiratory Disease. According to One-Health, the health of human beings is associated with the health of environment and animals.
- Some of the modern-day Zoonotic diseases are Ebola, Salmonellosis. HIV was a zoonotic disease that transmitted to humans from animals. However, it has now mutated to human-only disease. Influenza, Bird Flu, Swine Flu, Spanish flu are all zoonotic diseases.

UAE to send its 1st Rover, ‘Rashid’ to Moon by 2022

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Space Centre is planning to send its rover ‘Rashid’ to the moon on an unmanned spacecraft by 2022. The rover will be deployed on the Moon using Japan based space company’s Lunar lander. The rover is named after Dubai’s ruling family (Current Ruler-Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid)
- The rover will be launched into space aboard a SpaceX rocket from Kennedy Space Centre in Florida, USA.
- If the mission succeeds, UAE & Japan will join countries like US, Russia & China as nations that have put a spacecraft on the lunar surface.
- The rover will study the lunar surface, mobility on the moon’s surface and how different surfaces interact with lunar particles.

Recently,

- Noura al-Matroushi was selected as the first female astronaut of UAE accompanied by Mohammed al-Mulla [Apr 2021]
- UAE’s Hope landed on Mars [Feb 2021]

China launched Digital Yuan

- The People’s Bank of China (PBOC) has launched Digital Yuan in a few cities, a central bank digital currency (CBDC) on which it has been working on since 2014
- It has become the second nation after Bahamas to do so.
- It will be legal tender in China and no interest will be paid on it.
- Digital yuan could help with financial stability through a system of “controllable anonymity.” This is where the payments would be anonymous to some degree, but data analysis tools could help the central bank catch illegal activities.
- CBDC could make payments more efficient and improve the transmission of monetary policy.
- Digital Yuan is different from Bitcoin as Bitcoin is not controlled by any central authority like a central bank, unlike the digital yuan which will be issued by the PBOC.

Turkey bans Crypto Currency payments

- The Bitcoin currency tumbled more than 4% after the Central Bank of Turkey banned the use of Crypto currencies and crypto assets for purchases.
- In March 2021, the Turkish President Erdogan fired the top central banker Naci Agbal. This forced several businessmen to turn towards crypto currency as an alternate method. This increased the growth of crypto currency market in Turkey. Bitcoin had surged by 111% and the second largest crypto currency Ethereum jumped by 225%.
- However, after the ban, the Bitcoin was down by 4.6%. The Bitcoin was at 60,333 USD after the ban. The other smaller coins such as XRP, Ethereum that tend to move in tandem with Bitcoin fell between 6% and 12%.
- The recent Turkey regulations of Crypto currency mainly targets payments using crypto currencies for goods and services. It also prohibits companies from handling electronic fund transfers that involve crypto currency platforms.
- According to Turkey, the Turkish Government was finding it difficult to monitor and control the market volatility and illegal activities in the crypto currency market. Also, the wallets were highly vulnerable to thefts.

- The Turkish Government predicts that the anonymity behind the digital tokens will bring risks of non-recoverable losses.

Crypto currency

- A cryptocurrency, is a digital asset designed to work as a medium of exchange wherein individual coin ownership records are stored in a ledger existing in a form of computerized database using strong cryptography to secure transaction records, to control the creation of additional coins, and to verify the transfer of coin ownership.
- It uses Distributed ledger Technology (DLT).
- The process of making these currencies is called mining
- Bitcoin first released as open-source software in 2009, is the first decentralized cryptocurrency. It was created in 2009 presumably by Satoshi Nakamoto.
- Other famous currencies are Litecoin, Ethereum etc
- CBDC– Central Bank Digital Currency
- Recently, PayPal Launches Cryptocurrency Checkout Service in US

Israel: National plan to reduce 80% GHG emissions by 2050

- The Ministry of Energy of Israel recently announced a National Plan to reduce 80% of Greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 as compared to that of 2015.
- The plan aims to shut down all coal-fired power plants by 2025.
- It aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the electricity sector by 75% to 85% by 2050.
- It will increase the production of renewable energy in the country.

Iran Launched Advanced IR-6 Uranium Enrichment Centrifuges

- Iran launched IR-6 Uranium Enrichment centrifuges in Natanz as a part of its National Day of Nuclear Technology (10th April 2021) event held in Tehran and other nuclear sites of Iran. Hassan Rouhani, President of Iran inaugurated the 3 cascades of 164 IR-6 semi industrial centrifuges, 30 IR-6S centrifuges and 30 IR-6 devices at the uranium enrichment plant in Natanz, Iran.
- The manufacturing and assembly of the first prototype of IR-9S and IR-9-1B centrifuges were unveiled during the exhibition.
- Under the joint comprehensive plan of action (JCPOA) – 2015 nuclear agreement, Iran is restricted to enriching uranium with 5060 IR-1 centrifuges till 2025

About JCPOA:

- The **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)** known commonly as the **Iran nuclear deal** is an agreement on the Iranian nuclear program reached in Vienna on 14 July 2015, between Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council—China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States—plus Germany) together with the European Union.
- On 8 May 2018 the United States officially withdrew from the agreement after US President Donald Trump signed a Presidential Memorandum. The Iranian currency dropped significantly right the US withdrawal.
- Uranium Enrichment refers to increasing the concentration of the U^{235} isotope in the natural uranium to generate more power.

New Zealand set to consolidate healthcare into National service

- New Zealand government announced that it is to consolidate the fragmented health system in the country into a national service. The consolidated system is to look more like the ones implemented in Britain.
- Currently the New Zealand Health System is divided into 20 District Health Boards. Each District Health Board has its own budget. These District Health Boards are to be replaced by a single new body called Health New Zealand.
- The health system of New Zealand is Government subsidized. However, the patients visiting the hospital have to pay a portion of the cost to access many health services. More than one-third of the New Zealand citizens opt to pay additional benefits that are offered by private health

insurers. The new health system is expected to change this scenario and combine all the facilities under a single head.

- Recently, New Zealand introduced World's 1st Climate Change Law for Financial Sector

Israel: Google and AWS chosen for 1 billion Nimbus Project

- The Government of Israel has chosen Google and Amazon Web Services to provide cloud services for its military and Public Sector Units. The project is to be implemented in four phases and has been named the "Nimbus" project.
- The Nimbus Project is to be implemented at an estimated cost of 1 billion USD.
- The Cloud Services refer to wide range of services delivered over the internet. The Cloud Services are highly important as the defence industry of Israel is one of the largest in the world.

South Africa's second largest bank, FirstRand Bank to exit India

- FirstRand Bank, the second largest bank in South Africa has decided to withdraw its banking services from India just within a week of Citi banks exit. The Asset value is \$118 billion.
- FirstRand had started its banking service in India in late 2009 but it started lending to individual customers and small and medium enterprises only in 2012.
- The bank has its only office in Mumbai and acts as a branch of FirstRand Bank South Africa.
- As per its annual report (2019-20), there were Rs.318 crore deposits in the bank and its advances stood at Rs.420 crore at the end of March 2020.
- Recently, CITI Bank also announced to shut its retail banking operations in 13 countries including India.

South Korea's LG Electronics closes down mobile phone business

- South Korea's LG Electronics has announced that it is closing down its mobile phone business unit worldwide after nearly six years of losses totalling \$4.5 billion.

Kim Boo-kyum Nominated as the New Prime Minister of South Korea

- Moon Jae-in, President of South Korea nominated Kim Boo-kyum, the former Minister of the Interior and Safety as the new Prime Minister (PM) of South Korea. Kim Boo-kyum will be the 3rd PM under the government headed by President Moon Jae-in.
- He will replace former PM Chung Sye-kyun who resigned to run in the 2022 presidential election.
- Currently, Hong Nam-ki is serving as the Acting Prime Minister of South Korea.

Singapore becomes 1st Country to ratify Free Trade Agreement RCEP

- Singapore ratified the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), with this it became the 1st Participating country to ratify the RCEP, which is the World's Largest Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- RCEP is an initiative led by China, India had pulled out of the pact in 2019.
- In November 2020, 15 Asia-Pacific countries including 10 members of the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and their 5 Free Trade Agreement (FTA) partners China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand and Australia signed the RCEP.
- The agreement will enter into force after 6 ASEAN member states and 3 ASEAN FTA partners have ratified it.
- The participating countries are targeting entry into force on January 1, 2022.

Gambia eliminates Trachoma

- Gambia recently became the second African country to eliminate Trachoma. Trachoma is one of the leading causes of blindness. Ghana became the first African country to eliminate Trachoma in 2018.
- It is a bacterial eye infection that damages the eye lids. It causes the eye lashes to turn inwards. Trachoma is one of the Neglected Tropical Diseases. It leads to irreversible vision losses and blindness if not corrected with surgery.
- Trachoma is caused by bacterium Chlamydia trachomatis.
- The World Health Organisation launched a roadmap of Global Targets to tackle twenty

Neglected Tropical Diseases including Trachoma. The roadmap aims to eliminate all the twenty diseases by 2030.

- India became free from Trachoma in 2017. According to the National Trachoma Survey Report, the overall prevalence of Trachoma was 0.7% in the country. This is much below the elimination criteria defined by the World Health Organisation.

WHO's E-2025 initiative

- The World Health Organisation recently identified twenty-five countries with the potential to eradicate malaria by 2025. This is called the E-2025 initiative.
- The identified 25 countries will work by responding to the dual threat of malaria and COVID-19. The WHO is to provide technical guidance and specialised support to these countries under the initiative.
- Three of the identified countries were from Africa namely Eswatini, Botswana and South Africa.
- Africa shares 94% of global malaria death burden. The recent evidence has shown drug resistant mutations in Africa.
- The World Health Organisation launched the E-2020 initiative in 2017. The E-2020 aimed to support a group of countries to achieve zero indigenous cases of malaria by 2020. However, certain countries are yet to achieve this target. Thus, they were identified under the E-2025 initiative and new plan is to be launched.

OneWeb launches 36 LEO satellites from Russia

- The 36 satellites of OneWeb, a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite communications operator were launched into orbit by a Arianespace Soyuz Rocket from Vostochny Cosmodrome in Russia.
- The launch of the 36 LEO satellites will enable OneWeb to offer Broadband services across the UK, Alaska, Northern Europe, Greenland, Iceland, the Arctic seas and Canada.
- It will take OneWeb's total in-orbit constellation to 182 satellites, which would form part of OneWeb's 648 LEO satellite fleet for providing high-speed, low-latency global connectivity.
- OneWeb is aiming to launch fast broadband services in India by June 2022.
- Recently, OneWeb signs MoU with Kazakhstan to Accelerate Connectivity Services.

Former Banker Guillermo Lasso won the Presidential Election of Ecuador

- Guillermo Lasso former banker won Ecuador's 2021 presidential election after his opponent Andrés Arauz, a socialist economist conceded. He will become the 47th President of Ecuador.
- He will take over the presidency from the incumbent Lenín Moreno and assume office on 24th May 2021.
- Guillermo Lasso previously ran for President in 2013 and 2017 and lost to Rafael Correa and Lenín Moreno respectively.
- He has served as the Governor of Guayas from 1998 to 1999.
- As a banker, he has served as the CEO of Banco Guayaquil.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Govt Extended the Term of K. VijayRaghavan as PSA for One Year till April 2022

- The official order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training stated that the government has extended the term of K. VijayRaghavan as Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) for one more year.
- K. VijayRaghavan, 67, was appointed as PSA in 2018, after retiring as Secretary, Department of Biotechnology. His contract ends on April 2 but has now been extended until April 2022.
- He was conferred with the Padma Shri award in 2013.
- The office aims to provide pragmatic and objective advice to the prime minister and cabinet on matters related to science, technology and innovation with a focus on the application of science and technology in critical infrastructure, economic and social sectors in partnership with the government departments, institutions and industry.

Anish Shah Appointed as MD & CEO of Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd

- Anish Shah was appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd(M&M) with effect from 2nd April 2021.
- He takes over from Pawan Goenka who will retire as the MD and CEO, and member of the Board of Directors of M&M on 2nd April 2021.
- Anish Shah is currently serving as the deputy managing director and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the company.

Subhash Kumar, Finance Director Of ONGC, Assumes Additional Charge as its CMD

- According to the order issued of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)'s Finance Director Subhash Kumar assumes additional charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) due to the retirement of current CMD ShashiShanker.

1st Private Sector Specialist to be Appointed as Chairperson of PESB

- Appointment Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment of Mallika Srinivasan, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Tractors and Farm Equipment (TAFE), India's 2nd and World's 3rd largest tractor manufacturer, as the Chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB), which is responsible for the appointment of top management posts in Central Public Sector Enterprises(CPSEs).
- This is the first time where a private sector specialist was appointed as the head of PESB.
- She will serve as the Chairperson of PESB for a period of 3 years or until the attainment of the age of 65 years.
- She has taken up the position which was previously held by Rajiv Kumar, Former Finance Secretary from 1st May to 31st August 2020.
- Mallika Srinivasan received the Padma Shri in 2014 for Trade and industry.

Former RBI Governor Urjit Patel appointed Additional Director of Britannia

- Urjit Patel, former Reserve Bank Governor has been appointed as the Britannia Industry's Additional Director in the category of Non-Executive and Independent Director with effect from 31st March 2021 for a term of 5 years i.e up to 30th March 2026.
- Urjit Patel was the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) during September 2016-December 2018 and was succeeded by Shaktikanta Das.
- He was also appointed as the RBI Deputy Governor from 2013 to 2016.
- He is currently the chairman of the governing body of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy. He is also on the Investment Advisory Committee of the Army Group Insurance.

Virat Kohli Became Brand Ambassador Of Digit Insurance

- Captain of the Indian Men's cricket team, Virat Kohli became the brand ambassador of Digit Insurance, a general insurance company
- Other recent brands : Great Learning, Vize,

About Digit Insurance:

- Chairman– Kamesh Goyal
- CEO & Principal officer- Vijay Kumar
- Headquarters– Bengaluru, Karnataka

Slovak President Appoints Eduard Heger as Prime Minister

- Former Slovak Finance Minister Eduard Heger will be appointed as Prime Minister of Slovakia by its president Zuzana Caputova. He succeeds, Former Prime Minister Igor Matovic who now became Finance Minister of Slovakia.

Chief Justice of India: Justice Ramana to assume charge

- Justice Ramana was born in 1957 in Ponnayaram village of Andhra Pradesh. He was enrolled as an advocate in 1983. He became the Chief Justice of Delhi High Court in 2013. In 2014, he was appointed as the judge of the Supreme Court. Justice Ramana had been a part of the following popular cases:
- In January 2020, Justice Ramana led bench had pronounced that freedom of speech and conducting business on internet are protected under the Constitution. The bench had directed the Jammu and Kashmir administration to review the curfew orders.
- In November 2019, Justice Ramana led bench ordered floor test for the then Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to prove his majority in the house.
- According to Clause (2) of Article 124, the President appoints the Chief Justice of India.
- The Clause (3) of Article 124 provides the eligibility criteria for a person to become the Chief Justice of India. They are as follows:
- He or she should be a citizen of India
- He should have acted as the Judge of High Court for at least five years. Or he should have acted as an advocate in High Court for at least ten years.
- He should be a distinguished jurist in the opinion of the President
- The Clause (4) of Article 124 provides regulations for removal of Supreme Court Judge.
- The first Chief Justice of the erstwhile federal court of India was Sir Maurice Gwyer (1937-43)
- **Hiralal Jekisundas Kania** was the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India (1950-51)

Chintan Vaishnav appointed as the new Mission Director of Atal Innovation Mission

- Dr Chintan Vaishnav will replace Ramanathan Ramanan to become the new Mission Director of Niti Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) from mid-April 2021. Ramanathan Ramanan is the 1st mission director of AIM since June 2017.
- Dr Vaishnav holds a PhD in technology, management, and policy from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). At present he is teaching & researching on tackling challenges at the intersection of technology and systems, development, and public policy.

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, 38 became Kosovo's 7th President

- Kosovo's Parliament elected the 38 years old **Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu** as its new president for a five- year term. She became the nation's seventh president and its second female leader in the post-war period by succeeding Hashim Thaci. She is the country's youngest head of state and one of the youngest in the world.
- Atifete Jahjaga (fourth President of Kosovo) was the first female President of the country
- She served as an acting President between November 2020 and March 2021 and also served as the speaker of the Assembly of Kosovo from February 2020 until March 2021.
- As president, she will be the head of state and she also has a leading position in foreign policy and is the commander of the armed forces.
- Hashim Thaci was the President of Kosovo from April 2016 to 5 November 2020. He was the **first** Prime Minister of Kosovo.
- Acting President, Glauk Konjufca handed over the country's constitution to Vjosa Osmani.

About the Republic of Kosovo:

- **Capital** – Pristina

- **Currency** – Euro (€)
- **Prime Minister** – Albin Kurti Youngest leaders of the world:
- 1. Sebastian Kurz (Chancellor, Austria) : 34 years (27 August 1986)
- 2. Sanna Marin (PM, Finland): 35 years (16 November 1985)

Nguyen Xuan Phuc Sworn In As President of Vietnam; Pham Minh Chinh Elected As Prime Minister

- **Nguyen Xuan Phuc** (66 years old) of Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), sworn in as the President of Vietnam at Hanoi, Vietnam. The 14th National Assembly (NA) of Vietnam elected **Pham Minh Chinh** CPV as the new Prime Minister (PM) of Vietnam.
- Nguyen Xuan Phuc replaced Nguyen Phu Trong, who was serving as both the President and General Secretary of Vietnam.
- The resolution on electing him as the new president was adopted with an approval rate of 97.5%.
- He was the only candidate who was nominated for President, this is the first time where a prime minister was nominated to the post of President.
- He served as the Prime Minister of Vietnam from 2016 to 2021.
- He has served as the member of 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th CPV Central Committee.

Vivo ropes in Indian Cricketer Virat Kohli as Brand Ambassador

- Vivo Communication Technology Co. Ltd. (**Vivo**) has appointed Indian Men's Cricket Team captain Virat Kohli as its brand ambassador.
- As a part of Vivo's commitment to the "Make in India" campaign, all the Vivo smartphone series are manufactured at the Facility at Greater Noida.
- Vivo is one of the title sponsors of the Indian Premier League Cricket Tournament.

Other Indian Ambassadors of Vivo:

- Amir Khan
- Sara Ali Khan

Other companies in which Virat Kohli is Ambassador:

- Great Learning
- iQoo

Sushil Chandra: Country's 24th Chief Election Commissioner (CEC)

- Sushil Chandra will take over as the 24th chief election commissioner (CEC) from Sunil Arora, who demitted office.
- He was appointed as an election commissioner on February 14, 2019
- President Ram Nath Kovind appointed Chandra as the new CEC in line with the convention to appoint the senior-most election commissioner as the CEC
- Chandra's term will end on May 14, 2022.
- He is also Member of Delimitation Commission since 18th February 2020 looking after Delimitation of Jammu Kashmir UT
- Chandra has also served as the chairperson of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)
- **Sukumar Sen** was the first CEC of India

Election Commission

- The Election Commission of India is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for Administering Union and State election processes in India.
- This power of the Election Commission of India is derived from the Article 324 of the Constitution of India
- The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.
- The President appoints Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners. They have tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme Court of India.
- Removal of CEC: The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed from office only through

impeachment by Parliament. Two-thirds of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha need to present and vote against him for disorderly conduct or improper actions.

- Current Election Commissioner: Rajiv Kumar

Sonu Sood Appointed as Brand Ambassador for Punjab's Anti-COVID-19 Vaccination Drive

- Capt Amarinder Singh, Chief Minister of Punjab announced the appointment of actor and philanthropist Sonu Sood as the brand ambassador of the anti-coronavirus vaccination programme of the government of Punjab.
- As the brand ambassador, Sonu Sood will be reaching out and promote the benefits of the covid-19 vaccination
- Sonu Sood hails from Moga, Punjab.
- The Election Commission of India (ECI) approved the appointment of Sonu Sood as the State Icon of Punjab. The proposal for the appointment was made by S Karuna Raju, Punjab Chief Electoral Officer(CEO)

Recent Collaborations of Sony Sood:

- Royal Green Packaged Drinking Water appoints Sonu Sood as their brand ambassador [Apr 2021]
- Mi India had announced that it joined hands with Sonu Sood for #ShikshaHarHaath initiative [Jan 2021]
- Spice Money, a rural fintech firm, has joined hands with Sonu Sood to achieve their mutual vision to digitally and financially empower 1 crore rural entrepreneurs. [Dec 2021]

Prithvi Shaw appointed as Brand Ambassador of SportzXchange

- Indian Batsman, Prithvi Shaw, was appointed as the brand ambassador of SportzXchange, a fantasy sports platform. He will be a part of the brand's promotional campaign "Yahaan Hai Kuch Xtra" to amplify the reach of Fantasy matches in IPL.
- Prithvi Shaw was the captain of India's 2018 World Cup winning U-19 squad.
- He is the 1st person to score 800 runs in a single season of the Vijay Hazare trophy.

About SportzXchange:

- **Founder & CEO** – Hari Narayan

Pramerica Life Insurance Appointed Kalpana Sampat as its MD & CEO

- Pramerica Life Insurance Limited (PLIL), a private life insurer, appointed Kalpana Sampat as its Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Prior to the appointment, she was serving as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the company.
- She succeeds Annop Pabby as the new MD & CEO.
- Kalpana Sampat has been working with Pramerica life Insurance since 2018.
- PLIL is a joint venture between DHFL Investments Limited (DIL) and Prudential International Insurance Holdings, Ltd. (PIIH).
- MD & CEO– Kalpana Sampat
- Headquarters– Gurgaon, Haryana

ACC approves to Extend the Tenure Arun Kumar DG of DGCA By 6 Months

- The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the extension in the tenure of Arun Kumar, IAS as the Director General of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for a period of 6 months beyond 20th April 2021 or until further orders.
- He has been serving as the DG of DGCA since June 2019.
- Previously He had held an additional charge as DG of DGCA between May and July 2019. He has served as the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation(MoCA)
- Recently, Central Mine Planning and Design Institute gets Drone Use Permission by DGCA [Apr 2021]

About Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA):

- **Director-General**– Arun Kumar
- **Headquarters**– New Delhi

About ACC:

- It makes all major appointments and has two members : PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah

Suresh Raina appointed as Brand Ambassador of Elista

- Consumer electronic company, 'Elista' appointed former Indian Cricketer Suresh Raina as its Brand Ambassador. Elista is a subsidiary of 'TeknoDome', a UAE based trading company, which started its manufacturing in 2020.
- Elista manufactures innovative products in consumer electronics ranging from LED TVs to Coolers, under the concept of 'Making in India for the world'.
- He was the 1st Player to score 5000 runs in Indian Premier League (IPL).
- He retired from all forms of International Cricket in August 2020.

About TeknoDome:

- **Headquarters of TeknoDome** – Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE)
- **Headquarters of TeknoDome India** – Noida, Uttar Pradesh
- **Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Elista** – Saket Gaurav
- **CEO of Elista** – Pawan Kumar

Claude Joseph appointed as new PM of Haiti

- President of Haiti, Jovenel Moise appointed Claude Joseph current minister of foreign affairs and worship as the new Prime Minister (PM) of Haiti.
- He succeeds Joseph Jouthe who resigned from power because of the ongoing political crisis and unrest among the people.
- Joseph Jouthe was appointed as PM on March 2020 during the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic

About Haiti:

- **Capital:** Port-au-prince
- **Currency:** Haitian gourde
- **President:** Jovenel moise
- **Prime minister:** Claude Joseph

Ayushmann Khurrana Appointed as the Indian Brand Ambassador of Tecno

- Tecno, global smartphone brand has appointed Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana as its Indian Brand ambassador. The 2021 initiative of Tecno aims to push the envelope of technology democratisation with innovation, new age smartphones.
- He will be spearheading the new Tecno Spark 7 campaign launched in India on 9th April, 2021.
- He will feature in the campaigns across Spark, Pova, Camon smartphone series.
- In September 2020, Ayushmann Khurrana was appointed as United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)'s advocate for the Children's Rights Campaign "For Every Child". He was also chosen as the brand ambassador of Bajaj Allianz Life.

About Tecno Mobile – India:

- **CEO**– Arijeet Talapatra
- **Headquarters**– Noida, Uttar Pradesh

US President Joe Biden Nominated Bill Nelson To Serve As Next NASA Administrator

- United States (US) President, Joe Biden had nominated former Astronaut, Bill Nelson to serve as next Administrator of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). In May 2019, he was appointed to the NASA Advisory Council by former Administrator Jim Bridenstine.

About National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):

- **Headquarter:** Washington DC
- **Acting Administrator:** Steve Jurczyk
- **Administrator:** Bill Nelson

GC Murmu chosen as external auditor by OPCW

- G C Murmu has been chosen as the External Auditor of Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).
- G C Mumru is currently serving as the CAG of India. He has been appointed as the External Auditor of Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. He will serve at the OPCW as an External Auditor for three years.
- Also, India was elected as the member state of the Executive Council of OPCW in the Asia region for another two years.
- He was appointed as the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in 2020.
- He had also served as the Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019. He was the first Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Apart from these services, he has served as the External Auditor of World Food Programme, International Atomic Energy Agency, World Intellectual Property Organisation, UN World Tourism Organisation, International Maritime Organisation.
- The Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has 193 member states.
- It is an international organisation that works to achieve a chemical weapon free world.

RBI Approved the Re-appointment of Murali Natrajan as the MD and CEO of DCB Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the re-appointment of Murali Natrajan as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DCB Bank for one year from April 29, 2021. Initially, he was appointed as MD and CEO of DCB Bank (in May 2009).
- About Murali Natrajan: Before joining DCB, he worked in foreign banks such as Standard Chartered and Citibank.
- DCB Bank is the first bank in India to start an Aadhaar-based ATM (2016).
- Recently, DCB Bank Acquired 9% Stake in Techfino Capital.

Cape Verde's Prime Minister – Ulisses Correia e Silva led 'MpD party' has Won Parliamentary Election

- The Movement for Democracy (MpD), the ruling party of Cape Verde has won the country's Parliamentary Election
- It is expected that the MpD party would reappoint Ulisses Correia e Silva (the current Prime Minister) as the Prime Minister for second 5 year term.

About Cape Verde:

- **Capital** – Praia
- **President** – Jorge Carlos Fonseca
- **Prime Minister** – Ulisses Correia e Silva
- **Currency** – Cape Verdean escudo (CVE)

Puma India Signed Washington Sundar, Devdutt Padikkal As Brand Ambassadors

- Puma India, leading German sportswear brand signed a long term endorsement deal with Indian Cricketers, Washington Sundar and Devdutt Padikkal. Both Sundar and Padikkal will be joining Puma as its brand ambassadors.
- In March 2021, Puma signed as the official kit partners of the Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in the IPL 2021 season.
- Washington Sundar from Chennai, Tamil Nadu, is the youngest T20I cricketer (18 years) to represent India at International level in 2017.
- Devdutt Padikkal from Edappal, Kerala, is an Indian cricketer who represents Karnataka and India under 19s.
- Virat Kohli; KL Rahul; Sushma Verma; Yuvraj Singh; Sara Ali Khan; MC Mary Kom; Dutee

Chand; Kareena Kapoor Khan and Sunil Chhetri are some of the brand ambassadors of Puma.

Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno Named as the President of Chad

- According to the Transition Charter, Mahamat Idriss Deby Into a four star general, has taken over as the President of Chad. The Military council has named Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, as the transitional leader of Chad following the death of his father Idriss Deby Itno, President of Chad. He will assume the functions of the President of the Republic of Chad.
- He was also named as the Supreme head of the armed forces.
- A democratic election will be conducted after an 18 month transitional period.

About Chad:

- **Currency-** Central African CFA franc
- **Capital-** N'Djamena

Justice Rajesh Bindal appointed Calcutta HC Chief Justice

- President Ram Nath Govind appointed Justice Rajesh Bindal as Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court (HC). He will succeed Justice Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan.
- He was appointed by the President of India under the powers conferred by Article 223 of the Constitution of India.

Govt Appointed Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth as a Director on the Central Board of RBI

- The government of India has appointed Ajay Seth, the Economic Affairs Secretary in the Ministry of Finance as the non-official director of the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI). He succeeds Tarun Bajaj, who was appointed as revenue secretary.
- The directors will be appointed by the Government under the provisions of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 for a period of 4 years.
- **Official Directors:** It include the Governor and Deputy Governors (not more than four) of RBI.
- **Non-official Directors:** Government will nominate the directors on the Central Board in which 10 directors represents different sectors of the economy, such as, agriculture, industry, trade, and two secretaries from the finance ministry along with 4 directors from four Local Boards (one Director from each) of RBI.

Official Directors:

- Shaktikanta Das (Governor of RBI), Mahesh Kumar Jain, M.D. Patra, M. Rajeshwar Rao (3 Deputy Governors of RBI)

Non-official directors:

- Shri Debasish Panda, Ajay Seth, (Government officials) and other include Natarajan Chandrasekaran, Satish Kashinath Marathe, Shri Swaminathan Gurusamy, Revathy Iyer and Sachin Chaturvedi.

Indian Cricketer Ravindra Jadeja appointed as brand ambassador of ASICS

- The Japanese sports brand ASICS has appointed Indian cricketer Ravindra Jadeja as its brand ambassador. He is the all-rounder of the Indian cricket team and Chennai Super Kings
- Bollywood Actor Tiger Shroff is also the brand ambassador of the Japan based ASICS.
- Ravindra Jadeja took more than 425 wickets and score around 4000 runs during the International Cricket matches.

About ASICS:

- **Chairman and CEO**– Motoi Oyama
- **Headquarters**– Kobe, Japan
- **Founded in**– 1949

Mukhmeet S Bhatia Takes Over as the DG of ESIC

- Mukhmeet S Bhatia assumed the charge as the Director General of Employees' State Insurance

- Corporation under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.
- Previously, he served as the Additional Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.
 - Recently, ESI Corporation (ESIC) had announced the extension of the “Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana” (ABVKY) by another one year up to June 30, 2021.

About Employees’ State Insurance Corporation (ESIC):

- Director General– Mukhmeet S. Bhatia
- Headquarters– New Delhi

About Employees’ State Insurance Corporation

- Employees' State Insurance Corporation of India is an integrated social security system defined under ESI Act 1948, tailored to provide social protection to workers, immediate dependent or family.
- Only those workers are covered that earn upto Rs 21,000/-month (Rs 25,000 in case of PwDs)
- Total Contribution: 4% (Employer – 3.25%, Employee – 0.75%)
- There are two unemployment allowance schemes under ESIC namely Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna (ABVKY) and Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojna (RGSKY).

Recent Events:

- The convergence of ESI Scheme with Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY in 113 districts of 04 states Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh & Maharashtra was launched by Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Hon’ble MoS (IC) Labour & Employment and Chairman, ESIC on **[March 2021]**
- Govt. of India has now extended the Employees State Insurance (ESI) Scheme for the first time to Arunachal Pradesh, with effect from 1st Nov, 2020. It notified the district of Papum Pare under ESI Scheme. **[Nov 2020]**
- Recently, ESI Corporation (ESIC) had announced the extension of the “Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana” (ABVKY) by another one year up to June 30, 2021.

AWARDS

Rajinikanth to be Honoured with 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2019

- Prakash Javadekar, Union Minister, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting announced that Rajinikanth will be honoured with the 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2019 as a recognition of his contribution to the film industry as an Actor, Producer and screenwriter.
- Rajinikanth will be the 12th South Indian to receive the Dadasaheb Phalke Award.
- The award will be presented to him on 3rd May 2021 along with other National Film Awards.
- The award comprises a Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus) medallion, a shawl, and a cash prize of Rs. 10 lakhs.

Jury of 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award:

- Asha Bhosle (Singer), Subhash Ghai (Director & Producer), Mohanlal (Malayalam Actor), Shankar Mahadevan (Singer & Composer) and Biswajeet Chatterjee (Actor & Producer).
- Dadasaheb Phalke Award, the highest honour for the artists of the Indian Film Industry & was instituted in 1969. The award is annually presented at the National Film Awards Ceremony by the Directorate of Film Festivals, under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

2021 Rathbones Folio Literary Prize

- American Author Carmen Maria Machado won the Rathbones Folio Literary Prize for the year 2021 for memoir 'In the Dream House' (released in 2019). It is the only Literary prize which is open to all genres – Fiction, non-fiction, and poetry for writers around the world.
- Rathbones Folio Prize is a literary award that was backed by London-based publisher 'The Folio Society' in the initial two years (2014-15).
- From 2017, Rathbone Investment Management joined as the sponsor & name changed from Folio Prize to Rathbones Folio Literary Prize.

Kalinga Ratna Samman 2021

- M Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India presented the Kalinga Ratna Samman for the year 2021 to Biswabhusan Harichandan, governor of Andhra Pradesh (AP) to recognise his contribution to literature.
- The award was presented during the 600th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Adi Kabi Sarala Das and the 40th Annual Day of Sarala Sahitya Sansad at the Sarala Bhawan, Cuttack.
- Kalinga Ratna Samman is an annual award instituted by the Sarala Sahitya Sansad in 2007.
- The award recognises the person of Odisha who has contributed to any field at the national or international level.
- The award carries a silver idol of Goddess Saraswati, a copper plaque and a shawl.

About Sarala Das:

- Sarala Das was considered a genius in the field of Odia literature.
- The "Sarala Mahabharat" written by Sarala Das in the 15th century is the first complete Mahabharata in a regional language.

About Sarala Sahitya Sansad

- **President** – Sri Sahadeva Sahoo, IAS (Retd.)
- **Head Quarter** – Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Lilavati Awards, 2020

- Education Minister RP Nishank presented lilavati awards.

About Lilavati Awards:

- The prize has been named after the twelfth century book called "Lilavati".
- The book was written by the mathematician Bhaskara II. Lilavati was the daughter of Bhaskara II.

- The award is presented annually as a part of AICTE Innovative education programme to empower women.

2021 EE British Academy Film Awards: Nomadland Won 4 BAFTA's Including Best Picture

- The winners of the 74th edition of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA)'s annual film awards 2021 EE British Academy Film Awards were announced
- The film "Nomadland" directed by Chloé Zhao won the 2021 EE British Academy Film Awards under 4 categories – Best Film, Best Director, Best Leading Actress and Best Cinematography.
- Acclaimed filmmaker Ang Lee received a Bafta Fellowship, the organisation's highest honour.
- The award ceremony was hosted by Edith Bowman and Dermot O'Leary at the Royal Albert Hall, London, United Kingdom.
- The opening night ceremony was hosted by Clara Amfo.
- Bukky Bakray won the EE Rising Star Award which was voted by the public.
- Noel Clarke, the British multi-hyphenate behind the Hood franchise and the hit TV series Bulletproof, will receive 2021 Outstanding British Contribution To Cinema honorary award at the BAFTA

About EE Limited:

- EE Limited is a British Mobile Network operator and an Internet Service provider.
- EE Brought the first 4G network to the UK in 2012 and launched the first 5G network in 2019.

About British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA):

- BAFTA is a leading independent art charity.
- **Formed on** 16 April 1947
- **Headquarters**– London, United Kingdom

HAL Won ISTD's National Award for Innovative Training Practices

- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), a central public sector undertaking based in Bengaluru, Karnataka has won the National Award for Innovation Training Practices 2019- 2020 at the 30th National Award Ceremony organised by the Indian Society for Training and Development (ISTD) in New Delhi.
- HAL has coordinated with the best management and training institutes to provide the right training to the professionals.
- The HAL management academy, a 16 acres' campus with state of the art facility in Bengaluru is a Centre of Excellence for Aerospace technology and management professionals.
- The National Award for Innovative Training Practices is an annual award instituted by the ISTD to recognize the organisations which have adopted innovative practices on human resources development in their organisation.

About HAL:

- **Headquarter** – Bengaluru
- **CMD** - R Madhvan

Oscar-Winning Producer, Guneet Monga received the Second-Highest Civilian French Honour

- Guneet Monga, the Oscar-winning producer was awarded with 'Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters', second-highest civilian French honour by French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves LeDria.
- She received the honour for her contribution to world cinema through her Indo-French productions and her work towards women's empowerment and gender equality.
- She is an Indian producer who has won the Oscar in the Documentary Short Subject category at the 91st Academy Awards in 2019 for her short film 'Period End of Sentence, 2018'.
- Gangs of Wasseypur series, Masaan and The Lunchbox."The Lunchbox" has won Critics Week Viewer's Choice Award at the 66th Cannes Film Festival.
- It is a reward that will be given by France to the contributors across the globe under three categories such as Commander, Officer and Knight (Commandeur, Officier and Chevalier)

Birla Cellulose Limited Won the UN's National Innovative and Sustainable Supply Chain Award

- Birla Cellulose Limited, largest global man made cellulosic fibre producer, a part of the Aditya Birla Group won the first edition of National Innovative and Sustainable Supply Chain Award presented by the Global Compact Network India (GCNI), the Indian Local Network of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC).
- Birla cellulose won the award for its innovation in recycled and circular fibre made with pre-consumer fabric waste.
- The case study – Liva Reviva by Birla Cellulose and Fully Traceable Circular Global Fashion Supply Chains, provided solutions to the challenges of textile waste through live supply chain transparency and traceability through the blockchain based platform GreenTrack.
- In January 2021, The National Innovative and Sustainable Supply Chain Award was launched by GCNI in partnership with Accenture (Knowledge Partner), ICCo (Sustainability Partner) and FM Logistic India (Presentation Partner).

About Global Compact Network India (GCNI):

- **Executive Director-** Shabnam Siddiqui
- **Head Office-** New Delhi

Suman Chakraborty to get GD Birla Award for Scientific Research

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur's Professor Suman Chakraborty has been selected for the 30th GD Birla Award for Scientific Research for his outstanding contribution to engineering science and its applications in developing technologies for affordable healthcare.
- This award was instituted in 1991 by KK Birla Foundation to recognise eminent Indian scientists below the age of 50 for their outstanding contributions in the field of science or technology with a cash prize of ₹5 lakh.
- IIT Kgp was the first IIT of India.

Indian Origin Businessman Yusuffali MA honoured with UAE's Top Civilian Award

- Indian Origin Businessman Yusuffali MA along with 11 other individuals were awarded with "Abu Dhabi Award" UAE's top Civilian Award during the 10th edition of Abu Dhabi Awards held at Abu Dhabi, UAE.
- Yusuffali MA is the Chairman & Managing Director of Abu Dhabi-based LuLu Group that operates a chain of hypermarkets & retail companies.

Dutee Chand conferred with Chhattisgarh Veerni Awards

- Odisha Sprinter Dutee Chand conferred with Chhattisgarh Veerni Awards. The award, instituted by the Chhattisgarh state government, recognises contribution of Indian women in different fields, including sports.

Alfred VainoAho, Jeffrey David Ullman Bagged 2020 ACM A.M. Turing Award

- The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) has named Alfred VainoAho and Jeffrey David Ullman as the recipients of the 2020 ACM A.M. Turing Award. The award was presented to them for fundamental algorithms and theory on programming language implementation. The award is also referred to as the Nobel Prize of Computing.
- To commemorate the birth anniversary of Alan Turing on June 23, 2021, the Government of England will release 50-pound (£50) note with Alan Turing Face.
- Alfred VainoAho is the Lawrence Gussman Professor Emeritus of Computer Science at Columbia University
- Jeffrey David Ullman is the Stanford W. Ascherman Professor Emeritus of Computer Science at Stanford University.
- Alfred VainoAho and Jeffrey David Ullman have co-authored 9 influential books.
- The most popular books include, The Design and Analysis of Computer Algorithms (1974) (co-authored by Aho, Ullman, and John Hopcroft) and Principles of Compiler Design (1977).
- The A.M. Turing Award, named in honour of Alan Mathison Turing, a British mathematician

and computer scientist, is the most prestigious technical award instituted by ACM in 1966.

- The award recognises the major contributions of lasting importance to computing.
- The award carries a prize money of USD 1 million with financial support provided by Google, Inc.
- The first recipient of the AM Turing Award in 1966 was Alan J Perlis (American) who wrote the compiler for ALGOL computer programming language.

Argentina, Brazil, Uganda, Vanuatu – The Global Winners of ICC Development Awards for 2020

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced Argentina, Brazil, Uganda and Vanuatu as the global winners of the ICC Development Awards for 2020 for their contribution to cricket through different exceptional programmes in 2020.

About The International Cricket Council (ICC):

- **Headquarters** – Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- **Chairman** – Greg Barclay
- **CEO** – Manu Sawhney

93rd Academy Awards – Oscar 2021

- The 93rd Academy Awards, also known as the Oscar 2021 was presented at the ceremony held at Union Station Los Angeles and the Dolby Theatre at Hollywood & Highland Center in Hollywood. The hostless ceremony was opened by Regina King.
- The nominations of the Oscar 2021 were announced by Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas in March 2021. The Academy Awards is annually presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.
- Nomadland directed by Chloé Zhao (Chinese Film Maker) won the most awards including the awards for Best Picture, Best Actress and Best Director.
- Chloé Zhao is the 2nd woman to win the award for Best Director since the Academy award was instituted. She is also the first woman of colour (Asian) to win the award.
- Welsh actor, director and film producer Sir Anthony Hopkins (83 years old) won the award for the Best Actor for his performance in the film “The Father”. The award was presented by Joaquin Phoenix. He became the oldest person to win the Oscars for Best Actor.
- American actress and producer Frances McDormand won the Best Actress award for her performance in the film “Nomadland”. This is her 3rd Academy Award for acting, she became only the second woman to win three best actress Oscars.
- Katharine Hepburn has won the most (four) awards in the best actress category.
- Hairstylists Mia Neal and Jamika Wilson of “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom” became the first Black woman to win in makeup and hairstyling
- Indian Actor Irrfan Khan and costume designer Bhanu Athaiya who passed away in 2020 were honoured in the “In Memoriam” section of the 2021 Oscars.

About Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences:

- **President**– David Rubin
- **CEO**– Dawn Hudson
- **Headquarters**– California, United States

Saudi activist Loujain al-Hathloul awarded Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize by PACE

- Saudi activist Loujain al-Hathloul was awarded a top European rights prize, the prestigious 8th Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).
- She was awarded the 60,000-euro (Rs.53.87 lakh) prize in an online ceremony for “outstanding civil society action in defense of human rights.”
- This award was given in recognition of her fight for women’s rights in the kingdom, including her efforts to end a ban on women driving.
- Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize, was named after the former Czech dissident and later President, Vaclav Havel.

Noted Marathi Writer Dr Sharankumar Limbale To Receive Saraswati Samman 2020

- KK Birla Foundation has selected well known Marathi writer Dr. Sharankumar Limbale, as the recipient of Saraswati Samman 2020 for his 2018 Marathi novel titled “Sanatan”.
- The Saraswati Samman 2020 marks the 30th Saraswati Samman.
- The book – Sanatan, features the story of socio-cultural struggles of the untouchables.
- The Saraswati Samman is an annual award instituted by KK Birla Foundation in 1991.
- It is one of the highest literary awards in India.
- The award includes a citation, a plaque and a cash award of Rs.15 lakh.
- The winner of the award is selected from the outstanding works from 22 Indian languages.



IMPORTANT DAYS

World Autism Awareness Day 2021 – April 2

- United Nations World Autism Awareness Day is annually observed across the globe on 2nd April to highlight the needs to improve the quality of the life of the people living with autism.
- There was no official theme referred in UN sites on World Autism Awareness Day. Autism Speaks, an organisation highlight and promote autism awareness, in recognition of people with autism and those who love and support them with campaign #LightItUpBlue by wearing blue on April 2 2021.
- The World Autism Awareness Day was first observed on 2nd April 2008.
- Autism is a neurological condition that manifests during early childhood irrespective of gender, race and socioeconomic status. Autism is generally referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- Autism spectrum refers to the range of characteristics that impacts social interaction, behaviour and communication.
- The SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, promote productive employment and decent work for all including people with disabilities.

International Children's Book Day 2021 – April 2

- International Children's Book Day is annually observed across the globe on or around 2nd April, the birth anniversary of Danish Author Hans Christian Andersen, famous for his fairytales for children.
- The day aims to celebrate and to inspire the love of reading and to focus attention on children's books.
- The first ICBD was celebrated in 1967.
- Theme of ICBD 2021 is "The Music of words".
- United States Board on Books for Young People (USBYP) is the sponsor of 2021's ICBD Poster.
- The theme of ICBD Poster 2021 is "The Music of words".
- The message for the ICBD Poster was written by Margarita Engle, a Cuban-American author and the poster was designed by Roger Mello, a Brazilian illustrator.
- The Hans Christian Andersen Award is the highest international distinction given to authors and illustrators of children's books.
- The Hans Christian Andersen Award 2020 (Author) was presented to Jacqueline Woodson (America) and the award for an illustrator was presented to Albertine (Switzerland).

About International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY):

- **President**– Mingzhou Zhang
- **Headquarters**– Basel, Switzerland

International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action 2021 – April 4

- The United Nations International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is annually observed across the globe on 4th April to provide support to the mine action work, raise awareness about landmines and work toward its eradication.
- The International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action events across the globe are led by the United Nations mine action Service (UNMAS).
- The 2021 International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action highlights the importance of "Perseverance, Partnership, and Progress" in the mine sector.
- The first International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action was observed on 4th April 2006.
- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has organized a high-level event on mine action titled "Beyond Square Meters Cleared: Mine Action and Development."
- In 2015, Ban Ki-moon, the secretary general of the UN designated actor Daniel Craig as the first UN Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards.

National Maritime Day: April 5

- The National Maritime Day is celebrated every year to support global economy through sea transport. It also supports safe and sound environmentally responsive way of transporting goods from one part of the world to the other. The theme of National Maritime Day, 2021 is as follows: Theme: 'Sustainable Shipping beyond COVID-19' on the lines of 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat' initiative
- Indian shipping began on April 5, 1919. This is why India celebrates National Maritime Day on April 5 every year. The first ship of India The SS Loyalty sailed from Mumbai to United Kingdom. It was manufactured by the Scindia Steam Navigation Company Limited. This is highly historic as the sea routes were completely under the British control in those days.
- On National Maritime Day, the National Maritime Day Awards are presented. The awards recognise the efforts of people from the Indian Maritime Sector. Varuna award is presented for their long and exceptional contribution. The award consists of a statue of Lord Varuna. Also, the NMD Award of Excellence is presented on this day.
- The other countries that celebrate Maritime Day are China, Mexico, Pakistan, United States. World Maritime Day is celebrated on September 30 every year by United Nations and also by other international organisations. Just like National Maritime Day, the World Maritime Day is also dedicated to the seafarers.

Day of Seafarer:

- The Day of Seafarer is celebrated on June 25. The day is celebrated by the International Maritime Organisation and also by other international organisations.

International Maritime Organisation:

- The organisation is responsible for maritime protection and preventing pollution from ships. India became the member of IMO in 1959.

Bhagat Singh Koshyari inaugurated Merchant Navy Week:

- On 31st March 2021, Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Governor of Maharashtra inaugurated the Merchant Navy Week 31st March 2021 to 5th April 2021 at Raj Bhavan, Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- The delegation of the NMDC headed by Amitabh Kumar, Director General of Shipping and Chairman NMDC (Central) Committee visited the Governor of Maharashtra for the flag pinning ceremony.
- Amitabh Kumar felicitated Bhagat Singh Koshyari with the **first miniature flag**.

About Directorate General of Shipping:

- **Director General of Shipping**– Amitabh Kumar
- **Headquarters**– Mumbai, Maharashtra

International Day of Conscience – April 5

- The United Nations International Day of Conscience is annually observed across the globe on 5th April to promote peace and love throughout the globe in accordance with the culture and customs of local, national and regional communities through education and awareness- raising activities.
- 2021 marks the celebration of the 2nd International Day of Conscience.
- The first International Day of Conscience was observed on 5th April 2020.

About UNESCO:

- **Director-General**– Audrey Azoulay
- **Headquarters**– Paris, France

International Day of Sport for Development and Peace 2021 – April 6

- The United Nations International Day of Sport for Development and Peace is annually observed across the globe on 6th April to recognise the role of sports in communities and in individuals towards building resilience. 2021 marks the celebration of the 8th edition of the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

- The theme of 2021 IDSDP is focused on – recovery from the pandemic and the importance of equity in the recovery and the need to build back better for a resilient and equitable world.
- The first IDSDP was observed on 6th April 2014.
- The Department of Global Communications, in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), WHO and the co-chairs of the Group of Friends of Sport for Sustainable Development in New York, Qatar and Monaco has organised social media and online messages around the theme of 2021 IDSDP.

#WhiteCard Campaign:

- The sports communities across the globe celebrate the IDSDP through the #WhiteCard.
- The #WhiteCard was created by the Peace and Sport, an independent organisation, as a symbol in 2014 to represent the positive power of sport for peace and social inclusion.
- The core message of the campaign is “Behind each #WhiteCard there is a Story”.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises sports as an important enabler of sustainable development.
- Sports contribute to the realization of development and peace through the promotion of tolerance and respect.

World Table Tennis Day 2021 – April 6

- World Table Tennis Day is annually observed across the globe on 6th April to promote table tennis globally to be played in every part of the world. The day also marks the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.
- The celebration of the WTDD 2021 aims to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality.
- The first World Table Tennis Day was observed on 6th April 2015 under the theme “Table Tennis for ALL”.
- Table tennis was included in the Olympic Games at the Seoul 1988 Games with men’s and women’s singles and doubles.

About International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF):

- **CEO**– Stephen Dainton(Australia)
- **Secretary General**– Raul Calin(Spain)
- **Headquarters**– Lausanne, Switzerland

World Health Day 2021 – April 7

- The United Nations World Health Day is annually observed across the globe on 7th April to draw attention towards a specific health topic that concerns people across the globe to highlight the priority area of concern for the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- The day is celebrated under the sponsorship of the WHO and other related organizations. The theme of World Health Day 2021 is “Building a Fairer, Healthier World”.
- The day 7th April marks the anniversary of the inception of WHO at the first World Health Assembly in 1948 and the World Health day has been observed since 1950.
- The first World Health Day was observed on 7th April 1950. “Building a Fairer, Healthier World for everyone” Campaign:
- On World Health Day 2021, The year-long campaign “Building a Fairer, Healthier World for everyone” calls for action to eliminate health inequalities. The campaign brings people together to build a fairer and healthier world.

International Day of Reflection On The 1994 Genocide Against The Tutsi In Rwanda 2021 – April 7

- The United Nations International Day Of Reflection On The 1994 Genocide Against The Tutsi In Rwanda is annually observed across the globe on 7th April to recognise the importance of combating impunity for all violations that constitute the crime of genocide.
- The day recalls the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi ethnic group in Rwanda and remembers the victims of the genocide.
- The commemoration of 2021 is organised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation UNESCO Chair on Genocide Education, with the Permanent Delegation of Rwanda to UNESCO, in partnership with Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC).

- The 1994 Rwanda Genocide was started by the shooting down of President Juvenal Habyarimana's plane on 6th April 1994.
- During the Rwanda Genocide which lasted 100 days, the people of the Hutu ethnic group killed around 800000 Rwandans mostly Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

International Roma Day 2021 – April 8

- International Romani Day or International Roma Day is annually observed across the globe on 8th April to celebrate the culture and heritage of Romani and to raise awareness of the issues facing Roma people.
- The day also focuses on the discrimination against the Roma communities across the globe and call for the human rights of all to be respected and observed.
- The International Roma Day 2021 marks the 50th anniversary of the first Romani Congress April 7 to 12 1971 in Chelsfield near London, England.
- The International Romani Day was established during the 4th World Romani Congress of the International Romani Union held in Serock, Poland in 1990.
- The first Romani Congress was held in 1971 in which a group of gypsies from around 28 countries met to discuss their present and future.
- In 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proclaimed the 5th November of every year as the World Day of Romani Language to preserve the Romani language and culture.

About International Romani Union (IRU):

- **President-** Normunds Rudevics
- **Headquarters**– Riga, Latvia

CRPF Valour Day 2021 – April 9

- The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Valour Day is annually observed across India on 9th April to honour the valour of the Martyrs and the bravehearts of the 2 CRPF companies who fought against Pakistan at Sardar Post, Gujarat in 1965.
- The day is also known as the Shaurya Diwas.
- The 9th April 2021 marks the observance of the 56th CRPF Valour Day.
- The day marks the victory of the small contingent of CRPF against the Pakistan army at the Sardar Post, Rann of Kutch, Gujarat on 9th April 1965.
- The CRPF personnel eliminated 34 Pakistani soldiers and captured 4 alive. 6 personnels of CRPF attained martyrdom during the conflict.
- The CRPF came into existence as the Crown Representative's Police on 27th July 1939.
- After Independence the force was renamed as the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on enactment of the CRPF Act on 28th December 1949.

Play True Day 2021 – April 9

- The Play True Day is annually observed by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in 9th April to create awareness about the importance of protecting clean sport among the Athletes, sporting public and others. The Play True Day 2021 was observed by WADA on 9th April 2021.
- The theme of Play True Day 2021 is "What does Play True mean to you?"
- The idea of the Play True Day originated from the Education Conference in 2013 hosted by the WADA.
- The first Play True day was observed in 2014.

71st ICCR Foundation Day – 9th April 2021

- The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) celebrated its 71st Foundation Day on 9th April 2021. ICCR was founded on 9th April 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of Independent India.
- Through the Indian Cultural Centres, ICCR organises a range of cultural, academic and

intellectual activities in the field of Indian culture including Indian dance, music, yoga, languages, cuisines, festivals, ethos and traditions along with contemporary issues.

- Indian Cultural Centre and Embassy of India, Seoul, South Korea organised the virtual event to celebrate the 71st Foundation day of ICCR.
- ICCR's "Little Guru" app, the world's first Gamified Sanskrit Learning App, was jointly launched by Ambassador Vikram Misri and Professor Wang Bangwei, a renowned Chinese scholar on Sanskrit and India studies.
- As a part of the celebration of 71st Foundation day, ICCR has announced 2 fellowships dedicated to music to encourage research in the field of Indian Music:
- Bhimsen Joshi fellowship for music.
- Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan Fellowship for Music.

About ICCR:

- **President-** Dr Vinay Sahasrabuddhe
- **Director General-** Dinesh K Patnaik
- **Headquarters-** New Delhi

World Homeopathy Day 2021 – April 10

- World Homeopathy or Homoeopathy Day is annually celebrated across the globe on 10th April to mark the importance of Homeopathy and its contribution to the field of medicine.
- 10th April 2021 marks the 266th Birth anniversary of Dr Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician and the founder of Homeopathy, He was born on 10th April 1755 in Paris, France.

World Homeopathy Awareness Week 2021 – April 10 to 16

- The World Homeopathy Awareness Week is annually observed across the globe from 10th April to 16th April to create awareness about the importance of Homeopathy, the system of alternate medicine.
- The week begins on 10th April to mark the birth anniversary of Dr Samuel Hahnemann, the German physician who created homeopathy.
- World Homeopathy Day is annually observed on 10th April.

World Parkinson's Day 2021 – April 11

- World Parkinson's Day is annually observed across the globe on 11th April to create awareness and raise the funds to support the people living with Parkinson's disease.
- The day marks the birth anniversary of Dr. James Parkinson who was the first to describe Parkinson's disease as a neurological syndrome in 1817.
- The month of April is observed as Parkinson's Awareness month
- 'Red tulip with a fringe of white' is the official symbol of Parkinson's disease.
- Parkinson's disease is an illness that affects the nerve cells of the brain which controls the movements of the body.
- The most common symptoms are tremors, muscle rigidity and slowness of movement.

International Day for Street Children 2021 – April 12

- The International Day for Street Children is annually observed across the globe on 12th April to acknowledge the strength and resilience of the street children across the globe. The day aims to highlight the efforts of street children to have their rights respected and meet their needs in a caring and respectful manner.
- The International Day for Street Children has been globally celebrated since 2012.
- The Consortium for Street Children (CSC)'s network of organisations across the world recognise the International Day for Street Children between 6th April to 12th April.
- The CSC launched the 5-year campaign – "4 Steps to Equality" in 2018, which was a call to the government to take 4 steps to achieve equality for street children.
- The Four actionable steps of the campaign, based on the UN General Comment on Children in a street situation, are,
 - **Step 1:** Commit to Equality

- **Step 2:** Protect Every Child
- **Step 3:** Provide Access to Services
- **Step 4:** Create Specialised Solutions
- Under the 2021 theme – Access to Essential Services, the campaign focuses on Step 3: Provide Access to services since the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the conditions of the street children to get access to essential services.

102nd Anniversary of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre – April 13, 2021

- 13th April 2021 marks the 102nd anniversary of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, which took place on 13th April 1919 in a public garden (Jallianwala Bagh) in Amritsar, Punjab. According to the records of the British Government around 400 people including men, women and children were killed and around 1200 were wounded in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre which is also known as the Amritsar Massacre.
- On 13th April 1919, The British troop under the command of Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer had done the massacre on the crowd of unarmed protestors who were gathering to condemn the arrest of Satya Pal and Saifuddin Kitchlew.
- Following strong condemnation from Indian national leaders, the Government of British set up the Disorder Inquiry 7-member Committee under Lord Hunter, a senator of the College of Justice of Scotland and criticized the acts of general Dyer, and sent him back to England.
- The Congress established a non-official enquiry committee and later the government of British established the Disorder Inquiry Committee, a 7 member committee under Lord Hunter, a senator of the College of Justice of Scotland.
- The committee criticized the acts of General Dyer and relieved him from his command and sent him back to England.
- The Jallianwala Bagh Memorial was established in 1951 by the Government of India to commemorate the Amritsar massacre.
- The memorial is managed by the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Trust.
- The new edition of the 1969 classic “Jallianwala Bagh: A groundbreaking history of the 1919 massacre” authored by Vishwa Nath Datta (V N Datta) was released.

37th Siachen Day – 13th April 2021

- The Siachen Warriors celebrated the 37th Siachen Day on 13th April 2021 to honour the soldiers of the Indian army who continue to guard the Siachen Glacier, the northern frontier which is a part of the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- On 13th April 1984, the troops of the Indian Army unfurled the national flag of India at Bilafond and launched the operation Meghdoot.
- India secured the Siachen glacier and Saltoro ridge using the maps of Colonel Narendra ‘Bull’ Kumar.
- 3th April is annually observed as Siachen Day since 1984.
- The operation Meghdoot was in support of the Indian Army and the paramilitary forces in the Northern Ladakh to secure the control in Siachen Glacier, which is referred to as the world’s third pole and the potential flashpoint on the dispute of Northern borders
- Siachen Glacier is the highest, deadliest and costliest battlefield in the world.
- The Glacier is spread over an area of 76 kilometres.
- More than 850 Indian soldiers have lost their lives in Siachen since 1984 due to Climatic conditions.

Ambedkar Jayanti: April 14

- Babasaheb Ambedkar was born on April 14, 1891.
- He struggled for equality throughout his life. Thus, his birthday is also celebrated as “Equality Day”. India has placed a demand to celebrate his birthday as International Equality Day to the United Nations.
- He was also known as Babasaheb Ambedkar.
- In 1956, he converted to Buddhism.
- In 1932, he signed Poona Pact with Madan Mohan Malaviya. According to the agreement, reserved seats were provided for depressed classes. Because of the pact, the depressed classes

received one hundred and forty-eight seats instead of seventy one seats.

- In 1936, Ambedkar founded Independent Labour Party.
- After Lahore resolution, in 1940, he wrote a book called “Thoughts on Pakistan”. The book analysed the concept of Pakistan.
- In his other book called “Who were the Shudras?”, Ambedkar wrote about the untouchables.
- Ambedkar was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of Constituent Assembly.
- In 1990, Ambedkar was bestowed with Bharat Ratna.
- His portrait was unveiled in the Central Hall of Parliament in 1990.
- The period between April 14, 1990 and April 14, 1991 was observed as “Year of Social Justice”.
- In 2015, the Government of India issued ten rupees and 125 rupees coins to mark his 125th birth anniversary.
- The United Nations celebrated Ambedkar Jayanti for three consecutive years, in 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- In 2020, Canada decided to celebrate Ambedkar birthday as Dr B R Ambedkar Day of Equality.
- In 2021, the Government of British Columbia decided to celebrate his birthday as Dr B R Ambedkar Equality Day.

National Fire Service Day 2021 – 14th April

- The National Fire Service Day is annually observed by the Fire Service personnels across India on 14th April to commemorate the commitment and sacrifices of the 71 fire service personnels who died in the fire accident at freighter SS Fort Stikine at the Victoria Dock, Bombay Port on 14th April 1944.
- The theme of National Fire Service Day 2021 is “Maintenance of Fire Safety Equipment Is Key to Mitigate Fire Hazards”.
- The National Fire Service Day is also observed as the Martyrs day to pay homage to the firefighters who lost their lives in the Bombay explosion and the firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty.
- On 14th April 1944, the freighter SS Fort Stikine at the Victoria Dock of Bombay port (Presently Mumbai) carrying a cargo of cotton bales, gold, and ammunition including around 1,400 tons of explosives caught on fire.
- This incident is known as the Bombay explosion or the Bombay docks explosion.
- The explosion has killed around 800 to 1300 people and 71 firemen.
- The explosion broke the ship into 2 halves and damaged the ships which were present in the vicinity.
- The Fire Service Week or Fire Prevention Week is annually observed across India under the guidance of Fire Advise, Ministry of Home Affairs from 14th April to 20th April.
- The Fire Service Week has been propagated by the National Safety Council Since 1999.

World Chagas Disease Day 2021 – April 14

- The World Chagas Disease Day is annually observed across the globe on 14th April to raise awareness about Chagas disease, a life-threatening illness caused by the protozoan parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi* (T. cruzi).
- In May 2019 the 14th April of every year was established as the World Chagas Disease Day upon the decision of the 72nd World Health Assembly.
- The first World Chagas Disease Day was observed on 14th April 2020.
- 14th April marks the day on which Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas, a Brazilian physician and researcher diagnosed the first human case of the disease, a 2-year-old girl called Berenice Soares de Moura, in 1909.
- The Chagas disease is also known as American Trypanosomiasis.
- The disease is named after Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas, who discovered the disease in 1909.

World Art Day 2021 observed on 15th April

- International Association of Art (IAA/AIAP) a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), a partner of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) celebrated the World Art Day on 15th April annually. The 1st World Art Day was officially

celebrated on April 15th, 2012.

- UNESCO New Delhi Office for Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka offered a special webinar on 2021's World Art Day.
- Webinar Topic – "Shaping the Future for Artists".
- On the 6th World Art Day, IAA/USA (International Association of Art/USA) conducted a special virtual exhibition on the theme "You're Not Alone".
- World Art Day was established at the 17th General Assembly of the International Association of Art in Guadalajara, Mexico.
- To honor "Leonardo da Vinci" a pioneer in Art, his birthday (15th April) was selected as the World Art Day.

About International Art Association (IAA/AIAP):

- **President** – Bedri Baykam
- **Headquarter** – Paris, France

International Day for Monuments and Sites 2021 – April 18

- International Day for Monuments and Sites is annually observed across the globe on 18th April to preserve human heritage which has ancient importance and to recognise the endeavours of the organisations which are working for it. In many countries the day is celebrated as – World Heritage Day.
- The Theme of the International Day for Monuments and Sites 2021 is 'Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures'.
- The world heritage day is an effort of the communities across the globe to do the necessities to preserve the ancient buildings and monuments.
- The International Day for Monuments and Sites is globally promoted by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).
- The 1982 General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) approved establishment of 18th April as International day for Monuments and Sites.
- On 18th April 2021, Prahlad Singh Patel, Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (independent Charge) inaugurated the first ever online exhibition on Ramayana.
- India is the sixth country to have the maximum number of world heritage sites. China, Italy, Spain, Germany, and France have more locations on the list than India.
- India is home to 38 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, out of the 1121 such spots identified around the World. There are 30 cultural sites, 7 natural sites and 1 mixed as recognised by UNESCO.

About International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS):

- **Director General**- Marie-Laure Lavenir
- **Headquarters**– Paris, France

World Liver Day 2021 – April 19

- World Liver Day is annually observed across the globe on 19th April to create awareness about the importance of liver and liver related diseases. The day aims to inform the general public about liver infections and to provide timely treatment for the preventable illness.

World Creativity and Innovation Day 2021 – April 21

- The United Nations (UN)'s World Creativity and Innovation Day is annually observed across the globe on 21st April to create awareness about the role of creativity and innovation in all the aspects of human development.
- The first UN World Creativity and Innovation Day was observed on 21st April 2018.
- The day was founded by Canadian creativity expert Marci Segal, on 25th May 2001, in Toronto, Canada.
- The celebration of the World Creativity and Innovation Week begins on 15th April which marks the birth anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci, the Italian polymath of high renaissance who demonstrated creativity in both arts and science.
- The annual celebrations and observations of the 2021 will be organised by United Nations

Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), alongwith United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Intellectual Property (WIPO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Trade Organization (WTO).

National Civil Services Day 2021 – April 21

- The National Civil Services Day is annually observed across India on 21st April to acknowledge and appreciate the contribution of the civil servants towards ensuring the seamless functioning of the public administration.
- The April 21 was chosen to commemorate the day on which Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Home Minister of Independent India addressed the Administrative service officers at the Metcalfe House, Delhi in 1947. In his address he referred to the civil servants as the “Steel frame of India”.
- The First National Civil Service day was observed on 21st April 2006.
- The examination of Indian Civil Services has been held in India since 1922.
- The government of India instituted the Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Public Administration in 2006.

Administrative Professionals Day 2021 – April 21

- Administrative Professionals Day is annually observed across many countries on 21st April to recognise the work of the administrative professionals towards the seamless functioning of the offices. The day is also known as Secretaries Day or Admin Day.

Earth Day or International Mother Earth Day 2021 – April 22

- The United Nations(UN)’s International Mother Earth Day is observed annually across the globe on 22nd April. It is also called Earth Day. The day aims to create awareness about the deteriorating environment, to protect the people’s livelihood and to stop the biodiversity decline.
- The theme of the Earth Day 2021 is “Restore Our Earth”.
- The 22nd April 2021 marks the celebration of the 51st Earth Day.
- In 1969 at a UNESCO Conference in San Francisco, peace activist John McConnell proposed a day to honour the Earth.
- The day has been observed as the Earth Day since 1970 by the EARTHDAY.ORG in more than 190 countries.
- Earth Day was officially renamed to International Mother Earth Day in 2009.
- The UN observes the International Mother Earth Day through the Harmony with Nature initiative, a platform for global sustainable development.

International Girls in ICT Day 2021 – April 22

- The International Girls in ICT Day is annually observed across the globe on the 4th Thursday in April to bring attention to the critical needs of the girls and women in the ICT sector.
- The year 2021 marks the 10th anniversary of the International Girls in ICT (Information and communication technologies) day.
- The International Girls in ICT Day 2021 was observed on 22nd April 2021.
- The International Girls in ICT Day 2020 was observed on 23rd April 2020
- The International Girls in ICT Day 2022 will be observed on 28th April 2022.
- The theme of the International Girls in ICT Day 2021 is “Connected Girls, Creating Brighter Futures”.
- The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) announced that Every year the 4th Thursday in April will be observed as the international Girls in ICT day.
- The first annual International Girls in ICT Day was observed on 28th April 2011.
- The 10 moments of Girls in ICT is a series of virtual events hosted by the ITU and its partners as a part of the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the International Day of Girls in ICT.

World Book and Copyright Day: April 23

- Every year the World Book and Copyrights Day is celebrated on April 23 by UNESCO. UNESCO is United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. This year, to celebrate the World Book and Copyright Day, UNESCO has created “Bookface Challenge”.

- The first World Book and Copyrights Day was celebrated in 1995. The UNESCO Prize for Children's and Young People's Literature in the Service of Tolerance is awarded on this day. Also, the day will increase the understanding of copyright laws and other measures that protect intellectual properties.
- The UNESCO decided to celebrate the World Book and Copyrights Day on April 23 as it is the death anniversary of William Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega.
- Every year UNESCO and other international organisations select World Book Capital for a one-year capital. This year Tbilisi of Georgia has been selected as the World Book Capital.
- New Delhi was named as the World Book Capital in the year 2003.

UN English Language Day and UN Spanish Language Day – April 23

- The United Nations English Language Day and Spanish Language Day are annually observed across the Globe on 23rd April to promote the use of both English and Spanish respectively as the official language of the organisation.
- UN Spanish language day– 23rd April marks the death anniversary of Miguel de Cervantes, the genius of Spanish literature.
- UN English language day – 23rd April marks both the birth and death anniversary of the famous English playwright William Shakespeare, who was known as “Bard of Avon”.
- The celebrations of the UN English Language Day 2021 focuses on the presence of English in Africa and its interactions with the African languages and arts.
- The UN Spanish Language Day is annually observed on 23rd April to create awareness about the language among the UN's staff and to promote the history, culture and the use of Spanish as the official language of the organisation.
- Spanish is the 2nd language in the world with more native speakers and Mexico is the largest Spanish speaking country.
- It is the 3rd most popular language on the Internet, after English and Chinese.

World Immunization Week 2021 – 24th to 30th April

- World Immunization Week is observed annually across the globe in the last week of April to promote the use of vaccines to protect people against diseases.
- The World Immunisation Week 2021 is observed from 24th April to 30th April 2021.
- The theme of World Immunization Week 2021 is “Vaccines bring us closer”.
- The theme aims to promote the importance of the vaccine in bringing people together and in improving the health of everyone.
- David Beckham, the Goodwill Ambassador of UNICEF and the founder of 7 Funds for UNICEF, leads the global vaccination drive of the World Immunization week 2021.

International Day for Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace 2021 – April 24

- The United Nations International Day for Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace is annually observed across the globe on 24th April to promote the 3 pillars of the United Nations – Peace and Security; Development; and Human Rights.
- To spread the advantages of Multilateralism and diplomacy for peace through education and public awareness activities.
- The first International Day for Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace was observed on 24th April 2019.

About United Nations (UN):

- **Secretary-General**– Antonio Guterres
- **Headquarters**– New York, United States of America

World Day for Laboratory Animals 2021 – 24 April

- The World Day for Laboratory Animals is annually observed across the globe on 24th April. The day is observed as a movement to end the suffering of the animals in laboratories across the globe and replace animal testing with advanced scientific non-animal techniques.
- The World Day for Laboratory Animals is associated with the Lab Animal week which has been observed from 20th to 26th April since 1979.

- The World Day for Laboratory Animals was instituted by the British National AntiVivisection Society (NAVS) in 1979.
- The day April 24 was chosen to honour the birth anniversary of Hugh Dowding, the President of NAVS.

National Panchayati Raj Day 2021 – April 24

- National Panchayati Raj Day or Panchayati Raj Diwas is annually observed across India on 24th April to recognise the work of the Panchayat leaders towards building an AtmaNirbhar Bharat. The day is annually commemorated by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- 24th April 2021 marks the celebration of the 12th National Panchayati Raj Day.
- Panchayat is made up of two words – “Panch”, meaning five, and “Ayat”, meaning assembly.
- The Ministry has decided to commemorate the National Panchayati Raj Day 2021 as a virtual event due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The first National Panchayati Raj Day was observed on 24th April 2010.
- 24th April marks the institution of Panchayat Raj through the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 which came into force in 1993.
- The Panchayati Raj System, referred to as the local self-government of villages in Rural India, was first adopted in the Nagaur District, Rajasthan in 1959 and the system was first started on 2 Oct 1959 by Andhra Pradesh (AP).
- A committee was formed in 1957 to focus on the evolution of Panchayati Raj in the country. The chairman of the committee was Balwantrai Mehta. This committee recommended the Panchayati Raj System consist of 3 levels of governance:

World Veterinary Day 2021 – April 24

- The World Veterinary Day is annually observed across the globe on the last Saturday of April to promote animal health and welfare and to provide global leadership to veterinary professionals across the globe.
- The World Veterinary Day 2021 was observed on 24th April 2021.
- The World Veterinary Day 2020 was observed on 25th April 2020.
- The World Veterinary Day 2022 will be observed on 30th April 2022.
- The theme of World Veterinary Day 2021 is “The Veterinarian Response to the Covid-19 Crisis”.
- The First World Veterinary Day was observed on 29th April 2000.

About World Veterinary Association(WVA):

- **President**– Dr Patricia Turner
- **Headquarters**– Bruxelles, Belgium

World Malaria Day 2021 – April 25

- World Malaria Day is annually observed across the globe on 25th April to highlight the need for investment and commitment towards the prevention and control of malaria.
- The day aims to educate and provide a better understanding of Malaria, a preventable and curable disease.
- The theme of World Malaria Day 2021 is “Reaching the zero malaria target”. RBM Partnership to End Malaria:
- According to the RBM Partnership to End Malaria, the World Malaria Day 2021 will be built on the ‘Zero Malaria Starts with Me’ movement and the ‘Draw the Line against Malaria’ campaign.
- RBM Partnership to End Malaria observes World Malaria Day 2021 under the theme “Zero Malaria – Draw the Line Against Malaria”.
- The First World Malaria Day was observed on 25th April 2008

International Delegate’s Day 2021 – April 25

- United Nations International Delegates Day is annually observed across the globe on 25th April to create awareness about the role of the representatives and delegates of the member states to the United Nations.
- The day recognises the role of the delegates in fulfilling the UN’s goals like maintaining

international peace, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

- The first International Delegate's Day was observed on 25th April 2020.
- The day marks the anniversary of the first day of the San Francisco Conference, which is also known as the United Nations Conference on International Organization held on 25th April 1945.

World Penguin Day 2021 – 25th April

- The World Penguin Day is annually observed across the globe on 25th April to create awareness about the challenges faced by the Penguins due to the overfishing in their ecosystem.
- The World Penguin Day coincides with the annual northern migration of *Adelie penguins*, the smallest and the most widespread species of penguin in the Antarctic.

World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2021 – April 28

- The United Nations World Day for Safety and Health at Work is annually observed across the globe on 28th April to highlight the prevention of accidents and diseases at work and to raise awareness about occupational safety and health.
- On the occasion of World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2021, ILO released a report titled "Anticipate, prepare and respond to crises: Invest now in resilient Occupational Safety and Health systems".
- The World Day for Safety and Health at Work was initiated by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2003.
- The 28th April is also observed as the International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers by the Trade Union Movement since 1996.

International Dance Day 2021 – 29th April

- The International Dance Day is annually celebrated across the world on 29th April the birth anniversary of Jean- Georges Noverre, the creator of modern ballet.
- The day aims to celebrate dance and its universality which unites the people across different political, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
- The International Dance Day was founded by the Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) in 1982.
- Friedemann Vogel, a German ballet dancer, was chosen as the Message author of the International Dance Day 2021.
- Every year the International Dance Committee (IDC) of ITI and the Executive Council of ITI selects the author of the message.

About International Theatre Institute (ITI):

- **President**– Mohamed Saif Al-Afkham
- **Director-General**– Tobias Biancone
- **Headquarters**– Shanghai, China

International Jazz Day 2021 – April 30

- International Jazz Day is annually observed across the globe on 30th April to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role in uniting people across the globe.
- The year 2021 marks the 10th anniversary of International Jazz Day.
- The International Jazz Day is celebrated by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also with its official partners the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz.
- In November 2011, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) General Conference proclaimed the 30th April of every year as the International Jazz Day.

About Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz:

- **President**– Thomas R. Carter
- **Location**- Los Angeles & Washington, DC

Ayushman Bharat Diwas 2021 – 30th April

- Ayushman Bharat Diwas is annually celebrated across India on 30th April to promote affordable medical facilities in the remote parts of India.
- The day aims to promote health and wellness and provide the benefits of insurance to the poor.
- Ayushman Bharat is a flagship scheme of the Government which was launched as recommended by the National Health Policy 2017, with an aim to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The Ayushman Bharat comprises 2 interrelated components
- Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)
- In 2018 the government announced the establishment of 1.5 lakh Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) by transforming the existing sub centres and primary health centres.

World Backup Day 2021 – March 31

- World Backup Day is annually observed on 31st March to remind us to protect our digital documents. The Day was originally started as the World Backup Month instituted by Maxtor, a hard drive company which was later acquired by Seagate Technology.
- The day aims to create awareness about the importance of the role of data and regular backups.
- Backup is a 2nd copy of all the important digital documents stored in a single location like an external hard drive, USB Stick or on the Cloud.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Debut book of Daribha Lyndem titled “Name Place Animal Things”

- The debut book of Daribha Lyndem titled “Name Place Animal Things” examines the boundaries between the adult world and the world of a child. The book takes its name from a beloved school game.
- The book is published by Zubaan Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- The book features a young khasi woman who lives in the city of Shillong, Meghalaya in early 2000s.
- Daribha Lyndem is a writer and a civil servant from Shillong, Meghalaya who works with the Indian Revenue Service and a Deputy Commissioner of Customs.

‘Agriculture in India: Contemporary Challenges – in the Context of Doubling Farmers Income’

- M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India released the book titled “Agriculture in India: Contemporary Challenges – in the Context of Doubling Farmers Income” authored by Dr. Mohan Kanda, former Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh
- The Government of India targets to double the income of farmers by 2022.

Cinema through Rasa: A Tryst with Masterpieces in the Light of Rasa Siddhanta

- The book titled “Cinema through Rasa: A Tryst with Masterpieces in the Light of Rasa Siddhanta” by PrachandPraveer. This is the English translation of PrachandPraveer’s Hindi Book titled “Abhinava Cinema”.
- The book was translated by GeetaMirji Narayan and published by D.K Printworld (P) Limited.
- The foreword of the book was written by Vishnu Khare Bharat Gupt.
- The book views the cinema industry through the Rasa Siddhanta or aesthetics and discusses how the ancient Indian principles govern cinema as they govern the stage.
- The debut book of Prachand Praveer is Alpahari Grihtyagi: IIT Se Pehle (2010).

Venkaiah Naidu Released Book ‘Suparipalana’ by Dr Shailendra Kumar Joshi

- M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India released the book “Suparipalana” authored by Dr Shailendra Kumar Joshi, the former Chief Secretary of Telangana.
- This is the Telugu translation of SK Joshi’s book “Echo T Calling: Towards People Centric Governance”.
- The book was translated by Annavarapu Brahmaiah and published by Maruthi.

Other Books:

- Management of Transboundary Water Resources
- Ek Pratidhwani Jan Kendrit Shaasanki Ore (his first Book in Hindi)
-

‘Wisdom For Start-ups From Grownups: Discovering Corporate Ayurveda’ Book

- The book titled ‘Wisdom For Start-ups From Grownups: Discovering Corporate Ayurveda’ authored by corporate leaders R Gopalakrishnan and R Narayanan was inspired by the Secrets of shinise, Japanese companies dating back to the samurai era (long-lived companies in Japan).
- The book is published by Penguin Random House India.
- This book is a collaborative effort of R Gopalakrishnan and R Narayanan to offer the wisdom of grownup to the startups, presented in the form of all important lessons.
- R Gopalakrishnan is presently the non-executive chairman of Castrol India and an independent director of Hemas holding PLC, Sri Lanka.
- R. Narayanan has been involved with startups who is participating in angel investing and mentoring.

“Akhtari: The Life and Music of Begum Akhtar”

- “Akhtari: The Life and Music of Begum Akhtar” a new book to remember about the life and singing experience of great Indian Singer Begum Akhtar or Akhtari Bai Faizabadi. It was edited

by Yatindra Mishra and published by Harper Collins India.

- This book is a tribute to Begum Akhtar, featuring essays on her life and music, remembrances by those who knew her well, and interviews with the legend herself.
- It was originally written in Hindi and is now available in English which set to be released on April 30, 2021.
- The translators Shuchita Mital, Madhu B Joshi, Shubhangi Mishra, and Maneesha Taneja had done translation works to read it in Hindi and English respectively.
- **1968:** Padma Shri
- **1972:** Sangeet Natak Akademi Award
- **1975:** Padma Bhushan (posthumously)

PM Modi releases Hindi Translation of Odisha Itihaas

- The book was written by Utkal Keshari Dr Harekrushna Mahatab.
- He wrote the book Odisha Itihaas in Ahmednagar Fort Jail. He was imprisoned here for two years between 1942 and 1945.
- He was the first Chief Minister of Odisha. He served as the Chief Minister of Odisha between 1946 and 1950 and again between 1956 and 1961.
- He was popularly known as Utkal Keshari.
- He joined the Salt Satyagraha Movement and was imprisoned in 1930.
- He participated in Quit India Movement and was imprisoned again for two years.
- He founded the Prajatantra Prachar Samiti.
- He started the weekly magazine Prajatantra in 1923. It later became the Daily Prajatantra.
- He acted as the Governor of Bombay from 1955 to 1956.
- He shifted the capital of Odisha from Cuttack to Bhubaneswar.
- It was Mahatab who sanctioned the construction of Hirakud Dam.

Sanjaya Baru releases new book, 'India's Power Elite: Class, Caste and a Cultural Revolution'

- India's famous political commentator, Sanjaya Baru, released his new book "India's Power Elite: Class, Caste and a Cultural Revolution". The book discusses the socio-cultural changes that happened in India after the 2014 General Elections.
- The book analyses the regime of Prime Minister Narendra Modi & Bharatiya Janata Party, on how the party wins state elections in places where it had no footprint.
- He served as Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's media advisor and chief spokesperson (PMO) between May 2004 and August 2008.
- He was the former Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- The Accidental Prime Minister: The Making and Unmaking of Manmohan Singh
- 1991: How P.V. Narasimha Rao Made History
- Strategic consequences of India's economic performance
- India and the World: Essays on Geoeconomics and Foreign Policy

Nitin Anant Gokhale authors new book, "Manohar Parrikar: Brilliant Mind, Simple Life"

- Nitin Anant Gokhale authors his new book, 'Manohar Parrikar: Brilliant Mind, Simple Life' that discusses Manohar Parrikar's political journey & contribution to the country, from an IIT student to a social worker and to India's defence minister.
- The 1st IIT-ian to become a Chief Minister in India.
- He is a 4-time CM of Goa & Former Defence Minister of India.
- Gokhale is the founder of specialised defence related websites – BharatShakti.in. & StratNewsGlobal.com.
- R.N. Kao: Gentleman Spymaster
- Securing India the Modi Way: Balakot, Anti Satellite Missile Test and More
- Securing India The Modi Way: Pathankot, Surgical Strikes and More
- 1965 Turning the Tide

PM Narendra Modi Released 4 books on Life of BR Ambedkar Authored by Kishor Makwana

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually participated in the Association of Indian Universities' 95th Annual Meet and National Seminar of Vice-Chancellors. On the occasion he released 4 books based on Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar's life, which were authored by Kishor Makwana.
- Dr. Ambedkar Jivan Darshan, Dr. Ambedkar Vyakti Darshan, Dr Ambedkar Rashtra Darshan, and Dr. Ambedkar Aayam Darshan.
- 14th April 2021 marks the 130th birth anniversary of B.R. Ambedkar, which is celebrated in India as Ambedkar Jayanti.
- He is the 1st Law Minister of India & popularly known as the "Father of Indian Constitution".
- He was the inspiration behind the 1956 Dalit Buddhist movement in India.
- Books by B.R. Ambedkar – Annihilation of Caste, Who Were the Shudras?, The Buddha and His Dhamma, The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution, Castes in India, Waiting for a Visa.

Suresh Raina Authored His Memoir "Believe- What Life and Cricket Taught Me" With Bharat Sundareshan

- Suresh Raina penned his Memoir "Believe — What Life and Cricket Taught Me" Co-authored by Bharat Sundareshan to be released by May, 2021. The book will be published by Penguin Random House.
- He hails from Uttar Pradesh.
- He is the first Indian batsman to hit a century in all three formats (Test, ODI, T20I) of international cricket.
- He is also the 1st Indian player to score 6,000 and 8,000 runs in T20 cricket.
- He is the first cricketer in the history of the Indian Premier League (IPL) to complete 5000 runs.
- Recently, Suresh Raina was appointed as the brand ambassador of Elista.

About Bharat Sundareshan:

- He is a world-renowned, award-winning cricket writer currently based in Adelaide, Australia. He is the Australian correspondent and senior writer for Cricbuzz. He was well known for his book, "The Dhoni Touch".

Paro Anand Authored the Book Titled "Being Gandhi"

- Paro Anand authored the book on Gandhi, titled "Being Gandhi". The book was published by HarperCollins Children's Books. Illustrations were given by Priya Kuriyan. Paro's story captures the growing relevance of Gandhi's philosophy and the need to rethink it over the course of a decade and with the plagues of social and political division.

Soliha Shabir Named in India's World Records-Youngest & 1st Author in J&K to Recreate Life of Habba Khatoons poetry

- 22 year old Soliha Shabir from Dalgate, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) has added her name in India's World Records, as the youngest and first author from J&K who has recreated the Life of Habba Khatoons poetry.
- She has authored 3 books 'In the lawn of dark', 'Obsolete- The poem Market' and 'Zoon- The heart of Habba Khatoon'.
- Her 3rd book titled – Zoon is the first book which recreated the theme of Habba Khatoon's poetry and essence.

Harry Potter's author J.K. Rowling set to release a Children's novel 'The Christmas Pig'

- JK Rowling, the British author who is well known for the Harry Potter fantasy series set to release her children's novel called "The Christmas Pig".
- 'The Christmas Pig' is a standalone book and it is aimed at kids aged 8 years and above. The book is illustrated by Jim Field.
- She has won many awards including Legion of Honor in 2009 and Tony Award for Best play in 2008.

New Book: “Wanderers, Kings, Merchants: The Story of India through its Languages” by Peggy Mohan

- Noted Linguist Peggy Mohan has authored a new book titled “Wanderers, Kings, Merchants: The Story of India through its Languages”. The book explores the impacts of migration on Indians and Indian languages from ancient times through the early history of South Asia.
- The book was published by Penguin Random House India.
- The book argues that all Indians are of Mixed origins, through the inclusive study of languages like the story of early Sanskrit, the rise of Urdu, language formation in the Northeast.
- The book connects linguistics and history to explore the migration impacts on communication language.
- She has authored 3 novels: ‘Jahajin’, ‘Walk in C-Minor’ and ‘The Youngest Suspect’.

New Book: The Cursed Inheritance authored by Sutapa Basu

- Sutapa Basu the winner of JK Papers AutHer Awards 2020 has authored a new mystery novel titled “The Cursed Inheritance”. The book contributes toward the importance of the conservation of heritage through the stories.
- The book is published by Readomania Publishing.
- The book provides an overall view of the heritage of Kolkata through architecture, social customs, modes of transportation and food.
- Sutapa Basu is the director of Learning Solutions at Eupheus Learning.
- She won the AuthER award for Best Fiction 2020 instituted by Times of India and JK Papers for her book “The Curse of Nader Shah”.
- Padmavati: The Queen Tells Her Own Story
- The Legend of Genghis Khan: Untold Story of the Conqueror
- Dangle
- Out of the Blue: Stories with a Twist

FESTIVALS

Tika Utsav: COVID-19 Vaccination Drive

- Tika Utsav is a vaccine festival. It is to be held between April 11, 2021 and April 14, 2021. The main objective of the festival is to vaccinate as many people as possible. It will also focus on zero wastage of COVID-19 vaccine.
- Currently, three states are receiving maximum number of COVID-19 doses. They are Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.
- COVAXIN and COVISHIELD are the two major COVID-19 vaccines that are currently administered in India.
- So far, India has shipped 64 million doses of vaccines to 84 countries in Caribbean, Africa, and Asia. The major recipient countries of the Indian COVID-19 vaccines are Mexico, Canada, and Brazil.
- The GoI has planned to cover 250 million people included in “high priority” category by July 2021 under its vaccination programme.
- COVAXIN is a government backed vaccine produced by Bharat Biotech. It has an efficacy rate of 81%. More than 27,000 participants have participated in the phase three trials of COVAXIN vaccine. COVAXIN is given in two doses. The time gap between the doses is four weeks. The COVAXIN was prepared from the dead COVID-19 virus.
- The COVISHIELD Vaccine is manufactured by Astra Zeneca. Locally, COVISHIELD is produced by Serum Institute of India. It was prepared from a weakened version of a common cold virus called Adenovirus from Chimpanzees. The virus has been modified to look more like COVID-19 virus. It is administered in two doses.

BANKING NEWS

Restrictions on PMC Bank was Extended till 30 June 2021 by RBI

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) extended the restrictions on withdrawals and deposits in the Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank till 30 June 2021 due to the delay in finalizing a prospective investor for the bank.
- PMC is a multi-state cooperative bank in which they are regulated and supervised by the Central Registrar of Co-operative Societies (CRCS) and RBI.
- RBI had imposed restrictions and curbed all activities such as limiting withdrawals from customers' accounts of PMC Bank in September 2019 after finding financial irregularities, failure of internal control and system and underreporting of exposures.
- RBI appointed an administrator for six months after September 2019 and the restrictions were set to expire on 31 March 2021.
- Initially, the RBI had allowed depositors to withdraw ₹1,000 which was later raised to ₹1 lakh per account to mitigate their difficulties.

SBI Signed a \$1 Billion Loan Agreement with JBIC

- State Bank of India (SBI) has signed a loan agreement of \$1 billion with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) to provide loans for the whole range of business operations of the Japanese automobile manufacturers in India.
- The financing will assist the Government's 'Make in India' initiative.
- The agreement stated that from the total amount of \$1 billion, \$600 million will be financed by JBIC and \$400 million by other participating banks (Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC), MUFG Bank, Mizuho Bank, Shizuoka Bank and Bank of Yokohama).

RBI Fixed the WMA limit to Rs 1.2 lakh Crore for the 1st Half of FY22

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in consultation with the Government, decided the limits for Ways and Means Advances (WMA) for the centre to Rs 1.2 lakh crore for the first half of the

financial year 2021- 22(FY22) i.e. April 2021 to September 2021.

- On April 01, 2020, RBI has fixed the WMA limit to Rs 1.2 lakh crore for the first half of the FY21 but by April 20, 2020, in order to tackle the financial crisis arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has hiked the limit to Rs 2 lakh crore for the remaining months of the first half of FY21.
- For the second half of FY21 i.e. (October 2020 – March 2021), RBI has decided the amount Rs 1.25 lakh crore as the WMA.
- Now for the first half of FY22, the WMA limit has been fixed to the pre-pandemic level of Rs 1.2 lakh crore.

RBI Extended the Timeline for AFA Norms on e-Mandate to September 30, 2021

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) extended the timeline for Banks to move to the new norms for Additional Factor Authentication (AFA) on e-mandate for recurring payments through online transactions by 6 months i.e. till September 30, 2021.
- The framework for e-mandate was first issued by RBI in August 2019 and fixed the timeline up to March 31, 2021 however, banks have not developed capabilities to support the new system and hence it is finally extended to September 30.
- It is a digital payment service initiated by RBI and the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- It will allow the issuing bank and other institutions to automatically debit mentioned amount recurring payments (like insurance premiums, bill payments, loan instalment collections) from the users' bank account without their intervention.
- For opting e-mandate facility the cardholder should undertake a one-time registration process, with Additional Factor of Authentication (AFA) validation by the issuer.
- For auto-debit from cards/wallets above the cut-off (Rs 5,000), an additional one-time password (OTP) should be provided.
- On January 1, 2021, RBI had enhanced the limit for contactless card transactions and e-mandates for recurring transactions through cards and UPI from Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000.

RBI extends tenure of J&K Bank CMD, R K Chhibber by 6 months

- Reserve Bank of India had extended the tenure of Rajesh Kumar Chhibber, the Chairman & Managing Director of Jammu & Kashmir Bank by 6 months or till the appointment of MD & CEO whichever is earlier.
- RBI extended his appointment by exercising its power conferred under Section 10BB (2) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- R K Chhibber was appointed as the CMD of J&K Bank in the year 2019 for the period of 6 months & after that his tenure was extended numerous times.

Government retained the inflation target 4% with a +/-2% Till March 2026

- Government of India has decided to continue the existing inflation-targeting framework which fixed the inflation target (price stability) of 4% with a +/- 2% tolerance band (in the range of 2% – 6%) for the next 5 fiscal years i.e. FY22 to FY26.
- The inflation target for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2026 under the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934 has been kept at the same level as was for previous 5 years.
- In May 2016, the RBI Act, 1934 was amended to provide a statutory basis for the implementation of the flexible inflation targeting framework.
- It allowed for setting an inflation target by the Centre in consultation with the RBI, for every five years.

IRDAI: Health Insurance and Motor Insurance Filing Process Standardised

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) recently standardised the technical notes for filing health and motor insurance policies.
- The IRDAI has lately been taking up several initiatives to standardise the health insurance products in the country. This is mainly being done to reduce the complexities faced by the customers at the time of renewal or buying an insurance policy.
- The IRDAI has standardised the technical notes to file health and motor insurances. The insurers

will now need to submit a technical note detailing the price of his or her insurance product (Insurer is the person who offers the insurance). In other words, the insurer should explain the pricing of every feature of the insurance product. By this, the customers can make an informed and calculative choice. Also, this will ensure uniformity among insurers.

- The changes are being introduced under the provisions of Section 34 of Insurance Act, 1938 and Schedule III of IRDAI (Health Insurance) Regulations, 2016.

NPCI set up a subsidiary firm NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) formed its wholly-owned subsidiary firm called NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited (NBBL) to offer recurring payment services. NPCI transferred all its Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) transaction mandates to the newly formed subsidiary.
- It has a paid-up capital of Rs 5 lakh and a Share capital of Rs 1 crore.
- Bharat BillPay is NPCI's second subsidiary firm after NPCI International Payments (NIPL), which takes care of deployment of the RuPay card scheme and UPI outside of India.
- NBBL is a public company registered in December 2020 with three directors – NPCI chief executive Dilip Asbe, SBI deputy managing director and chief digital officer Ravindra Pandey, and NPCI non-executive chairman Biswamohan Mahapatra.
- The new entity offers various recurring payment services to customers, including bill payments for electricity, telecom, DTH, gas, education fees, water and municipal taxes, NETC FASTag recharge, loan repayments, insurance, cable, housing society, subscription fees, hospital, credit card, clubs and associations.

About NPCI:

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India, is an initiative of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA) under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, for creating a robust Payment & Settlement Infrastructure in India.
- It has been incorporated as a "Not for Profit" Company under the provisions of Section 25 of Companies Act 1956 (now Section 8 of Companies Act 2013)
- AI Chatbot – **PAI**
- Products: **NACH, AePS, UPI, IMPS, NETC, RuPay, APB, NFS, BBPS**
- MD & CEO: **Dileep Asbe**
- **Recently**, NPCI, has allotted 4.63 percent of its equity shares worth Rs 81.64 crore to multiple banks and non-banking payment entities through a private placement.

RBI Tightened the Security Norms for Payment companies

- Following the rise in cyber-security breaches at Indian tech startups over the last few months, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has tightened its supervision norms over Payment companies that are storing customer data.
- As per RBI's norms, from April 1, 2021, all licensed payment system operators (PSOs) have to submit detailed "compliance certificates" to the RBI twice a year.
- The certificate should be signed by their CEOs or managing directors, confirming adherence to all RBI regulations around security and storage of payment data.
- A certificate of compliance is a written document that states the fulfillment of a given requirement. It is a formal certification that declares that an individual or company met a set of conditions.
- These norms came after when the financial data of about 200 million Indian users were breached (especially from the systems of JusPay and Mobikwik).
- RBI's Department of Payment and Settlement Systems (DPSS) issued a letter to all PSOs, which mentioned the RBI's norms to submit the compliance certificate on April 30 and October 31 (for the period ending March 31 and September 30) every year.

Recent Events:

- RBI set up a five-member Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) for evaluating applications for universal banks and small finance banks under former central bank deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath [**Mar 2021**]
- RBI formed 6 member committee under Jayant Kumar Dash for digital lending apps [**Jan 2021**]

PayPal Launches Cryptocurrency Checkout Service in United States

- PayPal Holdings Inc has started allowing United States (U.S.) consumers to use their cryptocurrency holdings to pay its online merchants globally.
- In PayPal digital wallets, Customers who hold bitcoin, ether, bitcoin cash & litecoin will be able to convert their holdings into fiat currencies at checkouts to make purchases.

Cryptocurrency

- A cryptocurrency, is a digital asset designed to work as a medium of exchange wherein individual coin ownership records are stored in a ledger existing in a form of computerized database using strong cryptography to secure transaction records, to control the creation of additional coins, and to verify the transfer of coin ownership.
- It uses Distributed ledger Technology (DLT).
- The process of making these currencies is called mining
- Bitcoin first released as open-source software in 2009, is the first decentralized cryptocurrency. It was created in 2009 presumably by Satoshi Nakamoto.
- Other famous currencies are Litecoin, Ethereum etc
- CBDC– Central Bank Digital Currency

SEBI: India should separate the roles of Chairperson and Managing Director

- The main objective in separating the roles is to provide a better and more balanced governance structure.
- The Section 203 of the Companies Act, 2013 says that an individual shall not be appointed as the chairperson of a company as well as the Managing Director or Chief Executive Officer.
- Chairman is the person responsible for leading the board. He focuses on strategic matters, sets governance standards and oversees group's businesses. He plays a crucial role in bringing the effectiveness of the board and individual directors.
- A Managing Director is a whole-time director controlling the day-to-day affairs of the company.
- The deadline for top 500 listed firms to comply is **April 1, 2022**.
- **Types of Directors**
- **Residential Director**
- A director who has been in India and stayed for not less than 182 days in a previous calendar year (government can change the limit eg. In the recent budget it reduced the limit for a promoter of One Person Companies (OPC) to 120 days)
- **Non-Executive Director**
- A **non-executive director** typically does not engage in the day-to-day management of the organization but is involved in policymaking and planning exercises
- **Independent Director**
- Independent directors are non-executive directors of a company and help the company to improve corporate credibility and enhance the governance standards. They have to meet certain criteria like not being a promoter/employee/director in the present or past, criteria on holding of shares/debts of the company etc.
- **Small Shareholders Directors**
- A listed company, could upon the notice of minimum 1000 small shareholders or 10% of the total number of the small shareholder, whichever is lower, shall have a director which would be elected by small shareholders.
- **Additional Director**
- A person could be appointed as an additional director and can occupy his post until next Annual General Meeting. Eg Recently former RBI Governor **Urjit Patel** appointed Additional Director of **Britannia Industries**
- **Alternate Director**

- Alternate director refers to a personnel appointed by the Board, to fill in for a director who might be absent from the country, for more than 3 months.
- **Nominee Directors**
- Nominee directors could be appointed by a specific class of shareholders, banks or lending financial institutions, third parties through contracts, or by Union Government in case of oppression or mismanagement.

YES Bank Bought RInfra's Reliance Centre at Santacruz

- YES Bank bought the Reliance Centre of Reliance Infrastructure Limited (RInfra) at Santacruz, Mumbai, Maharashtra for Rs.1200 crores. This sale of the office building of 21432.28 square meter plot in Santacruz is utilised to repay the debt of YES Bank.
- Under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act 2002, The YES bank has issued the demand notice to Reliance Infrastructure Ltd on 6th May 2020, for non- payment of loans amounting to Rs. 2,892 crore.
- In July 2020, the YES Bank took over the possession of the Reliance Centre at Santacruz which served as the headquarters of the Anil Ambani's Group.
- Both YES Bank and RInfra have agreed to formalise this into a sale deal.

Recent Events:

- Yes Bank has tied-up with GVFL to strengthen Fintech-led innovation and support the growth of the Indian startup ecosystem. [Apr 2021]
- Yes bank unveils YES MSME scheme [Jan 2021]
- Yes bank appoints Niranjana Banodkar as new CFO [Dec 2020]

Govt has infused Rs 14,500 Cr to 4 PSBs under Zero-Coupon Recapitalisation Bonds

- The Government of India (GOI) has infused Rs 14,500 crore (\$1.98 billion) in four weak Public Sector Banks (PSBs) by issuing them non-interest-bearing Zero-Coupon Recapitalisation Bonds with maturities between March 31, 2031, and March 31, 2036.
- Out of the total amount infused the Central Bank of India was provided with Rs 4,800 crore, Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) with 4,100 crores, Bank of India with Rs 3,000 crore and UCO Bank with Rs 2,600 crore.
- For FY22, the government had allocated Rs 20,000 crore for capital infusion into the public sector banks for meeting regulatory requirements.
- The government has allocated Rs 5,500 crore to Punjab and Sind Bank (P&SB) in Q3FY21.
- Out of four banks, IOB, Central Bank of India and UCO Bank are currently under RBI's prompt corrective action (PCA) framework, which puts several restrictions related to lending, management compensation and directors' fees.
- GoI had infused Rs 2.5 trillion over FY18-FY20. While before FY18, the government would do a direct infusion of equity in PSBs, from FY18 onwards the government has used recapitalisation bonds.

Bonds

A **bond** is simply a loan taken out by a company, an institution or a state/country. Instead of going to a bank, the company gets the money from investors who buy its bonds. In return, the investors get interest (in a coupon-paying bond (or a higher value at maturity (in case of a zero-coupon bond)).

Recapitalisation Bonds:

- These are instruments to **increase the capital** of public sector banks.
- The government issues bonds which are **subscribed by banks**.
- The money collected by the government goes to banks in the form of **equity capital** as the government increases its share of equity holding, thereby increasing up banks' capital reserves.
- The money invested by banks in recapitalisation bonds is classified as an investment which earns them an interest. This helps the government in maintaining its fiscal deficit target as **no money is spent directly**.

Zero Coupon Recapitalisation Bonds:

These are special types of bonds **issued by the Central government specifically to a particular institution.**

- It is **not tradable**, it is **not transferable**.
- It is **limited** only to a **specific bank**, and it is for a **specified period**.
- There is **no coupon**, it is zero coupon, it is **issued at par** and will be **paid at the end of the specified period**.
- The concept of recapitalisation bonds was first introduced in 2017. Prior to this, the capital infusion was done by the government to a bank through cash outgo from the Consolidated Fund of India resulting in fiscal burden.
- In the first year (2017-18) bonds with six different maturities and coupon rates were issued to banks for infusing capital in PSBs.
- In all, the government has issued about Rs 2.5 lakh crore recapitalisation in the last three financial years. In the first year, the government issued Rs 80,000 crore recapitalisation bonds, followed by Rs 1.06 lakh crore in 2018-19. During the last financial year, the capital infusion through bonds was Rs 65,443 crore.
- Recently, the government has used **Zero Coupon Recapitalisation Bonds worth Rs 5,500 crore to recapitalise Punjab & Sind Bank.** [Dec, 2020]

Prepaid Payment Instruments

- The limit of outstanding balance in PPIs is to be increased from the current level of Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakhs.
- The facility of cash withdrawal is to be permitted for full KYC PPIs of non-bank PPI issuers.
- The membership to RBI operated Centralised Payment Systems (NEFT and RTGS) are to be opened to non-banks such as the Central bank regulated payment system operators.

What are PPIs?

PPIs are instruments that facilitate

- (a) purchase of goods and services, including financial services,
- (b) remittances,
- (c) funds transfers, etc., against the value stored in / on such instruments.

Who are the issuers of PPIs?

PPI issuers are companies incorporated in India and registered under the Companies Act, 1956 / Companies Act, 2013. They operate / participate in a payment system for issuing PPIs to individuals / organisations. A company can issue and operate PPIs after receiving authorisation from RBI.

What are the various types of PPIs?

PPIs can be issued in the country under three types:

- **Closed System PPIs:** These are PPIs issued by an entity for facilitating the purchase of goods and services from that entity only. No cash withdrawals are permitted. These instruments cannot be used for payment or settlement for third party services. The issuance and operation of such instruments is not classified as a payment system and does not require approval / authorisation from the RBI.
- **Semi-closed System PPIs:** These are PPIs issued by banks (approved by RBI) and non-banks (authorised by RBI) for purchase of goods and services, including financial services, remittance facilities, etc., for use at a group of clearly identified merchant locations / establishments which have a specific contract with the issuer (or contract through a payment aggregator / payment gateway) to accept the PPIs as payment instruments. These instruments do not also permit cash withdrawal, irrespective of whether they are issued by banks or non-banks.
- **Open System PPIs:** These are PPIs issued by banks (approved by RBI) for use at any merchant for purchase of goods and services, including financial services, remittance facilities, etc. Cash withdrawal at ATMs / Points of Sale (PoS) terminals / Business Correspondents (BCs) is also allowed through these PPIs.

HDFC Bank Smart Up Grants to 21 Social Sector Start Ups

- Around Twenty-one startups that are working in the social sector have been selected to receive the grants.
- The startups were selected through rigorous screening of three hundred applications received from different parts of the country.
- The SmartUp Grants was first instituted in 2017. In the last four years, HDFC has supported more than eighty-seven startups. It has disbursed Rs 19.4 crores under this initiative.
- HDFC provides preference to the startups working in the field of skill development and education. To shortlist the winner, the HDFC bank has partnered with IIT Delhi, IIM Kashipur, AIC-BIMTECH, IIT BHU, GUSEC, C-CAMP, Banasthali University, etc.
- Funding is the major challenge faced by the startups in the country. The other challenges faced are corruption, securing loans and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Startup also face pressure over controversies in tax, especially in Angel Tax.
- Angel Tax is the 30% Tax that are levied over the funding received by the startups from an external investor. This tax was introduced in 2012 mainly to fight money laundering. However, it is levied only when the startups receive angel funding higher than its "fairmarket value".

SEBI Imposed Rs 25 Crore Fine on Ambanis

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) imposed a Rs.25 crores fine on the promoters of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) (Mukesh Ambani, Anil Ambani, Nita Ambani, Tina Ambani) for the violation of the takeover code regulations in 2000.
- The imposed penalty will be jointly paid by the 34 individuals named in the SEBI order which includes the mother and children of Mukesh Ambani and Anil Ambani within 45 days.

RBI Deputy Governor B P Kanungo Retires

- Reserve Bank of India's Deputy Governor, B P Kanungo retired after serving as Deputy Governor for 4 years. He was appointed as Deputy Governor in April 2017.
- As a Deputy Governor, he was in charge of various portfolios including currency management, external investments, operations, payment, and settlement system.
- All his portfolios were reshuffled among the other 3 deputy governors – Mahesh Kumar Jain, Michael Patra and Rajeshwar Rao.

Recent Events:

- RBI came up with a GSAP-1 program [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI increased limit of PPI instruments from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI tightened security norms for payment companies [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI set up a five-member Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) for evaluating applications for universal banks and small finance banks under former central bank deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath [**Mar 2021**]
- RBI formed 6 member committee under Jayant Kumar Dash for digital lending apps [**Jan2021**]

Basic Savings Account can be opened in Post Offices

- The accounts can be opened in an India Post Payment Bank or a Scheduled Commercial Bank.
- The deposit required to open this account is NIL.
- The account shall be opened by a beneficiary of any Government Welfare Scheme. The account shall also be opened by a beneficiary who is a minor. However, it is mandatory for the minor to assign a guardian.
- According to the RBI Guidelines to the Basic Savings Bank Deposit Accounts, the users can deposit or withdraw money from these accounts any number of times in a month. On the other hand, in a Basic Savings Account, withdrawal can be made only four times per month.
- The accounts opened under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana are Basic Savings Account. So far 42.2 crores of such accounts have been opened. They currently hold Rs 1.45 lakh crores of balance.
- The Post Office Savings Account is also a Basic Savings Account. It shall be opened with a minimum amount of Rs 500. It allows to deposit a minimum of Rs 10 and there is no maximum deposit limit.

Airtel Payments Bank Announced 'Rewards123' Savings Account with Benefits On Digital Transactions

- Airtel Payments Bank announced its new savings account 'Rewards123' which offers benefits and value to customers when they transact digitally using the bank account.
- Annual Fee: 'Rewards123' could be availed by the customers at an annual fee of Rs 299
- Consistent rewards for each month along with Annual Cashback Rewards of Rs.960
- Unlimited Deposits with Auto-Sweep Facility (Sweep account opened in Partnership with Suryoday Small Finance Bank, which enables the customers to save more than 1L with Airtel Payments Bank.)
- Other benefits include zero minimum balance and free Platinum Online Mastercard DebitCard.
- Customers can easily open or upgrade to Rewards123 through the Airtel Thanks app using Video KYC.

Payment Banks:

- Formed on the recommendations of Nachiket Mor Committee
- The main objective of payments bank is to widen the spread of payment and financial services to small business, low-income households, migrant labour workforce in secured technology-driven environment.
- Are a type of differentiated bank with certain restrictions
- Can accept only demand deposits
- Cannot accept NRI deposits
- Cannot give loans/advances/credit cards
- Maximum deposit limit Rs 2 lakh (recently increased from 1 lakh)
- Offer remittance services, mobile payments/transfers/purchases and other banking services like ATM/debit cards, net banking and third party fund transfers.
- They have to comply with CRR and SLR requirements
- They have to invest min 75% of deposits in SLR-eligible government securities with maturity upto 1 year and max 25% in scheduled commercial banks.
- Min paid up capital – Rs 100 crore. Min CAR – 15% of RWA (Tier 1 min 7.5% of RWA and Tier2 max upto 1000% of Tier 1)
- On April 11, 2016, Airtel Payments Bank became the first entity in India to receive a payments bank license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

WazirX launched an NFT marketplace for Indian Artists

- WazirX, the Binance-owned cryptocurrency exchange has launched one of India's first marketplaces for Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT), which will enable Indian artists and creators to auction their digital assets over the Blockchain-based platform and earn royalty.
- This marketplace enables the exchange of digital assets and intellectual properties such as art pieces, audio files, videos and even tweets apart from other digital goods and services
- WazirX's NFT initiative is being led by Canada-based entrepreneur Sandesh B Suvarna with film actor and producer Vishakha Singh as an adviser.
- NFTs are a class of cryptocurrency assets in which each item, or token A non-fungible token is a unit of data stored on a digital ledger, called a blockchain, that certifies a digital asset to be unique and therefore not interchangeable.

About WazirX:

- Binance the world's biggest crypto exchange platform has acquired WazirX by the end of 2019.
- **Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **CEO** – Nischal Shetty

Punjab National Bank launches digital initiative PNB@Ease

- **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** launched a digital initiative **PNB@Ease** to commemorate 127 years of their service to the nation. This service is set to be activated across 165 identified locations across India.
- This new initiation will bring a **"Banking-on-the-Go"** model. Using this, customers themselves

can make every transaction undertaken by a bank branch.

- All kinds of services can be availed such as from opening a savings account to apply for various kinds of loans without visiting a branch.
- PNB @Ease outlets will be loaded with five Kiosks i.e. ATM, Bunch Note Acceptor, Account Opening Kiosk, Card Issuance Kiosk, and internet-enabled Kiosk.

Recent Events:

- PNB signed MOU with SwitchOn for first loss default [Apr 2021]
- PNB signed a MOU with Indian Oil Corporation to cater to the financing needs of dealers [Feb 2021]
- PNB launches loan management solution called 'LenS-The Lending Solution' [Dec 2020]

National Housing Bank: Rs 10,000 crore Special Refinance Facility launched

- The main objective of the facility is to provide short term refinance support to the housing finance companies and other eligible Primary Lending Institutions.
- The facility will aid in meeting the short-term liquidity requirement in the Public Lending Institutions.
- The National Housing Bank has launched the initiative with the support from Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The RBI had recently announced under its Monetary Policy Review that Special Liquidity Facility-2 of Rs 10,000 crores will be allocated to National Housing Board for one year. This was done to support the housing sector. The NHB has now launched the refinancing facility based on this allocation made by the Reserve Bank.
- Between May 2020 and August 2020, the National Housing Board provided refinance support of Rs 14,000 crores under the Additional Special Refinance Facility and Special Refinance Facility. It was under another short term liquidity support provided by RBI under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
- In May 2020, the RBI had announced refinance facility of Rs 15,000 crore for SIDBI.
- In April 2020, RBI announced refinance facility of Rs 25,000 crores for NABARD. This was to refinance regional rural banks, micro finance institutions and cooperative banks.
- The Special Refinance Facility is provided by the Reserve Bank of India under Section 17 (3) of Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. Basically, the Section 17 defines how the apex bank shall conduct its business.

About NHB:

- Formed on the recommendations of Dr. C. Rangarajan Committee
- Set up on July 9, 1988 under the National Housing Bank Act, 1987
- 100% shareholding by Central Government
- **Headquarter** – New Delhi
- **MD** - Sarada Kumar Hota

G20 nods to IMF for fresh SDR issue

- The new \$650 billion Special Drawing Rights is being issued by the International Monetary Fund to help the least developed and developing countries that are facing high foreign exchange crisis due to COVID-19.
- Ministers and governors also agreed on a final extension of the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) by six months through end-December 2021
- The G20 Finance Ministers including India opposed the general allocation of new Special Drawing Rights by the IMF. This is because this will not ease financial pressures created by COVID-19.
- The move has drawn criticism from economists as it will lead to skewed allocations towards developed countries who need it the least, with the US, EU and the UK receiving about half the funds, while low-income countries are expected to get only about \$21 billion worth of liquidity.
- The proposal was earlier dropped as the US enjoys a unique veto power at the IMF with 16.52% voting rights. A supermajority vote at the IMF for major policy decisions requires 85% of votes. India has a voting right of 2.6%.

About SDR:

- The Special Drawing Rights is an international reserve asset. It was created by the IMF in 1969 to supplement the official reserves of its member countries.
- The SDR is neither a claim on the IMF nor a currency. It is a potential claim on the freely usable currencies of IMF members.
- SDR is also called paper gold or notional currency. It is an interest bearing asset. The interest rate is called XDR.
- The value of Special Drawing Rights is based on five currencies of the world. They are US dollars, Japanese Yen, Chinese Renminbi (Yuan), British pound sterling and Euro (Weightage: USD > EUR > CNY > JPY > GBP)
- In 2009, the IMF allocated 182.6 billion USD of SDR in the wake of global financial crisis.
- The value of SDR is calculated every day by the IMF.
- The voting power of a member country in IMF is based on the quota that is measured in terms of SDR. The Quota of a country depends on its GDP, Openness, Economic variability and International Reserves.

About G20:

- The G20 is the international forum that brings together the world's major economies. Its members account for more than 80% of world GDP, 75% of global trade and 60% of the population of the planet.
- The members of the G20 are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.

G20 leadership:

- 2021 – Italy
- 2022 – Indonesia
- 2023 – India
- 2024 - Brazil

IRDAI has extended the Regulatory Sandbox Regulations for 2 Years

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has extended the validity of Regulatory Sandbox for 2 years as per the IRDAI (Regulatory Sandbox) (Amendment) Regulations, 2021
- As most of the approved experiments may not be completed (due to COVID-19) within the scheduled time of July 25, 2021.
- This extension of the time period will enable the applicants to complete their existing sandbox experiments and new sandbox proposals also will be allowed.
- The sandbox regulation was introduced by IRDAI in 2019 and scheduled to expire after 2 years i.e. on July 25, 2021, but now due to the extension for 2 more years the total duration of the sandbox regulation now becomes 4 years.
- The applicants should have a net worth of Rs 10 lakh in the previous financial year to file products under the regulatory sandbox.
- Permission for testing in the IRDAI regulation is set for 6 months if needed can avail extension for a maximum period of 6 months to complete the test i.e. all the testing procedures should be completed within a period of 12 months.

Regulatory sandbox:

- A regulatory sandbox (RS) usually refers to live testing of new products or services in a controlled/test regulatory environment for which regulators may (or may not) permit certain regulatory relaxations for the limited purpose of the testing.
- The RS allows the regulator, the innovators, the financial service providers (as potential deployers of the technology) and the customers (as final users) to conduct field tests to collect evidence on the benefits and risks of new financial innovations, while carefully monitoring and containing their risks.
- It can provide a structured avenue for the regulator to engage with the ecosystem and to develop

innovation-enabling or innovation-responsive regulations that facilitate delivery of relevant, low-cost financial product

Recent Events:

- IRDAI released guidelines on Trade Credit Insurance [Apr 2021]
- IRDAI: Health Insurance and Motor Insurance Filing Process Standardised [Apr 2021]

SEBI has revised the Reporting Formats for Mutual Funds

- Based on the consultation from the industry, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has revised the reporting formats for mutual funds with new guidelines.
- The guidelines are for the reports which will be submitted by asset management companies (AMCs) to trustees, by AMCs to SEBI and by trustees to the SEBI.
- SEBI has discontinued the bi-monthly and half-yearly basis submission of the compliance certificate by an AMC to the trustees and added both the reports in their quarterly report.
- SEBI has informed the AMCs to submit the QR on the activities of Mutual Funds/AMCs to trustees within 21 days from the end of respective quarters (March, June, September and December)
- Number of live schemes (as on the last day of the quarter)
- Details of Schemes – which were not constituted, merged, close-ended Schemes Rolled-over and schemes that underwent fundamental attribute change.
- Clearance received to launch New Schemes Details of Assets Under Management (AUM) and details of AMC related information, details related to investment, product, risk management, valuation of investments, investor.
- The guidelines would come into effect from June 2021 (For quarterly report) and – from the half-year ended March 2021 (for half-yearly trustee report).

Recent Events:

- SEBI imposed fine of Rs 25 crore on Reliance [Apr 2021]
- SEBI: India should separate the roles of Chairperson and Managing Director [Apr 2021]

Axis Bank Initiates International Fund Transfer Feature in Mobile App

- Axis Bank has allowed its customers to make International Fund Transfers (send money abroad) in over 100 currencies across 150 countries through the 'Send Money Abroad' feature in the Axis Mobile application with simple two-step process.
- The users can send up to USD 25,000 per transaction for any different purposes such as education fee payment, family maintenance, and health-related expenses.

RBI set up RRA 2.0 to streamline its Regulations and Reduce Compliance

- RBI has formed the second Regulations Review Authority (RRA) named RRA 2.0 to Streamline its Regulations and Reduce Compliance.
- RBI has set up the first RRA for one year i.e. from April 1, 1999, to April 1, 2000, in order to review the regulations, circulars, reporting systems of RBI based on the feedback from the public, banks and financial institutions.
- Y.V. Reddy, the Deputy Governor of that time has been appointed as the first head of RRA.
- After two decades, the second RRA i.e. the RRA 2.0 was formed to undertake a review of RBI's regulations and compliance procedures, in order to make them more effective.
- It was also set up for a period of one year from May 01, 2021, unless its tenure is extended by RBI.
- M. Rajeshwar Rao, Deputy Governor was appointed as the head of RRA.
- It will work in reducing the compliance burden on regulated entities. This is to be done by streamlining the reporting mechanism, removing paper-based submission of returns wherever possible and revoking obsolete instructions.
- The RRA will also obtain feedback from regulated entities on simplification of procedures and enhancing the ease of compliance. The RRA will also examine and suggest the changes required in the dissemination process of RBI instructions and circulars.

Recent Events:

- RBI came up with a GSAP-1 program [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI increased limit of PPI instruments from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI tightened security norms for payment companies [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI set up a five-member Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) for evaluating applications for universal banks and small finance banks under former central bank deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath [**Mar 2021**]
- RBI formed 6 member committee under Jayant Kumar Dash for digital lending apps [**Jan 2021**]

ETMONEY launched India's first Aadhaar-based SIP payment

- ETMONEY launched India's first Aadhaar-based Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) payments feature. This feature will enable anyone to start a SIP online and make automatic payments using a simple Aadhaar based One-Time Password (OTP) verification.
- The Aadhaar-linked SIP payment will enable more Indians to invest regularly through SIPs as more than 100 crore bank accounts are linked in Aadhaar and as the payment is done through OTP verification, it makes the online investment easier.
- As SIPs will do monthly investments through automated payment, the new feature will setup the users SIP mandates (automated SIP payment) easily through their Aadhaar linked bank accounts.

Citi bank to withdraw consumer banking business in India

- The multinational investment bank, Citi bank headquartered in New York has announced to exit its consumer banking operations in India. However it will retain wealth management and other operations.
- As a part of its global restructuring process Citi bank has decided to close its operations in consumer banking in 13 countries which includes Australia, Bahrain, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Poland, Russia, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.
- This exit has been made mainly to focus on the banks in Asia and EMEA (Europe, Middle-East and Africa) regions across four wealth centers viz Singapore, Hong Kong, the UAE and London.
- Citi began operations in India over a century ago in 1902 in Kolkata

Sudarshan Sen Committee of RBI

- The Reserve Bank of India recently set up a committee to study about the Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARC) in the country. The committee will evaluate the role of ARCs in debt resolution and will review their business model.
- The Committee is headed by former RBI Executive director Sudarshan Sen.
- The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act was enacted in 2002. The regulatory guidelines for Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARC) were issued under the SARFAESI Act in 2003. Since then the ARCs have grown in size and numbers. However, their potential to resolve stressed assets is yet to be realised completely.

Asset Reconstruction Companies:

- ARCs are institutions that buy NPAs from banks and clean up their balance sheet.
- SARFAESI Act, 2002 provides the legal basis for the setting up of ARCs in India.
- Minimum capital requirement to set up an ARC is Rs 100 crore
- Capital Adequacy Ratio must be 15%

JNPT Hired 'SBI Caps' as a Transaction Advisor for Privatization of JNPT

- Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) has hired SBI Capital Markets Ltd. (SBI Caps), a subsidiary of State Bank of India (SBI) to act as transaction advisor for the privatization of the J N Port Container Terminal (JNPT).
- JNPT has planned to privatize the JNPT through the public-private-partnership (PPP) route in December 2020, and it was evaluated by the standing finance committee (SFC) in the ministry of ports, shipping, and waterways (MoPSW).
- JNPT has appointed SBI Caps as the transaction advisor for the PPP project which is estimated

to cost Rs.863.31 crores.

- JNPT is looking to privatize the terminal under PPP mode on upgradation, operation, maintenance, and transfer (UOMT) basis.
- It is one of the five container terminals at JNPT

SEBI Issued Guidelines for Warehousing Norms for Agri and Non-Agri Goods

- SEBI has issued guidelines for preparing warehousing norms by Clearing Corporations (CCs) for agricultural/agro-processed goods and non-agricultural goods (base and industrial metals). The guidelines would come into effect from June 1, 2021.
- The norms set by CCs will be the minimum requirements/standards that its Warehouse Service Providers (WSPs) should comply with.
- In addition to the norms of CCs, the WSPs should comply with the norms laid down by Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA)

Warehousing Norms:

- **Capital:** An accredited WSP should have a minimum subscribed and paid-up share capital of Rs 10 crore.
- **Experience:** The promoter or promoter groups of a WSP are required to be in the public warehousing business for at least 3 years and a CC can relax the requirement, based on certain conditions.
- **Net worth:** The net worth required of a WSP varies for agricultural/agri-processed, base/industrial metals and composite goods and they will get six months to augment the net worth in case there is a reduction of net worth below the stipulated amount.
- The value of the goods stored in the accredited storage facilities of WSP should not exceed 33 times the net worth of the WSP (irrespective of the number of CCs it serves)

About Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI):

- **Establishment** – 1992
- **Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **Chairman** – Ajay Tyagi

First Neobank in Kerala – Launched by Aceware Fintech

- Aceware FinTech Services, a Kerala-based fintech services company, launched Kerala's first neobank called Ace Money Neobank, in partnership with YES Bank and ICICI Bank.
- Under Ace Money Neobank, the start-ups, merchants, and enterprise entities can open present accounts, in line with the corporate.
- Its services include Doorstep supply of cash, money transfer, bill payments and recharges, land and building tax payment, ticket bookings, birth, death, and marriage certificates, passport, pan card, Fastag, and insurance services.

India's first NeoBanks:

- **Chqbook (Chqbook.com)**– India's first Neobank for small business owners like kiranas, merchants, chemists, and others running proprietorships.
- **FamPay** – India's first Neobank for teenagers.
- **Finin** – India's first full-fledged consumer neobank (along with SBM Bank).

Neobank:

A neobank is a kind of digital bank without any branches. Rather than being physically present at a specific location, neobanking is entirely online. Neobanks don't have a bank license of their own but count on bank partners to provide bank-licensed services.

IOB appoints Ernst & Young as its Digital Consultant

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) appointed Ernst & Young Global Limited, a multinational professional services network as its digital consultant. This partnership is a part of IOB's growth strategy to transform its banking services into Digital format.
- The Digital consultant will support IOB to focus on utilizing and adopting the new technologies

and enhance its service quality and delivery to its customers.

Tata Steel and HSBC Executed Global First Blockchain-enabled, Paperless Trade Transaction in Steel Industry

- Tata Steel Ltd and HSBC, a banking and financial services organisation, executed the global first blockchain-enabled paperless transaction in steel industry. Under the transaction, Tata Steel exported steel to Universal Tube & Plastic Industries, UAE.
- Contour and essDOCS are the blockchain platforms used under the transaction.
- HSBC UAE has issued the Letter of Credit (LC) to Universal Tube & Plastic Industries (Importer) with HSBC India, as the advising and negotiating bank for Tata Steel (Exporter)

About Tata Steel Ltd:

- **Headquarters** – Jamshedpur, Jharkhand
- **CEO & MD** – Mr T V Narendran

RBI decides not to Activate CCyB due to Lack of Necessity

- In April 2021, Based on the empirical testing and review of Counter-Cyclical Capital Buffer (CCyB) indicators by the Reserve Bank Of India (RBI), it has decided not to activate CCyB at present as there is no necessity for it.
- In February 2015, RBI has proposed the CCyB as a part of its Basel-III norms (not activated) and stated that it would be activated as and when there is a necessity. (But till now keeping the ratio at 0 per cent)
- It is a part of Basel-III capital adequacy norms, which helps a bank to overcome distressed economic conditions.
- As per CCyB, banks will be required to set aside a higher portion of their capital during good times (when loans are growing rapidly), and that capital could be released and used during bad times (when there is distress in the economy).
- CCyB is supposed to be in the form of equity capital.

About Basel III:

- Basel III is an internationally agreed set of measures developed by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) in response to the financial crisis of 2007-09. The measures aim to strengthen the regulation, supervision and risk management of banks.
- BCBS was established in 1974 and is headquartered in Basel, Switzerland.
- Basel III norms were finalized in 2017. However, implementation of some clauses has been deferred till 1 Jan 2023.
- Basel Norms have three pillars – Capital Requirement, Supervisory Review and Market Discipline.
- RBI has decided to defer the requirement of last tranche of 0.625% of Capital Conservation Buffer (CCB) and Net stable funding ratio (NSFR) to Oct 1, 2021

Recent Events:

- RBI set up a committee under Sudarshan Sen to review working of ARCs [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI has set up Regulations Review Authority RRA 2.0 [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI came up with a GSAP-1 program [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI increased limit of PPI instruments from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI tightened security norms for payment companies [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI set up a five-member Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) for evaluating applications for universal banks and small finance banks under former deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath [**Mar 2021**]
- RBI formed 6 member committee under Jayant Kumar Dash for digital lending apps [**Jan 2021**]

PhonePe becomes 1st company to cross 1 billion transactions in UPI

- Walmart owned PhonePe, a digital payments and financial services company has become the first company to cross 1 billion transactions on Unified Payment Interface (UPI). The company has crossed over 1.3 billion transactions on its platform across payment offerings of wallet cards

and UPI in March 2021.

- The growth has come on the back of the rapid expansion it has seen in offline payments across tier-2, tier-3 cities, having already digitised over 17.5 million kiranas. The company had previously announced its plans to digitize 25 million kiranas by the end of 2021.
- The development comes at a time when UPI has broken a new record, crossing Rs 5 trillion in value in March across 2.73 billion transactions, according to the NPCI

SBI MF becomes 1st mutual fund company to cross Rs.5 lakh crore AAUM

- SBI Mutual Funds (MF) announced that its Average Assets under Management (AAUM) has crossed Rs.5 lakh crore making it the first mutual fund company to cross this mark.
- Its AAUM has increased to Rs.5.04 lakh crore in 2020-21 from Rs.3.37 lakh crore in 2019-20 fiscal year.
- SBI MF has seen a growth of 35 percent during the financial year 2020-21.

RBI Fixed the Bank's MD&CEOs Tenure at 15 years; Upper age limit at 70 years

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) through its circular – “Corporate Governance in Banks – Appointment of Directors and Constitution of Committees of the Board”, has fixed 15 years as the tenure for the Managing Director and Chief executive officers (MD & CEOs) or whole-time directors (WTDs) to hold their post in a bank.
- RBI's instructions are meant for private sector Banks, small finance banks (SFBs) and wholly-owned subsidiaries of foreign banks.
- The instructions are not applicable for foreign banks operating as branches in India.

Recent Events:

- RBI released State of the Economy Report for April 2021 [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI decides not to Activate CCyB due to Lack of Necessity [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI formed Sudarshan Sen committee for ARCs [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI has set up Regulations Review Authority RRA 2.0 [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI came up with a GSAP-1 program [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI increased limit of PPI instruments from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI tightened security norms for payment companies [**Apr 2021**]
- RBI set up a five-member Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) for evaluating applications for universal banks and small finance banks under former central bank deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath [**Mar 2021**]
- RBI formed 6 member committee under Jayant Kumar Dash for digital lending apps [**Jan2021**]

Paytm Launched India's 1st Video-based Wealth Community

- Paytm, the digital financial service company introduced India's first video-based wealth community for the users to interact with subject-matter experts in live sessions on different wealth topics such as Initial public offering(IPO), Futures and Options(F&O), Exchange- traded funds(ETFs), mutual funds, stocks, gold, fixed income, and personal finance.
- The Paytm wealth community will be owned and operated by One97 Communications Limited (OCL Ltd) and the beta mode of the community was launched on the Paytm Moneyplatform.
- Recently, LIC partnered with Paytm for handling e-payments

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Artemis Programme: NASA to land first person of colour on the moon

- NASA had finalised around 18 astronauts under its Artemis Programme. It included the Indian American Raja Chari. However, NASA is yet to announce the first two crew members of the Artemis programme. NASA has now planned to include a person of colour in the crew. With this, NASA will be landing the first person of colour on the moon under the programme. NASA has requested 24.7 billion USD of funding for 2022.
- Artemis Programme is an international human space flight programme funded by the US Government.
- The main objective of the programme is to launch a manned mission to the south pole region of the moon by 2024.
- The programme is predominantly carried out by NASA. The other international partners in the programme are JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency), Italian Space Agency, UK Space Agency, UAE space Agency, Brazilian Space Agency, Australian Space Agency, State Space Agency of Ukraine, Canadian Space Agency, and the European Space Agency.
- The total cost of the programme is estimated to be 35 billion USD.
- The programme is to be implemented in three parts. They are as follows:
- Artemis I: To be launched in 2021 and is an uncrewed flight. It will test the Space Launch System and the Orion spacecraft.
- Artemis II: It is the first crewed flight test and is targeted to be launched in 2023.
- Artemis III: It will land astronauts on the south pole of moon in 2024.

About National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):

- **Headquarter:** Washington DC
- **Acting Administrator:** Steve Jurczyk

Recent Events:

- NASA's Ingenuity to make first flight attempt [Apr 2021]
- Perseverance, Tianwen-1, Hope: US, China, UAE spacecrafts arrive at mars in quick succession [Feb 2021]

IIT Kanpur develops touch sensitive watch for visually impaired

- The user has to touch and scan the hour indicator of the watch to know the time. The watch then communicates back to the user with the help of different vibration patterns. The watch provides user privacy as it does not require audio feedback.
- Currently, mechanical watches are available for the visually impaired. Here the user has to feel the needles of hour and minute hand to know the time. On the other hand, the touch sensitive watch developed has no moving parts. Thus, there is no scope of breakage in the touch sensitive watch.
- The programme was launched in 1976.
- The main objective of the programme was to reduce the prevalence of blindness in the country from 1.4% to 0.3%. The prevalence of blindness was 1% in 2007.

Atal Innovation Mission: CSIR Adopts 295 Atal Tinkering Labs

- The CSIR scientists are to mentor each of the Atal Tinkering Labs.
- CSIR and Atal Innovation Mission will conduct series of webinars for the students.
- The pandemic has reinforced the importance of scientific and industrial research. Therefore, the partnership will boost Atal Innovation Mission and will push it towards STEM research and innovation collaborations.
- The collaboration with CSIR will provide great opportunities for the best young minds in the country to get access to the latest technologies.
- With a vision to 'Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators', Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India.

- ATL is a state-of-the-art space established in a school with a goal to foster curiosity and innovation in young minds, between grade 6th to 12th across the country through 21st century tools and technologies such as Internet of Things, 3D printing, rapid prototyping tools, robotics, miniaturized electronics, do-it-yourself kits and many more.

Recent Events

- Chetan Vaishnav Mission Director [**Apr 2021**]
- The CIPS and Atal Innovation Mission signed a Statement of Intent to promote innovation in the area of public system. This is to be achieved with the help of knowledge and experience of AIM and CIPS. [**Apr 2021**]
- ISRO adopted 100 ATLs across the country [**Jan 2021**]
- Atal Innovation Mission launched The Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook 2.0 [**Jan 2021**]
- ATL + NIC + CBSE + MeITY launched CollabCad 3D e-book [**Jan 2021**]

NASA's Ingenuity to make first flight attempt

- The Ingenuity Helicopter is a part of the Mars 2020 Mission of NASA.
- It will serve as a technology demonstrator for the potential use of flying probes in other worlds.
- It was carried to the Martian surface by the Perseverance rover that landed at the Octavia Butler Landing site in Jezero crater.
- The Ingenuity carries a piece of fabric from the wing of Wright Flyer. The Wright Flyer is the airplane of the Wright Brothers.
- The Mars 2020 mission is a part of Mars Exploration Programme of NASA. It was launched from the earth in July 2020. It reached Mars in February 2021.

About National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):

- **Headquarter:** Washington DC
- **Acting Administrator:** Steve Jurczyk

Recent Events:

- Perseverance, Tianwen-1, Hope: US, China, UAE spacecrafts arrive at Mars in quick succession [**Feb 2021**]

Odyssey Completes 20 years: NASA releases Electric Blue Dune Images

- The set of images released were clicked on the Mars. The planet looked in electric blue in the image.
- The title of the image was "Blue Dunes on the Red Planet".
- The image combines shots taken by the Mars Orbiter Odyssey in December 2002 and November 2004.
- The image had two types of dunes. One set of dunes were bluish representing colder climates. The other set of dunes were yellowish in colour and represented warmer climates.
- The THEMIS instrument on the Mars Odyssey captured the shots. THEMIS is Thermal Emission Imaging System. It had sent more than one million images since it began orbiting the planet.
- Odyssey is the longest lasting spacecraft in Mars till date. It was launched on April 7, 2001. It arrived at Mars on October 24, 2001.

About National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Headquarter: Washington DC

Acting Administrator: Steve Jurczyk

Aahaar Kranti: Mission launched by Health Minister

- The Mission is designed to address the major problem faced by India and the world, which is, "Hunger and Diseases in Abundance".
- The mission is also co-launched by the Vijnana Bharti and Global Scientists and Technocrats Forum.
- The motto of the mission is "Good Diet-Good Cognition".

- The mission will train the teachers. The teachers in turn will pass on the message to students. Through the students the mission aims to pass on the message to the families and societies at large.
- According to UNICEF, India is at the tenth spot among countries with highest number of underweight children. Also, the organisation says that India is at the seventeenth spot among countries with highest number of stunted children.
- According to the recent National Family Health Survey, the percentage of stunted children in 2015-16 was 38.4%.

Odyssey Completes 20 years: NASA releases Electric Blue Dune Images

- The set of images released were clicked on the Mars. The planet looked in electric blue in the image.
- The title of the image was “Blue Dunes on the Red Planet”.
- The image combines shots taken by the Mars Orbiter Odyssey in December 2002 and November 2004.
- The image had two types of dunes. One set of dunes were bluish representing colder climates. The other set of dunes were yellowish in colour and represented warmer climates.
- The THEMIS instrument on the Mars Odyssey captured the shots. THEMIS is Thermal Emission Imaging System. It had sent more than one million images since it began orbiting the planet.
- Odyssey is the longest lasting spacecraft in Mars till date. It was launched on April 7, 2001. It arrived at Mars on October 24, 2001.

About National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

- **Headquarter:** Washington DC
- **Acting Administrator:** Steve Jurczyk

SpaceX Announced 4 Member Crew for “Inspiration4”, World’s 1st all-civilian Earth Orbiter Mission

- SpaceX announced the 4 member crew for the World’s 1st all-civilian Earth Orbiter Mission, “Inspiration4”. Christopher Sembroski, Dr. Sian Proctor, Jared Isaacman and Hayley Arceneaux were the 1st batch of civilians aboard the Crew Dragon Resilience spacecraft to be launched into orbit by SpaceX’s Falcon 9 rocket by September 15, 2021.

Recent Events:

- Noura al-Matroushi was selected as the first female astronaut of UAE accompanied by Mohammed al-Mulla [Apr 2021]
- NASA’s Ingenuity to make first flight attempt [Apr 2021]
- Perseverance, Tianwen-1, Hope: US, China, UAE spacecrafts arrive at mars in quick succession [Feb 2021]

About SpaceX

- **CEO:** Elon Musk
- **Headquarters:** Hawthorne, California, United States

NASA to launch SpaceX Crew 2

- It is the second crewed operational flight of Crew Dragon Spacecraft.
- The mission will transport four scientists to the International Space Station.
- The astronauts to travel to the International Space Station are from NASA, JAXA and ESA. JAXA is Japanese Space Agency and ESA is European Space Agency.
- Crew Dragon was the first space vehicle to launch humans from American soil in nine years. It was first launched in May 2020. It was funded through NASA’s commercial Crew Programme. It evolved from an earlier design called Dragon 1. Dragon 1 was launched more than twenty times on missions to deliver cargo to the International Space Station between 2012 and 2020.
- SpaceX Crew 1 was the first time astronauts used a spaceship developed and launched by a private company. Also, it carried back astronauts to the earth.

About National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):

- **Headquarter:** Washington DC
- **Acting Administrator:** Steve Jurczyk

Luna 25: Russian Moon mission

- The Roscosmos is to launch Luna 25 by October 2021. The Roscosmos is the State Space Corporation of Russia that is responsible for space flights, aerospace research and cosmonautics programmes.
- The Mission will carry a lander. The primary objective of Luna 25 is to prove landing technology.
- It is to carry thirty kilo grams of scientific instruments including a robotic arm and drilling hardware to collect soil samples.
- It will study the exosphere around the south pole of the moon. Till date no spacecraft has been to this region of the moon
- The last of the Luna series was Luna 24 that was launched in 1976. It was the third Soviet Union mission to retrieve lunar surface samples. The first Luna mission was launched in 1970.

DRDO develops Supplemental Oxygen Delivery System

- The Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) has recently developed a Supplemental Oxygen Delivery System. It is to be used for soldiers posted at extreme high-altitude areas.
- The system was developed by the Defence Bio-Engineering and Electro Medical Laboratory (DEBEL) located in Bengaluru. It operates under DRDO.
- The system shall also be used to provide medical oxygen to COVID-19 patients. India is now on high demand of medical oxygen with COVID-19 cases increasing at great level. The Government of India is to establish 162 oxygen manufacturing plants that will provide medical oxygen, especially to hospitals in rural. Of these, 100 are to be funded by the PM- CARES fund. Also, India is to import 50,000 tonnes of Oxygen.

Recent Events:

- DRDO to partner with Private Sector in Missile Production [Apr 2021]
- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) inks pact with DRDO to mitigate avalanche, landslide in highways [Mar 2021]
- DRDO tests Solid fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) Technology [Mar 2021]
- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will strengthen its ties with the IIT Bhubaneswar (IIT-BBS) further to develop it as a centre of excellence for promoting defence research [Feb 2021]
- DRDO develops India's first machine pistol ASMI [Jan 2021]
- DRDO successfully conducted the maiden launch of the new generation of surface-to-air Akash missile from integrated test range off the coast of Odisha [Jan 2021]

About DRDO:

- Established in 1958
- Chairman – G. Sateesh Reddy
- Headquarter – New Delhi

NASA Ingenuity Helicopter makes historic flight

- The Ingenuity Mars Helicopter has successfully become the first aircraft in history to fly in another planet.
- The helicopter was carried by the Perseverance Mars rover. Perseverance rover is a part of the Mars 2020 mission. The Mars 2020 was launched on Atlas V launch vehicle.
- The success message of the flight of the helicopter was received through the Perseverance rover. Perseverance Rover acted as the medium of communication throughout the flight of Ingenuity. It is a solar powered helicopter.
- The total time of the flight was 39.1 seconds.

- The Deep Space Network, also called the DSN of NASA is an international array of giant radio antennas. It supports interplanetary space missions. It is operated by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory of NASA.
- The DSN is located in three different locations. The locations are spaced at 120 degrees apart in longitude around the world. The antennas of the network are located in Madrid (Spain), Goldstone (California) and Canberra (Australia).
- The sites have been chosen in such a way that they permit constant communication between NASA and spacecraft. Also, the sites have been selected in such a way that the next site takes over before previous site sinks below the horizon of the spacecraft.

Russia to launch its own Space Station

- The agreement between Roscosmos and its international partners is to run out in 2024. With this, Russia has planned to pull out of the International Space Station and launch its own space station in 2025.
- According to Russia, the structure of the International Space Station is ageing. With the station becoming older, it can lead to irreversible consequences.
- The International Space Station was launched by the US space agencies and Russian Space agencies in 1998. The other countries that were involved in the launch of the International Space Station were Canada, European Space Agency and Japan. The ISS revolves around the earth in 93 minutes. It makes 15.5 orbits per day. It travels at an orbital velocity of 7.7 kilometres per second.
- The Roscosmos also announced that the first core module of the new Russian orbital station is ready. Russia aims to launch the module by 2025. This new space model is being assembled at a cost of 5 billion USD.
- Russia recently announced that it has signed an agreement with China to establish a Lunar research station on the moon.
- Recently, Russian President Putin signs Law paving way to rule until 2036

MOXIE- Mars Oxygen In-Situ Resource Utilization Experiment

- The Perseverance rover of Mars 2020 Mission of NASA recently converted carbon dioxide into oxygen. This is the first time this has been achieved in another planet. This was achieved by MOXIE, an instrument placed in the front side of the rover.
- MOXIE is Mars Oxygen In-Situ Resource Utilisation Experiment. It is a golden box placed in the front side of the rover.
- MOXIE is also called “Mechanical Tree”. This is because, it uses electricity and chemistry to split carbon molecules into carbon and oxygen. In due process, it produces carbon monoxide as a by product.
- MOXIE produced five grams of oxygen in its first run. It is equal to ten minutes of breathable oxygen for an astronaut performing a normal activity.
- MOXIE is capable of generating ten grams of oxygen in one hour.
- MOXIE was designed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).
- MOXIE was covered with gold coating so that the heat radiated does not harm the rover.
- According to the scientists at MIT, one ton version of MOXIE is capable of producing twenty-five tonnes of oxygen.
- Perseverance landed on Mars on February 18, 2021. It carried the Ingenuity helicopter. The helicopter recently made its successful flight. This was first flight in another planet.

Cosmic Rose of NASA

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) recently shared an image of “Cosmic Rose”.
- Cosmic Rose is an image captured by Hubble Space Telescope of NASA. The image featured interacting galaxies Arp 273.
- It lies in the Andromeda constellation.
- It is 300 million light years away from the earth.
- It is a combination of spiral galaxy UGC 1810 and UGC 1813.
- The Interacting **Galaxies are those galaxies whose gravitational fields disturb one another.**

Zhurong: China's first Mars rover

- China has named its first Mars rover as Zhurong after a traditional fire god. The name signifies igniting the flame of Planetary Explorations of China.
- Zhurong is on board Tianwen-1 Space probe.
- It arrived at the Mars orbit in February 2021 and is due to land on the planet in May 2021.
- With Zhurong, China will become the third country after Soviet Union and USA to achieve soft landing on Mars. Also, it will become the second country put a rover on Mars after the US.
- The main aim of Tianwen-1 is to analyse and map the Martian surface and look for water ice and study the climate and surface environment.
- It was launched in July 2020.
- Tianwen-1 was launched with an orbiter, camera, lander and the Zhurong rover.

UK to build World's most powerful climate-change forecasting supercomputer

- Met Office and Microsoft are to build a weather forecasting supercomputer in the UK. The UK Government is to invest 1.2 billion Pound Sterling in the project.
- The supercomputer is expected to be one of the top twenty-five supercomputers in the world.
- It will help in better understanding of Climate Change.
- The Supercomputer is to run completely on renewable energy. This will help to save 7,415 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide in one year. Supercomputers release huge amounts of heat and thus a strong cooling system is required for their operation. Thus, energy required to maintain supercomputers is high.
- It will have more than 1.5 million processor cores
- The supercomputer will be able to do 60 quadrillion calculations per second, which is 60,000,000,000,000.

Aditya-L1 Support Cell (ALISC)

- A Community Service Centre has been set up on board India's first dedicated Solar Space Mission. The centre is called ALISC. ALISC is Aditya-L1 Support Cell. It is to be set up at the ARIES at Haldwani, Uttarakhand.
- It is a joint effort of ISRO and ARIES. ISRO is Indian Space Research Organisation and ARIES is Aryabhata Research Institute for Observational Sciences.
- It will bring all the data from the mission under one single interface.
- Aditya-L1 is an Indian space mission that will study the sun and also the region between the earth and the sun. It is to carry seven payloads developed by different institutions of the country.
- One of the payloads is the VELC, that is, Visible Emission Line Coronagraph.
- The satellite weighs 400 kilograms and is to be launched in the low earth orbit at a height of 800 km. Orbits that are at a height of less than 1000 km from the earth are called Low Earth Orbits.

SPORTS

2021 Bahrain Grand Prix of Formula One

- Mercedes Driver Lewis Hamilton (Great Britain) won the 2021 Bahrain Grand Prix (officially known as Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2021) held at Bahrain International Circuit, Sakhir, Bahrain.
- Red Bull Racing's driver Max Verstappen (Netherlands) finished 2nd in the race, while Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas (Finland) finished 3rd in the race.
- The victory was Hamilton's 96th Formula One Victory.
- The Formula One World Championships are organized by Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA)

About Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA):

- **President** – Jean Todt
- **Headquarters** – Paris, France

FIFA Women's World Cup

- Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) has announced the 9 host cities & 10 stadiums for the 2023 Women's Football World Cup spread across Australia & New Zealand.
- The opening match will be held in Auckland, New Zealand and the Finals in Sydney, Australia.
- For the 1st time in the history of FIFA Women's tournament, 32 teams will be participating in the 2023 World Cup (Previously, only 24 teams).
- This is also the 1st time countries from 2 different confederations co-host a FIFA World Cup.
- Australia – Asian Confederation
- New Zealand – Oceania Confederation

Kamalpreet Kaur – India's Discus Thrower

- Kamalpreet Kaur, An Indian women's Discus thrower qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games set to be held in Japan (from July 23 - 8 August, 2021), after she sent the discus to 65.06 metres at the 24th Federation cup Senior Athletics Championships held in Patiala, Punjab. With this, she set a new national record & breached the Olympic Qualification mark of 63.50 m. She became the 1st Indian women to breach the 65m Barrier in discus throw.
- She broke the previous record of 64.76 set by Krishna Poonia in 2012.

Uzbekistan to host AIBA's 2023 Men's Boxing World Championship

- International Boxing Association (AIBA) announced Tashkent, the capital city of Uzbekistan as the host city for 2023 Men's Boxing World Championship. The biennial event is the highest event in the sport of Boxing.
- For the 1st time Uzbekistan is going to host the Boxing World Championship in its 22nd Edition in 2023.
- AIBA's World Boxing Champion is conducted once in every 2 years.
- The next event, 22nd edition of the World championship will be conducted between 10th April to 24th April, 2021 at Belgrade, Serbia.
- 2019 World Boxing Championship was conducted in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

About International Boxing Association (AIBA):

- **President** – Umar Kremlev
- **Headquarters** – Lausanne, Switzerland

Tennis: Overview of 2021 Miami Open

- The 2021 Miami Open (also known as Miami Masters, presented by Itau) took place at Hard Rock Stadium, Miami, the USA from 22nd March – 4th April 2021.
- It is part of the Men's ATP Tour Masters 1000 Circuit & a Premier Mandatory event on the Women's WTA Tour.

- It is a Hard Court Tournament.
- **ATP Men's Rankings (as on April 5, 2021)** – #1 Novak Djokovic (Serbia), #2 – Daniil Medvedev (Russia), #3 – Rafael Nadal (Spain)
- **WTA Women's Rankings (as on April 5, 2021)** – #1 Ashleigh Barty (Australia), #2 – Naomi Osaka (Japan), #3 – Simona Halep (Romania)

Nethra Kumanan Becomes 1st Indian woman Sailor to Qualify for Olympics

- Nethra Kumanan became the 1st Indian woman sailor to qualify for the Olympics under the laser radial category. She will be the 10th Indian to qualify for a sailing event in the Olympics. She secured the place through her performance at the Mussanah Open Championship, a qualifier for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
- 4 Indian Sailors including Nethra were qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
- Vishnu Saravanan (Laser Standard) and the pair of Ganapathy Chengappa and Varun Thakkar (49er Class) qualified during the Asian Qualifiers held in Oman.
- For the first time India will be competing in more than 1 sailing event at the 2020 Tokyo Games.

Chess: Praggnanandhaa wins Polgar Challenge 2021

- Indian Grand Master, R. Praggnanandhaa won the Polgar Challenge 2021 after he finished with 15.5 points in the event. He finishes the campaign with a hard-fought draw against Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb).
- The Polgar Challenge was a four-day online rapid tournament held from April 8-11, it is part of the Julius Baer Challengers Chess Tour. With the victory, Praggnanandhaa qualified for the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour event which is set to be held on April 24, 2021.

ICC bans Former Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak for 8 years

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) banned former Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak for 8-years from all forms of cricket for breaching the ICC Anti-Corruption Code.
- During his tenure as the coach of Zimbabwe cricket team from 2016 to 2018 he leaked the team's internal information, mainly during the 2018 Tri-Series between Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

ICC announced Player of the Month for March 2021:

- **Bhuvneshwar Kumar** – India – Men's Player of the Month
- **Lizelle Lee** – South Africa – Women's Player of the Month

About International Cricket Council (ICC):

- **CEO**– Manu Sawhney
- **Chairman**- Greg Barclay
- **Headquarters**– Dubai, UAE

Wisden Almanack's ODI Cricketer of the Decade list

- Famous Cricketing Magazine, Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, has named 5 best cricketers for each decade, starting from 1970's to 2010's to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1st One-Day International (ODI) match.
- The list featured 3 Indian cricketers – **Kapil Dev, Sachin Tendulkar & Virat Kohli.**
- 1st ever ODI match was played between Australia & England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on 5 January 1971.
- Kapil Dev named as ODI Cricketer for the decade – **1980's**
- He led India to its first ODI World Cup win in 1983.
- Sachin Tendulkar ODI Cricketer for the decade – **1990's**
- He made a unique record with 9 ODI centuries in a single calendar year.
- Virat Kohli ODI Cricketer for the decade – **2010's**
- He scored over 11,000 runs in that 10-year, with 42 centuries and average run rate over 60.
- Apart from them, England all-rounder Ben Stokes was declared the 'Cricketer of the Year' for a 2nd successive time.
- Muttiah Muralitharan was awarded the ODI Cricketer of the 2000s.

- Dom Sibley, Zak Crawley, West Indian Jason Holder, Mohammed Rizwan and Darren Stevens were named Wisden Cricketers of the Year in the 2021 edition of Wisden Almanack.
- Australia's Beth Mooney was awarded 'Leading Women's Cricketer in the World'
- West Indian all-rounder Kieron Pollard was named the Leading T20 Cricketer in the World.

About Wisden Cricketers' Almanack:

- Wisden Cricketers' Almanack popularly known as the "**Bible of Cricket**" is an annual publication founded in 1864.
- **Founder-** John Wisden
- **Editor-** Lawrence Booth
- **Origin-** London, England

Formula One: Max Verstappen wins Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2021

- Red Bull Racing's Max Verstappen (Netherlands) won the 2021 Emilia Romagna Grand Prix held at Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari Circuit in Imola, Italy.
- Mercedes Driver Lewis Hamilton (Britain) finished in Second Place while McLaren's Lando Norris finished Third Place.
- This is Max Verstappen's 1st race victory of the Formula One 2021 season.
- It is the 2nd race of the 2021 Formula One Championships.
- The F1 Championships are organised by Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA).

About Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA):

- **President** – Jean Todt
- **Headquarters** – Paris, France

Wrestling: India bags 14 Medals in Asian Wrestling Champions 2021 at Almaty, Kazakhstan

- India bagged 14 Medals (5 Gold, 3 Silver, 6 Bronze) in the 2021 Asian Wrestling Championships held at Almaty, Kazakhstan . It is the 34th edition of the Asian Wrestling Championships.
- The championships took place across 3 disciplines of wrestling – Men's Freestyle, Men's Greco-Roman & Women's Wrestling (Freestyle).
- It is organized by the United World Wrestling (UWW).
- Vinesh Phogat claimed her Maiden Gold Medal in Asian Wrestling Championships. She won the Gold medal in the Women's Freestyle 53 Kg event.
- Sarita Mor became the 1st Indian Woman to win consecutive gold medals at the Asian Wrestling Championships. She won the Gold Medal in the same category in the 2020 Asian Wrestling Championships held at New Delhi.
- Ravi Kumar Dahiya bagged the Gold medal in the Men's 57 Kg Freestyle retained his Asian Championship Title.
- He won the Gold medal in the same category in the 2020 Asian Wrestling Championships.
- He also became the Third Indian Male wrestler (after Yogeshwar Dutt and Bajrang Punia) to secure a second Asian Championships gold medal.

About United World Wrestling (UWW):

- **President**– Nenad Lalovic
- **Headquarters**– Corsier-sur-Vevey, Switzerland

TN's Arjun Kalyan becomes India's 68th Chess GrandMaster

- 18-years old Arjun Kalyan from Tamilnadu (TN) became India's 68th Chess Grand Master (GM) after winning against Dragan Kosic of Montenegro in the 5th round of the ongoing GM Round Robin "Rujna Zora-3" in Serbia.
- GM is a title awarded by FIDE (International chess federation).It is the highest title a chess player can obtain apart from World Champion.
- The 1st GM from India is Vishwanathan Anand,who achieved it in 1988.
- On 30th December 2020, 14 year-old Leon Mendonca from Goa became India's 67th Grand Master.

About International Chess Federation (FIDE):

- **President:** Arkady Dvorkovich
- **Headquarters:** Lausanne, Switzerland.

Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium to host the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Final

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has selected the Narendra Modi Stadium commonly known as the Motera Stadium in Motera, Ahmedabad, Gujarat to host the finals of the 7th International Cricket Council (ICC) Men's T20 World Cup in November 2021. It has shortlisted eight venues to host the tournament of 2021 (October-November, 2021) which includes Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Dharamshala.

About BCCI:

- President: Saurav Ganguly
- Secretary: Jay Shah
- Headquarter: Mumbai

Former Sri Lankan Cricketer Dilhara Lokuhettige Banned For 8 Years Under ICC Anti Corruption Code

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) has imposed an 8 year ban on 40-years-old former Sri Lankan Cricketer Dilhara Lokuhettige from all forms of cricket for breaching the ICC Anti-Corruption code.
- The ban was backdated to 3rd April 2019 when he was provisionally suspended.
- He was the 4th former Sri Lanka player to be charged with corruption.

Current Affairs

Preliminary Questions

1. Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal has inaugurated a Happiness Centre “Anandam - the Centre for Happiness” at which of the following institute?
 - (a) Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore
 - (b) Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad
 - (c) Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Calcutta
 - (d) Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad
 - (e) **Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jammu**
2. Mahendragiri has been proposed as the Second Biosphere Reserve of which of the following state?
 - (a) Karnataka
 - (b) Telangana
 - (c) **Odisha**
 - (d) Tamil Nadu
 - (e) Andhra Pradesh
3. The Ministry of Road, Transport, and Highways (MoRTH) has proposed a concession of _____ in road tax against the scrappage certificate of personal vehicles.
 - (a) 10%
 - (b) 15%
 - (c) 20%
 - (d) **25%**
 - (e) 30%
4. The central Government has recently announced Rs 14,500 crore capital infusion in which of the following PSB in 2020-21?
 - (a) Central Bank of India
 - (b) Indian Overseas Bank
 - (c) Bank of India
 - (d) UCO Bank
 - (e) **All of the above**
5. Which bank has inked a \$1-billion loan agreement with Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) to extend loans to the supply chain of the Japanese automobile industry in India?
 - (a) Reserve Bank of India
 - (b) Union Bank of India
 - (c) **State Bank of India**
 - (d) Punjab National Bank
 - (e) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
6. Which of the following company has announced to buy US software developer GlobalLogic for \$9.6 billion?
 - (a) Toshiba
 - (b) Mitsubishi Electric
 - (c) JSW Energy
 - (d) **Hitachi**
 - (e) Daikin
7. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) has projected India's Economic Growth at _____ in 2021-22.
 - (a) **7.0%**
 - (b) 9.4%
 - (c) 10.1%
 - (d) 11.5%
 - (e) 13.7%

8. What is the rank of India in the Global Gender Gap Index 2021 released by the World Economic Forum?
- (a) 65
 - (b) 106
 - (c) **140**
 - (d) 153
 - (e) 156
9. Which country has topped the Global Gender Gap Index 2021 released by the World Economic Forum?
- (a) Norway
 - (b) **Iceland**
 - (c) Singapore
 - (d) Finland
 - (e) Denmark
10. Who has been honoured with the 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2019?
- (a) Amitabh Bachchan
 - (b) Dharmendra
 - (c) Raj Kapoor
 - (d) **Rajinikanth**
 - (e) Dilip Kumar
11. Utkal Divas or Odisha Day is celebrated on _____.
- (a) **1 April**
 - (b) 2 April
 - (c) 3 April
 - (d) 4 April
 - (e) 5 April
12. Two Naval Ships "Tonnerre and Surcouf" arrived at Cochin Port Trust on a goodwill visit recently. The Naval Ships "Tonnerre and Surcouf" were of which country?
- (a) Germany
 - (b) **France**
 - (c) Russia
 - (d) United States
 - (e) UK
13. Amboli in Western ghats in Sindhudurg district has been named as biodiversity heritage site. Amboli is in which state?
- (a) West Bengal
 - (b) Jharkhand
 - (c) Karnataka
 - (d) Chhattisgarh
 - (e) **Maharashtra**
14. Which Municipal Corporation has listed itself at BSE and successfully raised Rs. 150 Crores by issuing Municipal Bond on Private Placement Basis using BSE BOND (first-ever green bond issuance by any Municipal Corporation in the country)?
- (a) Dhanbad
 - (b) Kanpur
 - (c) Agra
 - (d) Noida
 - (e) **Ghaziabad**
15. Central government has declared birthday of Dr B R Ambedkar on _____ as public holiday for all its offices.
- (a) 11 April
 - (b) 12 April
 - (c) 13 April
 - (d) **14 April**
 - (e) 15 April

16. What was the Revenue collected from Goods and Services Tax (GST) in March 2021?
- (a) **Rs.1.23 lakh crore**
 - (b) Rs.1.15 lakh crore
 - (c) Rs.1.06 lakh crore
 - (d) Rs.1.17 lakh crore
 - (e) Rs.1.38 lakh crore
17. Who has assumed additional charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of ONGC?
- (a) Anish Shah
 - (b) Mahinder Giri
 - (c) **Subhash Kumar**
 - (d) Atish Chandra
 - (e) Saurabh Garg
18. Who among the following took over as the Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)?
- (a) Matam Venkata Rao
 - (b) Kuldiep Singh
 - (c) G P Samanta
 - (d) Deepak Mishra
 - (e) **Mukhmeet S Bhatia**
19. Indian Army will participate in Multinational Military Exercise 'Shantir Ogroshena -2021' in which country?
- (a) **Bangladesh**
 - (b) Nepal
 - (c) Myanmar
 - (d) Sri Lanka
 - (e) Afghanistan
20. Good Friday has been celebrated on _____ in 2021.
- (a) 1 April
 - (b) **2 April**
 - (c) 3 April
 - (d) 4 April
 - (e) 5 April
21. World Autism Awareness Day is observed on _____ every year.
- (a) 1 April
 - (b) **2 April**
 - (c) 3 April
 - (d) 4 April
 - (e) 5 April
22. On which date, International Children's Book Day is observed every year?
- (a) 30 March
 - (b) 31 March
 - (c) 1 April
 - (d) **2 April**
 - (e) 3 April
23. What was the theme for International Children's Book Day 2021?
- (a) Hunger for Words
 - (b) **The Music of Words**
 - (c) THE SMALL IS BIG IN A BOOK
 - (d) Let Us Grow with the Book
 - (e) Once Upon a Time
24. Biggest Floating Solar Power Plant of India will be set up in which of the following state?
- (a) **Telangana**
 - (b) Madhya Pradesh

- (c) Karnataka
(d) Assam
(e) Odisha
25. Indian Railways has achieved the highest ever electrification of sections during 2020-21. How much distance of electrification has been covered in 2020-21 by Indian Railways?
(a) 4,225 Km
(b) 5,017 Km
(c) 5,534 Km
(d) **6,015 Km**
(e) 6,739 Km
26. Government will start issuing _____ unique land parcel identification number (ULPIN) by March 2022.
(a) 10-digit
(b) 12-digit
(c) **14-digit**
(d) 16-digit
(e) 20-digit
27. Who has been appointed as the chairperson of Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB)?
(a) **Mallika Srinivasan**
(b) Navin Agarwal
(c) Subhash Kumar
(d) Suneet Sharma
(e) Atish Chandra
28. Who has been roped in as the brand ambassador of Digit Insurance?
(a) Priyanka Chopra
(b) Rohit Sharma
(c) Shah Rukh Khan
(d) **Virat Kohli**
(e) Deepika Padukone
29. Who among the following has won the gold at South Asian Wushu Championship, Nepal?
(a) Avinash Sable
(b) Yashaswini Deswal
(c) Sharath Kamal
(d) S Dhanalakshmi
(e) **Aniyan Midhun**
30. Who among the following has received Kalinga Ratna Samman for 2021?
(a) Pinarayi Vijayan
(b) **Biswabhusan Harichandan**
(c) Jagdish Mukhi
(d) Arif Mohammad Khan
(e) Bandaru Dattatreya
31. International Day of Mine awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is observed every year on _____.
(a) 1 April
(b) 2 April
(c) 3 April
(d) **4 April**
(e) 5 April
32. Bhagwati Singh passed away recently. He was a/an _____.
(a) **Politician**
(b) Journalist
(c) Actor
(d) Environmentalist
(e) Classical singer

33. Which of the following organization has approved a USD 32 million project to boost health services in Mizoram?
- (a) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
 - (b) New Development Bank
 - (c) International Monetary Fund
 - (d) World Bank**
 - (e) Asian Development Bank
34. World Bank and AIIB have approved a loan of how much amount for canal-based drinking water projects in Punjab?
- (a) USD 100 million
 - (b) USD 200 million
 - (c) USD 300 million**
 - (d) USD 400 million
 - (e) USD 500 million
35. Name the deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India who retired recently.
- (a) B P Kanungo**
 - (b) Michael D Patra
 - (c) M K Jain
 - (d) Rajeshwar Rao
 - (e) Both (a) and (b)
36. Every year in India National Maritime Day is observed on _____.
- (a) 4 April
 - (b) 2 April
 - (c) 6 April
 - (d) 3 April
 - (e) 5 April**
37. On which date, International Day of Conscience is observed every year?
- (a) 4 April
 - (b) 5 April**
 - (c) 6 April
 - (d) 7 April
 - (e) 8 April
38. Where will the 2023 AIBA Men's World Boxing Championships be hosted?
- (a) New Delhi, India
 - (b) Tashkent, Uzbekistan**
 - (c) Belgrade, Serbia
 - (d) Kielce, Poland
 - (e) Moscow, Russia
39. Who is the author of the book titled "Manohar Parrikar: Brilliant Mind, Simple Life"?
- (a) Anindya Dutta
 - (b) Evan Osnos
 - (c) Anant Vijay
 - (d) Imitiaz Ahmad Sahibzada
 - (e) Nitin Gokhale**
40. Shashikala passed away recently. She was a/an _____.
- (a) Singer
 - (b) Journalist
 - (c) Actress**
 - (d) TV Anchor
 - (e) Classical singer
41. India has completed the construction of arch of world's highest railway bridge in J&K. What is the length of this bridge?
- (a) 1045 m**

- (b) 1141 m
(c) 1200 m
(d) **1315 m**
(e) 1510 m
42. Government has approved the National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021. Under this policy, those who are suffering from rare diseases listed under Group 1 will have the financial support of up to _____ under the umbrella scheme of Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi.
(a) Rs. 5 lakh
(b) Rs. 10 lakh
(c) **Rs. 20 lakh**
(d) Rs. 25 lakh
(e) Rs. 27 lakh
43. Which of the following organization has launched SANKALP SE SIDDHI?
(a) **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India**
(b) Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry
(c) Confederation of Indian Industry
(d) Associated Chambers of Commerce of India
(e) National Council of Applied Economic Research
44. IMF has forecasted India's GDP growth for FY22 at _____.
(a) 8.5%
(b) 9.5%
(c) 10.5%
(d) 11.5%
(e) **12.5%**
45. Who has been appointed as the 48th Chief Justice of India by the President?
(a) Sharad Arvind Bobde
(b) Ravinder Singh Dhillon
(c) Ranjan Gogoi
(d) **N V Ramana**
(e) Urjit Patel
46. Who has been appointed as the head of the BCCI anti-corruption unit (ACU)?
(a) Ajit Singh
(b) **Shabir Hussein**
(c) John Joseph
(d) Henry Moniz
(e) Sriram Veditre
47. Who among the following has won the 2020 Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) A M Turing Award?
(a) M Veerappa Moily
(b) Theodore Baskaran
(c) **Alfred V Aho**
(d) Jane Ellison
(e) Carolina Araujo
48. Who among the following has topped the 35th Forbes' annual world's billionaire list?
(a) Daniel Zhang
(b) Elon Musk
(c) Masayoshi Son
(d) **Jeff Bezos**
(e) Andy Jassy
49. What was the rank of Mukesh Ambani in the 35th Forbes' annual world's billionaire list?
(a) 5th
(b) **10th**
(c) 14th

- (d) 21st
(e) 32nd
50. Which of the following has developed an Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard naval ships from missile attack?
(a) Indian Navy
(b) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)
(c) Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL)
(d) **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**
(e) National Space Informatics Centre (NSIC)
51. On which date, International Day of Sport for Development and Peace is observed every year?
(a) 4 April
(b) 5 April
(c) **6 April**
(d) 7 April
(e) 8 April
52. Vjosa Osmani has been elected as the president of which country?
(a) **Kosovo**
(b) Albania
(c) Yugoslavia
(d) Montenegro
(e) Serbia
53. Who has been elected as the Prime Minister of Vietnam?
(a) **Pham Minh Chinh**
(b) Nguyen Xuan Phuc
(c) Samia Suluhu Hassan
(d) Mark Rutte
(e) Woochong Um
54. Who among the following has been elected as the President of Vietnam?
(a) Pham Minh Chinh
(b) **Nguyen Xuan Phuc**
(c) Samia Suluhu Hassan
(d) Nguyen Phu Trong
(e) Woochong Um
55. RBI has projected GDP growth forecast at _____ for Financial Year 2022.
(a) 8.5%
(b) 9.5%
(c) **10.5%**
(d) 11.5%
(e) 12.5%
56. What is the current Cash reserve Ratio (CRR) as per RBI Monetary Policy, 7th April 2021?
(a) 3.35%
(b) **3.5%**
(c) 4.0%
(d) 4.25%
(e) 18%
57. Who has been appointed as the new revenue secretary of India?
(a) Rajeev Gauba
(b) Harsh Vardhan Shringla
(c) Ajay Kumar Bhalla
(d) T.V. Somanathan
(e) **Tarun Bajaj**
58. Who has been appointed as the new Secretary for Department of Economic Affairs (DEA)?

- (a) Amit Khare
 - (b) Rajesh Bhushan
 - (c) Ajay Kumar Bhalla
 - (d) Ajay Seth**
 - (e) T.V. Somanathan
59. Who has been appointed as Mission Director of Atal Innovation Mission?
- (a) Chintan Vaishnav**
 - (b) Shabir Hussein Shekhadam Khandwawala
 - (c) N V Ramana
 - (d) Mallika Srinivasan
 - (e) Subhash Kumar
60. World Health Day is celebrated every year on _____.
- (a) 4 April
 - (b) 5 April
 - (c) 6 April
 - (d) 7 April**
 - (e) 8 April
61. What was the theme for World Health Day 2021?
- (a) Support Nurses and Midwives
 - (b) Universal Health Coverage: Everyone, Everywhere
 - (c) Building a fairer, healthier world for everyone**
 - (d) Health for All
 - (e) Depression: Let's talk
62. Hindi version of "Odisha Itihaas" is released by PM Modi. Who is the author of the "Odisha Itihaas"?
- (a) Harekrushna Mahtab**
 - (b) Ramesh Kandula
 - (c) Romila Thapar
 - (d) Sonali Chitalkar
 - (e) A Sivathanu Pillai
63. Padma Shri Fatima Rafiq Zakaria passed away recently. She was a/an _____.
- (a) Politician
 - (b) Journalist**
 - (c) Actor
 - (d) Environmentalist
 - (e) Classical singer
64. With which country recently, National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL), Department of Space, GoI has signed an MoU for Academic and Research Cooperation?
- (a) Russia
 - (b) Japan**
 - (c) UK
 - (d) USA
 - (e) Germany
65. Nirmala Sitharaman has attended the 2nd Virtual G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting. Which country is the president of the 2nd G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting?
- (a) France
 - (b) Australia
 - (c) Italy**
 - (d) Spain
 - (e) England
66. Which country hosted the Meeting of BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors on April 6, 2021?
- (a) Japan**

- (b) Russia
 - (c) Qatar
 - (d) Vietnam
 - (e) **India**
67. RBI has decided to open up which of the following Centralised Payment Systems (CPS) facility for payment system operators?
- (a) Cheque Truncation System (CTS)
 - (b) Express Cheque Clearing System (ECCS)
 - (c) Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS)
 - (d) National Electronic Fund Transfer (NEFT)
 - (e) **Both (c) and (d)**
68. RBI has enhanced maximum balance limit per account in Payments Banks to _____.
- (a) Rs 1 lakh
 - (b) Rs 1.5 lakh
 - (c) **Rs 2 lakh**
 - (d) Rs 2.5 lakh
 - (e) Rs 5 lakh
69. RBI has increased Way and Means Advances (WMA) limits for the State Governments/UTs to _____.
- (a) Rs. 32,225 crores
 - (b) **Rs. 47,010 crores**
 - (c) Rs. 51,560 crores
 - (d) Rs. 54,245 crores
 - (e) Rs. 55,758 crores
70. RBI has increased the Way and Means Advances (WMA) limits for the State Governments/UTs based on the recommendation of a committee headed by _____.
- (a) Venu Srinivasan
 - (b) Sanjeev Kumar
 - (c) Naureen Hassan
 - (d) G P Samanta
 - (e) **Sudhir Shrivastava**
71. Who has been appointed as the Chairman and MD of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)?
- (a) Anish Shah
 - (b) **S Ramann**
 - (c) Mahinder Giri
 - (d) Atish Chandra
 - (e) Saurabh Garg
72. Who among the following has been shortlisted to receive 30th GD Birla Prize for Scientific Research?
- (a) Biswabhusan Harichandan
 - (b) Sharankumar Limbale
 - (c) Alfred Aho
 - (d) **Sumon Chakraborty**
 - (e) Both (c) and (d)
73. Which country's football federation has been suspended by FIFA due to claims of outside interference?
- (a) Chad
 - (b) Pakistan
 - (c) China
 - (d) Burkina Faso
 - (e) **Both (a) and (b)**
74. INS Sarvekshak has been deployed on a Joint Hydrographic Survey in which of the following country?
- (a) **Mauritius**
 - (b) US
 - (c) South Korea

- (d) Hong Kong
 - (e) Singapore
75. Ouhoumoudou Mahamadou has been named as the Prime Minister of which of the following country?
- (a) **Niger**
 - (b) Mali
 - (c) Eritrea
 - (d) Sudan
 - (e) Yemen
76. Which organization has approved 484 million USD for CKIC (Chennai-Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor) Project in Tamil Nadu?
- (a) World Bank
 - (b) **Asian Development Bank**
 - (c) International Monetary fund
 - (d) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
 - (e) New Development Bank
77. Who among the following has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Vivo?
- (a) Ajinkya Rahane
 - (b) Ambati Rayudu
 - (c) **Virat Kohli**
 - (d) Hardik Pandya
 - (e) Rishabh Pant
78. Name the Indian Army Officer who recently broke his own 2 Guinness World Records for Fastest Solo Cycling.
- (a) Renjith Kumar
 - (b) Ratan Lal
 - (c) Arvind Pandey
 - (d) **Bharat Pannu**
 - (e) Akhilesh Chandra Kulshrestha
79. Who has launched the updated version of the book titled "Exam warriors"?
- (a) Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank
 - (b) Harsh Vardhan
 - (c) K K Shailaja
 - (d) **Narendra Modi**
 - (e) Rajiv Kumar
80. Indian Navy has participated in multi-lateral maritime exercise La Pérouse conducted by which country?
- (a) Germany
 - (b) Russia
 - (c) Italy
 - (d) Spain
 - (e) **France**
81. CRPF Valour Day is observed on _____ every year.
- (a) 8 April
 - (b) **9 April**
 - (c) 10 April
 - (d) 11 April
 - (e) 12 April
82. Prince Philip passed away recently. He was from which country?
- (a) Scotland
 - (b) France
 - (c) Germany
 - (d) Denmark
 - (e) **England**

83. Who is the current Director General of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)?
(a) Kannan CS Warriar
(b) **Kuldip Singh**
(c) K F Rustamji
(d) Udayan Banerjee
(e) Vidya Rajaram
84. Which state government has launched a fourteen day "Mask Abhiyan" initiative to prevent the spread of COVID-19?
(a) Karnataka
(b) Andhra Pradesh
(c) Kerala
(d) **Odisha**
(e) Tamil Nadu
85. PM Modi has declared Tika Utsav will be organised in all states from _____.
(a) 10-13 April
(b) **11-14 April**
(c) 12-15 April
(d) 13-16 April
(e) 14-17 April
86. With which country, India has inked a Strategic Partnership in Water Sector and agreed to diversify the ties in trade and economy between the countries?
(a) Vietnam
(b) Saudi Arabia
(c) Russia
(d) **Netherlands**
(e) Hong Kong
87. Which Mutual fund has become the first mutual fund company in India to cross the Rs 5 lakh crore average assets under management (AAUM) mark?
(a) ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund
(b) **SBI Mutual Funds**
(c) Axis Mutual Fund
(d) UTI Asset Management
(e) DSP Mutual Fund
88. Which of the following country has named Noura al-Matroushi as its first female astronaut?
(a) Iraq
(b) Qatar
(c) **UAE**
(d) Lebanon
(e) Saudi Arabia
89. Who among the following has been selected for the inaugural edition of the Chhattisgarh Veer Award?
(a) **Dutee Chand**
(b) S Dhanalakshmi
(c) Archana Suseendran
(d) Hima Das
(e) Dipa Karmakar
90. Which institute has secured the top position among the best higher education institutes in India in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU 2020)?
(a) IIFT-New Delhi
(b) IIM-Ahmedabad
(c) **IISc-Bangalore**
(d) IIT-Madras
(e) IIT-Bombay

91. Which university became the best varsity in the country in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU 2020)?
- (a) Banaras Hindu University
 - (b) Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT)
 - (c) University of Allahabad
 - (d) Jawaharlal National University
 - (e) **Calcutta University**
92. Who among the following has become the first Indian woman sailor to qualify for Olympics?
- (a) Vinesh Phogat
 - (b) Bhavani Devi
 - (c) S Dhanalakshmi
 - (d) Archana Suseendran
 - (e) **Nethra Kumanan**
93. National Safe Motherhood Day (NSMD) is observed annually on _____ in India.
- (a) 8 April
 - (b) 9 April
 - (c) 10 April
 - (d) **11 April**
 - (e) 12 April
94. On which date World Homoeopathy Day (WHD) is observed every year?
- (a) **10 April**
 - (b) 11 April
 - (c) 12 April
 - (d) 13 April
 - (e) 14 April
95. What was the theme for World Homoeopathy Day (WHD) 2021?
- (a) **Homoeopathy – Roadmap for Integrative Medicine**
 - (b) Innovate: Evolve, Progress: Exploring Science since 40 years
 - (c) Enhancing the scope of Homoeopathy in Public Health
 - (d) Integrating Homoeopathy in Healthcare
 - (e) Enhancing Quality Research in Homeopathy through Scientific Evidence and Prosperity Clinical Experiences
96. National Siblings Day is celebrated every year on _____.
- (a) 8 April
 - (b) 9 April
 - (c) **10 April**
 - (d) 11 April
 - (e) 12 April
97. National Pet Day is observed on _____ every year.
- (a) 8 April
 - (b) 9 April
 - (c) 10 April
 - (d) 11 April
 - (e) **12 April**
98. Satish Kaul, who passed away recently was a/an _____.
- (a) Politician
 - (b) Journalist
 - (c) **Actor**
 - (d) Radio Astronomer
 - (e) Singer
99. Which Municipal Corporation has issued India's first municipal green bonds?
- (a) Dhanbad
 - (b) Kanpur

- (c) Agra
- (d) Noida
- (e) **Ghaziabad**

100. Which life insurance company and Fincare Small Finance Bank has recently joined hands for bancassurance partnership?

- (a) SBI Life Insurance Company
- (b) Oriental Insurance Company
- (c) Religare Health Insurance Company
- (d) **Bharti AXA Life Insurance**
- (e) Star Health and Allied Insurance Company

101. Which Payments Bank has launched 'Rewards123' savings account?

- (a) Paytm Payments Bank
- (b) **Airtel Payments Bank**
- (c) India Post Payments Bank
- (d) Fino Payments Bank
- (e) Jio Payments Bank

102. Nomura has projected India's GDP growth at _____ for Financial Year 2022.

- (a) 9.5%
- (b) 10.2%
- (c) 11.4%
- (d) 12.6%
- (e) **13.5%**

103. Who has been appointed as the Punjab state's covid vaccination ambassador?

- (a) Yuvraj Singh
- (b) Aamir Khan
- (c) Virat Kohli
- (d) **Sonu Sood**
- (e) Amitabh Bachchan

104. Who has been appointed as the first woman director general of National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)?

- (a) Soma Mondal
- (b) Shyamala Gopinath
- (c) Mallika Srinivasan
- (d) Kaja Kallas
- (e) **Poonam Gupta**

105. Who among the following has got the top Civilian Award in UAE?

- (a) **Yusuffali M A**
- (b) Sumon Chakraborty
- (c) Alfred Aho
- (d) Sharankumar Limbale
- (e) Aniyam Midhun

106. Who has been conferred with Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters honour?

- (a) Sanjna Kapoor
- (b) Kiran Mazumdar Shaw
- (c) Elavenil Valarivan
- (d) **Guneet Monga**
- (e) Narendra Modi

107. Who has won the award for "Best Leading Actor" at the 74th edition of the British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) awards 2021?

- (a) Leonardo DiCaprio
- (b) Jonathan Pryce
- (c) **Anthony Hopkins**
- (d) Antonio Banderas

- (e) Adam Driver
108. Which film has won the award for “Best Film” at the 74th edition of the British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) awards 2021?
- (a) Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom
 - (b) Nomadland**
 - (c) The Father
 - (d) Parasite
 - (e) Soul
109. Who has won the award for “Best Leading Actress” at the 74th edition of the British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) awards 2021?
- (a) Charlize Theron
 - (b) Renee Zellweger
 - (c) Yuh-Jung Youn
 - (d) Chloé Zhao
 - (e) Frances McDormand**
110. Which of the following has won the AICTE Lilavati Awards, 2020 under “Women’s Health” sub theme?
- (a) Sona College of Technology, Tamil Nadu
 - (b) St. Joseph’s College of Engineering, Tamil Nadu
 - (c) Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development, Pune
 - (d) Walchand Institute of Technology, Maharashtra**
 - (e) Thiagarajar Polytechnic College, Alagappanagar
111. Legendary coach Sanjay Chakravarty passed away recently. He was related to which sports?
- (a) Shooting**
 - (b) Tennis
 - (c) Badminton
 - (d) Hockey
 - (e) Wrestling
112. Who among the following has participated from India in 103rd Meeting of World Bank Development Committee Plenary?
- (a) Narendra Modi
 - (b) Nirmala Sitharaman**
 - (c) Ram Nath Kovind
 - (d) Shaktikanta Das
 - (e) S Jaishankar
113. Which country has launched the construction of an international center for trade and economic cooperation called “Central Asia”?
- (a) Kazakhstan
 - (b) Uzbekistan
 - (c) Tajikistan
 - (d) Kyrgyzstan
 - (e) Both (a) and (b)**
114. Name the tropical cyclone which has ripped across 1000 kilometers stretch of Western Australia.
- (a) Diane
 - (b) Tino
 - (c) Yasa
 - (d) Seroja**
 - (e) Elsa
115. Who has been appointed as the Chief Election Commissioner of India by the President?
- (a) N. K. Singh
 - (b) Rajiv Kumar
 - (c) Sushil Chandra**
 - (d) Sunil Arora
 - (e) Ajay Narayan Jha

116. Who has won the ICC Player of the Month award in March 2021?
- (a) **Bhuvneshwar Kumar**
 - (b) Ravichandran Ashwin
 - (c) Rishabh Pant
 - (d) Virat Kohli
 - (e) Ajinkya Rahane
117. Every year, International Day of Human Space Flight is celebrated on _____.
- (a) 11 April
 - (b) **12 April**
 - (c) 13 April
 - (d) 14 April
 - (e) 15 April
118. Jallianwala Bagh Massacre Day is commemorated on _____.
- (a) 10 April
 - (b) 11 April
 - (c) 12 April
 - (d) **13 April**
 - (e) 14 April
119. Bohag Bihu Bird count has begun in which of the following state?
- (a) **Assam**
 - (b) Tripura
 - (c) Madhya Pradesh
 - (d) Karnataka
 - (e) Rajasthan
120. What was the theme for the 6th Edition of Raisina Dialogue inaugurated by PM Modi?
- (a) Navigating the Alpha Century
 - (b) **Viral World: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control**
 - (c) A World Reorder: New Geometries; Fluid Partnerships; Uncertain Outcomes
 - (d) Asia: Regional and Global Connectivity
 - (e) The New Normal: Multilateralism with Multi-Polarity
121. India's 1st Floating LNG Storage and Regasification Unit has arrived in which of the following state?
- (a) Gujarat
 - (b) West Bengal
 - (c) Madhya Pradesh
 - (d) **Maharashtra**
 - (e) Haryana
122. Which Ministry has launched "Aahaar Kranti" Mission?
- (a) **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**
 - (b) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution
 - (c) Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
 - (d) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
 - (e) Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
123. Guillermo Lasso has been elected as the president of which of the following country?
- (a) Chad
 - (b) **Ecuador**
 - (c) Mauritania
 - (d) Burkina Faso
 - (e) Benin
124. Who has been appointed as the new Director-General of National Anti-Doping Agency?
- (a) Sudhir Shrivastava
 - (b) G P Samanta
 - (c) **Siddharth Longjam**

- (d) Venu Srinivasan
- (e) Naureen Hassan

125. Every year India celebrates Ambedkar Jayanti or Bhim Jayanti on _____.

- (a) 11 April
- (b) 12 April
- (c) 13 April
- (d) 14 April**
- (e) 15 April

126. International Turban Day is celebrated every year on _____.

- (a) 11 April
- (b) 12 April
- (c) 13 April**
- (d) 14 April
- (e) 15 April

127. I.A. Rehman passed away recently. He was a/an _____.

- (a) Environmentalist
- (b) Folk Singer
- (c) Social Activist
- (d) Human Rights Activist**
- (e) Historian

128. Who has launched the “Online Grievance Management Portal of National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)”?

- (a) Rao Inderjit Singh
- (b) Ravi Shankar Prasad**
- (c) Dharmendra Pradhan
- (d) Jitendra Singh
- (e) Prahlad Singh Patel

129. Name the Prime Minister of Haiti who has resigned amid violence and political strife.

- (a) Nguyen Xuan Phuc
- (b) Pham Minh Chinh
- (c) Vjosa Osmani
- (d) Jovenel Moïse
- (e) Joseph Jouthe**

130. Who has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Elista?

- (a) Ayushman Khurrana
- (b) Harbhajan Singh
- (c) Sachin Tendulkar
- (d) Bhuvneshwar Kumar
- (e) Suresh Raina**

131. World art day is celebrated internationally on _____ every year.

- (a) 12 April
- (b) 13 April
- (c) 14 April
- (d) 15 April**
- (e) 16 April

132. Which day is observed as Himachal Day?

- (a) 14 April
- (b) 15 April**
- (c) 16 April
- (d) 17 April
- (e) 18 April

133. National Fire Service Day is observed every year on _____.
(a) 11 April
(b) 12 April
(c) 13 April
(d) **14 April**
(e) 15 April
134. The 37th Siachen Day was celebrated by Siachen Warriors Brigade of Fire & Fury Corps on _____, 2021.
(a) **13 April**
(b) 14 April
(c) 15 April
(d) 16 April
(e) 17 April
135. World Art Day is celebrated to mark the birthday of which of the following greatest artist of all time?
(a) Michelangelo
(b) Pablo Picasso
(c) **Leonardo da Vinci**
(d) Claude Monet
(e) Salvador Dalí
136. Who will be the head of the new Regulations Review Authority (RRA 2.0) from May 1, 2021, set up by Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?
(a) **M Rajeshwar Rao**
(b) Shaktikanta Das
(c) Michael D Patra
(d) Mahesh Kumar Jain
(e) Bibhu Prasad Kanungo
137. Indian Space Research Organisation has recently signed an agreement with which country for cooperation on Gaganyaan Mission?
(a) Australia
(b) **France**
(c) USA
(d) Spain
(e) England
138. With which country's scientist, India is going to undertake joint research in food technology, plant-based medicines, metrology, space research and applications, etc.?
(a) Russia
(b) Bangladesh
(c) Japan
(d) **Sri Lanka**
(e) UK
139. What is the rank of India globally in internet inclusion and gender equality in accessing the World Wide Web index released by Facebook-Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)?
(a) 21
(b) 34
(c) **49**
(d) 51
(e) 58
140. Which country has topped the internet inclusion and gender equality in accessing the World Wide Web index released by Facebook-Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)?
(a) **Sweden**
(b) United States
(c) Spain
(d) Australia
(e) Hong Kong

141. Which of the following is NOT one of the “Five Wisden Cricketers of the Year” in the 2021 edition of Wisden Almanack?
- (a) Dom Sibley
 - (b) Zak Crawley
 - (c) Jason Holder
 - (d) Darren Stevens
 - (e) **Alistair Cook**
142. Who has been named the leading cricketer in the world for a second consecutive year in the 2021 edition of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack?
- (a) Steven Smith
 - (b) Rohit Sharma
 - (c) **Ben Stokes**
 - (d) Jasprit Bumrah
 - (e) Virat Kohli
143. Who has been chosen the ODI player of the decade for 2010s in the Wisden Almanack 2021?
- (a) M S Dhoni
 - (b) Steven Smith
 - (c) **Virat Kohli**
 - (d) Rohit Sharma
 - (e) Ben Stokes
144. “Believe - What Life and Cricket Taught Me” is the memoir Book of which of the following cricketer?
- (a) Yuvraj Singh
 - (b) Gautam Gambhir
 - (c) Harbhajan Singh
 - (d) **Suresh Raina**
 - (e) Zaheer Khan
145. Which of the following book related to Babasaheb Ambedkar was released by PM Modi at the 95th Annual Meet and National Seminar of Vice-Chancellors of the Association of Indian Universities?
- (a) Dr Ambedkar Jivan Darshan
 - (b) Dr Ambedkar Vyakti Darshan
 - (c) Dr Ambedkar Rashtra Darshan
 - (d) Dr Ambedkar Aayam Darshan
 - (e) **All of the above**
146. Which language’s film Puglya has won the Best Foreign Feature award at Moscow Film Fest?
- (a) Hindi
 - (b) English
 - (c) Malayalam
 - (d) **Marathi**
 - (e) Kannada
147. World Voice Day (WVD) is celebrated globally on _____ every year.
- (a) 15 April
 - (b) **16 April**
 - (c) 17 April
 - (d) 18 April
 - (e) 19 April
148. What was the theme for World Voice Day 2021?
- (a) Focus on Your Voice
 - (b) **One World, Many Voices**
 - (c) Your Voice is your Identity
 - (d) Share Your Voice
 - (e) Our Voice

149. Which country has launched the first ever mega food park & food processing unit in India, at Fanidhar in Mehsana district of Gujarat?
- (a) Australia
 - (b) UK
 - (c) **Italy**
 - (d) Spain
 - (e) USA
150. Which Bank has partnered with Mastercard to launch a mobile-based consumer-friendly payment solution 'Pay by Bank App', a first-of-its-kind payment functionality in India?
- (a) Federal Bank
 - (b) **RBL Bank**
 - (c) State Bank of India
 - (d) ICICI Bank
 - (e) Axis Bank
151. Which bank has announced that it is going to exit consumer (retail) banking business in India?
- (a) HSBC India
 - (b) **Citibank India**
 - (c) DBS Bank India
 - (d) Standard Chartered India
 - (e) IndusInd Bank
152. Who has been roped in as TECNO's India brand ambassador for 2021?
- (a) **Ayushman Khurrana**
 - (b) Sonu Sood
 - (c) Sachin Tendulkar
 - (d) Virat Kohli
 - (e) Suresh Raina
153. India and _____ have recently conducted the 8th edition of Special Forces Exercise 'Khanjar'.
- (a) Egypt
 - (b) Azerbaijan
 - (c) Uzbekistan
 - (d) **Kyrgyzstan**
 - (e) Turkey
154. Who among the following has won Gold in Asian Wrestling Championship by beating Taipei's Meng Hsuan Hsieh?
- (a) Deepak Punia
 - (b) Ravi Kumar Dahiya
 - (c) **Vinesh Phogat**
 - (d) Sakshi Malik
 - (e) Yogeshwar Dutt
155. Vinesh Phogat, Anshu Malik, Sarita Mor, and Divya Kakran have won gold medals in Asian Wrestling Championships. Asian Wrestling Championships is being held in _____.
- (a) Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
 - (b) **Almaty, Kazakhstan**
 - (c) Tashkent, Uzbekistan
 - (d) New Delhi, India
 - (e) Dushanbe, Tajikistan
156. SpaceX Crew 2 will be launched to the International Space Station on World Earth Day. The four astronauts of SpaceX Crew 2 are from which space agency?
- (a) NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)
 - (b) JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency)
 - (c) ESA (European Space Agency)
 - (d) **All of the above**
 - (e) Both (a) and (b)

157. World Hemophilia Day is observed every year on _____.
(a) 16 April
(b) **17 April**
(c) 18 April
(d) 19 April
(e) 20 April
158. What was the theme for World Hemophilia Day 2021?
(a) **Adapting to change: sustaining care in a new world**
(b) Together we can change
(c) Get + Involved
(d) Outreach and Identification
(e) Sharing Knowledge Makes Us Stronger
159. Actor Vivek passed away recently. He was from which state?
(a) Karnataka
(b) Odisha
(c) Kerala
(d) Andhra Pradesh
(e) **Tamil Nadu**
160. With which country, India has signed an agreement on Technical Cooperation titled 'Cities combating plastic entering the marine environment'?
(a) UK
(b) Japan
(c) Russia
(d) USA
(e) **Germany**
161. Who among the following has re-appointed as MD and CEO of DCB Bank?
(a) S Ramann
(b) **Murali Natarajan**
(c) Sushil Chandra
(d) Krishnan Ramachandran
(e) Siddharth Longjam
162. Who is the author of the new children's book "The Christmas Pig" which is going to release in October?
(a) Roald Dahl
(b) Ruskin Bond
(c) George Orwe
(d) **JK Rowling**
(e) Ian Fleming
163. What was the Rank of India in the Henley Passport Index 2021?
(a) 45th
(b) 53rd
(c) 71st
(d) **84th**
(e) 104th
164. Which country has topped in the Henley Passport Index 2021?
(a) **Japan**
(b) Singapore
(c) Germany
(d) South Korea
(e) Finland
165. On which date, World Heritage Day is observed every year?
(a) 16 April
(b) 17 April
(c) **18 April**

- (d) 19 April
- (e) 20 April

166. What was the theme for World Heritage Day 2021?

- (a) Rural Landscapes
- (b) Heritage for Generations
- (c) Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Tourism
- (d) The Heritage of Sport
- (e) **Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures**

167. World Liver day is observed on _____ every year.

- (a) 16 April
- (b) 17 April
- (c) 18 April
- (d) **19 April**
- (e) 20 April

168. Who has won the Emilia Romagna F1 Grand Prix 2021 in Imola, Italy?

- (a) Sebastian Vettel
- (b) Charles Leclerc
- (c) **Max Verstappen**
- (d) Valtteri Bottas
- (e) Lewis Hamilton

169. Kakarla Subba Rao passed away recently. He was a/an _____.

- (a) Astrophysicist
- (b) Cardiologist
- (c) Paleontologist
- (d) **Radiologist**
- (e) Cosmologist

170. Sumitra Bhawe, who passed away recently was a/an _____.

- (a) Painter
- (b) Folk Singer
- (c) **Film Director**
- (d) Author
- (e) Historian

171. Which state has released the first tranche of Rs 672 crores under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme?

- (a) Karnataka
- (b) Telangana
- (c) Odisha
- (d) Tamil Nadu
- (e) **Andhra Pradesh**

172. With which country, India has signed an MoU on the establishment of a framework of cooperation in the area of trade remedial measures?

- (a) Sri Lanka
- (b) Afghanistan
- (c) **Bangladesh**
- (d) Iran
- (e) Algeria

173. Who among the following has been elected as the President of Cuba?

- (a) Raúl Castro
- (b) **Miguel Díaz-Canel**
- (c) Manuel Marrero Cruz
- (d) Salvador Valdés Mesa
- (e) Guillermo Lasso

174. 'Out of control' fire broke out in the UNESCO World Heritage site "Table Mountain National Park". Table Mountain National Park is located in which country?
- (a) England
 - (b) Australia
 - (c) **South Africa**
 - (d) New Zealand
 - (e) Ireland
175. What is the rank of India in Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index 2021?
- (a) 139
 - (b) 140
 - (c) **142**
 - (d) 144
 - (e) 148
176. Which country has topped in the World Press Freedom Index 2021, published by Reporters without Borders?
- (a) Sweden
 - (b) **Norway**
 - (c) Switzerland
 - (d) Finland
 - (e) Denmark
177. ICRA has forecasted India's GDP at _____ for Financial Year 2022.
- (a) **10-10.5%**
 - (b) 10-11%
 - (c) 11-12%
 - (d) 11-11.5 %
 - (e) 12-12.5%
178. JP Morgan has projected India's GDP at _____ for FY22.
- (a) 10%
 - (b) **11%**
 - (c) 11.5%
 - (d) 12%
 - (e) 13%
179. UBS Securities has projected India's GDP at _____ for FY22.
- (a) **10%**
 - (b) 11%
 - (c) 11.5%
 - (d) 12%
 - (e) 13%
180. Which of the following Football club has won the 2021 Copa del Rey?
- (a) Manchester City
 - (b) Chelsea
 - (c) Liverpool
 - (d) **Barcelona**
 - (e) Real Madrid
181. Who has won the Monte Carlo Masters 2021 Tennis Title?
- (a) Novak Djokovic
 - (b) Rafael Nadal
 - (c) Roger Federer
 - (d) Denis Shapovalov
 - (e) **Stefanos Tsitsipas**
182. Bhumidhar Barman passed away recently. He was the Former Chief Minister of which state?
- (a) **Assam**
 - (b) Uttarakhand

- (c) Andhra Pradesh
- (d) Bihar
- (e) Rajasthan

183. Kim Boo-kyum has been elected as the new Prime Minister of which of the following country?

- (a) Hong Kong
- (b) Singapore
- (c) **South Korea**
- (d) Mauritius
- (e) Maldives

184. Who is the head of the committee about the Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARC) set up by RBI?

- (a) Shyamala Gopinath
- (b) **Sudarshan Sen**
- (c) Jayant Kumar Dash
- (d) N S Vishwanathan
- (e) Nachiket Mor

185. Care Ratings has forecasted India's GDP growth at _____ for Financial Year 2022.

- (a) 9.2%
- (b) **10.2%**
- (c) 10.7%
- (d) 11.5%
- (e) 12.1%

186. Who among the following has been appointed as the acting Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court?

- (a) **Sanjay Yadav**
- (b) P. V. Sanjay Kumar
- (c) Sudhanshu Dhulia
- (d) Hima Kohli
- (e) Raghvendra Singh Chauhan

187. Who among the following has been roped in as brand ambassador of Puma?

- (a) Washington Sundar
- (b) Devdutt Padikkal
- (c) Ajinkya Rahane
- (d) Suresh Raina
- (e) **Both (a) and (b)**

188. Who has become the first Indian woman to scale Mt Annapurna?

- (a) Punita Arora
- (b) Nivedita Choudhary
- (c) Usha Padhee
- (d) **Priyanka Mohite**
- (e) Priya Semwal

189. On which date, World Creativity and Innovation Day is observed globally?

- (a) 20 April
- (b) **21 April**
- (c) 22 April
- (d) 23 April
- (e) 24 April

190. National Civil Service Day is celebrated every year on _____.

- (a) 20 April
- (b) **21 April**
- (c) 22 April
- (d) 23 April
- (e) 24 April

191. Maidavolu Narasimham has passed away recently. He was a/an _____.
(a) Bengali Actor
(b) Radio astronomer
(c) **RBI governor**
(d) Arya Samaj Leader
(e) Vice President
192. Sankha Ghosh has passed away recently. He was a/an _____.
(a) Director
(b) Choreographer
(c) Politician
(d) **Poet**
(e) Musician
193. Which country became the first in world to introduce climate change law for financial firms?
(a) **New Zealand**
(b) Australia
(c) England
(d) Ireland
(e) UAE
194. Which country has been elected by acclamation to 3 bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council?
(a) Afghanistan
(b) Australia
(c) Bangladesh
(d) Russia
(e) **India**
195. What was the rank of India in the Global Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2021?
(a) 68
(b) 84
(c) **87**
(d) 95
(e) 104
196. Which country has topped in the Global Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2021 released by World Economic Forum (WEF)?
(a) **Sweden**
(b) Norway
(c) Denmark
(d) Switzerland
(e) Austria
197. Who among the following has become the 68th Indian Grandmaster?
(a) Audi Ameya
(b) **Arjun Kalyan**
(c) P Iniyan
(d) M Pranesh
(e) D Gukesh
198. On which date, World Earth Day is observed every year?
(a) 20 April
(b) 21 April
(c) **22 April**
(d) 23 April
(e) 24 April
199. What was the theme for World Earth Day 2021?
(a) End Plastic Pollution
(b) Climate action
(c) Protect our species

- (d) Environmental and Climate Literacy
- (e) **Restore Our Earth**

200. UN Chinese Language Day is observed annually on _____.

- (a) 19 April
- (b) **20 April**
- (c) 21 April
- (d) 22 April
- (e) 23 April

201. Ahmed Hussain passed away recently. He was associated with which sports?

- (a) Cricket
- (b) Badminton
- (c) Chess
- (d) **Football**
- (e) Table Tennis

202. Kishore Nandlaskar passed away recently. He was a/an _____.

- (a) Politician
- (b) Journalist
- (c) **Actor**
- (d) Environmentalist
- (e) Classical singer

203. Name the Padma Vibhushan awardee Indian Islamic scholar and peace activist, who passed away recently.

- (a) Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali
- (b) **Maulana Wahiduddin Khan**
- (c) Dar Yasin
- (d) Mukhtar Khan
- (e) Arif Mohammad Khan

204. Which country's President has hosted Leaders' Summit on Climate in which PM Modi has participated recently?

- (a) Russia
- (b) Japan
- (c) UK
- (d) **USA**
- (e) Germany

205. Which of the following state/UT will host the Khelo India Youth Games in November 2021?

- (a) Haryana
- (b) New Delhi
- (c) Punjab
- (d) Odisha
- (e) **Both (a) and (b)**

206. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will cancel the License of which of the following company?

- (a) **Sambandh Finserve Pvt Ltd**
- (b) RBL FinServe Ltd
- (c) India Finserve Advisors Private Limited
- (d) Samriddhi Finserve India Private Limited
- (e) JD Finserve India Private Limited

207. Aceware Fin Tech Services has launched the first Neobank, Ace Money Neobank, in Kerala in partnership with which of the following bank?

- (a) Yes Bank
- (b) ICICI Bank
- (c) Axis Bank
- (d) HDFC Bank
- (e) **Both (a) and (b)**

208. S & P Global Ratings has forecasted India's GDP growth at _____ in 2021.
- (a) 7.5%
 - (b) 8.6%
 - (c) 9.3%
 - (d) 11.0%**
 - (e) 12.6%
209. India Ratings and Research has projected India's FY22 GDP growth forecast at _____.
- (a) 6.4%
 - (b) 8.6%
 - (c) 9.4%
 - (d) 10.1%**
 - (e) 11.5%
210. What is the projected growth rate of India for Financial Year 2022, according to State Bank of India (SBI) Research?
- (a) 8.5%
 - (b) 9.9%
 - (c) 10.4%**
 - (d) 10.9%
 - (e) 11.8%
211. Who has been appointed as the chairperson of National Association of Software and Services Companies?
- (a) Krishnan Ramanujam
 - (b) Rekha Menon**
 - (c) Soma Mondal
 - (d) Atish Chandra
 - (e) Gowsalya Shankar
212. Every year World Book and Copyright Day is celebrated on _____.
- (a) 22 April
 - (b) 23 April**
 - (c) 24 April
 - (d) 25 April
 - (e) 26 April
213. On which date, English Language Day is celebrated annually?
- (a) 20 April
 - (b) 21 April
 - (c) 22 April
 - (d) 23 April**
 - (e) 24 April
214. Amit Mistry passed away recently. He was a/an _____.
- (a) Politician
 - (b) Actor**
 - (c) Freedom Fighter
 - (d) Footballer
 - (e) Painter
215. In which state, Glacier burst has occurred in Sumna, Chamoli district recently?
- (a) Assam
 - (b) West Bengal
 - (c) Nagaland
 - (d) Uttarakhand**
 - (e) Manipur
216. RBI has allowed commercial banks to pay up to _____ of pre-Covid dividends.
- (a) 20%
 - (b) 25%
 - (c) 40%

- (d) **50%**
- (e) 60%

217. RBI has restricted which of the following from adding new customers to their card networks?

- (a) American Express Banking Corp
- (b) Diners Club International Ltd
- (c) JCB Co Ltd
- (d) Discover Financial Services
- (e) **Both (a) and (b)**

218. Who has been appointed as the HDFC Bank's part-time chairman?

- (a) Sudarshan Sen
- (b) M Rajeshwar Rao
- (c) **Atanu Chakraborty**
- (d) Murali Natarajan
- (e) Sanjay Yadav

219. Who has won the Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021?

- (a) Sharan Kumar Limbale
- (b) **Rumana Sinha Sehgal**
- (c) Guneet Monga
- (d) Alfred Aho
- (e) Sumon Chakraborty

220. Who among the following has made it to Forbes Asia's 30 'Under-30' list recently?

- (a) Sangita Reddy
- (b) **Vibha Harish**
- (c) Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw
- (d) Vandana Luthra
- (e) Indra Nooyi

PAHUJA LAW ACADEMY

Judicial Services Foundation

Course Covers :-

- **Major Laws and State Local Laws**
- **General Studies**
- **English Classes**
- **Test Series-Prelims, Subjective,
State-wise Mock Paper**

Head Office : 211-212, D-1, 2nd Floor, Virat Bhawan, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-110009
Inquiry Office : B-9, Shop No. 1, Commercial Complex Basement, Main Road,
Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Near Bank of Maharashtra ATM, Delhi-110009

9821593226 (26-30), 011-47243226

Website : www.pahujalawacademy.com | E-mail : info@pahujalawacademy.com