
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

16th August to 22nd August, 2021

PREFACE

Dear Students,

The 'Current Affairs' section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the Week. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfill aspirations.

Happy Reading

Team CL



Career
Launcher

National



Justice BV Nagarathna in line to be first woman Chief Justice of India

- The Supreme Court Collegium, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana has recommended to the government nine names for appointment as apex court judges, and in the process scripted history by naming Karnataka High Court judge Justice BV Nagarathna, who may become India's first woman CJI.
- The Collegium, also comprising Justices U.U. Lalit, A.M. Khanwilkar, D.Y. Chandrachud and L. Nageswara Rao, met until the late hours of August 17 to zero in on the names. It, however, formalised and published its resolution. The names include eight judges and one lawyer from the Supreme Court Bar.
- The Collegium has for the first time, in one single resolution, recommended three women judges. It has thus sent a strong signal in favour of representation of women in the highest judiciary. It has also continued the recent trend to recommend direct appointments from the Supreme Court Bar to the Bench of the court.
- If the government approves the names, three of the nine - Chief Justice Nath and Justice BV Nagarathna and Mr. Narasimha would go on to be the CJIs. Mr. Narasimha, who had served as Additional Solicitor General, may become the ninth lawyer to be ever appointed directly as judge in the apex court. Justice Hima Kohi and Justice Bela Trivedi are the other two women judges in the list of recommendations.
- Justice BV Nagarathna, who is presently a judge with the Karnataka High Court, has also been recommended by the Collegium. She is likely to have a month-long tenure. Her appointment will be a historic moment for the country's judiciary. She will be following in the footsteps of her father ES Venkataramiah, who was the Chief Justice of India between June 1989 and December 1989.
- Eligibility to become a Supreme Court judge: The norms relating to the eligibility has been envisaged in the Article 124 of the Indian Constitution. 1. To become a judge of the Supreme Court, an individual should be an Indian citizen. 2. In terms of age, a person should not exceed 65 years of age. 3. The person should serve as a judge of one High Court or more (continuously), for at least five years or the person should be an advocate in the High Court for at least 10 years or a distinguished jurist.

Article 124(2) of the Indian Constitution provides that the Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose. As per Article 217, the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the CJI and the State Governor, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court. The names are recommended by the Collegium. Collegium System is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court, and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution. The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the CJI and comprises four other senior most judges of the court. A HC collegium is led by its Chief Justice and four other senior most judges of that court. The collegium sends its final recommendation to the President of India for approval. The President can either accept it or reject it. In the case it is rejected, the recommendation comes back to the collegium. If the collegium reiterates its recommendation to the President, then he/she is bound by that recommendation.

President Ramnath Kovind gives assent to Constitution (105th Amendment) Act 2021

- **President Ramnath Kovind** has given his assent to the **Constitution (105th Amendment) Act 2021**, which restores the power of State Governments to identify and specify **Socially and Economically Backward Classes (SEBCs)**. The Constitution (105th) Bill 2021 was passed by the Parliament on August 11, 2021.
- The Gazette of India, issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice, the Act would amend article 338B of the Constitution, in clause (9), and would insert a provision of: **“Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply for the purposes of clause (3) of article 342A.”**
- In article 342A of the Constitution, for the words **“the socially and educationally backward classes which shall for the purposes of this Constitution”**, the words **“the socially and educationally backward classes in the Central List which shall for the purposes of the Central Government”** will be substituted, and the expression **“Central List”** meaning the list of socially and educationally backward classes prepared and maintained by and for the Central Government should be inserted.
- As per the Act, every State or Union territory may, by law, prepare and maintain, for its own purposes, a list of socially and educationally backward classes, entries in which may be different from the Central List.
- **“In article 366 of the Constitution, for clause (26C), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-- ‘(26C) “socially and educationally backward classes” means such backward classes as are so deemed under Article 342A for the purposes of the Central Government or the State or Union territory, as the case may be,”** the Gazette read.
- Earlier, the Supreme Court in the Maratha quota case struck down the reservation in government jobs and educational institutions for the Maratha community brought in by the Maharashtra government in 2018, saying it exceeded the 50 per cent cap imposed earlier.
- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister **Dr Virendra Kumar** had informed that the bill should be considered as the 105th Constitution Amendment bill after being renumbered.

National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) was initially constituted by the Central Govt by The National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993. The Central Govt has repealed The National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993 w.e.f 15.8.2018. The present Commission (8th) has been accorded Constitutional Status and constituted through **“The Constitution (One Hundred and Second Amendment) Act, 2018”** Act dated 11.8.2018, whereby Article 338B has been inserted, forming a Commission for the socially and educationally backward classes to be known as NCBC. The Commission consists of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and three other Members in the rank & pay of Secretary to the Govt of India and their condition of service and tenure of office has been notified vide MSJE Notification dated 23.08.2018. **The current Chairman is Dr. Bhagwan Lal Sahni.** Article 340 of the Constitution provides for the appointment of a Commission by the President of India to investigate the conditions of and the difficulties faced by the socially and educationally backward classes and to make appropriate recommendations.

BRO hoists national flag at world’s highest motorable pass Umling La

- To commemorate 75 years of Independence, **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** unfurls the National Flag at **75 highest passes in India on August 15**, besides undertaking several other activities. The Himalayan range that spreads across India’s northern frontier has the **highest passes and motorable roads in the world**, the highest being the Kalindi Pass in Uttarakhand at an altitude of 19,521 feet.
- Earlier this month, the BRO completed the black-topping of the world’s highest motorable roads that passes over the 19,300-foot-high Umling La Pass in south-eastern Ladakh connecting the town of Demchok in the vicinity of the Line of Actual Control.

The **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** is a road construction executive force in India that provides support to and is a part of the Indian Armed Forces. BRO develops and maintains road networks in India’s border areas and friendly neighboring countries. This includes infrastructure operations in 19 states and three union territories (including Andaman and Nicobar Islands) and neighboring countries such as Afghanistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, Tajikistan and Sri Lanka. Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry is the current Director General of Border Roads (DGBR).

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar launches TAPAS

- **Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar** launched an online portal **TAPAS (Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services)**, developed by the **National Institute of Social Defence, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** in the presence of Ministers of State, **Shri Ramdas Athawale** and **Sushri Pratima Bhoumik**.
- **TAPAS is the initiative of National Institute of Social Defence (NISD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, to provide access to lectures by subject experts, study material and more**, but in a manner that it **supplements the physical classroom without compromising on the quality of teaching**.
- The main objective of introducing the course modules is to **impart training and enhance the knowledge and skills for the capacity building of the participants**. It can be taken up by anyone who wishes to enhance his or her knowledge on the topics and there is no fee for joining.
- **The five basic courses are on Drug (Substance) Abuse Prevention, Geriatric/Elderly Care, Care and Management of Dementia, Transgender Issues and on comprehensive course on Social Defence Issues**.
- **The idea of TAPAS was conceptualised at a time when exploring the online medium for work and education had become imperative due to the outbreak of Covid 19 pandemic**. What fuelled it further was the Ministry's vision of ensuring maximum participation of stakeholders and volunteers working in the field of social defence for better training and capacity building.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is a Government of India ministry. It is responsible for welfare, social justice and empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised sections of society, including scheduled castes (SC), Other Backward Classes (OBC), trans-people and LGBTQ people, the disabled, the elderly, and the victims of drug abuse. **Dr. Virendra Kumar Khatik** is serving as the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment. He is a Member of Parliament in the 17th Lok Sabha from Tikamgarh.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurates world's 2nd-largest refurbished National Gene Bank

- **Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar** inaugurated the world's second-largest refurbished **National Gene Bank** at the **National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa** in New Delhi. The Gene Bank was established in **1996** to preserve the seeds of Plant Genetic Resources for future generations.
- It has the **capacity to preserve about ten lakh germplasm in the form of seeds**. Presently, it is protecting four lakh 52 thousand accessions, of which over two lakh are Indian germplasm. **The National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources is meeting the need of in-situ and ex-situ germplasm conservation through the Delhi Headquarters** and ten other regional stations in the country.
- According to the release by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare, the **revamped state-of-the-art National Gene Bank is a powerful step in the direction of helping the farmers of India**. While speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister mentioned that the farmers in India are completely capable of accepting the challenges faced by the agriculture sector and can also conquer them.
- The Union Minister while speaking on the occasion said that **today the need for biofortified crops is being felt**. **The agriculture farmers will be greatly benefited by the new gene bank with state-of-the-art facilities at germplasm**. The goal is to make the farmers of the country self-reliant and the government has been making every effort in that direction.

The agriculture contribution in India's GDP in 2019 is 15.96 percent. According to latest report, **agriculture is primary source of livelihood for 58% population in India**. The Primary sector of the economy includes any industry involved in the **extraction and production of raw materials, such as farming, logging, hunting, fishing, and mining**. India is a global agricultural powerhouse. It is the **world's largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices, and has the world's largest cattle herd (buffaloes)**, as well as the **largest area under wheat, rice and cotton**. It is the **second largest producer of rice, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, farmed fish, sheep & goat meat, fruit, vegetables and tea**. **Narendra Singh Tomar** is the Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. He is a member of the 17th Lok Sabha from Morena, Madhya Pradesh.

Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment flagged off ‘Operation Blue Freedom – Land World Record at Siachen Glacier’

- **People with disabilities from across the country have undertaken an expedition till Siachen Glacier to create a new World Record for the largest team of people with disabilities to reach the world’s highest battlefield.**
- **Recently, The Government of India has permitted a team of people with disabilities to scale Siachen Glacier.** The team of people with disabilities trained by ‘Team CLAW’ a team of Armed Forces veterans.
- **The selected people with disabilities from across the country have undertaken an expedition till Kumar Post (Siachen Glacier) to create a new World Record for the largest team of people with disabilities to reach the world’s highest battlefield.**
- **The successful execution of this pioneering expedition, ‘Operation Blue Freedom’, shall firmly place India on the global stage as a leader in empowering Divyangjan and set a benchmark for other nations to emulate.** This will drive The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi’s vision for Divyangjan and MSJE’s pursuit to harness the immense productive potential of people with disabilities. Simultaneously, it will powerfully portray the skill and heart of India’s Armed Forces not only on the Battlefield but off it as well.

The Siachen Glacier is located in the Eastern Karakoram range in the Himalayas, just northeast of Point NJ9842 where the Line of Control between India and Pakistan ends. It is the Second-Longest glacier in the World’s Non-Polar areas. The Siachen Glacier lies immediately south of the great drainage divide that separates the Eurasian Plate from the Indian subcontinent in the extensively glaciated portion of the Karakoram sometimes called the “Third Pole”. The Siachen Glacier is part of Ladakh which has now been converted into a Union Territory. The Siachen Glacier is the world’s highest battlefield. In 1984, India launched Operation Meghdoot to capture the 76.4 km-long glacier on the Saltoro ridge. India claims the area based on the Jammu and Kashmir Instrument of Accession (1947) and the Karachi Agreement of 1949, which define the ceasefire line beyond NJ9842 as “running Northwards to the glaciers”.

PM Narendra Modi launches National Automobile Scrapage Policy in Gujarat

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the long-awaited National Automobile Scrapage Policy, describing it as a “significant step towards Aatmabirbhar Bharat.”** The policy, which PM Modi launched while virtually addressing the Investor Summit in Gujarat, was announced by Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech in February.
- **Mr. Modi said that the launch of Vehicle Scrapage Policy is a significant milestone in India’s development journey.** The new National Automobile Scrapage Policy will give a new dimension to our mobility with a new identity to our automobile industry. He said that scrapping the vehicles in a scientific manner will not only remove the unfit vehicles in the country but also give a boost to the economy.
- **The policy recommends “fitness tests” for private and commercial vehicles that are more than 20 and 15 years old respectively. In the absence of a “fitness certificate,” registration of such vehicles will be automatically cancelled.** It further recommends mandatory scrapping of all government vehicles that are more than 15 years old but is applicable only on four-wheelers.
- **The fitness tests will be done at government-certified fitness centres, appointments for which can be made online. Test reports will be generated in online mode. Also, scrapping can be done anywhere in the country, regardless of the place of vehicle registration.**
- **The scheme also proposes several incentives which the owners can avail after being given a scrapping certificate.** This includes the scrap value for the old vehicle, which is expected to be around 5-6% of the price of a new vehicle.
- **Additionally, a road tax rebate of up to 25% for new personal vehicles, and 15% for new commercial vehicles, as well as a 5% discount against the scrapping certificate, have also been proposed under the policy.**
- **The registration fees for the purchase of a new vehicle may also be waived upon getting the old vehicle scrapped.** The policy will bring investments worth more than Rs. 10,000 crore and create up to 50,000 jobs, Union transport minister Nitin Gadkari had said while announcing details of the policy, in March.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the BJP from 2010-2013. He is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways of India. Gadkari represents Lok Sabha from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra. During the cabinet reshuffle on 7th July 2021 the portfolio for Ministry of MSME which was under him was reassigned to Narayan Rane, another BJP MP from Maharashtra as a part of cabinet expansion.

BDL & MBDA establishing facility for Final Assembly, Integration, Test of Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile in India

- **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) and MBDA are establishing a facility for the Final Assembly, Integration and Test of Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile (ASRAAM) missiles in India.**
- **MBDA is a European multinational developer and manufacture of missiles.** The two organisations signed a licencing agreement to establish the manufacturing facility in India. Under the licensing agreement, MBDA will transfer the equipment and knowledge to BDL for establishing the facility.
- **Work on establishing this capability in India is due to start immediately and is expected to commence operations by the next financial year. ASRAAM is one of the Within Visual Range missiles available and BDL will be manufacturing these at its Bhanur Unit for the domestic and export in future through MBDA.**

Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) is one of India's manufacturers of ammunitions and missile systems. It was founded in 1970 in Hyderabad, Telangana, India. BDL was established in the year 1970 to be a manufacturing base for guided weapon systems.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw launches 'Amrit Mahotsav Shri Shakti Challenge 2021'

- **Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw launched the 'Amrit Mahotsav Shri Shakti Challenge 2021'** to encourage technology solutions developed by Women Entrepreneurs that facilitate Women's Safety and Empowerment.
- **The aim is to empower women to help them achieve their full potential.** Startup Women Entrepreneurs' Awards function virtually, the Minister hoped for the enthusiastic participation in the Shri Shakti Challenge. The number of incubators and accelerators which is around 100 at present, is not sufficient for a country of over 130 Crore population.

Ashwini Vaishnaw is an Indian politician and former Indian Administrative Service officer currently serving as the Minister of Railways, Communications and Electronics & Information Technology of India, since 8 July 2021. He is a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party. In June 2019, he became a member of the Parliament of India representing Odisha State in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house.

Cabinet approves Disaster Management MoU between India and Bangladesh

- **The Union Cabinet Chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the MoU on cooperation in the field of Disaster Management, Resilience and Mitigation signed between India and Bangladesh in March this year during the visit of Prime Minister Modi to Bangladesh.**
- **The MoU seeks to put in place a system so that both the countries benefit from the Disaster Management mechanisms of each other.** It will also help in strengthening the areas of preparedness, response and capacity building in the field of Disaster Management.
- **The MoU envisages that India and Bangladesh will extend mutual support to each other** at the time of large scale disaster in the field of relief, response, reconstruction and recovery. Both the countries will also exchange relevant information, remote sensing and other scientific data. **They will also share best practices in the field of disaster response, recovery, mitigation, capacity building for ensuring resilience, etc.**
- **According to the provisions of MoU India and Bangladesh will extend cooperation in the field of advanced information technology, early warning systems, remote sensing and navigation services and expertise for disaster preparedness, response and mitigation and more towards real time data sharing.** They will also support training of officials in the field of Disaster Management and conduct joint disaster management exercises bilaterally. The MoU envisages joint research activities in the field of Disaster management.

A disaster is a result of natural or man-made causes that leads to sudden disruption of normal life, causing severe damage to life and property to an extent that available social and economic protection mechanisms are inadequate to cope. **National Disaster Management Authority**, abbreviated as **NDMA**, is an apex **Body of Government of India**, with a mandate to lay down policies for disaster management. **NDMA** was established through the **Disaster Management Act** enacted by the **Government of India** on **23 December 2005**. **NDMA** is responsible for framing policies, laying down guidelines and best-practices for coordinating with the **State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs)** to ensure a holistic and distributed approach to disaster management. It is headed by the Prime Minister of India.

Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurates Centre for Research & Innovation in Artificial Intelligence set up at IIT-Hyderabad

- **Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan** has virtually **inaugurated the Centre for Research and Innovation in Artificial Intelligence** set up at the **Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H)**.
- He also inaugurated the **first Academic Building of the Department of Materials Science & Metallurgical Engineering, High-Performance Computing Centre and High-Resolution Electron Microscopy Facility**.
- **Centre for Research and Innovation in Artificial Intelligence** in collaboration with **Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA** is the best example of international Cooperation. The University has an agreement with **Honeywell Technology Solutions** for setting up the lab.
- The Minister has asked the students and researchers to carry out cutting edge research in advanced technologies to ensure **Atmanirbhar Bharat** in various domains and optimum investments in strategic areas of technology.

The **Ministry of Education (MoE)**, previously the **Ministry of Human Resource Development (1985-2020)**, is responsible for the **implementation and formulation of the National Policy on Education** approved by Union cabinet of India and to ensure that it is implemented in letter and spirit. **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad** is the **First Minister of Education** in the Indian. He is **commonly remembered as Maulana Azad**; the word **Maulana** is an honorific meaning **‘Our Master’** and he had adopted **Azad (Free)** as his pen name. The current **Union Minister for Education** is **Dharmendra Pradhan** since **7 July 2021**. **Shri Pradhan** currently represents **Madhya Pradesh** in the **Rajya Sabha** as **Member of Parliament**.

SC passes interim order allowing women to sit for NDA examination

- **The Supreme Court** passed an **interim order to allow women to take the admission exam to National Defence Academy (NDA)**. A division bench comprising **Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Hrishikesh Roy** passed the interim order in a writ petition seeking permission for women candidates to appear for the **NDA exam**. While issuing the order, the court said women should be permitted take part in the **NDA exam**.
- On **February 17** last year, a bench of **Justices D Y Chandrachud and Ajay Rastogi** directed the government to ensure that **women Short Service Commission officers** are given **permanent commission in the Army, including command postings**.
- **NDA** is one of the two modes for direct entry to the armed forces and the exam is held by the **Union Public Services Commission (UPSC)**.

In 2020, the Supreme Court (SC) ordered the central government to **grant permanent commission (PC) to women officers in the Army’s non-combat support units on par with their male counterparts**. The SC had rejected the government’s stand of women officers’ physiological limitations as being based on “sex stereotypes” and “gender discrimination against women”. **Women officers have been granted PC in the Indian Army in all the ten branches where women are inducted for SSC. The Army, Air Force and Navy began inducting women as short-service commission (SSC) officers in 1992. This was the first time when women were allowed to join the military outside the medical stream.** One of the turning points for women in the military came in 2015 when **Indian Air Force (IAF)** decided to induct them into the fighter stream. **In early 2021, the Indian Navy deployed four women officers on warships after a gap of almost 25 years. In May 2021, the Army inducted the first batch of women into the Corps of Military Police, the first time that women joined the military in the non-officer cadre.**

India, Vietnam undertake bilateral maritime exercise in South China Sea

- **India and Vietnam navies have carried out bilateral maritime exercise in the South China Sea**, the Indian navy said. Accordingly, **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Ranvijay and INS Kora undertook bilateral maritime exercise with the Vietnam People's Navy frigate VPNS Ly Thai To (HQ-012).**
- **INS Ranvijay is a guided-missile destroyer and the latest of the Rajput class.** The ship was **commissioned on December 21, 1987 and is equipped with an array of weapons and sensors, including surface-to-surface missiles, anti-air missiles and guns, heavy weight torpedoes, anti-submarine rockets.** It is also capable of carrying anti-submarine helicopter (Kamov 28).
- **INS Ranvijay is in company with INS Kora which is the lead ship of Kora class missile corvette.** The ship is fitted with **surface-to-surface missiles and anti-air guns.**
- **"The bilateral interaction aims to consolidate the strong bond shared by the two navies and would be another step towards strengthening India-Vietnam defence relations,"** the force said.

The Indian Navy is the naval branch of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Navy. The Indian Navy traces its origins back to the East India Company's Marine which was founded in 1612 to protect British merchant shipping in the region. In 1793, the British East India Company established its rule over eastern part of the Indian subcontinent i.e. Bengal, but it was not until 1830 that the colonial navy was titled as His Majesty's Indian Navy. When India became a republic in 1950, the Royal Indian Navy as it had been named since 1934 was renamed to Indian Navy. Admiral Karambir Singh is the current Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) of the Indian Navy.

Uttar Pradesh govt tables it's first supplementary budget for current FY in State Assembly

- **In Uttar Pradesh, the government has tabled it's first supplementary budget** for the current financial year in Assembly. Earlier, the Government had **tabled it's general budget in the month of February this year.**
- Finance minister Suresh Khanna presented the **supplementary budgetary demands of Rs. 7,301.5 crores in the house in the presence of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.** This budget is **1.33 percent of the total general budget.** Three thousands will be for employment for youths. **Supplementary Budget is the request for additional funds by Ministries and Departments during the course of the year.**

Uttar Pradesh is the **most populous state in India** as well as the **most populous country subdivision in the world.** It was **created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule,** and was **renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950,** giving the acronym UP. The state is **divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow.** On **9 November 2000,** a new state, Uttarakhand, was **carved out from the state's Himalayan hill region.** The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, **join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges.** The state **contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha.**

IIT Madras to collaborate with Road Transport Ministry on pavement engineering & intelligent transportation systems

- **IIT Madras will collaborate with Road Transport Ministry on pavement engineering and intelligent transportation systems.** The research areas include **pavement materials, hydrogen cell transportation, automatic vehicle classification, novel toll systems, Fast TAG data analytics and traffic simulations** beside transportation safety among others.
- **IIT Madras – MoRTH Chair has been set up.** The Institute will train eight to ten students including nominated officers in the field of Highway engineering.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launches Defence India Startup Challenge 5.0

- **Defence minister Rajnath Singh launched fifth edition of Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC 5.0).** The minister said, there is neither shortage of talents nor lack of demand for talents in the country.

- **Thirty five Problem Statements – 13 from the Services and 22 from Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) – were unveiled under DISC 5.0.** These are in areas such as Situational awareness, Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence, Aircraft-trainer, Non-lethal devices, 5G network, Under-water domain awareness, Drone SWARMS and Data Capturing. The Problem Statements, designed to ensure military advantage in the foreseeable future, are the highest in any edition, so far.
- Lauding the efforts of iDEX-DIO, Shri Rajnath Singh, in his address, **termed DISC 5.0 as another step towards independence in the defence sector** as the launch comes at a time when the country is celebrating ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’. **Stating that DISC 5.0 is a reflection of Government’s resolve of creating an ‘AatmaNirbhar’ defence sector,** he exuded confidence that this challenge will move forward from its earlier editions and take innovation, design & development to newer heights.
- Shri Rajnath Singh listed out measures taken by Ministry of Defence to **promote innovation, such as including iDEX as a procurement avenue under Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP-2020); earmarking Rs 1,000 crore for domestic procurement through iDEX for financial year 2021-2022** and approving a budget of Rs 498.8 crore for the next five years to support over 300 startups and foster innovation in defence & aerospace sectors.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces. The President of India is the ceremonial commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country. The Indian Armed Forces (including Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy) and Indian Coast Guard under the Ministry of Defences are primarily responsible for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. A military department was created by the supreme government of the British East India Company at Kolkata in the year 1776. **Rajnath Singh is currently serving as the Defence Minister of India.** He has been Member of parliament, Lok Sabha two times from Lucknow (Lok Sabha constituency) and once from Ghaziabad (Lok Sabha constituency).

PM Modi inaugurated virtually at Somnath Temple in Gujarat

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of various projects worth 83 crore rupees at the historic Somnath Temple in Gujarat** through video conference.
- **Prime Minister Modi is the chairman of the Shri Somnath Trust** which manages the affairs of the world-famous temple located in Prabhas Patan town in Gir-Somnath district. Mr Modi inaugurated three projects and also perform a virtual ground-breaking ceremony for the Parvati Temple coming up near the main temple at a cost of 30 crore rupees.

The **Somnath temple (also known as the Deo Patan) located in Veraval in Saurashtra on the western coast of Gujarat, India is believed to be the first among the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines of Shiva.**

Tamil Nadu forms 7-member panel for study of hydrocarbon projects

- **The Tamil Nadu Government has constituted a seven member committee led by Sultan Ahmed Ismail of the State Development Policy Council to study the exploration of hydrocarbon projects.**
- The study will be **conducted in areas other than the protected agricultural zone** as the terms of reference has been revised. It will also **assess the impact of drilling technologies like hydro fracturing on ground water and environment.**

Tamil Nadu lies in the southernmost part of the Indian subcontinent and is bordered by the union territory of Puducherry and the South Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Its capital and largest city is Chennai. Its official language is Tamil, which is one of the longest-surviving classical languages in the world. **Banwarilal Purohit is the current Governor of Tamil Nadu. M.K. Stalin is the current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.**

Delhi-Chandigarh highway becomes India’s first EV-friendly highway

- The Union Heavy Industries Minister Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey **inaugurated the country’s very first Solar Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station at the Karnal Lake Resort.**

- With a network of solar-based electric vehicle charging stations, **the Delhi-Chandigarh Highway has become the country's first EV-friendly highway in the country.** The network of stations was set up by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) under the FAME-1 (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) & Electric Vehicles) scheme of the Ministry of Heavy Industries.
- **Encourage faster adoption of electric and hybrid vehicles** by way of offering upfront Incentive on purchase of Electric vehicles. **Establish a necessary charging Infrastructure for electric vehicles.** To address **the issue of environmental pollution and fuel security.**
- With the **inauguration of the first solar electric vehicle charging station at the Karnal lake resort, the Delhi-Chandigarh Highway has become the first e-vehicle friendly highway in India.** The EV charging station at the Karnal lake resort is strategically located at the midpoint of the Delhi-Chandigarh highway and is equipped to cater to all types of E-cars plying currently in the country.

FAME India is a part of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan. Main thrust of FAME is to encourage electric vehicles by providing subsidies. The FAME India Scheme is aimed at incentivising all vehicle segments. Two phases of the scheme: Phase I: started in 2015 and was completed on 31st March, 2019 Phase II: started from April, 2019, will be completed by 31st March, 2022. The scheme covers Hybrid & Electric technologies like Mild Hybrid, Strong Hybrid, Plug in Hybrid & Battery Electric Vehicles. Monitoring Authority is Department of Heavy Industries, the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises.

Nashik is the first non-metro Indian city to sign for 'Race to Zero' pledge, plans to develop carbon-free transport

- Nashik has become the first non-metro city in Maharashtra to sign the 'Race to Zero' pledge for going net zero on greenhouse gas by 2040. The pledge has already been signed by Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai.
- Net Zero is an ambitious target where an institution, a city or a country aims to attain a balance between the amount of greenhouse gas produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere.
- The United Nations' 'Race to Zero' is the largest 'credible alliance' of companies, cities, states, regions, investors, universities and other actors, aiming to halve carbon emissions by 2030.

Arvind Kejriwal inaugurated India's first smog tower

- Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal inaugurated the country's first smog tower at Baba Kharak Singh Marg, Connaught Place. The smog tower will clean 1,000 cubic metres of air every second and reduce PM 2.5 and PM 10 levels in Delhi.
- The smog tower will work with full force after the monsoon season. **The scientists of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee will accordingly assess the performance of the tower and present a monthly report."**

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, Delhi city proper's population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai. Anil Bajjal is the current & 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Delhi is a Union Territory with a legislature, and it came into being in 1991 under Article 239AA of the Constitution inserted by the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991.

Exercise Konkan-2021 held between INS Tabar & HMS Westminster

- Exercise Konkan-2021 was held between INS Tabar and HMS Westminster in the English Channel. The Indo-UK Naval exercise included the participation of integral helicopters of the two ships and the Falcon Electronic Warfare aircraft.
- A wide range of exercises including co-ordinated anti-submarine procedures, firing drills, combined maritime picture compilation, combat formation maneuvering and replenishment at sea were conducted. These along with

the diverse professional engagements held earlier in the harbour, have enabled Exercise Konkan-2021 consolidate interoperability and helped cement the strong bonds of friendship between the two navies.

NTPC commissions largest Floating Solar PV Project in Andhra Pradesh

- **The National Thermal Power Corporation, NTPC Limited has commissioned the largest floating solar PV project of 25 MegaWatt on the reservoir of its Simhadri thermal station in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. This is also the first solar project to be set up under the Flexibilisation Scheme, notified by the Government of India in 2018.**
- **The floating solar installation has a unique anchoring design which is spread over 75 acres. This floating solar project has the potential to generate electricity from more than one lakh solar PV modules. This will not only help to light around seven thousand households but also ensure at least 46 thousand tons of carbon dioxide is not emitted every year during the lifespan of this project.**

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have Five Deputy Chief Ministers one each from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, backward, minority and Kapu communities. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the current Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have three capital cities; there are Visakhapatnam (Executive capital), Amaravati (Legislative capital) and Kurnool (Judiciary). Andhra Pradesh High Court imposed a stay on implementation of 3 capitals. Andhra Pradesh is the first state to be formed on a linguistic basis in India on 1 October 1953. On 2 June 2014, Telangana was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital.

The Union Government approved the ratification of the Kigali Amendment

- **The Union Government approved the ratification of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on phasing down climate-damaging refrigerant Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). China, which is the largest producer of HFCs in the world, will reduce HFC use by 80 per cent by 2045 over the 2020-22 baseline. It comes close on the heels of similar decisions by the United States and China, the world's largest producers and consumers of HFCs. 122 countries had ratified the Kigali Amendment by the end of July 2021.**
- **Following similar decisions by the United States and China in the past few months, India decided to ratify a key amendment to the 1989 ozone-saving Montreal Protocol negotiated five years ago. The Kigali Amendment, named after the Rwanda capital where it was negotiated, enables the phase-out of hydrofluorocarbons, a set of chemicals notorious for their capacity to warm the planet.**
- **The 2016 amendment was seen as one of the most important breakthroughs in the global efforts to fight climate change, because the HFCs, a set of 19 gases used extensively in the air-conditioning and refrigerant industry, are known to be hundreds, even thousands, of times more potent than carbon dioxide in their ability to cause global warming. It is estimated that a complete phase-out of HFCs by 2050 would prevent about 0.5 degree Celsius rise in global temperatures by the end of this century.**
- **This important instrument, therefore, is crucial to achieving the target of restraining the increase in global temperatures to 2 degree Celsius from pre-industrial times. As pointed out by a recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the average temperatures of the planet has already risen by about 1.1 degree Celsius.**

The Kigali Amendment aims for the phase-down of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) by cutting their production and consumption. The goal is to achieve over 80% reduction in HFC consumption by 2047. Given their zero impact on the depletion of the ozone layer, HFCs are currently used as replacements of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in air conditioning, refrigeration and foam insulation, however they are powerful greenhouse gases. India has to reduce its HFC use by 80% by the year 2047, while China and the United States have to achieve the same target by the year 2045 and 2034 respectively. India will complete its phasedown of HFCs in four steps from 2032 onwards with a cumulative reduction of 10% in 2032, 20% in 2037, 30% in 2042 and 80% in 2047. In October 2016, with the United States' leadership, 197 countries adopted an amendment to phase down HFCs under the Montreal Protocol in Kigali, Rwanda.



Malaysia's PM Muhyiddin Yassin resigns as political crisis escalates

- **Malaysia's Muhyiddin Yassin has stepped down as Prime Minister after months of political turmoil culminated in the loss of his majority.** Mr. Muhyiddin's departure comes less than 18 months after taking office and will plunge the country into a fresh crisis amid a worsening pandemic.
- Political leaders have already begun to jostle for the top post, with **his deputy Ismail Sabri rallying support to succeed Mr. Muhyiddin and keep the government intact.**
- **The Southeast Asian nation's king appointed Muhyiddin as the caretaker prime minister** until a new one is found, but did not set a timeline. **King Al-Sultan Abdullah ruled out elections because of the pandemic,** saying he would invoke his constitutional power to appoint a prime minister he believes is likely to command a majority.

Malaysia is a country in Southeast Asia. The federal constitutional monarchy consists of thirteen states and three federal territories, separated by the South China Sea into two regions, Peninsular Malaysia and Borneo's East Malaysia. Peninsular Malaysia shares a land and maritime border with Thailand and maritime borders with Singapore, Vietnam, and Indonesia. East Malaysia shares land and maritime borders with Brunei and Indonesia and a maritime border with the Philippines and Vietnam. Kuala Lumpur is the national capital. The Malaysian ringgit is the currency of Malaysia.

Belfast's Linen Hall Library becomes first in world to be awarded diversity and inclusion certificate

- **The Linen Hall Library has become the world's first library/museum and tourist destination to be awarded the BS 76005 Diversity and Inclusion certificate** from accredited certification body Centre for Assessment.
- **The Centre for Assessment awarded the certificate** following a rigorous assessment process involving staff and volunteer interviews and an in-depth examination of current and historical Linen Hall policies and procedures.
- **The British Standard for diversity and inclusion, BS 76005 Valuing people through diversity and inclusion is a standard for good practice.** The Standard provides a framework for reviewing, assessing and undertaking a competent and principled approach to diversity and inclusion that encompasses people management and development; the evolution of more inclusive policies, procedures, practices and behaviours; the building of productive relationships with others, including customers, clients and people within communities.

The Linen Hall Library is located at 17 Donegall Square North, Belfast, Northern Ireland. It is the **oldest library in Belfast and the last subscribing library in Northern Ireland.** The Library is physically in the centre of Belfast, and more generally at the centre of the cultural and creative life of the wider community.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani resigns & leaves country

- **Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has left the country.** On 15 August 2021, as the Taliban took control of the country in the fall of Kabul, **he fled the country by air landing in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. He then went to the United Arab Emirates which granted him political asylum.** During his escape, the Afghanistan embassy in Tajikistan asked Interpol to apprehend him for embezzling public funds. **He was legally succeeded by the vice president, Amrullah Saleh.**

Ashraf Ghani is an Afghan politician, academic, and economist who served as President of Afghanistan between September 2014 and 15 August 2021. Ghani came in fourth in the 2009 presidential election. Ghani ran in the 2014 presidential election securing less votes than rival Abdullah Abdullah in the first round, but winning a majority in the second round. Following political chaos, the United States intervened to form a unity government. Ghani was re-elected when the final results of the 2019 presidential elections were announced after a long delay on 18 February 2020. He was sworn in as president for a second five-year term on 9 March 2020.

After G-7, Quad includes Taiwan Strait in talks

- Taiwan irked China further by publicly thanking the members of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) for including peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.
- The Biden administration is focusing on developing the Taiwan Strait as a friction point with China after decades. The US has been successful in mentioning Taiwan Strait in its joint statements with Japan and South Korea. More importantly, it found mention in the recent G-7 summit that was also virtually attended by PM Narendra Modi.

Taiwan, officially the Republic of China (ROC) is a country in East Asia. It shares maritime borders with the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the northwest, Japan to the northeast, and the Philippines to the south. The capital is Taipei and currency is New Taiwan dollar. Tsai Ing-wen is a Taiwanese politician and academic serving as the seventh President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) since 2016. A member of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Tsai is the first female President of Taiwan.

Vietnam opens its first consul office in India in Bengaluru

- The Ambassador of Vietnam to India Phan Sanh Chau announced opening its first-ever consul office in India in Bengaluru and the appointment of N S Srinivasa Murthy as the Honorary Consul of Vietnam for Bengaluru. The consul was opened to improve the investment ties between Vietnam and India, which are friends historically as the country has a Buddhist population of about 80 per cent.

Vietnam is the easternmost country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia. Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam. The dong has been the currency of Vietnam since May 3, 1978. Nguyen Xuan Phuc is the current President of Vietnam. Pham Minh Chinh is the current Prime Minister of Vietnam.

India, Australia sign document to boost naval ties

- The document is aligned to the '2020 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' agreed to by prime ministers of the two nations, and aims to ensure a shared approach to regional and global security challenges.
- Australia and India, along with the US and Japan are members of the four-nation Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or the Quad, which has irked China. The navies of the four Quad nations will also participate in the Malabar Naval Exercise later this year.

Hunger spreading in Afghanistan: UN food agency

- The UN food agency says it has been able to negotiate access with the Taliban to distribute aid in one provincial capital in Afghanistan but hasn't been able to resume food deliveries to three other provincial capitals it supplies. The World Food Program, headquartered in Rome, has said that some 14 million people are facing severe hunger in the nation of some 39 million.
- This is the second drought in three years that country is facing. This year, drought is combined with fighting. Drought had afflicted Afghanistan much before the Taliban takeover of the country on August 15. As per WFP estimates, around 2 million children are malnourished in Afghanistan.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations and the world's largest humanitarian organization. It largely focuses on hunger and food security. WFP is also the largest provider of school meals. It was founded in 1961 with its headquarter in Rome. It also has offices across 80 countries. The World Food Programme was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 for its efforts to provide food assistance in areas of conflict, and to prevent the use of food as a weapon of war and conflict.

China amended the country's family planning rules to allow couples to have three children

- **China's legislature formally amended the country's family planning rules to allow couples to have three children**, also announcing a number of policy measures aimed at boosting declining birth rates.
- **The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, or Parliament, passed an amendment to the Population and Family Planning Law**, state media said, adding that the amended law calls on the authorities to "take supportive measures, including those in finances, taxes, insurance, education, housing and employment, to reduce families' burdens as well as the cost of raising and educating children."
- **The ruling Communist Party announced in May that couples in China would for the first time be allowed to have a third child** in a relaxation of family planning rules. **In 2016, a "two-child policy" was introduced that largely failed to boost birth rates.**
- The changes come in the **wake of China's once-in-ten year population census that recorded rapidly declining birth rates over the past decade.** The National Bureau of Statistics said on May 11 that **12 million babies were born last year, the lowest number since 1961.** The census said **China's population was 1.41 billion in 2020, an increase of 72 million since the last census in 2010.**

China is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. Xi Jinping is serving as president of the People's Republic of China. National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies. China claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea, a huge source of hydrocarbons. However, several ASEAN member countries, including Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei, have made counterclaims. Chinese claims in the South China Sea are described in part by the nine-dash line. China and India are the two neighbouring countries in Asia. India shares 3488 km of border with China that runs along the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. The Belt and Road Initiative, known in Chinese and formerly in English as One Belt One Road or OBOR for short, is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest in nearly 70 countries and international organizations.

Afghanistan name changed to "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan"

- **Taliban Leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Declared Afghanistan's New President and Afghanistan name changed to "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan."** That was the name of the country under the Taliban government ousted by US-led forces after the September 11, 2001, attacks.
- **The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is an Islamic state governed by the Taliban that is the de facto current government of Afghanistan since 2021, has also ruled the country from 1996 to 2001.** Between 1996 and 2001, it controlled approximately 90% of the country as an insurgency, whereas remaining regions in the northeast were held by the Northern Alliance, which maintained broad international recognition as a continuation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.
- **The Islamic Emirate was overthrown by the Northern Alliance on 17 December 2001, which had been bolstered by the ISAF coalition established after a U.S.-led invasion of the country two months prior.** The Taliban has continued to refer to itself as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in official communications from 2001 until 2021.

Durand Line, boundary established in the Hindu Kush in 1893 running through the tribal lands between Afghanistan and British India, marking their respective spheres of influence; in modern times it has marked the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. India shares land borders with seven sovereign nations. The state's Ministry of Home Affairs also recognizes a 106 kilometres (66 mi) land border with Afghanistan, as part of its claim of the Kashmir region (Durand Line).



The General Insurance Business (Nationalization) Amendment Act, 2021 also got the assent of the President.

- **President Ramnath Kovind** gave his assent to **General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Act, 2021** which had introduced new provisions as well as amended **General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Act, 1972**. The act will allow the public sector insurance businesses regulated by the 1972 Act to be privatized. Apart from privatization, the act's stated goals include increasing insurance sector coverage, providing social safety through better protecting policyholder rights, and promoting faster economic growth.
- **It aims to do away with the need that the central government owns at least 51% of the stock capital in a specific insurer.** It classifies general insurance as fire, marine, or other types of insurance.
- **It eliminates capital redemption and annuity from the definition for some firms.** Capital redemption insurance entails the insurer paying a lump sum of money to the beneficiary on a predetermined date after the beneficiary has paid premiums on a regular basis.
- **Certain types of insurance, such as annuity insurance, pay the beneficiary over time.**
- **From the date on which the central government relinquishes control of the insurer, it will not apply to the specified insurers.** Here, control is defined as: The authority to appoint a majority of the directors of a particular insurer. To be able to make decisions about its management or policies.
- **It gives the central government the authority to notify workers of selected insurers about their terms and conditions of employment.** It states that schemes devised by the central government in this regard shall be regarded as implemented by the insurer. The insurer's board of directors has the authority to alter or create new policies.
- **However, there have been apprehensions that it will have an impact on the country's insurance industry as well as employees of the General Insurance Company.** It's also been argued that it could lead to the complete privatization of general insurance businesses. **Privatization will open Pandora's Box, putting 30 crore policyholders in jeopardy.**

Insurance is a legal agreement between two parties i.e. the insurance company (insurer) and the individual (insured). In this, the insurance company promises to make good the losses of the insured on happening of the insured contingency. The contingency is the event which causes a loss. It can be the death of the policyholder or damage/destruction of the property. It's called a contingency because there's an uncertainty regarding happening of the event. The insured pays a premium in return for the promise made by the insurer. Insurance is a subject listed in the Union list in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. It means only Union Government can make laws on insurance (a state Government cannot make law on this subject).

Sweden's HYBRIT delivers world's first fossil-free steel

- Swedish green steel venture **HYBRIT** had made the world's first customer delivery of steel produced without using coal as it looks to revolutionize an industry that accounts for around 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

- Swedish-Finnish steelmaker SSAB AB has produced the world's first fossil-free steel, which is being delivered to customer Volvo Group. **The achievement is part of the HYBRIT (Hydrogen Breakthrough Ironmaking Technology) initiative, launched by SSAB, Swedish state-owned utility Vattenfall AB and mining company LKAB in 2016. The test delivery is seen as a key step towards developing a fossil-free value chain for steel production.**
- **The first steel made with the HYBRIT technology, or reduced by fossil-free hydrogen instead of coal and coke, was rolled in SSAB's Oxelosund site in Sweden in July. The steel was produced using the world's first hydrogen-reduced sponge iron, manufactured earlier at the HYBRIT pilot plant in Lulea.**

Sweden is a Nordic country in Northern Europe. The Nordic countries, or the Nordics, or Norden (literally "the North"), are a geographical and cultural region in Northern Europe and the North Atlantic, which includes the sovereign states of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as the autonomous countries of the Faroe Islands and Greenland (both part of the Kingdom of Denmark). The capital city is Stockholm. The krona is the official currency of Sweden. Stefan Lofven has been Prime Minister of Sweden since October 2014.

HCL Foundation launches 'My e-Haat' portal to empower artisans

- **HCL Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of HCL Technologies launched an online portal, 'My e-Haat', to empower artisans and strengthen the value chain of the handicraft sector in the country. Currently, more than 30 partners from eight states with over 600 products are listed on the portal, it said adding that more will be joining from across the country by the end of the year.**
- **"My E-Haat' initiative will be a unique model (A2C) where artisans will connect with the customer directly in the coming years". The portal will assist in showcasing the ingenuity of skilled artisans from all over the country in front of the globe, resulting in increased recognition, appreciation, and remuneration.**

HCL Technologies is an Indian multinational information technology (IT) services and consulting company, headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India. It is a subsidiary of HCL Enterprise. Originally a research and development division of HCL, it emerged as an independent company in 1991 when HCL entered into the software services business. In 1976, a group of six engineers, all former employees of Delhi Cloth & General Mills, led by Shiv Nadar, started a company that would make personal computers. Roshni Nadar Malhotra is the current chairperson of HCL Technologies and the first woman to lead a listed IT company in India.

RBI creates composite FI-Index to capture extent of financial inclusion across country

- **The Reserve Bank of India has created a composite Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) to capture the extent of financial inclusion across the country.**
- **The FI-Index has been conceptualised as a comprehensive index, incorporating details of banking, investments, insurance, postal as well as the pension sector, in consultation with government and respective sectoral regulators. It also captures information on the financial inclusion aspects in a single value ranging between 0-100, where 0 represents complete financial exclusion and 100 indicates full financial inclusion.**
- **The FI-Index comprises three broad parameters – Access (35%), Usage (45%), and Quality (20%), with each of these consisting of dimensions computed based on many indicators. The Index is also responsive to the ease of access, availability and the usage of services, and the quality of services, comprising all 97 indicators.**
- **A unique feature of the Index is the quality parameter, which captures the quality aspect of financial inclusion as reflected by the financial literacy, consumer protection, and inequalities and deficiencies in services. The FI-Index has been constructed without any 'base year', and as such it reflects cumulative efforts of all stakeholders over the years towards financial inclusion.**

Financial inclusion is defined as the availability and equality of opportunities to access financial services. It refers to a process by which individuals and businesses can access appropriate, affordable, and timely financial products and services. These include banking, loan, equity, and insurance products. Financial inclusion efforts typically target those who are unbanked and underbanked, and directs sustainable financial services to them. Financial inclusion is understood to go beyond merely opening a bank account. It is possible for banked individuals to be excluded from financial services

RBI revises lockers rules: Bank liability limited to 100 times of annual rent

- The Reserve Bank came out with revised guidelines for the hiring of lockers under which the liability of banks will be limited to 100 times its annual rent in case of fire, theft, building collapse or frauds by bank employees.
- As per the revised guidelines, which shall come into effect from January 1, 2022, banks will be required to incorporate a clause in the locker agreement prohibiting the hirer from keeping anything illegal or hazardous in lockers.
- The RBI said banks need to maintain a branch-wise list of vacant lockers as well as a wait-list in Core Banking System (CBS) or any other computerised system compliant with Cyber Security Framework, for the purpose of allotment of lockers and ensure transparency in allotment of lockers.

The Reserve Bank of India was founded on 1 April 1935 to respond to economic troubles after the First World War. RBI was conceptualised as per the guidelines, working style and outlook presented by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his book titled “The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution” and presented to the Hilton Young Commission. The bank was set up based on the recommendations of the 1926 Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance, also known as the Hilton–Young Commission. In 1969, the Indira Gandhi-headed government nationalised 14 major commercial banks. Upon Indira Gandhi’s return to power in 1980, a further six banks were nationalised. The first Governor of the RBI was British banker Osborn Smith and C.D. Deshmukh was the first Indian Governor of RBI. Shashikant Das is the current Governor of RBI.

India ranks second in crypto adoption globally

- India has been ranked second in terms of crypto adoption, amid a bull run in cryptocurrency assets globally this year, a new report by blockchain data platform Chainalysis showed.
- According to the report, which ranked 154 countries, worldwide crypto adoption grew by over 881% in the last year. Global adoption has grown by over 2,300% since the third quarter of 2019, it said. Emerging markets led ahead of the United States and European nations, driven by peer-to-peer (P2P) platform trading, the report revealed.
- With the creation of Bitcoin in 2008 till present date, cryptocurrencies have gained much significance all around the world. The gains made by this sector since the onset of Covid-19 pandemic in January 2020 are astounding; the “cryptomarket” grew by over 500%. However, in the 2018-19 budget speech, the Finance Minister announced that the government does not consider cryptocurrencies as legal tender.

Cryptocurrency is a specific type of virtual currency, which is decentralised and protected by cryptographic encryption techniques. Bitcoin, Ethereum, Ripple are a few notable examples of cryptocurrencies. Bitcoin is a type of digital currency that enables instant payments to anyone. Bitcoin was introduced in 2009. Bitcoin is based on an open-source protocol and is not issued by any central authority. The origin of Bitcoin is unclear, as is who founded it. A person, or a group of people, who went by the identity of Satoshi Nakamoto are said to have conceptualised an accounting system in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. In 2018, The RBI issued a circular preventing all banks from dealing in cryptocurrencies. This circular was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in May 2020. Recently, the government has announced to introduce a bill; Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021, to create a sovereign digital currency and simultaneously ban all private cryptocurrencies.

Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal confers National Intellectual Property Awards

- Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal conferred the National Intellectual Property Awards at a virtual event in New Delhi.
- The Minister said, technology and ideas are the twin engines of growth, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is the fuel that powers them and this award not only recognises the innovative ideas of individuals and institutions but also serves as an inspiration for others. He said there is need to bring an Intellectual Property revolution for Inclusive Progress in the nation and strengthening IPR laws.

- It will **boost job creation, quality, competitiveness and manufacturing**. India can be the Innovation Powerhouse of the world. Intellectual Property Rights actually translates into India's progress in real-time and extend Intellectual Property Right to India's Prosperity Right.
- **There will be 80 per cent fee reduction filing for IPRs to all Recognized Educational Institution Government or Aided or Private** irrespective of whether such institute is in India or outside India. **Total fee Filing plus publication plus Renewal fee for an Institute is 4 lakh 24 thousand 500 rupees and now this will be reduced to 84 thousand 900 rupees.**
- The fees among the top Patent Offices worldwide. Mr Goyal said, the office of Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks also known IP office will **impart training and awareness to 10 Lakh students in this Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav from 15th August 2021 to 15th August 2022.** India records 572 per cent growth in grant of Patents in last 7 years.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) are the **rights acquired by an owner of an intellectual property. Intellectual property is a category of property that includes intangible creations of the human intellect.** In simple terms, it refers to creations of the mind, such as inventions, literary & artistic works, designs & symbols, names & images used in commerce. The main purpose of intellectual property law is to encourage the creation of a wide variety of intellectual goods & strike the right balance between the interests of innovators & wider public interest. A patent is an exclusive right granted for an invention, which is a new product or process that meets conditions of novelty, non-obviousness, & industrial use. A patent provides the owner with the right to decide how – or whether – the invention can be used by others. Patents in India are governed by “The patent Act 1970” which was amended in 2005 to make it compliant with TRIPS.

Wipro, Asian Paints, HCL in Hurun Global 500 list

- **Wipro Ltd, Asian Paints Ltd, HCL Technologies Ltd and nine other Indian firms found a place among the world's 500 most valuable companies in 2021, while ITC Ltd dropped out of the Hurun Global 500 list.**
- **iPhone maker Apple Inc. retained its position as the world's most valuable company, with a 15% increase in market capitalization to \$2.4 trillion.** The next five most valuable companies are Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Facebook and Tencent, and they have also remained unchanged from last year.
- **Reliance Industries Ltd topped the list of Indian companies with a market capitalization of \$188 billion.** Tata Consultancy Services Ltd with \$164 billion in market value and HDFC Bank Ltd with \$113 billion followed.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman launches 'Ubharte Sitaare Fund' for export-oriented firms & startups

- **Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched an ambitious 'Ubharte Sitaare Fund' -USF for export-oriented firms and startups** in a program at Lucknow.
- **The Fund aims at arranging funds for promotion of micro, small and medium companies.** The fund has been set up by Exim Bank and SIDBI. The minister said that this scheme will be **successful in Uttar Pradesh as the state has highest number of MSMEs.**
- Finance minister said that during the last two years union government has taken several important steps and the results are showing up now as the country is establishing its place in the world. She said that **every district of Uttar Pradesh will benefit under Ubharte Sitare Fund.** She also **appreciated the one district one product scheme of Uttar Pradesh.**

Nirmala Sitharaman is an Indian economist and politician serving as the current Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs of India. She is a member of the Rajya Sabha, upper house of the Indian Parliament, since 2014. Sitharaman formerly served as the Defence Minister of India, thereby becoming India's second female defence minister and also the second female finance minister after Indira Gandhi and first full-time female Finance Minister. Sitharaman featured in the Forbes 2020 list of 100 most powerful women and ranked the 41st in the world.



Inventions/Discoveries

India approves first Covid vaccine for children above 12

- **Zybus Cadila received an approval for the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for ZyCoV-D, the world's first and India's indigenously developed DNA based vaccine against Covid-19.**
- The company said it plans to manufacture 100 million to 120 million doses of ZyCoV-D annually and has started to stockpile the vaccine. **ZyCoV-D will be administered in children above 12 years and adults.**
- The vaccine has **efficacy of 66.6 percent and it is to be stored at 2 degree Celsius to 8 degree Celsius.** The vaccine is needle free to be administered intradermally in three doses at day 0, 28 and 56. It was **approved after evaluation of interim Phase III clinical trial results in consultation with Subject Expert Committee of Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).**
- **The vaccine has been developed in partnership with the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India under the 'Mission COVID Suraksha' and implemented by BIRAC, ZyCoV-D has been supported under COVID-19 Research Consortia through National Biopharma Mission for Preclinical studies, Phase I and Phase II Clinical Trials and under the Mission COVID Suraksha for Phase III Clinical Trial,"** an official release stated.
- **This three-dose vaccine, which when injected produces the spike protein of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and elicits an immune response, plays a vital role in protection from the infection as well as viral clearance.** The plug-and-play technology on which the plasmid DNA platform is based can be easily adapted to deal with mutations in the virus, such as those already occurring.

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) is India's national regulatory body for pharmaceuticals and medical devices. It serves a similar function to the European Medicines Agency of the European Union, the PMDA of Japan, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the United States, and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency of the United Kingdom, and the National Medical Products Administration (NMPA) of China. **The Indian government has announced its plan to bring all medical devices, including implants and contraceptives under a review of the Central Drugs and Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).** Within the CDSCO, the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) regulates pharmaceutical and medical devices and is positioning within the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. **Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) is the head of department of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization of the Government of India responsible for approval of licences of specified categories of drugs such as blood and blood products, IV fluids, vaccines, and sera in India. DCGI also sets standards for manufacturing, sales, import, and distribution of drugs in India.**

Three research scholars discover new plant species in Western Ghats

- **Three research scholars, one from the United States among them, have discovered a new plant in Ponnudi hills in Kerala which is part of the Western Ghats, one of the eight hotspots of biological diversity in the world.**

- They named the plant after Dr N Mohanan (*Symplocos Mohananii*), former principal scientist and now scientific adviser of M S Swaminathan Research Foundation in Wayanad, north Kerala.
- They said the tree was named after the scientist for his outstanding contribution spanning 37 years in the field of taxonomy (classification of plants) and conservation of biodiversity. He discovered more than 33 new species from the Western Ghats and also six species were re-discovered many years later (some of them were written off as extinct).

The Western Ghats is a mountain range that covers 1,600 km parallel to the western coast of the Indian peninsula, traversing the states of Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of the eight hotspots of biological diversity in the world. It is sometimes called the Great Escarpment of India.

India added four more sites recognised as wetlands of international importance under Ramsar

- India added another feather in its cap when four more sites - two each from Haryana and Gujarat - were recognised as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. After the latest addition, India now has 46 such sites, the Union environment ministry said.
- Haryana's Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary is a human-made freshwater wetland. It is also the largest in Haryana. The Sultanpur National Park supports more than 220 species of resident, winter migratory and local migratory waterbirds at critical stages of their life cycles.
- The Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat lies on the Central Asian Flyway and more than 320 bird species can be found here. Meanwhile, the Wadhvana Wetland in Gujarat is internationally important for its birdlife as it provides wintering ground to migratory waterbirds, including over 80 species that migrate on the Central Asian Flyway.
- According to environment ministry, the aim of the Ramsar list is to develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.
- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on February 2, 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. It came into force for India on February 1, 1982. Those wetlands which are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites. Last year, Ramsar declared 10 more wetland sites from India as sites of international importance.
- India has maximum wetlands in South Asia - 7.7 lakh - covering the country's 4.6 per cent geographical area, according to a report of NGO Wetland International. The 46 Ramsar sites in India include the Chilika Lake in Odisha, Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan, Harike Lake in Punjab, Loktak Lake in Manipur and Wular Lake in Jammu and Kashmir. The World's largest Mangrove forest is located in Sundarbans Reserve Forest.

New enzyme that infects plants identified, says new study

- A new research has identified an unusual enzyme that plays a major role in the infection of plants - and has shown that disabling this enzyme effectively stops plant disease in its tracks. By discovering previously unexplored ways in which crop pathogens breakthrough plant cell walls, scientists have opened up opportunities for developing effective disease control technologies. The research described a family of enzymes found in a microorganism called *Phytophthora infestans*.
- The enzymes enable crop pathogens to degrade pectin – a key component of plant cell walls – thereby enabling the pathogens to break through the plant's defenses to infect the plant. Led by biologists and chemists from the University of York, the international team of researchers discovered the new class of enzymes that attack pectin called LPMOs. The team also showed that disabling the gene that encodes this enzyme rendered the pathogen incapable of infecting the host.
- *P. infestans* is known to cause potato late blight, a devastating plant disease that led to widespread starvation in Europe and more than a million deaths in Ireland in the 1840s, in what became known as 'The Great Famine'. Plant infection continues to cause billions of dollars' worth of damage to global crop production each year and continues to threaten world food security. The identification of this new gene could open up new ways of protecting crops from this important group of pathogens.

Rare orchid species found in India for the first time

- A rare orchid species – *Cephalanthera erecta* var. *oblanceolata* – has been found for the first time in India in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district at an altitude of 1870 metres, said experts from Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and Uttarakhand forest department.
- “*Cephalanthera* represents a small group of terrestrial orchids with about 19 taxa, mainly distributed in Europe, North America and temperate parts of Asia. So far the genus is represented in India by two species that include *Cephalanthera damasonium* and *Cephalanthera longifolia*, which are confined to the Himalayan region”.

India's first cattle genomic chip launched in Telangana

- To conserve indigenous breeds of cattle like Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal and Ongole, the National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB) has developed India's first cattle genomic chip, IndiGau.
- This chip technology will help in the selection of high yielding cattle and improvement of characteristics. With 11,496 markers, IndiGau is touted as the largest cattle chip in the world.
- “IndiGau is purely indigenous and the largest cattle chip of the world. It has 11,496 markers (SNPs) more than that placed on 777K Illumina chips of US & UK breeds. This chip of our own indigenous cows is a great example of a self-reliant India”.

IIT Kanpur develops 'Sanjeevani' oxygen concentrator

- To ensure a sufficient supply of oxygen and prevent future crisis amid the probable third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K), has developed an advanced oxygen concentrator named 'Sanjeevani'.
- Equipped with the pressure swing adsorption (PSA) technique, the technology has been transferred and licensed to a Bengaluru-based company Albot Technologies Private Limited.
- The oxygen concentrator works at a flow rate of 10 litres per minute (LPM) with an oxygen purity of 92% ±3. The concentrator has an adjustable capacity of 1 to 10 LPM which can be used for both medical as well as personal uses.

IIT Guwahati Researchers make Breakthrough in Memory Architectures

- Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT) researchers have made fundamental contributions to memory architectures by preventing redundancy in data values and improving slow and frequent writes in the multi-core processor systems.
- IIT stated that when the world is rapidly moving towards research in applied areas, IIT Guwahati researchers have developed methods to solve the problems in computer systems domain.
- Specific contributions being in multi-core processor-based systems that need an equally large on-chip memory to commensurate the data demands of the ever-growing applications and hence preventing energy consumption to ensure the temperature remains under the thermal design power (TDP) budget.

India Makes First Scientific Estimate of Elephant Population in 2022

- On Elephant Day, Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) announced that India will be conducting its first scientific estimation of its elephant population, and will conduct a tiger census as well.
- This estimation will be undertaken in 2022, and the ministry has released protocols that will need to be followed during the census. While India does conduct a census, the methods are not necessarily scientific and can be thought of more as a headcount than an actual census.
- The last census was carried out in 2017 and concluded that there are more than 27,000 elephants in India. The assessment will be conducted in three phases: ground surveys, analyses of remotely sensed data and camera traps.
- World Elephant Day is an international annual event on August 12, dedicated to the preservation and protection of the world's elephants. African elephants are listed as “Vulnerable” and Asian elephants as “Endangered” on the IUCN Red List of threatened species.

Elephant census is conducted once in 5 years under the aegis of Project Elephant. Last Elephant Census was conducted in 2017. According to the Elephant Census 2017, **India's Asian elephant population is 27,312.** The numbers are lower than from the last census estimate in 2012 (between 29,391 and 30,711). **Karnataka has the highest number of elephants, followed by Assam and Kerala.** There are around 32 Elephant Reserves in India. The very first elephant reserve was the Singhbhum Elephant Reserve of Jharkhand.

New Frog Species 'Adi Cascade' Discovered In Arunachal Pradesh

- **A team of biologists from Delhi University, Wildlife Institute of India and North Carolina Museum of Natural Science (USA) has discovered a new species of frog from the Adi hills Arunachal Pradesh.**
- **The new species of Cascade Frog has been named Adi Cascade Frog (Amolops adicola) after the Adi hills, which are home to Adi tribes, an indigenous group of people from the Himalayan regions in the state. The literal meaning of Adi is "hill" or "mountain top". Historically, this region was also known as Abor Hills.**
- **The findings have been published in a scientific article titled "Phylogenetic position of the poorly known montane cascade frog Amolops monticola (Ranidae) and description of a new closely related species from Northeast India". The discovery was made as biologists investigated a group of medium to large sized Cascade Frogs from Northeast India over the last five years.**

The rings around Neptune

- **Neptune has at least five main rings and four prominent ring arcs. Starting from the ring nearest to the planet, these are named Galle, Leverrier, Lassell, Arago, and Adams.**
- **While the rings are currently thought to be short-lived and relatively young, the arcs are clumps of dust that are peculiar to Neptune's ring system. The outermost ring, Adams, is where four prominent arcs Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, and Courage can be found.**
- **Among these, it was Neptune's rings that were the last to be discovered. While scientists suspected for some years that Neptune must have rings around it, it was only when Voyager 2 made its flyby that it was proven beyond any doubt.**
- **Launched in August 1977, Voyager 2 took 12 years to get to Neptune, having observed Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus along the way. And then, in a matter of weeks, Voyager 2 discovered six new moons and four rings around Neptune.**
- **Today, Voyager 2 remains the only earthly spacecraft to have encountered Neptune. But since Voyager's 1989 flyby, the Hubble Space Telescope and Earth-based telescopes have imaged the two brightest rings of Neptune. Astronomers named those two Neptunian rings Adams and Le Verrier. They're named for John Couch Adams and Urbain Jean Joseph Le Verrier, whose independent calculations helped find Neptune's position in the sky – and thus led to its discovery – in 1846.**

Rainfall at Greenland ice summit for first time

- **Rain fell at the highest point on the Greenland ice sheet for the first time on record, another worrying sign of warming for the ice sheet already melting at an increasing rate, scientists said. This meltwater is streaming into the ocean, causing sea levels to rise.**
- **Already, melting from Greenland's ice sheet – the world's second-largest after Antarctica's – has caused around 25% of global sea level rise seen over the last few decades, scientists estimate. That share is expected to grow, as global temperatures increase.**

The standard instrument for the measurement of rainfall is the 203 mm (8 inch) rain gauge. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) rainfall in the "second half of the monsoon" is **likely to be 104% of the Long Period Average (LPA).** Long Period Average (LPA) is the average rainfall recorded during the months from June to September, calculated during the 50-year period, and is kept as a benchmark while forecasting the quantitative rainfall for the monsoon season every year.



Sports Personalities in News

Top-seeded Daniil Medvedev beats Reilly Opelka in Toronto

- Top-seeded Daniil Medvedev of Russia won the National Bank Open for his third victory of the year and 12th overall, beating American qualifier Reilly Opelka 6-4, 6-3. The 25-year-old Daniil Medvedev, ranked second in the world, also won this year in Mallorca and Marseille. He has four ATP Masters 1000 victories

Komalika Bari becomes new under-21 recurve world champion at Youth World Championships

- In Archery, Komalika Bari became the new under-21 recurve world champion at the Youth World Championships in Wroclaw, Poland.
- India's Junior recurve archers also bagged gold in the men's and the mixed team event. In the U21 men's recurve team final the Indian team of Dhiraj Bommadevara, Aditya Choudhary, and Parth Sushant Salunkhe clinched the gold medal in a very exciting fashion.

Binder wins in Austria after tyre gamble pays off

- South African Brad Binder delivered a sensational home Austrian Grand Prix win for his KTM team after a late, crazy gamble to stick to slick tyres on a wet and slippery track paid off.

India register their third-ever Test victory at iconic Lord's Ground

- In Cricket, India made history after defeating England by 151 runs in the second Test of five-match series registering their third-ever Test victory at the iconic Lord's Ground, in London. KL Rahul won the Man of the Match.
- With the win at Lord's, Skipper Virat Kohli has become the third Indian captain after Kapil Dev and MS Dhoni to win a Test at this iconic venue known as the Home of Cricket. Kapil Dev achieved the feat for the first time in 1986 before Dhoni's side ended India's 28-year wait in 2014.

2021 edition of World Athletics U20 Championships to be held in Nairobi

- The 2021 edition of the World Athletics U20 Championships scheduled to be held in Nairobi, Kenya. The tournament will continue till 22 August at the Nyayo Sports Complex.
- Javelin Thrower Kunwar Ajai Raj Singh Rana and Long Jumper Shaili Singh will lead the Indian challenge in the World Athletics U20 Championships. India has had a champion at the U20 Athletics World Championships in each of the last two editions.
- Neeraj Chopra threw the javelin longer than any man in his age group in 2016 for his first major international breakthrough while Hima Das clinched gold medal in the women's 400m in Tampere in 2018.

Princepal becomes first Indian to be on NBA title winning team

- Young cager Princepal Singh became the first Indian to be part of an NBA title winning team when his side Sacramento Kings clinched the 2021 NBA Summer League crown. The last time, the Kings tasted success was in 2014.

Manika-Sathiyam win mixed doubles title in Budapest

- India's Manika Batra and G Sathiyam outplayed Hungary's Dora Madarasz and Nandor Ecseki 3-1 to win the mixed doubles title at the WTT Contender Budapest.
- Manika had won the Asian Games bronze with veteran Sharath Kamal and, more recently, they played together at the Tokyo Olympics.

Amit Khatri wins silver medal in 10,000m race walk at World Athletics U20 C'ships

- India's Amit Khatri won the silver medal in men's 10,000m race walk at the World Athletics U20 Championships in Nairobi. Amit finished behind gold medal winner Heristone Wanyonyi of Kenya who clocked a time of 42:10.84.
- Earlier this year, Amit had set a new national U-20 record in 10 km race walking when he won the title at the 18th National Federation Cup with a time of 40:40.97.

Top 5 individual medal winners at the Tokyo Olympics

1. Emma McKeon: With seven medals, the swimmer from Brisbane earned the most medals by an individual athlete in Tokyo. She is now tied with gymnast Maria Gorokhovskaya for the record for most medals won by a woman in a single edition of the Olympics.
2. Caeleb Dressel: The star swimmer was selected as a co-captain for the USA men's swimming team. The 24-year-old was on a gold rush in Tokyo, collecting five medals on top of the podium.
3. Kaylee McKeown: The 20-year-old Queenslander made a splash at the biggest stage of swimming. She took the gold in 100m, setting a new Olympic record. She took another gold, this time in the 200m backstroke. Kaylee clinched her third gold at Tokyo in the women's 4x100m medley relay. She also had a bronze in the mixed 4x100m medley relay.
4. Zhang Yufei: One of the breakthrough stars of the Tokyo Olympics, Zhang had a memorable outing. She won the gold in the 200m butterfly, setting a new Olympic record. She was a member of the 4x200m freestyle team which took the gold by breaking the world record. She took the silver in the 100m butterfly and 4x100m mixed relay.
5. Kathleen Ledecy: The most decorated female swimmer of all time bagged four medals in Tokyo. She began with a silver medal in 400m freestyle, losing to Australia's Ariarne Titmus.

Elaine Thompson-Herah defended her title as the fastest woman in the world

- Elaine Thompson-Herah defended her title as the fastest woman in the world, taking first in the 100m at The Prefontaine Classic. Thompson finished with a time of 10.54 seconds, running the second-fastest women's 100m in history. Fellow countrywomen Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and Shericka Jackson came in second and third for a Jamaican podium sweep.
- Elaine Thompson-Herah is a Jamaican sprinter who competes in the 100 metres and 200 metres. A five-time Olympic champion, she is the fastest woman alive, and the second-fastest in history, over both distances.
- Thompson-Herah rose to prominence at the 2015 World Athletics Championships, winning silver in the 200 m. She is the first woman in history, and the second sprinter after compatriot Usain Bolt, to win the 'sprint double' at consecutive Olympics, capturing gold in both the 100 m and 200 m at the 2016 Rio Olympics and again at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

MISCELLANEOUS

Govt constitutes Committee for doubling the production, quadrupling exports of handlooms

- **The Union Government has constituted a Committee for doubling the production and quadrupling the exports of handlooms in a span of three years. It will be headed by Chairman of Fashion Design Council of India Sunil Sethi.**
- **The Committee will submit the final report within 45 days from the day of constitution.** It will suggest the strategy and policy framework for doubling the production and for improving the quality of handloom products with the aim of enhancing income of the weavers.

Ministry of Panchayati Raj organized National Webinar on ‘Zero Hunger by 2030’

- **As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is organized a National Webinar on Zero Hunger by 2030.** The day-long webinar is expected to sensitize the leaders at the grassroots level on India’s position in fighting hunger as also they get information on various schemes, programmes, initiatives, steps, innovative measures taken by the Central and State Governments in the attainment of zero hunger.

Ramappa temple, Telangana’s first World Heritage Site

- **Situated in Palampet in Telangana, the 13th-century Ramappa temple was recently inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.** The temple is located in the village of Palampet, which is about 200 km north of Telangana’s capital Hyderabad.
- **The temple complex was built by Racherla Rudra Reddy during the period of the Kakatiya ruler Ganapati Deva.** It was built using sandstone and its construction, which began in 1213 CE, is believed to have continued for over four decades.

Meghalaya hands over erstwhile royal estate in heart of Shillong to Manipur

- **Meghalaya has handed over Manipur a magnificent heritage estate known as Manipur Rajbari (home of Manipur royal family) permanently to amicably settle an old dispute.**
- **The heritage property which is still inhabited by descendents and agents of the erstwhile Manipur Maharaj (king) will now be converted into Manipur State Bhawan.**

Anurag Thakur & Jal Shakti Ministers launch Season-2 of ‘Rag Rag Mein Ganga’

- **Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur jointly launched the Second Season of the popular series ‘Rag Rag Mein Ganga’.** 40 per cent of the country’s population is dependent on the Ganga River Basin for their livelihood. Mr Shekhawat added that people have become serious about environment conservation and this thought has given impetus to the works of conservation along with uniting the country.

‘Six lakh villages will get internet connectivity by 2024’

- **Union Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrashekhar said that six lakh villages of the country will get internet connectivity under the Bharat Net programme by 2024.** As of now, around 2.8 lakh villages have got internet facility.

Ten more Handloom Design Resource Centres to be set up in country

- **Ministry of Textiles has said that ten more Handloom Design Resource Centres will be set up in the country with aim to build and create design-oriented excellence in the Handloom sector.** It will also facilitate weavers, exporters, manufacturers and designers access design repositories for sample and product improvisation and development.
- **These Design Resource Centres will be set up by National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) at Weavers’ Service Centres of Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kannur, Indore, Nagpur, Meerut, Bhalgalpur and Panipat.**

PERSONS IN NEWS

Amitabh Bachchan replaces Alexa, becomes first indian celebrity to give voice on Amazon Alexa

- **Amazon Alexa and Amitabh Bachchan partnered** in September last year and now a year later, **Amazon Alexa has got the voice of Amitabh Bachchan.**
- **Amazon Alexa is now ready to answer your questions in Big B's voice.** The company announced that **you can talk to Amitabh Bachchan through Alexa** and ask him questions and answers. **Amitabh Bachchan's voice has become available on Celebrity Voice Feature on Amazon Alexa.**
- **Alexa users can now connect Amitabh Bachchan to any speaker or Echo Display** and take advantage of this feature. However, this feature will only work on Android for now.

U. Raja Babu appointed as Director of Hyderabad-based Research Centre Imarat

- **An Outstanding Scientist and Programme Director U. Raja Babu** has been **appointed as Director of the Hyderabad-based Research Centre Imarat (RCI).** RCI is the premier avionics laboratory of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Missile Complex of DRDO in Hyderabad.
- **Raja Babu is renowned for his significant contribution as Programme Director at RCI.** He provided necessary thrust to the design, development and successful demonstration of Ballistic Missile Defence system capabilities. Strengthening indigenous defence capabilities, **India's first Anti Satellite Missile Test (A-SAT), 'Mission Shakti'** has been successfully demonstrated under his leadership.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas named MAMI film festival chairperson

- **Actress-producer Priyanka Chopra Jonas** was announced as the **chairperson of Jio MAMI Film Festival, almost four months after Deepika Padukone stepped down from the position.** The Mumbai Academy of Moving Image (MAMI) unveiled its plans for the coming year, edition and the change in leadership.
- **Chopra Jonas was unanimously nominated by MAMI's Board of Trustees which comprises Nita M Ambani (Co-Chairperson), Anupama Chopra (Festival Director), Ajay Bijli, Anand G. Mahindra, Farhan Akhtar, Isha Ambani, Kabir Khan, Kaustubh Dhavse, Kiran Rao, Rana Daggubati, Riteish Deshmukh, Rohan Sippy, Siddharth Roy Kapur, Vikramaditya Motwane, Vishal Bhardwaj and Zoya Akhtar.**

Afghanistan's first VP Amrullah Saleh declares himself caretaker president

- **Citing the provisions of the Constitution of Afghanistan, Amrullah Saleh** said that the **first vice president automatically becomes the caretaker president in the event of the president's absence, escape or resignation.** Afghanistan's first vice president Amrullah Saleh added a new twist to the ongoing crisis, claiming he is now the caretaker president after Ashraf Ghani fled the war-torn country.

N K Singh elected as President of Institute of Economic Growth Society

- **Mr N K Singh** has been elected as the **President of the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) society.** Mr Singh earlier was the **Chairman of the Fifteenth Finance Commission.** Mr Singh succeeds Dr Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister of the country.

AWARDS

Mohammad Azam from Karimnagar district in Telangana awarded National Youth Award

- A social activist from Karimnagar district has received the National Youth Award for the year 2017-18, which is the highest award conferred on youths in India by the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs for those who render outstanding service in the field of social service and fall in the 18-29 years age group.
- The award was given to Mohammad Azam by Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur during a ceremony at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi. Azam, who hails from Karimnagar district, is pursuing a PhD in English Literature from Kakatiya University under the guidance of Professor R Meghana Rao. He has been actively taking part in social service activities for the past eight years.
- He has conducted several awareness programmes related to blood donation, organ donation and plantation programmes under the Haritha Haram project. Apart from these, he has also worked on water conservation, construction of soaking pits, works related to Swachh Bharat mission and government welfare schemes, for the benefit of the people in various villages.

EMMRC Pune documentary bags second award at national science film festival

- A documentary titled “Kamala- The Swadeshi Nutri-Indian” produced by the Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMMRC) of the Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) has won the second award at the national-level science film festival held on August 15 to commemorate 75 years of independence.
- The award comprises Rs50, 000 along with a certificate and memento. The award-winning film depicts the life and contributions of Dr Kamala Bhagwat Sohoni, the first Indian woman scientist to pursue a PhD in science from Cambridge University.

President Ram Nath Kovind confers 144 Gallantry awards in 2021

- President Shri Ram Nath Kovind, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, has approved 144 Gallantry awards for armed forces, police and paramilitary personnel on the occasion of Independence Day 2021. Besides, President Kovide also approved 28 Mention-in-Despatches to the army personnel for their significant contributions in different military operations.
- Ashok Chakra: Babu Ram (posthumously), ASI, Jammu and Kashmir Police.
- Kirti Chakra: Altaf Hussain Bhat (posthumously), Constable, J&K Police.

Mahatma Gandhi to be given the US Congressional Gold Medal

- An influential US lawmaker from New York reintroduced a resolution in the US House of Representatives to posthumously award the prestigious Congressional Gold Medal to Mahatma Gandhi in recognition of his promotion of peace and nonviolence.
- The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian award in the United States. Gandhi would be the first Indian to receive a Congressional Gold Medal, an honour bestowed upon such great figures as George Washington, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, and Rosa Parks.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Elephant Day

- **World Elephant Day is an international annual event on August 12**, dedicated to the preservation and protection of the world's elephants.
- **The goal of World Elephant Day is to create awareness of the urgent plight of African and Asian elephants**, and to share knowledge and positive solutions for the better care and management of captive and wild elephants. **African elephants are listed as “Vulnerable” and Asian elephants as “Endangered” on the IUCN Red List of threatened species.**

World Organ Donation Day 2021

- **Every year on 13 August, World Organ Donation Day is observed across the world.** The day is marked to spread awareness about organ donation and to clear misconceptions related to donating organs.

World Humanitarian Day 19 August

- **The day was designated in memory of the 19 August 2003 bomb attack on the Canal Hotel in Baghdad, Iraq, killing 22 people**, including the chief humanitarian in Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello. **In 2009, the United Nations General Assembly formalized the day as World Humanitarian Day (WHD).**

World Mosquito Day

- **Every year, August 20 is observed as the World Mosquito Day to raise awareness about the illness and disease caused by mosquitos.** It marks the day when Sir Ronald Ross discovered the link between female mosquito and malaria, which changed the course of medical history.
- **The mosquito is possibly the only predator in human history to have thrived through millennia**, bringing death and destruction through a variety of vector-borne illness, particularly malaria. According to a survey of the world's deadliest animals, mosquitoes surprisingly topped the list.
- This year amid the coronavirus pandemic, **the theme of World Mosquito Day 2021 is “Reaching the zero-malaria target”.**

World Photography Day

- **World Photography Day is an annual celebration of art, science, and history of photography. It is observed every year on August 19th** to pay tribute to the art of photography.
- **This day is commemorated with an aim to encourage people who want to pursue photography as a hobby or career.** A picture captures a thousand emotions locked in a frame. Photography is a form of art that immortalizes the moment forever.

References:

The Hindu
The Economics Times
Indian Express
Press Information Bureau of India
The Times of India
Business Standard
News on AIR
Hindustan Times

QUESTIONS

1. Recently, Border Roads Organisation (BRO) hoisted the national flag at the world's highest motorable pass _____.
(a) Shipki La (b) Chang La (c) Umling La (d) Mana
2. Recently, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar launched an online portal _____.
(a) TAPAN (b) TAPAS (c) KARYA (d) KIRAN
3. Which of the following countries President Ashraf Ghani resigned & left country recently?
(a) Iraq (b) Iran (c) Afghanistan (d) Malaysia
4. Recently, Taiwan thanked the members of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) for including peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. Which among the following is not the member of Quad?
(a) United States (b) South Korea (c) Australia (d) Japan
5. Which of the following recently launched an online portal, 'My e-Haat', to empower artisans and strengthen the value chain of the handicraft sector in the country?
(a) Adani Wilmar Foundation (b) HCL Foundation
(c) Reliance Foundation (d) Wipro Foundation
6. Recently, how many new Indian wetlands have received international recognition as Ramsar sites taking the number of such protected sites in India to 46?
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Six
7. Who won the Men's singles title at National Bank Open 2021?
(a) Reilly Opelka (b) Stefanos Tsitsipas (c) Daniil Medvedev (d) Alexander Zverev
8. Recently, In Archery who became the new under-21 recurve world champion at the Youth World Championships in Wroclaw, Poland?
(a) Komalika Bari (b) Deepika Kumari (c) Abhilasha Luthra (d) Geeta Murmu
9. World Elephant Day is an international annual event on _____ dedicated to the preservation and protection of the world's elephants.
(a) August 3 (b) August 7 (c) August 10 (d) August 12
10. Recently, the 13th-century Ramappa temple was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Ramappa temple is dedicated temple of _____.
(a) Lord Rama (b) Lord Shiva (c) Lord Indra (d) Lord Kartikeya
11. Recently, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated the world's second-largest refurbished National Gene Bank at the _____.
(a) National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa in Kolkata
(b) National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa in New Delhi
(c) National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa in Hyderabad
(d) National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa in Lucknow
12. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has formally launched National Automobile Scrappage Policy and Investors Summit for setting up Vehicle Scrapping Infrastructure through video conferencing at _____.
(a) Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh (b) Gandhinagar in Gujarat
(c) Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh (d) Darbhanga in Bihar

13. Recently, Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur jointly launched the Second Season of the popular series _____.
 (a) 'Rag Rag Mein Amrit' (b) 'Rag Rag Mein Ganga'
 (c) 'Rag Rag Mein Bharat' (d) 'Rag Rag Mein Deshbhakti'
14. Which of the following countries Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin has stepped down after months of political turmoil culminated in the loss of his majority?
 (a) Indonesia (b) Malaysia (c) Brunei (d) Tajikistan
15. Recently, The Linen Hall Library in _____ has become the world's first library/museum and tourist destination to be awarded the BS 76005 Diversity and Inclusion certificate from accredited certification body Centre for Assessment.
 (a) London (b) Paris (c) Belfast (d) Brussels
16. The Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment flagged off _____ Land World Record at Siachen Glacier'.
 (a) Operation Blue Freedom (b) Operation White Freedom
 (c) Operation Saffron Freedom (d) Operation Green Freedom
17. Recently, A rare orchid species – *Cephalanthera erecta* var. *oblanceolata* – has been found for the first time in India in _____.
 (a) Uttarakhand's Chamoli district (b) Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang
 (c) Jammu & Kashmir's Anantnag (d) Himachal Pradesh's Manali
18. World Organ Donation Day is observed across the world every year on:
 (a) 5th August (b) 8th August (c) 11th August (d) 13th August
19. Recently, which of the following states has handed over Manipur a magnificent heritage estate known as Manipur Rajbari (home of Manipur royal family) permanently to amicably settle an old dispute.
 (a) Meghalaya (b) Assam (c) Mizoram (d) Nagaland
20. Brad Binder is a famous South African:
 (a) Lawn Tennis Player (b) Formula One Racer
 (c) Grand Prix Motorcycle Racer (d) Golfer
21. Who is in line to become the first woman Chief Justice of India in 2027?
 (a) Justice Hima Kohi (b) Justice BV Nagarathna
 (c) Justice Bela Trivedi (d) Justice N H Subbulaxmi
22. How many villages of the country will get internet connectivity under the Bharat Net programme by 2024?
 (a) Three Lakh (b) Five Lakh
 (c) Six Lakh (d) Eight Lakh
23. Recently, Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw launched the _____.
 (a) 'Amrit Mahotsav Shri Shakti Challenge 2021'
 (c) 'Amrit Mahotsav Maa Challenge 2021'
 (c) 'Amrit Mahotsav Nari Shakti Challenge 2021'
 (d) 'Amrit Mahotsav Mahila Ekta Shakti Challenge 2021'
24. Recently, Mohammad Azam from _____ has been awarded the National Youth Award recently.
 (a) Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh
 (b) Bhopal district in Madhya Pradesh
 (c) Karimnagar district in Telangana
 (d) Surguja district in Chhattisgarh

25. Who among the following has recently created a composite Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) to capture the extent of financial inclusion across the country?
 (a) Finance Ministry (b) Reserve Bank of India
 (c) Corporate Affairs Ministry (d) NITI Aayog
26. To conserve indigenous breeds of cattle like Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal and Ongole, the National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB) has developed India's first cattle genomic chip _____.
 (a) IndiGau (b) BharatGau (c) BharatCattle (d) Indi cattle
27. To ensure a sufficient supply of oxygen and prevent future crisis amid the probable third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the _____ has developed an advanced oxygen concentrator named 'Sanjeevani'.
 (a) Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K)
 (b) Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-B)
 (c) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (IIT-D)
 (d) Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M)
28. Which of the following IIT researchers have made fundamental contributions to memory architectures by preventing redundancy in data values and improving slow and frequent writes in the multi-core processor systems?
 (a) Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT)
 (b) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT)
 (c) Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT)
 (d) Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT)
29. Name the first Indian test cricket team captain who won a Test at Lord's venue known as the Home of Cricket.
 (a) Virat Kohli (b) Kapil Dev (c) MS Dhoni (d) Mohammad Azharuddin
30. Who has been recently announced as the chairperson of Jio MAMI Film Festival?
 (a) Priyanka Chopra Jonas (b) Aishwarya Rai Bachchan
 (c) Deepika Padukone (d) Shilpa Shetty Kundra
31. Recently, The Union Cabinet Chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the MoU on cooperation in the field of Disaster Management, Resilience and Mitigation signed between _____.
 (a) India and Nepal (b) India and Bangladesh
 (c) India and Maldives (d) India and Mauritius
32. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has virtually inaugurated the Centre for Research and Innovation in Artificial Intelligence set up at the _____.
 (a) Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad
 (b) Indian Institute of Technology-Mandi
 (c) Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi
 (d) Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay
33. Recently, The Supreme Court passed an interim order to allow women to take the admission exam to _____.
 (a) National Defence Academy (NDA) (b) Staff Selection Commission (SSC)
 (c) Black Cat Commando (d) Merchant Navy
34. In Uttar Pradesh, the government has tabled its first supplementary budget for the current financial year in Assembly. This budget is _____ percent of the total general budget.
 (a) 1.33 (b) 1.98 (c) 2.56 (d) 3.87
35. Recently, The Ambassador of Vietnam to India Phan Sanh Chau announced opening its first-ever consul office in India in _____.
 (a) Bhopal (b) Hyderabad (c) Bengaluru (d) Mumbai

36. Recently, The Reserve Bank came out with revised guidelines for the hiring of lockers under which the liability of banks will be limited to _____ times its annual rent in case of fire, theft, building collapse or frauds by bank employees.
 (a) 50 (b) 100 (c) 200 (d) 500
37. Recently, Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) announced that India will be conducting its first scientific estimation of its _____ population.
 (a) Lion (b) Elephant (c) Deer (d) Golden Langur
38. Who is the first Indian to be part of an NBA title winning team?
 (a) Princepal Singh (b) Gurkeerat Maan (c) Ashutosh Sharma (d) Vivek Mehta
39. The 2021 edition of the World Athletics U20 Championships scheduled to be held in _____.
 (a) Nairobi, Kenya (b) Durban, South Africa (c) Sydney, Australia (d) Jakarta, Indonesia
40. World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is observed every year on:
 (a) 11th August (b) 14th August (c) 17th August (d) 19th August
41. Who has been elected as the President of the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) society?
 (a) N K Singh (b) Dibakar Bannerjee (c) Kaustubh Miran (d) Akshay Mathur
42. Which of the following will collaborate with Road Transport Ministry on pavement engineering and intelligent transportation systems?
 (a) IIT Bombay (b) IIT Delhi (c) IIT Madras (d) IIT Guwahati
43. Recently, team of biologists from Delhi University, Wildlife Institute of India and North Carolina Museum of Natural Science (USA) has discovered a new species of frog from the Adi hills in _____.
 (a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Assam (c) Meghalaya (d) Sikkim
44. Who among the following has declared himself as the caretaker President in the event of the President's escape in Afghanistan?
 (a) Ashraf Ghani (b) Mahmud Pasha (c) Zain Rehmani (d) Amrullah Saleh
45. According to a new report by blockchain data platform Chainalysis, India has been ranked _____ in terms of crypto adoption.
 (a) First (b) Second (c) Fifth (d) Seventh
46. Name the Asian country which recently decided to ratify a key amendment to the 1989 ozone-saving Montreal Protocol negotiated five years ago.
 (a) Pakistan (b) India (c) Japan (d) Indonesia
47. The navies of the four Quad nations will also participate in the _____ Naval Exercise later this year.
 (a) Malabar (b) Oceania (c) Quad 2021 (d) Konkan
48. Name the documentary which has won the second award at the national-level science film festival to commemorate 75 years of independence.
 (a) "Ekta the Union" (b) "Kamala- The Swadeshi Nutri-Indian"
 (c) "Deepak the light" (d) "Unity we are"
49. Recently, The Tamil Nadu Government has constituted a seven member committee led by _____ of the State Development Policy Council to study the exploration of hydrocarbon projects.
 (a) Sultan Ahmed Ismail (b) Moor Islam Zahid
 (c) Jehan Khwaja (d) Maqbool Khusamir

50. Who launched fifth edition of Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC 5.0) recently?
 (a) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh (b) President Ramnath Kovind
 (c) Home Minister Amit Shah (d) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
51. Which is the first non-metro city in Maharashtra to sign the 'Race to Zero' pledge for going net zero on greenhouse gas by 2040?
 (a) Chandrapur (b) Nashik (c) Raigarh (d) Solapur
52. Recently, The Union Heavy Industries Minister inaugurated India's very first Solar Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station at the _____.
 (a) Karnal Lake Resort (b) Parliament Street (c) Sukhna Lake Resort (d) Hazratganj GPO
53. Name the constitution amendment which restores the power of State Governments to identify and specify socially and Economically Backward Classes (SEBCs).
 (a) Constitution (102nd Amendment) Act 2021 (b) Constitution (105th Amendment) Act 2021
 (c) Constitution (107th Amendment) Act 2021 (d) Constitution (109th Amendment) Act 2021
54. Who has been appointed as Director of the Hyderabad-based Research Centre Imarat (RCI)?
 (a) Sameer Atal (b) Deepak Luthra (c) U. Raja Babu (d) Fredrick K
55. Recently, India's first smog tower was inaugurated in:
 (a) Bengaluru (b) New Delhi (c) Chandigarh (d) Gurugram
56. Which of the following companies is not among the world's 500 most valuable companies in 2021, of the Hurun Global 500 list?
 (a) Apple Inc (b) Exxon Mobil (c) Alphabet (d) Facebook
57. Who had made the world's first customer delivery of steel produced without using coal as it looks to revolutionize an industry that accounts for around 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions?
 (a) HYBRID (b) HEALTH (c) HYBRIT (d) PUSAN
58. Who won the mixed doubles title at the WTT Contender Budapest?
 (a) Aditi Thapa and R Raman (b) Vibhuti Nagpal and H Sundaram
 (c) Manika Batra and G Sathiyam (d) Latika Jha and K Mathur
59. Recently, Zydus Cadila received an approval for the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for _____ the world's first and India's indigenously developed DNA based vaccine against Covid-19.
 (a) ZyCoV-N (b) ZyCoV-S (c) ZyCoV-D (d) ZyCoV-L
60. World Mosquito Day is observed on _____ to raise awareness about the illness and disease caused by mosquitos.
 (a) August 3 (b) August 9 (c) August 13 (d) August 20
61. Recently, Exercise Konkan-2021 was held between the navies of:
 (a) India and USA (b) India and UK (c) India & France (d) India and Germany
62. Recently, As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is organized a National Webinar on Zero Hunger by _____.
 (a) 2024 (b) 2027 (c) 2030 (d) 2035
63. Recently, NTPC Limited has commissioned the largest floating solar PV project of 25 MegaWatt on the reservoir of its Simhadri thermal station in _____.
 (a) Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (b) Warangal, Andhra Pradesh
 (c) Nizamabad, Telangana (d) Satara, Maharashtra

64. Recently, The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has approved DNA COVID-19 vaccine ZyCoV-D of Cadila Healthcare for restricted use in emergency situation in India for _____ and above.
(a) 8 years (b) 10 years (c) 12 years (d) 14 years
65. The World Food Program is headquartered in:
(a) Manila (b) Geneva (c) New York (d) Rome
66. Recently, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched an ambitious 'Ubharte Sitaare Fund' -USF for export-oriented firms and startups in a program at _____.
(a) Lucknow (b) Pune (c) New Delhi (d) Bengaluru
67. Planet Neptune has at least five main rings and four prominent ring arcs. Which is not among the rings?
(a) Galle (b) Arago (c) Omega (d) Leverrier
68. Recently, Rain fell at the highest point on the _____ ice sheet for the first time on record.
(a) Himalayas (b) Greenland (c) Antarctica (d) Mount Elbrus
69. In September 2020, Amazon Alexa and _____partnered and now a year later, Amazon Alexa has got his voice.
(a) Akshay Kumar (b) Amitabh Bachchan (c) Sharad Kelkar (d) Pankaj Kapur
70. World Photography Day is observed every year on:
(a) August 11th (b) August 15th (c) August 19th (d) August 21st



ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. c Border Roads Organisation (BRO) hoists the national flag at the world's highest motorable pass Umling La in Ladakh.
2. b Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar launched an online portal TAPAS (Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services), developed by the National Institute of Social Defence.
3. c Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has left the country.
4. b The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD, also known as the Quad) is a strategic dialogue between the United States, Japan, Australia and India that is maintained by talks between member countries.
5. b HCL Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of HCL Technologies, launched an online portal, 'My e-Haat', to empower artisans and strengthen the value chain of the handicraft sector in the country.
6. c Four more Indian wetlands have received international recognition as Ramsar sites taking the number of such protected sites in India to 46 spread over an area of nearly 11 lakh hectares in 20 states. The new additions are Thol and Wadhvana water bodies in Gujarat and Sultanpur and Bhindawas wetlands in Haryana.
7. c National Bank Open: The 25-year-old Daniil Medvedev, ranked second in the world, also won this year in Mallorca and Marseille.
8. a In Archery, Komalika Bari became the new under-21 recurve world champion at the Youth World Championships in Wroclaw, Poland.
9. d World Elephant Day is an international annual event on August 12, dedicated to the preservation and protection of the world's elephants.
10. b Situated in Palampet in Telangana, the 13th-century Ramappa temple was recently inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Rudreshwara, popularly known as Ramappa Temple, is located in the village of Palampet approximately 200 km north-east of Hyderabad, in the State of Telangana. It is the main Shiva temple in a walled complex built during the Kakatiyan period (1123–1323 CE) under rulers Rudradeva and Recherla Rudra.
11. b Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated the world's second-largest refurbished National Gene Bank at the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa in New Delhi.
12. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi has formally launched National Automobile Scrappage Policy and Investors Summit for setting up Vehicle Scrapping Infrastructure through video conferencing at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
13. b Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur jointly launched the Second Season of the popular series 'Rag Rag Mein Ganga'.
14. b Malaysia's Muhyiddin Yassin has stepped down as prime minister after months of political turmoil culminated in the loss of his majority.
15. c The Linen Hall Library has become the world's first library/museum and tourist destination to be awarded the BS 76005 Diversity and Inclusion certificate from accredited certification body Centre for Assessment.
16. b Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment flagged off 'Operation Blue Freedom – Land World Record at Siachen Glacier'.

- 17. a** A rare orchid species – *Cephalanthera erecta* var. *oblanceolata* – has been found for the first time in India in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district.
- 18. *** Every year on 13 August, World Organ Donation Day is observed across the world.
- 19. a** Meghalaya has handed over Manipur a magnificent heritage estate known as Manipur Rajbari (home of Manipur royal family) permanently to amicably settle an old dispute.
- 20. c** Brad Binder is a South African Grand Prix motorcycle racer. He was also known for winning the 2016 Moto3 World Championship.
- 21. b** Justice BV Nagarathna is in line to become the first woman Chief Justice of India in 2027.
- 22. c** Union Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrashekhar said six lakh villages of the country will get internet connectivity under the Bharat Net programme by 2024.
- 23. a** Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw launched the 'Amrit Mahotsav Shri Shakti Challenge 2021' to encourage technology solutions developed by Women Entrepreneurs that facilitate Women's Safety and Empowerment.
- 24. c** Mohammad Azam from Karimnagar district in Telangana has been awarded the National Youth Award recently by the Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur in Delhi for displaying exemplary leadership qualities.
- 25. b** The Reserve Bank of India has created a composite Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) to capture the extent of financial inclusion across the country.
- 26. a** To conserve indigenous breeds of cattle like Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal and Ongole, the National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB) has developed India's first cattle genomic chip, IndiGau.
- 27. a** To ensure a sufficient supply of oxygen and prevent future crisis amid the probable third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K), has developed an advanced oxygen concentrator named 'Sanjeevani'.
- 28. a** Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT) researchers have made fundamental contributions to memory architectures by preventing redundancy in data values and improving slow and frequent writes in the multi-core processor systems.
- 29. b** In Cricket, India made history after defeating England by 151 runs in the second Test of five-match series registering their third-ever Test victory at the iconic Lord's Ground, in London. With the win at Lord's, Skipper Virat Kohli has become the third Indian captain after Kapil Dev and MS Dhoni to win a Test at this iconic venue known as the Home of Cricket.
- 30. a** Actress-producer Priyanka Chopra Jonas was announced as the chairperson of Jio MAMI Film Festival, almost four months after Deepika Padukone stepped down from the position.
- 31. b** The Union Cabinet Chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the MoU on cooperation in the field of Disaster Management, Resilience and Mitigation signed between India and Bangladesh.
- 32. a** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has virtually inaugurated the Centre for Research and Innovation in Artificial Intelligence set up at the Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H).
- 33. a** The Supreme Court passed an interim order to allow women to take the admission exam to National Defence Academy (NDA).

- 34. a** This budget is 1.33 percent of the total general budget.
- 35. c** The Ambassador of Vietnam to India Phan Sanh Chau announced opening its first-ever consul office in India in Bengaluru and the appointment of N S Srinivasa Murthy as the Honorary Consul of Vietnam for Bengaluru.
- 36. b** The Reserve Bank came out with revised guidelines for the hiring of lockers under which the liability of banks will be limited to 100 times its annual rent in case of fire, theft, building collapse or frauds by bank employees.
- 37. b** On Elephant Day, Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) announced that India will be conducting its first scientific estimation of its elephant population, and will conduct a tiger census as well.
- 38. a** Young cager Princepal Singh became the first Indian to be part of an NBA title winning team when his side Sacramento Kings clinched the 2021 NBA Summer League crown.
- 39. a** The 2021 edition of the World Athletics U20 Championships scheduled to be held in Nairobi, Kenya.
- 40. d** In 2009, the United Nations General Assembly formalized the day as World Humanitarian Day (WHD).
- 41. a** Mr N K Singh has been elected as the President of the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) society.
- 42. c** IIT Madras will collaborate with Road Transport Ministry on pavement engineering and intelligent transportation systems.
- 43. a** A team of biologists from Delhi University, Wildlife Institute of India and North Carolina Museum of Natural Science (USA) has discovered a new species of frog from the Adi hills Arunachal Pradesh.
- 44. d** Afghanistan's first vice President Amrullah Saleh added a new twist to the ongoing crisis, claiming he is now the caretaker President after Ashraf Ghani fled the war-torn country.
- 45. b** India has been ranked second in terms of crypto adoption, amid a bull run in cryptocurrency assets globally this year, a new report by blockchain data platform Chainalysis showed.
- 46. b** India decided to ratify a key amendment to the 1989 ozone-saving Montreal Protocol negotiated five years ago.
- 47. a** The navies of the four Quad nations will also participate in the Malabar Naval Exercise later this year.
- 48. b** A documentary titled "Kamala- The Swadeshi Nutri-Indian" produced by the Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMMRC) of the Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) has won the second award at the national-level science film festival held on August 15 to commemorate 75 years of independence.
- 49. a** The Tamil Nadu Government has constituted a seven member committee led by Sultan Ahmed Ismail of the State Development Policy Council to study the exploration of hydrocarbon projects.
- 50. a** Defence minister Rajnath Singh launched fifth edition of Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC 5.0).
- 51. b** Nashik has become the first non-metro city in Maharashtra to sign the 'Race to Zero' pledge for going net zero on greenhouse gas by 2040.
- 52. a** The Union Heavy Industries Minister Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey inaugurated the country's very first Solar Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station at the Karnal Lake Resort.
- 53. b** President Ramnath Kovind has given his assent to the Constitution (105th Amendment) Act 2021, which restores the power of State Governments to identify and specify Socially and Economically Backward Classes (SEBCs).

- 54. c** An Outstanding Scientist and Programme Director U. Raja Babu has been appointed as Director of the Hyderabad-based Research Centre Imarat (RCI).
- 55. b** Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal inaugurated the country's first smog tower at Baba Kharak Singh Marg, Connaught Place.
- 56. b** iPhone maker Apple Inc. retained its position as the world's most valuable company, with a 15% increase in market capitalization to \$2.4 trillion. The next five most valuable companies are Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Facebook and Tencent, and they have also remained unchanged from last year.
- 57. c** Swedish green steel venture HYBRIT had made the world's first customer delivery of steel produced without using coal as it looks to revolutionize an industry that accounts for around 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- 58. c** India's Manika Batra and G Sathiyam outplayed Hungary's Dora Madarasz and Nandor Ecseki 3-1 to win the mixed doubles title at the WTT Contender Budapest.
- 59. c** Zydus Cadila received an approval for the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for ZyCoV-D, the world's first and India's indigenously developed DNA based vaccine against Covid-19.
- 60. d** Every year, August 20 is observed as the World Mosquito Day to raise awareness about the illness and disease caused by mosquitos.
- 61. b** Exercise Konkan-2021 was held between INS Tabar and HMS Westminster in the English Channel. The Indo-UK Naval exercise included the participation of integral helicopters of the two ships and the Falcon Electronic Warfare aircraft.
- 62. c** As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is organized a National Webinar on Zero Hunger by 2030.
- 63. a** NTPC Limited has commissioned the largest floating solar PV project of 25 MegaWatt on the reservoir of its Simhadri thermal station in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- 64. c** The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has approved DNA COVID-19 vaccine ZyCoV-D of Cadila Healthcare for restricted use in emergency situation in India for 12 years and above.
- 65. d** The World Food Program, headquartered in Rome, has said that some 14 million people are facing severe hunger in the nation of some 39 million.
- 66. a** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched an ambitious 'Ubharte Sitaare Fund' -USF for export-oriented firms and startups in a program at Lucknow.
- 67. c** Neptune has at least five main rings and four prominent ring arcs. Starting from the ring nearest to the planet, these are named Galle, Leverrier, Lassell, Arago, and Adams.
- 68. b** Rain fell at the highest point on the Greenland ice sheet for the first time on record, another worrying sign of warming for the ice sheet already melting at an increasing rate, scientists said.
- 69. b** Amazon Alexa and Amitabh Bachchan partnered in September last year and now a year later, Amazon Alexa has got the voice of Amitabh Bachchan.
- 70. c** World Photography Day is an annual celebration of art, science, and history of photography. It is observed every year on August 19th to pay tribute to the art of photography.