

Monthly

G.K. MANIA

Analytically Covering National, International, Political,
Cultural, Economic, Sports, Science and Technology
Events, Environment and much more.....

Current



PRIME MINISTER
NARENDRA MODI

to launch digital
payment solution

e-RUPI

on 2nd August



AUGUST - 2021

CAREER  **FLITE**®

giving flight to your career

Free Download Mobile App on Google Play

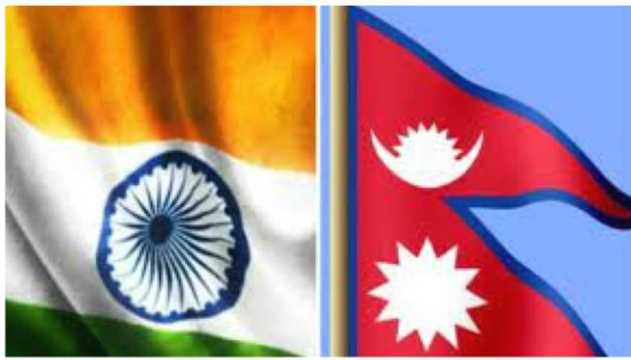


Visit us at : www.careerflite.com



NATIONAL NEWS

India, Nepal sign LoE to revise 2004 India-Nepal Rail Services Agreement



India & Nepal signed a Letter of Exchange (LoE) to revise the 2004 India-Nepal Rail Services Agreement (RSA). The revised agreement will facilitate the import and export of goods through the Indian railway freight services and will come into force from 9th July, 2021.

- The revised agreement aims to increase the efficiency, and costcompetitiveness of the rail freight sector.
- It is seen as a step by India to enhance regional connectivity under the 'Neighborhood First'

Revised RSA Agreement

The revised pact permits all types of cargo train operators (public, private, special freight, automobile) authorized by the Indian Railways (IR) to use the Indian Railway Network for carrying Nepal's container and freight - both bilateral between India & Nepal or Third country from Indian ports to Nepal.

The Revised pact will benefit the Nepalese traders, transporters and consumers as it will reduce transportation costs for automobiles and certain other products whose carriage takes place in special wagons.

US Became the 4th Largest Crude Oil Supplier to India in 2020

As per the 70th edition of BP's report named 'Statistical Review of World Energy 2021', the United States (US) became the 4th largest supplier of crude oil and natural gas to India in 2020.

- Even though the US has started exporting oil to India in 2017, its supply accounted for about 5 percent of India's total imports of 204 million tonnes in 2020

Top 4 Oil Suppliers to India in 2020

1. Iraq- 47 million tonnes
2. Saudi Arabia-38 million tonnes
3. United Arab Emirates-22 million tonnes
4. USA-10.7 million tonnes

Indian Researchers spot rare Superluminous Supernova



A Team of Indian Researchers spotted the very rare SuperLuminous Supernova (SLSNe) using the special arrangements at India's Devasthal Optical Telescope (DOT3.6 m), Nainital, Uttarakhand along with 2 other Indian telescopes - Sampurnanand Telescope (1.04 m), Nainital & Himalayan Chandra Telescope (2.0 m) in Ladakh.

- The study was led by Amit Kumar, a Ph.D. student working under Dr. S.B. Pandey. It has been published in the monthly notices of the UK-based Royal Astronomical Society.
- The study established the role of DOT 3.6 in exploring very rare and distant SLSNe in the future.

What is SLSNe?

SLSNe are extremely bright, hydrogen deficient, fast-evolving supernovae which shine with energy borrowed from an exotic type of neutron star with an ultra-powerful magnetic field. They are the least understood SuperNovae (SNe) as their underlying sources are unclear.

- Deep study of such ancient spatial objects can help in investigating the mysteries of the early universe.
- They originate from very massive stars (minimum mass limit is more than 25 times that of the sun) and their distribution in the galaxy is sparse.
- Among them, SLSNe-I has been counted to about 150 entities spectroscopically confirmed so far.
- The 'SN 2020ank' first discovered by the Zwicky Transient Facility on January 19, 2020, was studied by

scientists from Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES) in Nainital, a research institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

Nitin Gadkari Inaugurates India's 1st Private LNG Facility Plant at Nagpur Maharashtra

Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated India's 1st Private LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) Facility plant at Nagpur, Maharashtra. The Plant has been set up by Baidyanath Ayurvedic Group.

- Emphasizing the importance of alternate biofuels for diversification of agriculture towards the energy and power sector, Gadkari stated that India is spending 8 Lakh Crore for the import of petrol, diesel & petroleum products.
- The Government has designed a policy which encourages development of cost effective pollution free and indigenous ethanol, bio CNG (Compressed Natural Gas), LNG and hydrogen fuels.
- He stated that Surplus quantities of rice, corn and sugar must be used for production of alternative fuels.

GISAT- 1 to be launched by ISRO



The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is all set to launch its Geo Imaging Satellite-1 (GISAT-1), weighing about 2,268kg, onboard Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-F10 (GSLV-F10) rocket on August 12, 2021 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh.

- This will be the 14th flight of the GSLV.
- Sriharikota is regarded as the Spaceport of India.

Points to be noted :

- It is the first state-of-the-art agile Earth observation satellite which will be placed in a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit by GSLV-F10 and, subsequently, positioned in the final geostationary orbit, about 36,000 km above earth's equator.
- For the first time, a 4-metre diameter Ogive shaped payload will be flown in this GSLV flight. It will be the second

launch of 2021 following the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)-C51 mission on February 28, 2021. It was launched with Brazil's earth observation satellite Amazonia-1 and 18 as co-passengers, including some built by students.

What will GISAT-1 do?

It will facilitate real-time observation of the Indian subcontinent, real-time images of India's borders under cloud-free conditions, at frequent intervals.

NTPC REL, Ladakh sign MoU to set up India's 1st Green Hydrogen Mobility Project.

NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd (NTPC REL), the renewable energy arm of NTPC Ltd has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Union Territory of Ladakh to set up India's 1st Green Hydrogen Mobility project in Ladakh.

- The Agreement will enable NTPC to help Ladakh develop a carbon-free economy based on renewable sources and green hydrogen, which is in line with Prime Minister's vision of 'Carbon Neutral' Ladakh.
- It was signed in the presence of Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Mathur and members of NTPC.

APEDA-NAFED collaborated to Strengthen Export Linkage of Farmer Cooperatives and FPO

On July 12, 2021, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) to utilize the export potential of agricultural and processed food products of cooperatives, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), partners and associates.

The facilitation of exports will be done by APEDA while NAFED will promote them.

The MoU was signed by Dr. Madhaiyaan Angamuthu, Chairman APEDA and Sanjeev Kumar Chadha, Managing Director, NAFED.

DBT, MoES sign MoU for Cooperation in Polar Biology

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) & Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for mutual collaboration in the field of Polar Biology (Biology of Polar regions).

- Under the agreement, both organizations will work under one roof and work jointly to address relevant questions in Polar Biology.
- The centre point of collaboration between the 2 entities will be the biotechnological applications of polar microbes.
- The MoU was signed by Renu Swarup, Secretary of DBT & Dr. Madhavan Nair Rajeevan, Secretary of MoES.

Key Points

- Under the MoU, the two entities will collaborate in mutually agreed areas of research in POLAR sciences.
- The two entities will set up DBT-MoES Polar Research Center (Joint Laboratories) at MoES stations in Polar Regions to strengthen the collaboration and speed up the research.
- The Polar Region which includes the Antarctic, Arctic, Southern Ocean and Himalayas remains an unexplored system.

India's 1st Cryptogamic Garden inaugurated in Dehradun, Uttarakhand



India's 1st Cryptogamic Garden which has nearly 50 species of Lichens, Ferns and Fungi was inaugurated at Deoban area of Dehradun district, Uttarakhand. It was inaugurated by social activist Anoop Nautiyal.

- Cryptogamae means 'hidden reproduction' which refers to the fact that no seed, no flowers are produced. Algae, bryophytes (moss, liverworts), lichens, ferns and fungi are the best-known groups of cryptogams
- They are lower plants which have existed on earth since the Jurassic era. They are good bioindicators as species like Lichens do not come up in pollution-infected areas.

Meity inked MoU with MapmyIndia for Map services in 'UMANG App'



The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with MapmyIndia, thereby enabling map services in 'UMANG App'.

UMANG stands for Unified Mobile Application for New-Age Governance.

This collaboration is on the lines to enhance the initiatives of Digital India Programme under the theme of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

About MapMyIndia :

It was the first company to build India's digital maps, India's internet mapping portal & technologies, India's GPS Navigation Auto-tech System along with nationwide Digital Address.

India's 1st 'Grain ATM' set up as Pilot Project in Gurugram, Haryana

Haryana's Minister for Food & Civil Supplies Department & Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala stated that India's 1st Grain ATM called 'Automated, Multi Commodity, Grain Dispensing Machine' has been installed in Farrukhnagar, Gurugram district, Haryana. It has been set up as part of a pilot project under the 'World Food Programme' of the United Nations.

- The machine which works like Bank ATMs can dispense approximately 70 kg of grains in 5-7minutes' It will dispense the quantity of ration as allocated by the Haryana government per individual family in the respective food bag designated at the ATM machine.
- The machines are set to be installed at all ration depots across the state; they will address the complaints regarding the time and right measurement of ration quantity.

Refurbished Gandhinagar Capital Railway Station

PM Modi inaugurated the newly renovated Gandhinagar Capital railway station. It is India's 1st redeveloped station in line with Narendra Modi government's plan to modernize railway stations through Public Private Partnerships.

- It has been redeveloped at a cost of INR 71 crore with world-class amenities, at par with modern airports.
- A newly-built five-star hotel atop the renovated Gandhinagar railway station was also inaugurated. It has been built at a cost of INR 800 crore by the Railways, and the Gandhinagar Railway and Urban Development Corporation (GARUD).

Karnataka to host 2nd Edition of Khelo India University Games in March 2022

Karnataka, the host of 2nd edition of Khelo India University Games (KIUG) announced that the 12 -day long event will be conducted from 5 th March 2022 in Bangalore. Decisions were taken to invite Prime Minister Narendra Modi as

Chief Guest for the event's inauguration, which is planned to be held at SreeKanteerava Stadium, Bangalore, Karnataka.

A total of 18 sporting events will be conducted in KIUG, with the inclusion of 2 new indigenous games – Yogasana & Mallakhamb

- Hosts - Karnataka in partnership with the Association of Indian Universities Over 6000 persons & 158 universities are expected to participate in the event, with an estimated budget of Rs 40 crore

Annual Asha Bonalu Festival commenced in Telangana from July 11- August 8 2021



The state of Telangana commenced its annual month-long state festival 'Asha Bonalu' festival on July 11, 2021 at its Golconda Fort in Hyderabad. As part of

the festivities, a procession will take place from the Langar Houz to Golconda. During this, Ministers of State Talasani Srinivas Yadav for Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Cinematography of Telangana and AllolaIndrakaran Reddy for Endowments, Law and Forest, Environment, Science and Technology presented the silk robes to the goddess on behalf of the state government.

IAHE signs pacts with University of New South Wales for setting up Centre of Excellence 'CAATS' at IAHE, Noida

On July 15,2021, an agreement has been inked between Indian Academy of Highway Engineers (IAHE), under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MORTH) with University of New South Wales (UNSW), Australia for setting up a Centre of Excellence (CoE) i.e. 'Centre for Advanced Transportation Technology and Systems (CATTS)' at IAHE, Noida (Uttar Pradesh).

- As a part of agreement, there will be capacity building, technology transfer

and creation of an enabling environment for establishment of CATTS in IAHE.

PM Modi Inaugurates Railway Project worth Rs 1,110 Crore in Gujarat

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated & dedicated several Railway Projects worth INR 1,100 crores in Gujarat.

- Inauguration of India's 1st Re-developed railway station - Gandhinagar Capital Railway Station.
- Gauge converted cum electrified Mahesana - Varethha line & the newly electrified 266 km Surendranagar - Pipavav section (INR 289 crores).
- Inauguration of 3-new attractions at Gujarat Science City, Ahmedabad.
- PM Flagged off 2 new trains i.e Gandhinagar Capital - Varanasi Superfast Express and MEMU (Mainline Electric Multiple Unit) service trains between Gandhinagar Capital and Varethha.

PFRDA Increased the FDI Limit of NPS fund Managers to 74 % from 49 %

In July 2021, the 'Pension Funds Regulatory and Development Authority' (PFRDA) has made amendments over the PFRDA (Pension Fund) Regulations, 2015 and modified the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit in the pension fund management under the National Pension System (NPS) to 74 percent from 49 percent.

India's 1st Monk Fruit Cultivation Exercise begins in Kullu, HP

The 'monk fruit' which is native to China was introduced for field trials in Himachal Pradesh (HP) by Palampur-based Council of Scientific Research and Industrial Technology-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT) in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh. It is the 1st ever monk fruit cultivation exercise in India.

The field trials have begun 3 years after the CSIR-IHBT imported its seeds from China. It is currently cultivated only in China. Monk Fruit is known for its properties as a non-caloric natural sweetener.

2nd Edition of CII Conference and Exhibition 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat-Self-Reliance for Renewable Energy Manufacturing' held virtually

On July 15-16, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organized the second edition of Digital Conference & Exhibition 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat - Self-Reliance for Renewable Energy Manufacturing' virtually in collaboration with Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) under its RE-INVEST agenda and Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

As a part of Conference, a 15-day Digital Exhibition also initiated showcasing the latest from the Renewable Energy world. Union Minister Raj Kumar Singh announced that India will exceed its target of reducing carbon emission to 33 % set by 2030 under the Paris agreement.

During the inaugural session, a report on 'A Roadmap for Self-Reliance in RE Manufacturing' was released which was developed by CII-in partnership with PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt Ltd).

BrahMos Extended Raise Version fails during Test-firing off the coast of Odisha



The extended range version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile failed during a test firing being carried out off the coast of Odisha and fell shortly after takeoff. BrahMos supersonic cruise missile earlier was used for range upto 290 km but this version is capable of hitting targets up to 450 kilometres.

It is expected that the missile failed due to issues with the propulsion system but the exact cause will be assessed by the joint team of scientists from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and BrahMos Aerospace Corporation.

India's First Pod Taxi to be Launched in UP between Noida Airport and Film City

India's 1st Pod taxi service to be launched in Uttar Pradesh (UP) between the upcoming 'Noida International Airport'(NIA) (Jewar airport) and the proposed 'Film city' in Uttar Pradesh (UP). 'Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority' (YEIDA) has reported about the final Detailed Project Report (DPR) about the Project.

- The project will cost Rs. 862 crore and it will run around 14.5 between the airport and film city.
- On July 17, 2021, Zurich Airport International \$A G\$, the Swiss company, signed a shareholder agreement with Noida International Airport Limited (NIAL) for the development of the NIA in Jewar, UP.

Uttarakhand Celebrates Shravan Harela Festival Marking the Beginning of Monsoon

Shravan Harela festival 2021, an important folk festival celebrated across the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand on 16th July which marks the beginning of the monsoon. The word Harela means "Green Leaves".

- The day also symbolises the new harvest and it is celebrated by planting the saplings.
- The Harela festival also commemorates the wedding of Hindu Gods Shiva and Parvathi.

Celebration of Harela Festival:

The Harela is celebrated thrice every year,

- First Harela is celebrated during Chaitra Navratri in the month of Chaitra,
- Second Harela is celebrated during Sharad Navratri in the month of Ashwin
- Third, Shravan Harela is celebrated in the Hindu calendar month of Shravan (late July).

DAHD sets up Dairy Investment Accelerator to Promote & Facilitate investments in the Dairy Sector

In order to promote and facilitate investments in the Indian Dairy sector, the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD) of Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying on July 19, 2021 has setup Dairy Investment Accelerator under its Investment Facilitation Cell.

The Investment Accelerator is a cross functional team to act as intermediary with investors.

Accelerator will work with DAHD to organize events with international & local industry participants to facilitate direct interactions with government officials and other players in the industry.

IOC to Build India's 1st Green Hydrogen Plant at Mathura Refinery, UP

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is set to build India's 1st 'Green Hydrogen' plant at Mathura refinery, Uttar Pradesh (UP). Through this, it aims to cater to the growing demand for cleaner forms of energy.

- It will be India's 1st Green Hydrogen Unit. Previous projects have been announced to produce 'green hydrogen' using fossil fuels such as natural gas.
- Green Hydrogen will replace the carbon-emitting fuels used in Mathura refinery to process crude oil into value-added products like petrol and diesel.
- Green hydrogen is hydrogen produced by splitting water by

electrolysis. The process to make green hydrogen is powered by renewable energy sources such as wind or solar.

- IOC has set a vision to focus on Petrochemicals, hydrogen and electric mobility in the next 10 years.

India Became 4th Country & Maharashtra became 1st State to Implement Blockchain-Powered Educational Documents

The government of Maharashtra, with the help of LegitDoc, a blockchain startup, plans to implement the world's largest blockchain-powered educational credentialing system by issuing tamper-proof digital diploma certificates under the blockchain system

- Through such initiative, the Govt of Maharashtra became the 1st state in India to implement a blockchain-based educational document registry, and around the globe, India (Maharashtra Government) became the 4th country to achieve such registry after Malta, Singapore, and Bahrain.
- LegitDoc, a SaaS (software as a service) based platform, has

supported the Maharashtra govt in issuing and verifying around 1 million digital diploma certificates for students of 'Maharashtra State Board of Skill Development' (MSBSD) across 8 academic years.

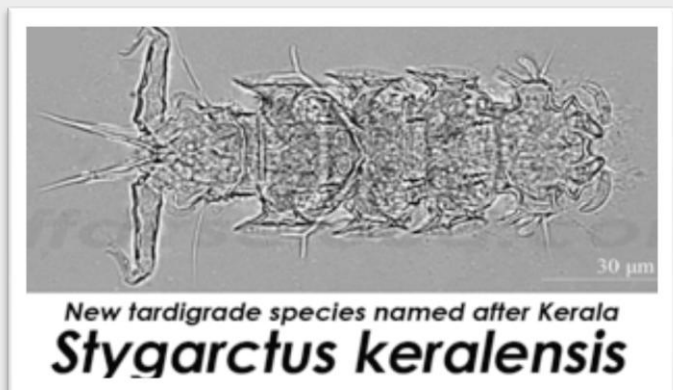
Inaugural edition of Indian Navy-European Union Naval Force exercise held at Gulf of Aden

The inauguration edition of the Joint Naval Exercise between Indian Navy (IN) & European Union Naval Force Somalia (EU NAVFOR also known as Operation Atalanta) took place at Gulf of Aden from June 18-19, 2021.

- From the Indian side, Indian Naval Ship Triakand participated in the exercise. From the European side a total of 5 warships participated in the exercise. They are Italian Navy Ship ITS carabinieri, Spanish Navy Ship ESPS Navarra, and two French Navy Ship FS Tonnerre and FS Surcouf.
- The exercise aims to enhance and hone their war-fighting skills to promote peace, security and stability in the maritime domain.

- Simultaneously, a virtual 'Information sharing Exercise' was conducted between Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region and the Maritime Security Centre-Horn of Africa.

Stygarctus Keralensis: Newly Discovered Tardigrade Species Named After Kerala



Researchers have discovered a new Tardigrade species and named it as *Stygarctus Keralensis* after Kerala since it was discovered from Vadakara in north Kerala. They are the eighth species named under genus *Stygarctus*.

- They are the first taxonomically described marine tardigrade from Indian waters.
- This species was discovered by a research team which consisted of Vishnudattan N.K., Jayachandran P.R.,

S. Bijoy Nandan, Cochin University of Science and Technology and J.G. Hansen, Copenhagen University.

- Their findings have been published in *Zootaxa*.

Note: *Stygarctus* is a genus of tardigrades of family Stygarctidae. It was named in 1951 by Erich Schulz. Greek Styx and arktos.

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Launched Scheme for COVID-19 Orphan Children-Ashirbad

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched a scheme named 'Ashirbad' on Father's Day (June 20, 2021) to provide monthly financial support to all orphan children who have lost one or both their parents during COVID-19 from April 2020.

Objective:

For in-situ rehabilitation and continuation of orphan children's lives in a similar family-based non-institutional socio-cultural environment.

The beneficiaries of the scheme are divided into 3 categories viz, Children who have been orphaned, who have to move to welfare homes for want of a caretaker, and who have lost their earning parent.

Venkaiah Naidu Addresses World Universities Summit 2021

The Vice President Venkaiah Naidu virtually addressed the World Universities Summit 2021 (WUS 21) organised by O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat, Haryana.

- Theme - "Universities of the Future: Building Institutional Resilience, Social Responsibility and Community Impact".
- Discussions were held on 30 themes related to Universities & Higher Education across the world.
- Leaders from 6 continents & 25+ countries participated in the summit.

Key Points

The Vice President emphasized Universities to become thought leaders in finding solutions to global challenges like climate change, poverty and pollution.

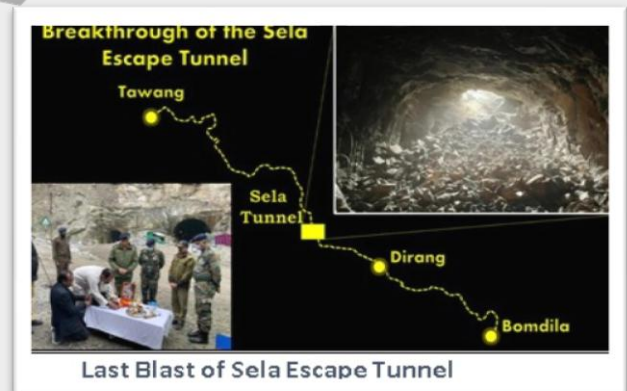
- COVID-19 pandemic has pulled an estimated 1.2 billion children out of classrooms.
- He highlighted the features of the New National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) and stated that the 4 Pillars of NEP 2020 are Quality, Equity, Accessibility and Affordability

DRDO successfully Tests Akash - NG & Anti-Tank Guided Missile

Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO) successfully tested the New Generation (NG) Surface-to-Air missile 'AKASH-NG' Missile for the Indian Air Force (IAF) & Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) for the Indian Army.

- The Akash-NG missile was flight tested from Integrated Test Range (ITR) off the coast of Odisha. While the MPATGM missile was launched from a man portable launcher.

DGBR Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhury Conducted the Last Blast of Sela Tunnel's Escape Tube



On July 22, 2021, Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry, Director General Border Roads (DGBR), virtually conducted the last blast of the escape tube of the under-construction 'Sela Tunnel' in Arunachal Pradesh to enable its faster completion.

- The first blast of the escape tube was initiated by DGBR in January 2021 . The escape tunnel is 1555 meters in length.
- This blast will support faster completion of the Sela Tunnel by undertaking simultaneous activities in two tubes i.e., a two-way tube of 1,555 meters, an escape tube of 980 meters, and the 8.8 kms of approach roads.

About Sela Tunnel:

In 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi initiated the Sela Tunnel Project in Arunachal Pradesh at an estimated cost of Rs 687 crore to provide all-weather connectivity to Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh through the Balipara (Chhattisgarh) – Charduar (Assam) Tawang (Arunachal Pradesh) Road.

The tunnel covers a total distance of 12.04 kms and it has two tunnels of 1790 and 475 meters each.

Indian Navy conducts PASSEX with UK Navy in Bay of Bengal

Indian Navy (IN) participated in a Bilateral Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with United Kingdom's (UK) Royal Navy in Bay of Bengal from July 21-22, 2021. The Maritime Exercise aimed at sharpening

the ability of two navies to operate together in the maritime domain.

- From the Indian side, IN ships Satpura, Ranvir, Jyoti, Kavaratti, Kulish and a submarine participated in the exercise. Anti-submarine warfare capable P8I Aircraft also took part in the exercise.
- While from the UK side, Royal Navy Carrier Strike Group (CSG)-21 led by HMS Queen Elizabeth & comprises Type 23 Frigates and an Astute-class Submarine also participated in the exercise.

The exercise covered a spectrum of maritime operations like Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), Anti-Air and Anti-Surface warfare.

Niti Aayog and IEA launch 'Renewables Integration in India 2021' Report

Dr. Rakesh Sarwal, Additional Secretary of NITI Aayog & Keisuke Sadamori, Director of Energy Markets and Security, International Energy Agency (IEA) jointly launched the 'Renewables Integration in India 2021 prepared by NITI Aayog & IEA.

- The report is based on the outcome of Workshops held with State

Governments of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat. The workshops were held to understand the specific energy transition challenges faced by the renewable-rich states.

- The joint report uses IEA modelling results to show the effects of different flexibility options on the power system.
- The report provides suggestions for states to manage the integration of renewable energy sources.

Cabinet Approved Establishment of a Central University in Ladakh at a Cost of Rs 750 crore

The Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur informed about the Union cabinet's approval for the formation of a Central University in the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh with a project cost of Rs 750 crore.

- The 1st phase of the university will be completed in 4 years and the jurisdiction of the upcoming Central University will cover the entire Ladakh region, including Leh and Kargil.
- Leh and Kargil were left out of the jurisdictions of central universities in

Jammu and Kashmir after the state was bifurcated into 2 UTs.

- The bill for amending Central Universities Act, 2009 will be introduced to support the formation of Central University in Ladakh.
- The Cabinet has also approved the establishment of the 1st 'Integrated Multipurpose infrastructure Development Corporation' for the UT of Ladakh.

MoSJE formulated SMILE scheme covering Comprehensive Measures for Welfare of Beggars

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) initiated a welfare scheme namely 'SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise' covering several comprehensive measures for the welfare of beggars.

- SMILE also includes a sub scheme - 'Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging'.
- This information was given by Minister of State (MoS) Abbaiah Narayana swamy in, MoSJE.

- Key Points

The focus of the scheme is on rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counselling, basic documentation, education, skill development, economic linkages, survey and identification, mobilization, basic hygiene among others.

The scheme would be implemented with the support of State/UT (Union Territory Governments/Local Urban Bodies, Voluntary Organizations, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), institutions and others.

Scheme provides for the use of the existing shelter homes available with the State/UT Governments and Urban local bodies for rehabilitation of beggars. In case of non-availability of existing shelter homes, new dedicated shelter homes are to be set up by the implementing agencies. Pilot project:

The sub scheme of SMILE is initiated in 10 cities by MoSJE. The cities are Delhi, Bangalore (Karnataka), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Hyderabad (Telangana), Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), Mumbai (Maharashtra), Nagpur (Maharashtra), Patna (Bihar) and Ahmedabad (Gujarat).

Rudreswara Temple becomes India's 29th UNESCO World Heritage Site



During the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), India's nomination of Kakatiya Rudreswara Temple (also known as the Ramappa Temple) at Palampet, Mulugu district, Warangal, Telangana was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list. It will be India's 39th World Heritage Site & the 1st World Heritage Site from Telangana.

- Rudreswara Temple was proposed by India as its only nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage site tag for the year 2019.
- The WHC consists of 21 Members and China is the Chair of the Committee.

Kakatiya Rudreswara Temple

It was constructed in 1213 AD during the reign of Kakatiya Empire by Recharla Rudra Reddy, a general of Kakatiya king Ganapati Deva.

- It is also known as Ramappa Temple, after the sculptor who executed the work in the temple for 40 years. The presiding deity in the temple is Ramalingewara Swamy. Paseo del Prado boulevard and Retiro Park added to UNESCO World Heritage list. The tree-lined Paseo del Prado boulevard & the adjoining Retiro Park, both situated in Madrid, Spain were added to UNESCO's World Heritage list by WHC of UNESCO.
- The committee also inscribed Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan China (China), Trans-Iranian Railway (Iran) to the World Heritage List.

161st Income Tax Day observed on July 24, 2021 by CBDT

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) celebrated the 161st Income Tax Day or Aaykar Diwas on July 24, 2021. It was on July 24, 1860 that income tax was introduced in India by Sir James Wilson

to compensate the British government for the losses incurred during the First War of Independence in 1857.

Key Points:

- July 24 has been celebrated as the Income Tax Day in India since 2010 annually because this year marked the 150th anniversary of income tax.
- The week preceding the Income Tax Day is marked by various activities undertaken by the regional offices of the IT department across the country.

National Web Portal for Sharing R & D I-STEM Entered Phase II

Indian Science Technology and Engineering Facilities Map (I-STEM) (www.istem.gov.in), the national web portal for sharing Research and development (R&D) facilities, entered into its 2nd phase with an extension of 5 years i.e., till 2026.

- Initially, the I-STEM was launched in January 2020 by the Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi as an initiative of the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India under the PM-STIAC (PM's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council) mission.

- Objective: To strengthen the R&D ecosystem of India and to locate the required facilities that are needed for the R&D work in India.

Features of I-STEM:

Connecting Researchers with Resources: Through the I-STEM web portal, the researchers could get access to existing publicly funded R&D facilities in the country.

The R&D equipment in institutions across India could be located and accessed through ISTEM. It also facilitates researchers to access slots for the use of the equipment and to share the details of the outcomes, such as patents, publications and technologies. Note - Phase I of I-STEM: Under the 1st phase, more than 20,000 pieces of equipment from 1050 institutions across the country were listed and it also included more than 20,000 Indian researchers.

Scheduled Initiatives under Phase - II:

Listing of R&D Facilities: Indigenous technology products under R\&D and different City Knowledge and Innovation Clusters which are supported by the Office of PSA will also be listed under the portal.

The portal will also provide access to selected R\&D software for students and scientists to undertake research projects. Partial funding assistance will be provided under this phase to researchers, start-ups, and institutions (that use the I-STEM facilities) of tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

Regional centres will also be established under the 2nd phase to provide technical training and skill development.

76 UNGA President elect Abdulla Shahid's visit to India- Overview

Abdullah Shahid, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, who is also The President-Elect of the 76th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) (PGA-Elect) visited New Delhi from July 22-24,2021. He visited India at the invitation of Dr. S Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister (EAM) of India.

- India is the 1st country that Abdulla Shahid is visiting after being elected as PGA-Elect on 7th June2021.
- Shahid has released a vision statement for his presidency term called 'Presidency of Hope: COVID Pandemic and Need for Reformed

Multilateralism' with 5 priority themes - recovering from Covid-19, rebuilding sustainably, responding to the planet's needs, respecting the rights of all, and reforming the UN.

India, Maldives sign agreement for Community Projects EAM Jaishankar and Abdulla Shahid signed an agreement on India-funded High Impact Community Development projects in Maldives.

Govt is Implementing BPKP as a Sub-scheme of PKVY for Promoting Organic Farming

Since 2020-21, the government is implementing Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Padhati (BPKP) as a sub-scheme of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) for promoting Organic farming (traditional indigenous practices).

- Under BPKP, financial assistance of Rs 12200/hectare for 3 years is being provided for cluster formation, capacity building, and continuous handholding. It promotes biomass mulching, use of cow dung-urine formulations, plant-based preparations and time to time working of soil for aeration.

- Till now, BPKP covered an area of 4.9 lakh ha in 8 states and released Rs 4980.99 lakh. So far, Telangana has not taken up natural farming under BPKP.

Note : PKVY is a sub-component of the Soil Health Management (SHM) scheme under the National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA).

MoST set up a first of its kind 'Centre of Excellence' in the Northeast, Located in Kimin, Arunachal Pradesh

The Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) will launch a first-of-its-kind Centre of Excellence (CoE) in the Northeast i.e. 'Centre for Bio-Resources and Sustainable Development' at Kimin in Papum Pare district of Arunachal Pradesh (AR).

The establishment of the Centre was sanctioned by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), MoST and is already complete for formal inauguration.

This decision has been taken to push digital initiatives in the north eastern states under the Centre's flagship Digital India programme.

Citizen Engagement Platform 'MyGov' Celebrates 7th Anniversary

India's Citizen Engagement Platform 'MyGov' celebrated the 7th Anniversary of its launch on July 26, 2021. The platform was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 26th July 2014 to promote the active participation of Indian citizens in their country's governance and development.

- The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) conducted an event to highlight the contribution of MyGov in promoting participatory governance.
- The theme of the event was 'MyGov Positive' - promoting positive use of social media.
- The platform is managed by National Informatics Centre (NIC).

FOSS4GOV Innovation Challenge

During the event, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister for MeitY & Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh announced the launch of FOSS4GOV Innovation Challenge (Free

and Open-Source Software). It invites FOSS innovators, technology entrepreneurs and Indian Startups to submit implementable open-source product innovation in the fields of Health, Education, Urban Governance, Agriculture or any other field related to E-Governance for public for 2 categories:

- Customer relationship management (CRM)
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

Lohum Plans to Set up India's Largest 3 GWh Li-ion Battery Factory

Lohum Cleantech, a lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery maker and a battery recycling solutions company, plans to set up India's largest 3 GWh Li-ion manufacturing as well as recycling plant in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh with an investment of Rs 300 crore within 18 months.

- It also plans to introduce a new recycling facility in Kandla, Gujarat.

The key raw materials required for manufacturing a Li-ion battery are lithium, cobalt, nickel and graphite

Kandla became 1st Green SEZ to Achieve IGBC Green Cities Platinum Rating

On July 26, 2021, Kandla Special Economic Zone (KASEZ) was awarded Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) Green Cities Platinum Rating for successfully achieving the green city standards through green master planning, policy initiatives, and implementation of green infrastructure.

- KASEZ became the 1st Green SEZ to achieve such a rating for Existing Cities. The IGBC Platinum rating was awarded by the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) IGBC.
- The rating plaque was presented to the KASEZ's team Satyadeep Mahapatra, Joint Development Commissioner and Chandan Singh, Appraiser in the presence of senior officials of the Department of Commerce and DGFT (Directorate General of Foreign Trade)
- The initiatives undertaken by KASEZ for water conservation and afforestation in the Bhuj region of Gujarat was also appreciated.

The achievement of KASEZ is considered as a commitment under India@75

JICA Tie up with IITH for Technical Cooperation Project-FRIENDSHIP Phase II

In July 2021, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has signed a Record of Discussions with the Indian government to strengthen its technical cooperation project with the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) Phase 2 of FRIENDSHIP (Future Researchers at IITH to Enhance Network Development with Scholarship).

- Under Phase 2 of FRIENDSHIP, JICA experts will be dispatched to IITH for launching the Japan Desk at IITH, conducting student exchange programmes, and providing JICA research funds to enhance research and technology development and industrial collaboration between India and Japan.

Collaboration between JICA and IITH:

JICA and IITH started their collaboration in 2007 and so far, they have worked under different projects for technical cooperation, research, public-private partnership, etc. They have also offered Official Development Assistance (ODA) Loans for campus development.

FRIENDSHIP is the core project between them, it was initiated from 2nd January 2011 for a period of 8 years till 31st March 2020 to establish a sustainable platform for academic and industrial collaboration between India and Japan at IITH.

So far under Phase 1 of FRIENDSHIP, IITH has signed 32 MoUs with Japanese universities and 15 MOUs between IITH and Japan industries. The project has provided scholarships for 116 beneficiaries, and exchanged 271 faculty members between Japan and IITH.

PM Modi launched e-Voucher Digital Payment Solution e-Rupi



On August 02, 2021, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi virtually launched a prepaid electronic voucher-based digital payment solution named 'e-RUPI' to strengthen the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and the financial inclusion of unbanked citizens.

- e-RUPI, the 'person and purpose-specific' one-time cashless and contactless digital payment vouchers was developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on its UPI (Unified Payments Interface) platform, in association with the Department of Financial Services (DFS), National Health Authority (NHA), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), and partner banks.
- The e-RUPI e-Voucher/coupon could be shared in the form of an SMS-string or QR code (instead of Money) to the beneficiaries' mobile for a specific purpose (health, education, subsidies, etc.)
- The beneficiaries could redeem the voucher at the service provider (i.e., the merchants that accept e-RUPI) and it doesn't need a card, digital payments app, bank account, internet banking access, and other traditional payment modes to complete the transaction.

Naval Exercise “Zayed Talwar 2021” held between India and UAE



Indian Navy and United Arab Emirates (UAE) Navy undertook Bilateral Naval Exercise Zayed Talwar 2021 off the coast of Abu Dhabi.

- The Indian Navy deployed INS Kochi and 2 Integral Sea King MK 42B helicopters, whereas the UAE participated in the exercise with Al-Dhafra, a Baynunah class guided missile corvette and one AS-565B Panther helicopter.
- The ships undertook tactical manoeuvres, over the horizon targeting, search and rescue operations and electronic warfare drills to enhance interoperability and synergy between the two navies.

MoSJE forms ‘I-MESA’ to conduct Social Audit of Social Sector Schemes

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) has formulated a scheme 'Information - Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit (I-MESA)' in FY 2021-22.

Under the scheme, Social Audits will be conducted for all the schemes of the MoSJE starting FY 2021-22. The audits will be done through Social Audit Units (SAU) of the States and National Institute for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR).

Power to be restored in States and Union Territories (UTs) to make their own Other Backward Class (OBC) lists.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the Constitution (127th) Amendment Bill, which will restore the power of States and Union Territories (UTs) to make their own Other Backward Class (OBC) lists.

- The bill will be passed for parliament approval in the upcoming parliament session, after approval, the

amendments will be made over the Article 342-A and 366 (26) C of the Constitution.

- Article 366(26 C) gives the definition for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC).

Background:

Through the 102nd Constitution Amendment Act of 2018, Articles 338B and 342A were included in the constitution to remove the powers vested with States and UTs to create their own OBC list.

- Article 338B: It deals with the structure, duties and powers of the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC).
- Article 342A: It empowers the President to notify a particular caste as SEBC and also enables the Parliament to change the list.

By referring to Article 342 A, the Supreme Court has barred the

Maharashtra government from granting reservations to Marathas and stated the Centre's only power to draw up a single 'central' OBC list.

India's first Water Villas will be set up in Lakshadweep



For the first time in India, water villas will be set up in the Union Territory (UT) of Lakshadweep with an outlay of Rs 800 crore. Similar to water villas in Maldives, these will be solar-powered and eco-friendly to provide world-class facilities.

- The decision behind this development is to develop Lakshadweep like Maldives in order to promote tourism and to benefit local residents



Human-wildlife conflict among Greatest threat to Animal Species: WWF & UNEP Report



On July 8, 2021, the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) released a report titled 'A future for all - the need for human-wildlife coexistence' which states that world's most iconic species are in threat due to conflict between humans and animals as one of the key reasons.

- The analysis of the report is based upon the contributions from 155 experts from 40 organizations based in 27 countries.

Key Points from Report :

On the global front, conflict-related killing affects more than 75% of the world's wild cat species along with other terrestrial and marine carnivore species such as polar bears and Mediterranean monk seals as well as elephants.

On Indian front, as per the data from the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) indicates that over 500 elephants were killed between 2014-2015 and 2018-2019, mostly due to human-elephant conflict. During the same period, 2,361 people were killed as a result of conflict with elephants.

Global wildlife populations have fallen an average of 68 % since 1970.

Ethiopia PM Abiy Ahmed's Party Won the Country's arliamentary Election

Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity Party won the country's parliamentary election by winning 410 of 436 parliamentary seats.

- The victory assures Abiy Ahmed a 2nd 5-year term as PM. He was appointed as the PM of Ethiopia by the governing coalition in 2018.

INS Tabar participated in Maritime Partnership Exercise with Italian Navy on Tyrrhenian Sea



Indian Naval Ship (INS) Tabar participated in a Maritime Partnership Exercise with ITS Antonio Marcegaglia, a frontline frigate of the Italian Navy, on 4-5 July in the Tyrrhenian Sea.

They conducted a wide range of naval operations including - Air defence procedures replenishment at sea, communication drills and cross deck helo operations by day and night.

INS Tabar is currently deployed in the Mediterranean Sea, visited Italy's Port of Naples on 3 July

INS Tabar is a Talwar class vessel, which has the capability to be equipped with supersonic BrahMos anti-ship cruise missiles and Barak 1 missiles

Notably, Chief of Army Staff Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane visited Italy on 7 th July and inaugurated an "Indian Army Memorial" at Cassino, Italy

Around 768 million People in the World Faced Hunger in 2020: UN Report



According to 'The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World –2021 released by 5 Agencies of UN, between 720-811 million people (768 million being the midpoint of project range) in the world faced hunger in 2020 compared to 2019. It is the 1st comprehensive report on food insecurity and nutrition in the PostPandemic era.

- The 5 UN Agencies are - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO),

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP) & World Health Organization (WHO).

- The report states that around 9.9 % of the world's population were estimated to have been undernourished in 2020, compared to 8.4% in 2019.

NS Srinivasa Murthy became the 1st Honorary Consul General of Vietnam from India

Vietnam's Minister of Foreign Affairs appointed Nama Subbiah Setty Srinivasa Murthy as the Honorary Consul General of Vietnam for Bangalore, Karnataka through the Vietnamese Embassy in India.

- He is the 1st honorary consul general of Vietnam from India and the 19th across the world.
- Role: He will provide consular protection of the State's interests and lawful rights and interests of Vietnamese citizens in Bangalore along with promoting Vietnamese-investments, trade and tourism within Bangalore, Karnataka.

- His appointment is for 3 years. He is the owner and Managing partner of N.K. Subbiah Setty Sons, the Incense Stick Manufacturers.

Virgin Galactic's Unity 22 Human Space Mission-Indian Origin Sirisha Bandla Joins the Mission

US based private Spaceflight company 'Virgin Galactic' announced the 6-member crew of its human commercial space mission "Unity 22". The crew includes Richard Branson - the founder of Virgin Galactic as one of its passengers. Indian origin Sirisha Bandla will be the 4th crew member of the space mission. Unit 22 Mission:

Objective - To act as a pre-run for all of its future commercial space trips, that will allow passengers to witness the curvature of Earth from space.

Former Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale authored a new book "The Long Game: How the Chinese Negotiate with India"

Vijay Keshav Gokhale former Foreign Secretary of India has authored a new book titled "The Long Game: How the Chinese Negotiate with India". The book

is focused on diplomacy and China's method of operations in diplomatic negotiations. The book is published by Vintage Books, a subdivision of Random House, an international publishing group.

1 in 3 countries not taking Remedial Measures for School Closures-UN Report

The report, "Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures" states that, Schools were or are still closed in 1 in 3 countries due to the Covid-19 pandemic have not yet implemented remedial programmes to mitigate learning loss. At the same time, only \$1 / 3\$ rd of countries are taking steps to measure learning losses in primary and lower second levels, mostly among high-income countries.

The report was released jointly by 4 United Nations (UN) Organisations - UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Bank and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Schools should be opened at the earliest to ease-out psychological displeasure faced among young childrens and minimize dropouts.

Commonwealth Countries lost Trade worth USD 345 billion in 2020: Commonwealth Trade Review 2021

According to a recent review 'Energizing Commonwealth Trade in a Digital World: Paths to Recovery Post-COVID' released by the Commonwealth Association, due to COVID-19 commonwealth countries lost trade worth USD 345 billion worth of trade in 2020, including USD 60 billion in intra-Commonwealth trade.

- Among the developing nations, only India recorded higher overall Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows in 2020. FDI inflows increased by more than USD 13 billion in 2020, a 29.5 % increase over the average annual inflows for 2017-19.
- Globally, COVID-19 has impacted all Commonwealth members' economies and led to USD \$1.15\$ trillion in past GDP in just one year.

Regarding India

According to the analysis, in 2019, India was the 2nd largest global exporter of ICT services (after Ireland). Among the Commonwealth countries, India was the largest ICT exporter with service exports totaling USD 70 billion.

- The value of India's ICT services exports to Commonwealth countries has increased from USD 9 billion in 2010 to USD 17 billion in 2019.

Electricity Demand Growing Faster than RE Capacity: IEA Report



According to the mid-2021 edition of 'Electricity Market Report' released by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the demand for electricity is growing faster than the production of Renewable Energy (RE). This is leading to an increase in usage of heavily polluting coal, threatening the efforts made by countries to reach Carbon neutrality.

- Electricity demand is expected to grow by 5 % in 2021, which is 1 % more than the drop experienced in 2020 due to COVID-19
- Renewable power production increased by 7 % in 2020. IEA expects

RE production to grow by 8 % in 2021 and by more than 6 % in 2022.

Despite increase in RE production, renewables will serve only around 50% of projected growth in global demand in 2021 and 2022. It will leave fossil fuel power stations to cover around 45 % of extra demand in 2021.

Emissions from Coal-fired power stations are expected to hit record high in 2022.

The report states that in order to limit climate change, Use of coal needs to decrease by more than 6% a year.

23 Mn children Missed Routine Vaccinations in 2020 India showed max increase in children missing DTP-1: WHO/UNICEF Study

In accordance with the official data published by WHO (World Health Organization) and UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) namely 'WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage (WUENIC)' on comprehensive worldwide childhood immunization figures' 23 million children missed out on basic vaccines through routine immunization services in 2020.

- This figure is 3.7 million more than in 2019.
- These were the first official figures to reflect global service disruptions due to COVID-19.

India showed Greatest Increase in Children Missing DTP-1 Notably, India topped the countries with the greatest increase, missing diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis combined vaccine (DTP-1) i.e., first dose with 1'403'000 from 91 % to 85 %

- On global front the, DTP-3 fell from 86% in 2019 to 83% in 2020 while 3.5 million more children missed DTP-1 in 2020 as compared to 2019
- This is the highest drop in DTP3 vaccine coverage since 2008.

Of those 23 million children, more than 60% live in 10 countries of India, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pakistan, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Brazil, Philippines, Angola and Mexico and 17 million of them did not receive any vaccines (zero-dose children).

- Most of these children hail to communities affected by conflict, in under-served remote places, or in slums deprived of basic health and key social services.

The WHO Southeast Asian and Eastern Mediterranean regions are most affected in immunization services disruptions.

Middle-income countries account for an increasing share of unprotected children.

iv. Vaccinations against human papillomavirus (HPV) which protect girls against cervical cancer are also highly affected due school closures.

- Globally only 13 % girls were vaccinated against HPV, falling from 15% in 2019.

UNICEF, WHO and partners like GAVI (formerly the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization) Alliance are supporting efforts to strengthen immunization systems. - These agencies target global Immunization Agenda 2030, which aims to achieve 90 % coverage for essential childhood vaccines.

Africa-1st Continent to complete collection of Digital land use Data



Under the Africa Open DEAL initiative, a complete collection of accurate, comprehensive digital land use data was collected across the African Continent, making Africa the 1st Continent in the World to have complete digital land use data.

This survey is an initiative by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the African Union Commission (AUC), and conducted by 2018 to 2020.

The data also revealed that Africa has over 7 billion trees outside forest area, indicating the continent has increased crop land by over 25% compared to 2018. Land use data can be used to study the potential of various countries in Africa and can be used in the fight against hunger.

About Africa Open DEAL :

Africa Open DEAL (Data for the Environment, Agriculture and Land Initiative) is an initiative to conduct land data on Africa using "Collect Earth"- an Open-Source Software by FAO.

Collect Earth, worked in synchrony with Google Earth, Bing Maps and Google Earth Engine to collect digital land data.

EU proposes World's 1st Carbon Border Tax

European Commission (EC), the executive branch of European Union (EU) proposed plans to impose World's 1st 'Carbon Border Tax' from 2026 on imports of carbonintensive goods, including steel, cement, fertilizers and aluminum as part of a programme to meet its new climate target (Reducing emissions by 55% from 1990 levels by 2030).

- It aims to protect European industries from competitors abroad not subject to the same carbon levies.
- During the transitional phase from 2023-25, Importers will monitor and report their emissions.

Key Points :

- The proposal mandates importers to buy digital certificates representing the tonnage of Carbon Dioxide

emissions embedded in their imported goods.

- Importers will be able to claim a reduction in carbon border costs, if the goods have been subject to a carbon levy in their country of manufacture.
- At present, around 64 carbon pricing instruments like emissions trading schemes or taxes are in use around the world (including China & US). But it covers only 21% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

USA, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan to form Quad group for Afghan Peace Process

In accordance with the United States (US) State Department notification, the US, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan are all set to create a new quadrilateral diplomatic group to promote the Afghan peace process, stability and trade in the region.

- This formation of this quad group is on the lines of deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan as Taliban claimed control of 85 % of Afghanistan after the withdrawal of US military forces from the country.

Key Points:

- This group will engage in enhancing regional trade, build new transit routes and strengthen business ties.
- US officials also urged the neighboring countries of Afghanistan and other south and central Asian countries to support the Afghan Defense Forces.

Overview of EAM Jaishankar's visit to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar paid a visit to Tajikistan (13-14th July) & Tajikistan (15-16th July) to participate in regional forum meetings.

- He visited Tajikistan to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting (SCO-FMM) & the Contact Group on Afghanistan held at Dushanbe, Capital of Tajikistan.
- Jaishankar visited Uzbekistan to participate in the Central-South Asia Conference 2021.

Tajikistan EAM visited Tajikistan at the invitation of Foreign Minister Mr. SirojiddinMuhridin to participate in the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers.

- SCO Contact Group on Afghanistan - The foreign ministers of the 8 - member countries carried out a detailed deliberation on the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan.

Qatar Airways Became 1st Airline from Middle East to Join IATA's Turbulence Aware Platform

Qatar Airways joined the Turbulence Aware platform of the International Air Transport Association(IATA), a data resource to help airlines avoid turbulence. It became the first airline from the Middle East to join the IATA Turbulence aware platform which was launched in 2018.

- The platform helps the airlines to reduce the impacts of turbulence, the main cause of passenger and crew injuries and higher fuel costs.

The platform shares the anonymized turbulence data collected from multiple participating airlines which will allow the pilots to choose an optimal flight path avoiding turbulence and fly at optimum level to increase fuel efficiency and reduce carbon emission.

India chairs 27th Meeting of BRICS CFETI 2021



The 27th Meeting of BRICS CGETI 2021 (Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues) held from July 12-14, 2021 was chaired by India. India is the Chair of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) for the year 2021, while the Department of Commerce was the national coordinator for the BRICS CGETI 2021.

Of various groups of BRICS, the CGETI is responsible for economic and trade matters.

During the meeting, BRICS members discussed the proposals circulated by India, for strengthening and increasing the Intra-BRICS cooperation trade.

India also proposed several events to strengthen the trade and economy.

- BRICS Trade Fair - To showcase & have buyer/sellers virtual meet from August 16-18,2021. It will be organized by the Department of Commerce.

Singapore Unveils One of the World's Largest Floating Solar Panels



Singapore implemented one of the world's largest floating solar panel farms, spanning an area equivalent to 45-hectare (111.2 acres) and producing electricity to power the island's 5 water treatment plants.

- The project would generate electricity from the 122,000 solar panels on the site.
- The project aims to multiple its solar energy production by 4 times by 2025 to tackle climate change.

- Floating solar farms will perform between 5 percent to 15 percent better than land solar farms because of the cooling effect of the water.

Eswatini's King Mswati III Appointed Cleopas Dlamini as New PM of Eswatini

Mswati III, the King of Eswatini and the head of the Swazi Royal Family has appointed Cleopas Dlamini as the new Prime Minister(PM) of Eswatini (commonly known as Swaziland), Africa's only remaining absolute monarchy.

- Cleopas Dlamini succeeds Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini, who died on 13th December 2020.
- He takes over from Themba Masuku who has been serving as the acting prime minister of Estawani since the death of Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini.
- Previously, he has served as the Chief Executive of the Public Service Pension Fund.

Russia Test Fires Zircon Hypersonic Cruise Missile

Russia successfully test-fired the Zircon (also known as Tsirkon) Hypersonic Cruise Missile from Russian Navy's

Admiral Gorshkov warship in White Sea. The missile successfully hit a target situated more than 350 km (217 miles) away.

- Zircon meaning 'Invincible' is a winged, anti-ship hypersonic cruise missile. During the testing, the missile reached speeds of up to Mach 7.

Zircon Missile Tsirkon hypersonic Cruise Missile is developed & manufactured by NPO Mashinostroyeniya.

- It is capable of hitting targets at sea and on land, it has a range of 1000km and is capable of flying at the speed of Mach 9 .
- It is set to be deployed on both warships and submarines.

PM Modi addresses 5th edition of Viva Technology 2021

Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually delivered the keynote address at the 5th Edition of Viva Technology 2021, which was held from June 16-19,2021 at Paris, France. He was invited as a Guest of Honour to the event, which is one of the largest digital and startup events in Europe.

- It is jointly organized by Publicis Groupe - a advertising and marketing company Les Echos, a leading French media group.
- The event brings together stakeholders in technology innovation and the startupecosystem. It has been held annually since 2016.
- Other prominent speakers in the event were Emmanuel Macron, President of FrancePedro Sanchez, Prime Minister of Spain; Tim Cook, CEO of Apple; Mark Zuckerberg, Chairman & CEO of Facebook and many others.

UNCTAD Report: India 5th Largest recipient of FDI inflows, US Tops

According to the 'World Investment Report 2021 released by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) - India received Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows worth USD 64 billion in 2020 making it the 5th largest recipient of inflows in the world. The US with 156 billion was the top destination for FDI in 2020 followed by China (USD 149 billion) & Hong Kong, China (USD 119 billion).

- Global FDI inflows declined to USD 1 Trillion in 2020 (35 % decline) compared to USD 1.5trillion in 2019 due to pandemic.
- India's FDI inflow has increased to USD 64 billion in 2020 from USD 51 billion in2019 (37%increase) due to acquisition in the Information & CommunicationTechnology (ICT) industry.
- India was ranked 8th in the UNCTAD's 2020 Report based on its FDI Inflows.

China launches World's Largest Emissions Trading System

China's National Carbon Market, the world's largest Emissions Trading System (ETS) began its trading on July 16,2021. China has replaced European Union (EU) as the largest Carbon Market.

- China is the world's biggest emitter of Greenhouse gases; the scheme is part of China's efforts to decarbonize its economy by 2060.
- In the initial stage, ETS will cover only the power sector; around 2,200 power firms will participate in the trading. China's power sector is

responsible for 14% of Global Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG).

- Shanghai Environment and Energy Exchange will host the national carbon trade.

World's 1st 3-D printed Steel Bridge Opened to Public in Amsterdam

World's 1st 3D-printed Steel Bridge, a 12-meter-long steel structure, developed by MX3D, a Dutch robotics company in collaboration with a consortium of experts, has been opened to the public in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The unveiled ceremony of the bridge was presided over by Queen Máxima of the Netherlands. The 3D printed bridge has been installed over one of the oldest canals - OudezijdsAchterburgwal - in Amsterdam's city centre.

- The 12-meter-long smart bridge, equipped with hi-tech sensors will be a 'living laboratory' that will collect real-time data on the overpass' performance. This data will be used by the digital twin, a computer model

which will imitate the actual bridge in real-time to improve accuracy over time.

- The smart sensor network was designed and installed by the team from Alan Turing Institute.

Iranian Chief Justice Ebrahim Raisi Won Iran Presidential Election

Iranian Chief justice Ebrahim Raisi became the President-elect of Iran, after winning the 2021 Iranian presidential election. He will succeed Hassan Rouhani.

- This election appeared to see the lowest turnout in the Islamic Republic's history.
- Ebrahim Raisi won 17.9 million votes overall, nearly 62 % of the total 28.9 million casted.

UK's 'Liverpool - Maritime Mercantile City' delisted from the World Heritage Site List

On 21st July 2021, United Kingdom's (UK) 'Liverpool - Maritime Mercantile City' was delisted from the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites after marginalizing losing the vote count conducted. The

voting for delisting was conducted by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee Chairman Tian Xuejun during the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee that was held virtually from Fuzhou, China.

The Delisting proposal was favoured by 13 Countries, which is 1 vote more than the required two-third majority, while opposed by 5 (UK, Australia, Brazil, Hungary & Nigeria).

Proposal for delisting the world heritage site came after overdevelopment over the region, which includes plans for constructing a new football stadium.

World heritage committee recently proposed to place Australia's Great barrier Reef in the danger category due to its deterioration caused by climate change.

Note-TeWahipounamu park from New Zealand is the newest UNESCO World Heritage Site Notable

Points on Liverpool:

Liverpool was one of the World's Major Trading Centres in the 18th & 19th centuries with advanced facilities like dock technology, transport systems & port management.

NASA's New Spacecraft NEA Scout to launch in November 2021 as a part of Artemis I

National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) new spacecraft, named Near-Earth A

program, which is expected to be launched in November 2021.

- It has completed all required tests and has been safely tucked inside the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket.

About NEA Scout:

It is a miniaturized spacecraft (about the size of a big shoebox), known as a CubeSat, developed under NASA's Advanced Exploration Systems Program. The CubeSat is being designed and developed by NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

It is propelled by a solar sail measuring 925 square feet. This will be America's first interplanetary mission using special solar sail propulsion useful for small, lightweight spacecraft.

Russia Launches 'Nauka' Lab Module to ISS

Russia's Space Agency Roscosmos successfully launched 'Nauka' (also called Multipurpose Laboratory Module) to the International Space Station (ISS) onboard Proton-M booster rocket. The rocket was launched from Russia's space facility in Baikonur, Kazakhstan.

- Nauka's is Russia's largest space laboratory, it will provide more room for scientific experiments and space for the crew in ISS.
- The 22-ton module initially scheduled to be launched in 2007 was delayed due to technical problems.
- Russia launched the 1st module of the ISS named 'Zarya' in 2000. Russia's last module 'Rassvet' was sent to the ISS in 2010.
- 'Nauka' is expected to dock at ISS on July 29, 2021.

G20 Environment Ministerial Meeting held in Hybrid format in Naples, Italy

On July 22, 2021, the G20 (Group of Twenty) Environment Ministers' Meeting 2021 was held in hybrid format which

was hosted by Italy (2021 G20 Presidency) in Naples.

In the meeting, India participated virtually and was represented by Union Minister, Bhupender Yadav, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC). Minister of State (MoS) Ashwini Kumar Choubey and other senior officers of MoEF&CC also participated in the meeting.

It was held as part of the G-20 (Group of Twenty) Leaders' Summit 2021, which will be hosted by Italy in October 2021.

UNCDF launched 'Agritech Challenge 2021' for farmers in Asia, Africa

United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), under the Centre for Financial Health in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog, the Government of India; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Rabo Foundation; International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Bayer launched Agritech Challenge 2021 to address the challenges faced by the smallholder farmers in Asia and Africa.

Aim:

To scale up Agritech and Agri-fintech innovators in the 7 selected countries from Southeast Asia and Africa.

Sweden Joins International Solar Alliance

In July 2021, Sweden, a leading member of the European Union (EU), ratified the framework agreement for International Solar Alliance (ISA). ISA, a global initiative by India aims to provide Solar energy & sustainable solutions to enhance energy security and tackle the challenges faced due to Climate Change.

Sweden will promote its renewable energy technologies among ISA member countries to reduce

Notably, Sweden has set an ambitious target of achieving 100% renewable electricity capacity by 2040

Sweden's joining comes just 4 months after the virtual meet between Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi & Swedish PM Stefan Löfven, where they discussed enhancing cooperation in technology & innovation.

UN Adopts 1st Resolution on Vision- “Vision for Everyone” to help 1.1 billion

On July 23, 2021, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted a new first-ever resolution on vision named 'Vision for Everyone' to make eye care services an integral part of universal health coverage and address the increasing impact of vision loss on sustainable development.

Objective:

To provide eye care service for at least 1.1 billion people with vision impairment by 2030, especially those who lack eye service.

Background:

The resolution - 'Vision for Everyone: accelerating action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)' was introduced by Bangladesh's U.N. Ambassador Rabab Fatima and proposed by Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh and Ireland to the UN General Assembly.

Limited Access :

Globally, over 2 billion people are living with vision impairment/ blindness and at least 1.1 billion people are living with

vision loss due to the limited access to proper vision care for conditions like short and far-sightedness, glaucoma and cataract.

61% of Global Drowning Deaths in 2019 was in Asia Pacific region: WHO Report

The World Health Organization (WHO) released 2 reports 'Regional status report on drowning in the Western Pacific' & 'Regional status report on drowning in the Asia Pacific region'. It is the 1st WHO regional assessment on drowning prevention.

- In 48 of 85 countries, drowning is among the top 5 causes of death for children under the age of 15 years.
- The report states that on average, men were 3-4 times more likely to drown than women.
- Drowning accounts for 75 % of all deaths in flood disasters. Countries in South-East Asia and Western Pacific regions are particularly vulnerable to Flood disasters due to climate change

NASA selects SpaceX for Europa Clipper Mission



US Space Agency NASA has selected Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX) for the Europa Clipper Mission. It will be Earth's 1st mission to conduct detailed investigations of Jupiter's moon Europa.

- The Europa Clipper mission will be launched in October 2024 aboard Falcon Heavy Rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, USA.
- Total Contract award amount for launch services comes to around USD 178 million.

Key Points :

Jupiter's moon Europa is approximately 390 million miles (630 million kilometers) from Earth and the journey is expected to take more than 5 years.

- The mission will reach Jupiter's orbit in April 2030.

The mission will investigate whether the icy moon has conditions suitable for life. It will produce high-resolution images of Europa's surface, determine its composition, look for signs of recent or ongoing geological activity and others.

World's largest floating Solar Farm to be Built in Indonesia

Singapore's Sunseap Group and Batam Indonesia free zone authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to build the world's largest floating solar farm and energy storage system in Indonesian city Batam at the cost of \$2 billion, to double its renewable power generation capacity.

- The floating photovoltaic system will have a capacity of 2.2\$ gigawatt-peak (GWp) and will be located on the Duriangkang Reservoir in Batam Island spanning around 1,600 hectares. The project would begin in 2022 and would be completed by 2024).

Note: India's Largest Floating Solar Power Plant of 100 MegaWatt (MW) capacity is being constructed at Ramagundam in Peddapalli district of Telangana. It will be India's largest floating solar plant in a single location.

1st World Drowning Prevention Day-25th July 2021

The United Nations(UN)'s World Drowning Prevention Day will be annually observed across the globe on 25th July starting from 2021. The day aims to highlight the impacts of death by drowning on families and communities and to provide solutions to prevent death by drowning.

- 25th July 2021 marks the observance of the first-ever World Drowning Prevention Day.
- The World Health Organization(WHO) hosted the global launch event of World Drowning Prevention Day. WHO also produces the World Drowning Prevention day related advocacy materials

The theme of World Drowning Prevention Day is "Anyone Can Drown, No One Should".

Background:

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution A/RES/75/273 on 28th April 2021 and proclaimed the 25th July of every year as World Drowning Prevention Day.

- The resolution also invited the WHO to coordinate the actions on drowning prevention within the UN system.

Background:

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution A/RES/75/273 on 28th April 2021 and proclaimed the 25th July of every year as World Drowning Prevention Day.

- The resolution also invited the WHO to coordinate the actions on drowning prevention within the UN system.

Philippines becomes World's 1st Country to approve GM 'Golden Rice' for Production

The Philippines became the World's 1st Country to approve Genetically Modified (GM) 'Golden Rice' for Commercial Production. The GM rice will help in increasing the rice productivity in the country.

- It has been developed by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in partnership with the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rice Research Institute.

- The rice variety approved by the Philippines is enriched with Vitamin A precursor beta-carotene to make it more nutritional. In the Philippines, around 17 % of children under the age of 5 are deficient in Vitamin A.
- Rice will help in combating childhood blindness and save lives in the developing world.
- Crops like rice, wheat, soybeans, and other fruits and vegetables have a naturally occurring fault in the way they photosynthesize that causes the plants to use up energy and resources, drastically decreasing the productivity.
- Golden Rice was first conceived by Professors Ingo Potrykus and Peter Beyer in the late 1980s.

Importance of Vitamin A

The Vitamin A enriched in the rice is essential for normal growth and development, and for proper functioning of the immune system, and vision.

- According to WHO, Vitamin A deficiency causes up to 500,000 cases of childhood blindness every year.

Scientists from India, Russia, Brazil, South Africa will collaborate to develop COVID-19 drug

Collaboration will be made between the scientists from India, Russia, Brazil and South Africa to develop or repurpose drugs against Covid-19. This partnership will comprise experts from bioinformatics, organic chemistry, medicinal chemistry, drug screening and parasitologists.

- The research to be done under this partnership will be supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST).

Key Points:

As a team, they will work together to repurpose, validate and synthesize lead compounds against main protease and RNA (Ribonucleic acid) replicase, the enzyme that catalyzes the replication of RNA of SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2).

Under this, the sharing of efforts, knowledge and experience will enhance the health system and health care in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries.

The scientists will work towards inhibiting maturation and propagation of viruses during the infection in the host cells which can help produce new COVID-19 medicines with improved production methods.

3 Indian SMEs Among UN's Winners of the Best Small Business of 'Good Food for All'

3 Indian Small and Medium-sized Enterprises(SMEs) have won the United Nations (UN) Food Systems Summit competition 'Best Small Business: Good Food for All', which aims to showcase innovative solutions in improving access to healthy and sustainable food. The 3 Indian SMEs: Edible Routes Private Limited, Oorja Development Solutions India and Taru Naturals were among the 50 SMEs which were announced as the winners of the Best Small Businesses of the Good Food for All competition held in conjunction with the UN Food Systems Summit.

UN Food Systems Summit:

UN Secretary-General António Guterres convened the Food Systems Summit 2021 as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Winners:

50 winners were from across 42 countries from Europe \& Central Asia (10); Africa \& Middle East (13); East Asia & Pacific (10); South Asia (8); and North and Latin America (9) were announced as the Best Small Businesses of the Good Food for All competition.

Each winner will share 1,00,000 USD in cash prizes.

Half of the winners were youths and around half were women.

IMF cut India's FY22 GDP Growth Forecast to 9.5 %

In its July 2021 World Economic Outlook (WEO) titled 'Fault Lines Widen in the Global Recovery', the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reduced India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast in FY22 to 9.5 percent from 2.5 percent (April 2021 projection) and raised the growth forecast for FY23 to 8.5 percent from 6.9 percent. Key Points: The IMF has unchanged the global economic growth forecast in 2021 to 6 percent and for 2022 it was estimated to be 4.9 percent.

The global trade volumes are projected to expand 9.7 percent in 2021 and moderate to 7.0 percent in 2022.

India and Indonesia were mentioned as the most suffered among G20 economies.

India ranked 9th in Agricultural Produce Exporters in 2019 by WTO Report; EU Tops

A recently released World Trade Organization (WTO) report has ranked India 9th (holding 3.1% share in global agri exports) among the Top 10 list of Agricultural produce exporters in 2019. European Union (EU) with a global share of 16.1 % has replaced the US as the World's largest Agriculture produce exporter (13.8 %).

- The report states that India holds a significant share in the export of rice, cotton, soya beans and meat.
- The WTO report documents the trends in World Agricultural Trade in the past 25 years (from 1995). It compares the rankings & share of global agriculture exports in 1995 to the same in 2019.

Key Points

- The Top rice exporters in 2019 were India (33%) followed by Thailand (20%)& Vietnam (12%).
- India was the 3rd largest cotton exporter (7.6 %), and the 4th largest cotton importer (10 %) in 2019. India among 5 Countries that account for 75 %of COVID-19 Vaccine Production
- WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has stated that 5 members of the WTO namely India, Germany, US, France and China will account for 75 % of the entire global output of COVID-19 vaccines in 2021.

WHO releases Global Tobacco Epidemic 2021 Report

The World Health Organization (WHO) released the 8th edition of the 'Global Tobacco Epidemic 2021: Addressing new and emerging products'. For the 1st time, the report presents data on e-cigarettes and other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS).

The report states Children and adolescents who use ENDS have high chances of using conventional cigarettes and other tobacco products in the future.

Use of ENDS affects brain development of adolescents, it also has a damaging impact on the cardiovascular and respiratory health of regular smokers.

Currently, just 32 countries (covering 2.4billion people) have banned the sale of ENDS, while 79 countries have implemented partial measures to regulate ENDS. Other findings

- Tobacco kills more than 8 million people each year.
- 80% of the world's 1.3 billion tobacco users live in low and middle-income countries.
- However, smoking prevalence among people aged over 15 years has decreased from 22.7 % to 17.7%

Pham Minh Chinh re-elected as PM of Vietnam

Pham Minh Chinh was re-elected as the Prime Minister (PM) of Vietnam for 2021-2026 through the 15th National Assembly (NA) of Vietnam.

- At first, he was elected as PM of Vietnam on 5 April 2021.
- Pham Minh Chinh, is a member of the Politburo of the 13th Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee

(CPVCC), was re-elected with a 95.99 percent approval rate among deputies at the ongoing first session of the 15th NA.

China plans to build the world's 1st 'Clean' commercial Nuclear Reactor

Chinese scientists have unveiled plans for a first of its kind commercial Nuclear reactor which runs on liquid Thorium rather than uranium

- This prototype reactor being developed by a team of scientists at the Shanghai Institute of Applied physics will be completed by August and the first tests will begin from September
- A full scale commercial reactor is expected to be ready by 2030.
- It uses molten salt instead of water for cooling.

Molten-salt reactors

Instead of using Fuel rods, Molten salt reactors will dissolve thorium into liquid fluoride salt before sending this mixture into the reactor's chamber which is above 600 degree Celsius temperature. If there is a leak, the molten salt cools

enough effectively so that it seals in the thorium and prevents any significant leaks.

Russia's Nauka Module launched to ISS

Recently Russia's Space Agency 'Roscosmos' launched its Largest Space Laboratory 'Nauka (meaning Science)' to the International Space Station (ISS) from Baikonur, Kazakhstan.

- 'Nauka' will replace the Russian Module 'Pirs' on the ISS. Pirs arrived at the Space Station in 2001 .
- It will serve as a research facility and is equipped with an oxygen generator, a spare bed, another toilet, and a robotic cargo crane built by the European Space Agency (ESA).
- Nauka was sent into orbit using a Proton rocket.

India, US to Virtually co-host 4th Annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum in October 2021

The Governments of India and the United States of America(USA) are set to virtually co-host the 4th annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum(IPBF) in October 2021. The 2-day virtual event will

start from 28th October to 29th October 2021.

The 4th IPBF will be organised over a secured online conferencing platform.

Host & Sponsor:

The event is sponsored by the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) and co-organizing with the Department of State and more than 10 other United States(US) government agencies.

India and the US host the event in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), US Chamber of Commerce, US India Business Council, US India Strategic Partnership Forum, and the US-ASEAN Business Council.

4th IPBF:

Aim:

To promote trade, investment and economic cooperation between the United States and its partners across the Indo-Pacific region.

Key Points :

The IPBF will provide a platform for the business leaders and government from The US, India and across the Indo Pacific region to exchange ideas through discussion organized on 3 themes:

- Economic Recovery and Resilience
- Climate Action
- Digital Innovation

The IPBF will also showcase high impact private sector investment and government efforts to support market competition, job growth, and highstandard development in the Indo-Pacific region.

Myanmar's Military Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing Declared Himself as PM

Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the Chief of Myanmar's Military has declared himself as the Prime Minister(PM) of Myanmar. The state administration council of Myanmar has been reformed as the "Caretaker government of Myanmar" headed by Min Aung Hlaing as the PM.

- He will lead Myanmar as PM under the extended state of Emergency until the election which will be held by 2023.

Special Envoy for Myanmar:

The efforts of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations(ASEAN) to negotiate between the military government and its opponents are

stalled following the agreement to appoint a special envoy for Myanmar. VirasakdiFutrakul, Former Deputy Foreign Minister of Thailand was selected as the envoy.

Year-Old Pakistan Climber becomes the Youngest to reach the Summit of K2

Shehroze Kashif, a 19-year-old from Lahore, Pakistan became the Youngest person in the world to reach the summit of K2(8,611 metres or 28,251 ft) in Karakoram range on the border of Pakistan and China.

- In May 2021, Kashif became the Youngest Pakistani to scale Mount Everest (8,849 meters), the highest peak in the world.
- Pakistan, Nepal, and China are home to the 14 highest peaks in the world.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Represents India at G20 Digital Ministers Meeting 2021

On August 05 2021, Union Minister for the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Ashwini Vaishnaw led the Indian Delegation at the G20

Digital Ministers Meeting 2021 held virtually from Trieste, Italy. The meeting was hosted by Italy (G20 2021 Presidency).

Key Points

The participants adopted the "Leveraging Digitalization for a Resilient, Strong, Sustainable and Inclusive Recovery" declaration at the meeting.

- The declaration includes 12 actions to accelerate the digital transition

The Ministers agreed to work towards enhanced cooperation on the pillars of Digital Economy and Digital Government.

Bangladesh, Canada Joined Coalition on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure

Bangladesh and Canada joined the Coalition on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), an initiative of India launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019.

- India's external affairs minister S Jaishankar has welcomed both nations as partners under CDRI.

About CDRI:

CDRI : It is the global partnership of national governments, UN (United Nation) agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sectors, and knowledge institutions, to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development. Members of CDRI

After the inclusion of Bangladesh and Canada, CDRI has 25 countries and 7 international organizations as its members.

Member Countries of CDRI (as of July 2021) - Afghanistan, Africa, Argentina, Bhutan, Brazil, Chile, Fiji, France, Germany, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, Peru, Sri Lanka, Turkey, UK, USA, Bangladesh, Canada

7 member Organizations - Asian Development Bank (ADB); World Bank Group; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations

Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR); ARISE, the Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies; Coalition for Climate Resilient Investment (CCRI); European Union.

South Africa becomes 1st Country to grant Patent for an Invention by AI

South Africa became the 1st Country in the World to grant Patent to an Artificial Intelligence (AI) System. It has granted a patent related to a Food Container

system based on Fractal Geometry invented by the AI system 'DABUS' (Device for Autonomous Bootstrapping of Unified Sentience).

- DABUS was created by Stephen Thaler. Its main functions are Emergency warning system, spoiled food alert and others.
- DABUS is a type of AI, often referred to as 'creativity machines'. They are capable of independent and complex functioning.



Italy wins UEFA Euro 2020

The Italy National Football Team won the 16 th Edition of ' 2020 UEFA European Football Championship (UEFA Euro 2020)' by defeating England on penalties in the finals held at Wembley Stadium, London, UK. This is Italy's 2nd European Championship Title (1st one was in 1968).

UEFA EURO 2020

- For the 1st time, The UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) Euro 2020 was held across Europe, with 11 host cities in all. 24 European National Teams participated in the Tournament which took place from 11 th June-11th July, 2021.
- UEFA European Championship is a Quadrennial men's football championship event (held once in 4 years) organized by UEFA.
- Defending Champions- Portugal

Italy wins UEFA Euro 2020



The Italy National Football Team won the 16 th Edition of ' 2020 UEFA European Football Championship (UEFA Euro 2020)' by defeating England on penalties in the finals held at Wembley Stadium, London, UK. This is Italy's 2nd European Championship Title (1st one was in 1968).

UEFA EURO 2020

- For the 1st time, The UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) Euro 2020 was held across Europe, with 11 host cities in all. 24 European National Teams participated in the Tournament which took place from 11 th June-11th July, 2021.

- UEFA European Championship is a Quadrennial men's football championship event (held once in 4 years) organized by UEFA.
- Defending Champions- Portugal

Highlights of Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics



The 32nd Edition of Olympic Games is set to take place in Tokyo, Japan from 23rd July, 2021 - 8th August, 2021. As many as 204 countries are participating in the games.

- The Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games will be held from 24th August - 5th September, 2021
- Summer Olympic Mascot - 'MIRAITOWA'; Paralympic Mascot - Someity.
- The 2020 Games mark the 2nd time that Japan is hosting the Summer

Olympic Games, the 1st one also took place in Tokyo in 1964. It is the 1st City in Asia to host the Summer Games Twice (Including Winter Games, it is the 4th Olympic Games in Japan).

- Karate, Skateboarding, Sport Climbing, Surfing, and 4 times 400m mixed relay are set to make their Olympic debut in the 2020 Olympics.
- The Olympics are organized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

India's Squad India is sending a 228-member Contingent to the Tokyo Olympics, which includes 119 athletes (67 male & 52 female). It will be India's largest ever contingent of athletes at the Olympics.

- Mary Kom (Boxing) & Manpreet Singh (Hockey) will be India's flag bearers in the Opening Ceremony, while Bajrang Punia (Wrestling) will be the flag bearer for the

Closing ceremony

Olympic Laurel 2020 Bangladesh's Muhammad Yunus is set to receive the Olympic Laurel award for 2020 during

the opening ceremony. It aims to honour outstanding individuals for their achievements in education, culture, development and peace through sport.

Paralympics

India is sending a 24-member contingent for the Paralympic games. Mariyappan Thangavelu (Para High Jumper) has been named as India's flag bearer for Tokyo Paralympics.

Olympic Motto Amended

The Olympic Motto was amended to 'faster, higher, stronger - together' and 'Citius, Altius, Fortius - Communis' in Latin during the IOC's session in Tokyo.

- The word 'together' or 'Communis' after a hyphen has been added to the earlier motto.

About International Olympic Committee (IOC)

President - Thomas Bach
HQ- Lausanne, Switzerland

Overview of Ongoing Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics

The 32nd Edition of Olympic Games is taking place in Tokyo, Japan from 23rd July, 2021-8th August, 2021.

- The Specific Motto of the Tokyo Olympics is 'United by Emotion'.

- Japanese Emperor Naruhito officially declared the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics open, while Japanese Women's Tennis Players lit up the Olympic Cauldron.

- The Opening ceremony took place at the newly-built National Stadium, Tokyo.

- India's Performance India has won 2 medals 1 Silver, 1 Bronze till August 3, 2021.

- Medals Mirabai Chanu wins Silver Medal in Weightlifting Mirabai Saikom Chanu (Manipur) won the Silver Medal in 49 kg. Weightlifting category with a total lift of 202 kg. She became 1st Indian Weightlifter to win Silver in Olympics.

- P.V. Sindhu wins Bronze Medal in Badminton

- P.V. Sindhu (Telangana) won the Bronze Medal in Women's Badminton after defeating China's He Bingjiao in the Bronze Medal match. She became the 1st Indian Woman and 2nd Indian overall to win 2 Olympic Medals.

- Men's Hockey Team grabbed a bronze

India gets its first gold with Neeraj Chopra winning in Athletics

Poland's Jan-Krzysztof Duda wins FIDE World Cup 2021

Jan-Krzysztof Duda (Poland) defeated Sergey Karjakin (Russia) to win the 9th Edition of FIDE (International Chess Federation) World Cup 2021. FIDE World Cup 2021 was held at Sochi, Russia from July 12 - August 6th, 2021.

Grand Master (GM) Magnus Carlsen (Norway) finished 3rd in the World Cup defeating GM Vladimir Fedoseev (Russia).

The top 2 finishers of the tournament (Jan-Krzysztof Duda & Sergey Karjakin), aside from World Champion Magnus Carlsen have qualified for the 2022 Candidates Tournament 2022.

The Indian challenge at the FIDE World Cup 2021 ended as Vidit Santosh Gujrathi lost to Jan-Krzysztof Duda in the second game of the Men's quarterfinals. Inauguration Edition of FIDE Chess World Cup for Women Alongside FIDE World Cup 2021, The Inaugural edition of a women's only version of the FIDE World Cup 2021 took place in Sochi, Russia from 12th July 3rd August, 2021.

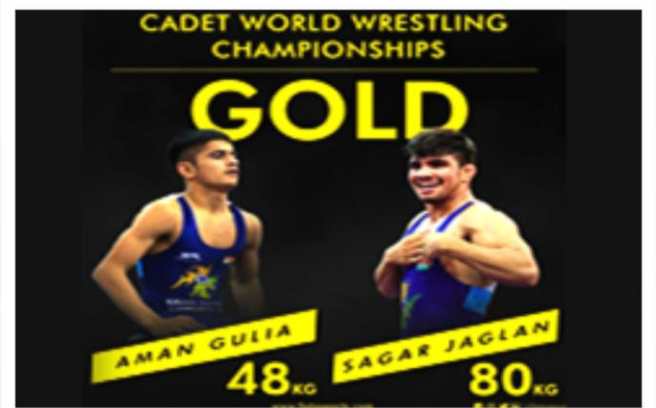
Inauguration Edition of FIDE Chess World Cup for Women Alongside FIDE World Cup 2021, The Inaugural edition of a women's only version of the FIDE World Cup 2021 took place in Sochi, Russia from 12th July 3rd August, 2021 .

- Alexandra Kosteniuk (Russia) defeated Aleksandra Goryachkina (Russia) to win the Inaugural edition of the Women's World Cup.

About FIDE (International Chess Federation)

President - Arkady Dvorkovich
HQ - Lausanne, Switzerland

Aman Gulia and Sagar Jaglan become cadet world champions



Young wrestlers Aman Gulia and Sagar Jaglan emerged as the new world champions in their respective categories as India dished out an impressive show

on the second day of the Cadet World Championship 2021 at Budapest, Hungary. Gulia emerged the winner with a convincing 5-2 win over American Luke Joseph Lilledahl in a 48kg final while Jaglan blanked James Mockler Rowley 4-0 in the 80kg summit clash

Viswanathan Anand wins Sparkassen Trophy

Viswanathan Anand defeated Vladimir Kramnik to win the Sparkassen Trophy at Dortmund. Anand needed only a draw in the final game of the No-Castling Chess event, and he got it in 40 moves.

Portugal Captain Cristiano Ronaldo wins Golden Boot in EURO 2020

Portugal captain and modern-day great Cristiano Ronaldo won the Euro 2020 Golden Boot after finishing as the top-scorer in the tournament. Despite playing just four games, Ronaldo clinched the top honours as he scored five goals. Czech Republic's Patrik Schick also ended the tournament with five goals but the award went to Ronaldo via the tie-breaker of assists.

Samir Banerjee wins Wimbledon Junior Men's title

Indian-American Samir Banerjee has won the Wimbledon Junior Men's title at Number 1 Court. He defeated Victor Lillov of America by 7-5, 6-3 in the Junior Men's finals to lift the trophy at All England Club. For the first time since 2014, and only the second time since 1977, there was an all-American conclusion to the boys' singles event. Notably, both 17-year-olds were unseeded for The Championships.

Wimbledon Championships 2021: Complete List Of Winners

In the men category, Novak Djokovic defeated Matteo Berrettini in the Wimbledon final, 6-7(4-7), 6-4, 6-4, 6-3, to win his sixth Wimbledon title and 20th Grand Slam trophy. With this win, he has equalled his total major men's singles titles record with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, with each of them winning 20 titles.

In women's category, Ashleigh Barty of Australia beat Karolina Pliskova (Czech Republic), 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 6-3, to win her

first Wimbledon women's singles title on July 10, 2021. The 25-year-old Barty is the first Australian woman to win the Wimbledon singles title in 41 years since Evonne Goolagong, who claimed her second All England Club title in 1980.

Part II-Overview of Ongoing Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics

The 32nd Edition of Olympic Games took place in Tokyo, Japan from 23rd July, 2021 - 8th August, 2021.

- India finished with 7 medals (1 Gold, 2 Silver, 4 Bronze) and has been ranked at 48th Position.
- The US topped the Medals tally with 113 Medals (39 G, 41 S, 33B) followed by China & Japan.

About International Olympic Committee (IOC):

President - Thomas Bach

HQ - Lausanne, Switzerland

Football: USMNT won CONCACAF Gold Cup 2021

The United States (US) men's national team (USMNT) won the 2021 CONCACAF Gold Cup defeating Mexico 1-0 during the finals held at Allegiant Stadium, Las Vegas, Nevada, US. The 2021 championship marks the 7th Gold Cup Title of the US.

The 2021 CONCACAF Gold cup was the 16th edition of the biennial international men's football championship of the North, Central American, and Caribbean regions organized by CONCACAF.



Current Affairs

1. Saikhom Mirabai Chanu, has opened India's medal tally at the ongoing Tokyo Olympics 2020, by winning a silver medal. She represents the country in which event?
(a) Weightlifting (b) Gymnastics
(c) Boxing (d) Sprinting
2. Which of the following site has been inscribed as India's 39th UNESCO World HeritageList?
(a) Kakatiya Rudreswara Temple (b) Bhimbetka Rock Shelters
(c) Mahabodhi Temple (d) GangaikondaCholapuram
3. Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated every year on July 26. This year nation is celebrating the _____ of victory in the Kargil war.
(a) 21 years (b) 22 years
(c) 24 years (d) 25 years
4. World Drowning Prevention Day is held annually on _____.
(a) 29 July (b) 28 July
(c) 27 July (d) 26 July
5. 'INDRA' is a naval exercise conducted between?
(a) Russia and India (b) France and India
(c) China and India (d) None of the above

6. World Health Organization is observed on 28th July every year as “World Hepatitis Day”. What is the theme of World Hepatitis Day 2021?
(a) Test. Treat. Hepatitis (b) Invest in eliminating hepatitis
(c) Hepatitis-free future (d) Hepatitis Can’t Wait
7. IMF Projects India’s economic growth forecast for FY22 at _____.
(a) 9.5% (b) 8.5%
(c) 7.5% (d) 6.5%
8. Name the first city in India where people can avail high-quality drinking water directly from the tap on a 24-hour basis.
(a) Kanpur (b) Puri
(c) Pune (d) Haldwani
9. Basavaraj Bommat elected as the new Chief Minister of which state?
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Karnataka
(c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Goa
10. The Reserve Bank of India is currently working on a phased implementation strategy for its own digital currency named “CBDC”. What is the full of CBDC?
(a) Central Business Digital Currency (b) Central Bureau Digital Currency
(c) Central Bank Digital Currency (d) Central Broker Digital Currency
11. India ranked _____ in Agricultural Produce Exporters in 2019 by WTO Report?
(a) 9th (b) 8th
(c) 6th (d) 5th
12. Abiy Ahmed has been appointed as the Prime minister of which country for the second term?
(a) Tanzania (b) Mozambique
(c) Ethiopia (d) Madagascar

- 13.** What is the theme for World Population Day 2021?
(a) The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on fertility
(b) Family Planning is a Human Right
(c) Empowering People, Developing Nations
(d) Vulnerable Populations in Emergencies
- 14.** Who among the following has won the Wimbledon Junior Men's title?
(a) Rohit Verma (b) Samir Banerjee
(c) Victor Lilov (d) Dinkar Mawari
- 15.** Dr PK Warriar recently passed away at the age of 100. He was associated with which among the following fields?
(a) Architecture (b) Psychology
(c) Ayurvedic Physician (d) IT Businessman
- 16.** Which country signed USD 1.3 billion Deal with India's SJVNL to Develop 679b MW Lower Arun HEP?
(a) Nepal (b) Bhutan
(c) China (d) Sri-Lanka
- 17.** India's 1st Private LNG Facility Plant inaugurated at
(a) Nagpur (b) Indore
(c) Bhopal (d) Chandigarh
- 18.** The International Cricket Council (ICC) inducted _____, _____ and _____ as members at its 78th Annual General Meeting.
(a) Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Switzerland
(b) Mongolia, Turkey, and Switzerland
(c) Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Swaziland
(d) Mauritius, Tajikistan, and Switzerland

- 19.** In which of the following country chess was invented?
(a) China (b) India
(c) USA (d) UK
- 20.** International Chess Day is observed annually on which day?
(a) July 19 (b) July 15
(c) July 20 (d) July 30
- 21.** When is the bank nationalization day?
(a) July 15 (b) July 17
(c) July 20 (d) July 19
- 22.** Pension Fund Regulatory & Development Authority has allowed foreign companies to hold up to _____ stake in Pension funds.
(a) 45% (b) 25%
(c) 49% (d) 74%
- 23.** _____ has reported the 1st human infection with the Monkey B virus (BV)
(a) China (b) India
(c) Japan (d) Russia
- 24.** World -Class 'Indian Institute of Heritage' will be set up at
(a) Noida, UP (b) Kolkata, West Bengal
(c) Hyderabad, Telangana (d) Maharashtra, UP
- 25.** Which of the following state will be the first state in India to issue educational documents using blockchain technology?
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Kerala
(c) Karnataka (d) Maharashtra

26. Indian Oil Corporation, India's largest oil firm to set up first 'green hydrogen' plant at
(a) Dehradun (b) Kanpur
(c) Noida (d) Mathura
27. Name the air defence missile systems, which was recently test-fired by Russia.
(a) S-300 (b) S-400
(c) S-500 (d) S-600
28. Name the billionaire, who has made a short journey to space, in the first crewed flight of his rocket ship, New Shepard.
(a) Larry Ellison (b) Bill Gates
(c) Elon Musk (d) Jeff Bezos
29. Which of the following country has unveiled a maglev train capable of a top speed of 600 kph?
(a) China (b) Germany
(c) Japan (d) USA
30. Which state government launched the 'One Block, One Product' Scheme?
(a) Haryana (b) Chhattisgarh
(c) Kerala (d) Madhya Pradesh
31. 'India Inequality Report 2021: India's Unequal Healthcare Story' report has been released by?
(a) Oxfam International (b) WHO
(c) Doctors without Borders (d) None of the above
32. Which Indian city is the only one from the country to be chosen for the International Clean Air Catalyst Programme of USAID?
(a) Ahmedabad (b) Pune
(c) Indore (d) Mumbai

- 33.** One of India's legendary sportspersons, Nandu Natekar, has passed away. He was associated with which game?
- (a) Badminton (b) Hockey
(c) Volleyball (d) Football
- 34.** When was the Earth overshoot Day observed?
- (a) 2nd August (b) 29th July
(c) 30th July (d) None of these
- 35.** What is the theme of the 2021 International Tiger Day?
- (a) Fresh Ecology for Tigers' Protection (b) Their Survival is in our hands
(c) Connect2Tiger (d) Save Tigers Now
- 36.** UN Food Systems Pre-Summit 2021 was held in _____
- (a) Rome, Italy (b) Tokyo, Japan
(c) Geneva, Switzerland (d) None of these
- 37.** Which is the first country to make world's first clean nuclear reactor?
- (a) Japan (b) China
(c) USA (d) None of these
- 38.** Indian female Shutler, PV Sindhu has won _____ Medal at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.
- (a) Gold (b) Silver
(c) Bronze (d) None of these
- 39.** A new hightech and low sound weapon called TriCa (Trichy Carbine) has been launched by the Ordnance factory of which state?
- (a) Tamil Nadu (b) West Bengal
(c) New Delhi (d) None of the above

- 40.** Which cities ranked above 100 in QS Best Student Cities 2022?
(a) Mumbai, Bangalore (b) New Delhi, Chennai
(c) Bangalore, Kolkata (d) None of the above
- 41.** CORPAT Exercise was held between which two countries?
(a) India and Indonesia (b) India and Japan
(c) India and Thailand (d) India and Russia
- 42.** Who has been re-appointed as the prime minister of Armenia?
(a) Hovik Abrahamyan (b) Karen Karapetyan
(c) Serzh Sargsyan (d) Nikol Pashinyan
- 43.** Which of the following city has become the first Indian city to achieve 100 per cent COVID-19 vaccination?
(a) Imphal (b) Bhubaneswar
(c) Indore (d) Surat
- 44.** The Union Ministry for Science & Technology has released "Biotech-PRIDE Guidelines". Who is the present Union Minister for Science & Technology?
(a) Jitendra Singh (b) Rao Inderjit Singh
(c) Shripad Yesso Naik (d) Faggansingh Kulaste
- 45.** Myanmar Military Chief _____ appointed as interim Prime Minister.
(a) Than Shwe (b) Maung Aye
(c) Min Aung Hlaing (d) Soe Win
- 46.** Italy's _____ outshone a field of unusual suspects to claim a shock Olympic gold in the men's 100 metres.
(a) Usain Bolt (b) Andre de Grasse
(c) Fred Kerley (d) Lamont Marcell Jacobs

- 47.** Operation Blue Freedom was launched in _____ by CLAW Global, a team of former Special Forces Operatives of the Indian Army and the Indian Navy.
- (a) 2015 (b) 2016
(c) 2017 (d) 2019
- 48.** National Handloom Day is observed on which date?
- (a) 6th August (b) 8th August
(c) 5th August (d) 7th August
- 49.** Which Ministry is implementing the PM-DAKSH Yojana?
- (a) Ministry of Home Affairs
(b) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
(c) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
(d) Ministry of Law and Justice
- 50.** What is the theme of International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2021?
- (a) COVID-19 and indigenous peoples' resilience
(b) Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract
(c) Right to Education
(d) Indigenous peoples' languages



ANSWERS



1.(a) Weightlifting

Exp. India's ace weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu has claimed a silver medal in the Women's 49kg category, at Tokyo 2020 Olympics on July 24, 2021.

2.(a) Kakatiya Rudreswara Temple

Exp. During the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), India's nomination of Kakatiya Rudreswara Temple (also known as the Ramappa Temple) at Palampet, Mulugu district, Warangal, Telangana was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list. It will be India's 39th World Heritage Site & the 1st World Heritage Site from Telangana.

- Rudreswara Temple was proposed by India as its only nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage site tag for the year 2019.
- The WHC consists of 21 Members and China is the Chair of the Committee.

Kakatiya Rudreswara Temple

- It was constructed in 1213 AD during the reign of Kakatiya Empire by Recherla Rudra Reddy, a general of Kakatiya king Ganapati Deva.
- It is also known as Ramappa Temple, after the sculptor who executed the work in the temple for 40 years. The presiding deity in the temple is Ramalingewara Swamy.

3.(b) 22 years

Exp. India celebrates the 22nd Anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas on 26th July 2021 which marks the victory of India over Pakistan in the war fought from 3rd May to 26th July 1999 in Kargil, Jammu & Kashmir. The day remembers the valour and sacrifices of the heroes of the Kargil War and pays homage to the martyrs who lost their lives in the line of duty. Background:

On 26th July 1999 , the Indian army successfully executed Operation Vijay, which evicted the infiltrators, backed by the Pakistani Army, from the high outposts in Kargil after an armed conflict that lasted for more than 60 days.

4.(e) 25 July

Exp. The United Nations(UN)'s World Drowning Prevention Day will be annually observed across the globe on 25th July starting from 2021. The day aims to highlight the impacts of death by drowning on families and communities and to provide solutions to prevent death by drowning.

- 25th July 2021 marks the observance of the first-ever World Drowning Prevention Day.
- The World Health Organization(WHO) hosted the global launch event of World Drowning Prevention Day. WHO also produces the World Drowning Prevention day related advocacy materials

The theme of World Drowning Prevention Day is "Anyone Can Drown, No One Should".

5.(a) Russia and India

Exp. Indian Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh attended the 325th Russian Navy Day celebrations held at St. Petersburg, Russia. Indian Navy's Stealth Frigate INS Tabar participated in the Navy Day Celebrations of Russia.

- INS Tabar arrived at St. Petersburg as part of a five-day goodwill visit.
- The two navies will conduct a naval exercise to strengthen the ties. The exercise will be part of the Indo-Russian Naval Exercise 'INDRA'.
- The engagements are aimed at enhancing maritime security and conducting combined operations against maritime threats.

6.(d) Hepatitis Can't Wait

Exp. The United Nations (UN)'s World Hepatitis Day is annually observed across the globe on 28th July to highlight the need for the global response defined in the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s Global hepatitis report 2017. The day aims to create awareness about viral hepatitis, which causes severe liver diseases and hepatocellular cancer. World Hepatitis Day is sponsored by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The theme of World Hepatitis Day 2021 is "Hepatitis can't wait".

7.(a) 9.5 %

Exp. In its July 2021 World Economic Outlook (WEO) titled 'Fault Lines Widen in the Global Recovery', the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reduced India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast in FY22 to 9.5percent from 2.5 percent (April 2021 projection) and raised the growth forecast for FY23 to 8.5 percent from 6.9 percent. Key Points:

The IMF has unchanged the global economic growth forecast in 2021 to 6 percent and for 2022 it was estimated to be 4.9 percent.

The global trade volumes are projected to expand 9.7 percent in 2021 and moderate to 7.0 percent in 2022.

India and Indonesia were mentioned as the most suffered among G20 economies.

8.(b) Puri

Exp. Puri has become the first city in India where people can avail high-quality drinking water directly from the tap on a 24-hour basis.

9.(b) Karnataka

Exp. The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) legislature party has unanimously elected Lingayat MLA Basavaraj S Bommai as the new Chief Minister of Karnataka.

10.(c) Central Bank Digital Currency

Exp. The Reserve Bank of India is currently working on a phased implementation strategy for its own digital currency, Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), and will launch it in the wholesale and retail segments soon.

11.(a) 9th

Exp. A recently released World Trade Organization (WTO) report has ranked India 9th (holding 3.1% share in global agri exports) among the Top 10 list of Agricultural produce exporters in 2019. European Union (EU) with a global share of 16.1 % has replaced the US as the World's largest Agriculture produce exporter (13.8 %).

12.(c) Ethiopia

Exp. Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity Party won the country's parliamentary election by winning 410 of 436 parliamentary seats.

- The victory assures Abiy Ahmed a 2nd 5-year term as PM. He was appointed as the PM of Ethiopia by the governing coalition in 2018.
- The election was held on June 21, 2021; it was that country's first free and fair election after decades of repressive rule.
- Voting did not take place in 3 of Ethiopia's 10 regions due to opposition boycott, a war in Tigray, ethnic violence, etc.

13.(a) The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on fertility

Exp. This year theme of World Population Day 2021: “the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on fertility”.

14.(b) Samir Banerjee

Exp. Indian-American Samir Banerjee has won the Wimbledon Junior Men`s title at Number 1 Court.

15.(c) Ayurvedic Physician

Exp. Dr PK Warriar was the chief physician and managing trustee of the Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala, one of the leading Ayurvedic healthcare chains in the country. In his nearly seven-decade career, Warriar set a benchmark for the Indian traditional healing system and played a pivotal role for the renaissance of Ayurveda.

16.(a) Nepal

Exp. Investment Board of Nepal (IBN) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the India's State-owned hydropower major 'Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Ltd' (SJVN) for the implementation of 679 Megawatt (MW) Lower Arun Hydro Electric Project (HEP) in eastern Nepal at the cost of USD 1.3 billion.

- It is the 2nd project of SJVN in Nepal after the Arun-3 hydropower project.

17.(a) Nagpur Maharashtra

Exp. Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated India's 1st Private LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) Facility plant at Nagpur, Maharashtra. The Plant has been set up by Baidyanath Ayurvedic Group.

- Emphasizing the importance of alternate biofuels for diversification of agriculture towards the energy and power sector, Gadkari stated that India is spending 8 Lakh Crore for the import of petrol, diesel & petroleum products.
- The Government has designed a policy which encourages development of cost effective pollution free and indigenous ethanol, bio CNG (Compressed Natural Gas), LNG and hydrogen fuels.
- He stated that Surplus quantities of rice, corn and sugar must be used for production of alternative fuels.

18.(a) Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Switzerland

Exp. The International Cricket Council (ICC) inducted Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Switzerland as members at its 78th Annual General Meeting.

19.(b) India

Exp. Chess was invented in India around the 8th century. Then it was known as chatrang, and changed over the centuries by the Arabs, Persians and then ultimately the medieval Europeans, who changed the pieces' names and appearances to resemble the English court.

20.(c) July 20'

Exp. The United Nations(UN)'s World Chess Day is annually observed across the globe on 20th July to highlight the role of the World Chess Federation or International Chess Federation (FIDE) towards international cooperation for chess activity and improving harmony among the people across the globe. The day also focuses on the importance of chess in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals(SDG). World Chess Day 2021 also marks the 97th anniversary of the FIDE.

21.(d) July 19

Exp. The Bank Nationalisation Day is annually observed across India on 19th July to commemorate the issuance of the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Ordinance, 1969 on 19th July 1969, that nationalized 14 major banks in India with a deposit of more than Rs 50 crores each. 19th July 2021 marks the 52nd Anniversary of Bank Nationalisation.

- All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) has organized a month-long National Webinars from July 1 to 31 to commemorate the 52nd anniversary of bank nationalization.

22.(d) 74 %

Exp. Government notified a hike in the foreign direct investment limit in pension fund management to 74% from 49% under the national pension system (NPS), opening doors for experienced foreign partners in this space and facilitating more competition in the fledgling segment.

23.(a) China

Exp. China has reported the 1st human infection case with the Monkey B virus (BV). Monkey B virus is an alphaherpesvirus enzootic (endemic) in macaques, and it was initially isolated in 1932.

24.(a) Noida UP

Exp. The Central Government has decided to set up a world class Indian Institute of Heritage at Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar (Uttar Pradesh) to focus on conservation and research in India's tangible heritage.

- It was informed by Union Minister Gangapuram Kishan Reddy, Ministry of culture in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.
- This will be a standalone institution of its type in India.

25.(d) Maharashtra

Exp. Maharashtra will be the first state in the country to issue educational documents using blockchain technology. Forgery of documents is a serious concern for various educational and other institutions.

26.(d) Mathura

Exp. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), India's largest oil firm, will build the first 'green hydrogen' plant of the country at its Mathura refinery, to meet the growing demand for both oil and cleaner forms of energy.

27.(b) S-400

Exp. Russia successfully test-fired its new S-500 Air Defence Missile Systems in a Kapustin Yar Training ground, Russia. The missile, considered as the most advanced anti-missile system, successfully hit a high-speed ballistic target.

28.(d) Jeff Bezos

Exp. On July 20, 2021, 'New Shepard' Rocket System built by Blue Origin (a Company owned by Amazon's Founder, Jeff Bezos) successfully completed its 1st human spaceflight with 4 people on board. It was launched from a private launch site near Van Horn, Texas.

- The 4 members in the spaceflight were Jeff Bezos, Mark Bezos, Wally Funk (82 years, oldest to ever fly in space) & Oliver Daemen (18 years, youngest ever to fly in space).

29.(a) China

Exp. China has unveiled a new Maglev transportation system, which is capable of achieving a maximum speed of 600 kph or 372 mph, in Qingdao, the coastal city in Shandong province of China. The Maglev train developed by China and

manufactured in Qingdao is reported to be the world's fastest ground vehicle available. This is China's latest scientific and technological achievement in the field of rail transit.

What is Maglev?

- Maglev (from magnetic levitation) is a train transportation system, which uses the electromagnetic force and levitates above the track & there will be no contact between the body of the train and rail.
- It uses two sets of magnets: one set to repel and push the train up off the track, and another set to move the elevated train ahead, taking advantage of the lack of friction.

30.(a) Haryana

Exp. The State Government of Haryana is all set to launch the 'One Block, One Product' scheme to encourage and promote small industries in the rural areas. It was announced by the state's Deputy Chief Minister (CM) Dushyant Chautala.

What is in the scheme?

- It will be introduced in 137 blocks of the state under which every block will be connected with some industry. The arrangements for common services, lab testing, packaging, transportation, accountancy will be set up in the cluster itself.
- This will support the small entrepreneurs of rural areas to compete with large industries.

31.(a) Oxfam International

Exp. In accordance with the report titled 'India Inequality Report 2021: India's Unequal Healthcare Story' by Oxfam India, there are sharp inequalities across different caste, religious, class and gender categories on various health indicators.

- As per report general category is better than the SCs (Scheduled Caste) and STs (Scheduled Tribes), Hindus are better than Muslims, rich are better than the poor, men are better than women, and the urban population is than the rural population on most health determinants, interventions and indicators.
- Notably, it named Kerala as a success story in handling the pandemic.

32.(c) Indore

Exp. India's cleanest city Indore has become the only city from India to be selected for International Clean Air Catalyst Programme

- It is a new flagship programme launched by The U.S Agency for International Development (USAID) in collaboration with a group of organisations, led by World Resources Institute (WRI) and Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)
- The project will be rolled out for 5 years with the support of Indore Municipal Corporation and Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board.

33.(a) Badminton

Exp. Legendary Indian badminton player Nandu Natekar, who became the first Indian to win the international title in 1956, has passed away.

34.(b) 29th July

Exp. Earth Overshoot Day marks the day on which humanity's demand for ecological resources and services in the year exceeds the regeneration capacity of Earth in that year. The Earth Overshoot Day 2021 falls on the 29th July 2021 . The EOD is hosted and calculated by Global Footprint Network, an international research organization.

The Earth Overshoot Day 2020 was observed on 22nd August 2020.

35.(b) Their Survival is in our hands

Exp. The theme/Slogan for 2021 International Tiger Day celebration is “Their Survival is in our hands”.

36.(a) Rome Italy

Exp. On July 26-28,2021, a 3-day United Nations (UN) Food Systems Pre-Summit 2021 was held in a hybrid mode which was organized by the UN and the Government of Italy in Rome, Italy. There India was represented by Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) who led the 15-member delegation.

- The union minister virtually delivered the Ministerial Statement which emphasized the importance of Agriculture in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 as 12 out of 17 SDGs are directly dependent on agriculture.

37.(b) China

Exp. Chinese scientists have unveiled plans for a first of its kind commercial Nuclear reactor which runs on liquid Thorium rather than uranium

- This prototype reactor being developed by a team of scientists at the Shanghai Institute of Applied physics will be completed by August and the first tests will begin from September
- A full scale commercial reactor is expected to be ready by 2030.
- It uses molten salt instead of water for cooling.

38.(c) Bronze

Exp. Indian female Shutler, PV Sindhu has won Bronze Medal at the Tokyo Olympics 2020. She defeated He Bing Jiao of China for clinching her second consecutive Olympic medal.

39.(a) Tamil Nadu

Exp. The Ordnance factory Tiruchirappalli (OFT) in Tamil Nadu launched a new hightech and low sound weapon called TriCa (Trichy Carbine), a mini version of the Trichy Assault Rifle (TAR). It was unveiled by General Manager of OFT Sanjay Dwivedi, IOFS (Indian Ordnance Factories Service) during a function.

- It was developed by the in-house research and development unit of the Ordnance Factory.

Features of TriCa:

Size: 7.62 X 39mm portable weapon launched on the carbine platform

Weight: 3.17 kg (including the magazine) and Range: 150 to 175 metres.

40.(a) Mumbai, Bangalore

Exp. Mumbai, Maharashtra and Bangalore, Karnataka ranked above 100 in the 'QS Best Student Cities 2022' ranking of QS Quacquarelli Symonds, they became the only 2 cities to get ranked from India.

- Mumbai ranked as 52nd among the top 100 cities globally in the 'employer activity' indicator and Bangalore, Karnataka ranked 42nd among the top-10 under the indicator of 'affordable cities' for students.
- QS Best Student Cities 2022 is the annual ranking used to provide an overview to international students for the best places to live and study around the world based on the current students' opinions on affordability, quality of life, and the standard of university.

41.(a) India and Indonesia

Exp. The 36th Edition of Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) was held between the Navies of India and Indonesia from July 30-31,2021 in the Indian Ocean region (IOR).

- Indian Naval ship (INS) Saryu, an indigenously built Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) along with Indonesian Naval ship KRI Bung Tomo took part in the coordinated patrol.
- It aims to enhance the maritime cooperation between the two navies and forge strong bonds of friendship across the Indo Pacific region.
- The patrol was held in "A non-contact, at sea only" format in view of the pandemic.

42.(d) NikolPashinyan

Exp. NikolPashinyan has been re-appointed as the prime minister of Armenia by President Armen Sarkissian on August 02, 2021.

43.(b) Bhubaneswar

Exp. Bhubaneswar has become the first Indian city to achieve 100 per cent COVID-19 vaccination.

44.(a) Jitendra Singh

Exp. Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Science and Technology is Jitendra Singh.

45.(c) Min Aung Hlaing

Exp. Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the Chief of Myanmar's Military has declared himself as the Prime Minister(PM) of Myanmar. The state administration council of Myanmar has been reformed as the "Caretaker government of Myanmar" headed by Min Aung Hlaing as the PM.

- He will lead Myanmar as PM under the extended state of Emergency until the election which will be held by 2023.

46.(d) Lamont Marcell Jacobs

Exp. Italy's Lamont Marcell Jacobs outshone a field of unusual suspects to claim a shock Olympic gold in the men's 100 metres, breaking retired Jamaican star Usain Bolt's 13-year hold on the blue-riband event.

47.(d) 2019

Exp. Operation Blue Freedom was launched in 2019 by CLAW Global, a team of former Special Forces Operatives of the Indian Army and the Indian Navy.

48.(d) 7th August

Exp. The National Handloom Day(NHD) is annually observed across India on 7th August to create awareness about the handloom works in India and to recognize its contribution to the socio-economic development of India. The annual celebration of the national Handloom Day is organized by the Ministry of Textile. Background:

- In 2015, the Government of India declared the 7th August of every year as National Handloom Day.
- The first National Handloom Day was inaugurated by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi on 7th August 2015 at the Centenary Hall of Madras University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

49.(c) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Exp. On 7th August, 2021, Dr. Virendra Kumar, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment has launched 'PM-DAKSH' Portal and 'PM-DAKSH' Mobile App. This portal and app have been developed by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, in collaboration with NeGD, to make skill development schemes accessible to the target groups of Scheduled Castes,

Backward Classes and SafaiKaramcharis. From the year 2020-21 the Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur KushaltaSampannHitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

50.(b) Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract

Exp. The United Nations (UN)'s International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is annually observed across the globe on 9th August to recognize the contributions and achievements of the indigenous people across the globe, who have a vast diversity of unique cultures, traditions, languages and knowledge systems. The day aims to promote and protect the rights of the world's indigenous population. The day is also known as "World Tribal Day". The theme of International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2021 is "Leaving No One Behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract".