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INTERNATIONAL

China Launched Robot Prototype 'NEO-01' Clear Space Debris

- The Chinese government has launched a robot prototype named as 'NEO-01', in the Earth's low orbit, on its Long March 6 rocket. The 30kg robot prototype has been developed by Shenzhen-based space mining start-up 'Origin Space'.
- To observe small celestial bodies in deep space and to experiment with space debris removal techniques.

Time magazine's 100 most influential firms

- Two Indian firms, Reliance Industries' technology arm Jio Platforms and e-learning startup Byju's have figured in the Time Magazine's first-ever list of 100 most influential companies. On its website, Time said companies shaping the future are at the heart of the first ever TIME100 Most Influential Companies.
- It listed Jio Platforms under the Innovators category alongside Zoom, Adidas, TikTok, Ikea, Moderna and Netflix. "Over the past few years, Reliance Industries, the Mumbai-based conglomerate, has built India's largest 4G network.

David Beckham the ambassador of UNICEF, leads global vaccination drive

- UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, David Beckham, is fronting a global initiative to inspire confidence in vaccines and encourage parents around the world to vaccinate their children against deadly diseases.
- In a powerful video released ahead of World Immunization Week, Beckham talks about the loss of everyday activities due to C-19, such as hugs with family, spending time with friends, and being with the people we love, and encourages parents to vaccinate themselves so that they can be safe.

Italy bans entry of travelers from India

- Italy has joined other countries by imposing restrictions on travel from India to avert the spread of a C-19 variant as the Asian nation struggles with a surge in infections.
- Italy's Health Minister Roberto Speranza said on Twitter he had signed an order barring foreign travellers who have been in India in the past 14 days from entering the country.
- India, which is facing a health crisis, is battling a "double mutant" strain of C-19. On Sunday, the country posted the world's highest single-day increase in cases for a fourth day.

Japan declares three months emergency in four major cities

- Japan has declared a state of emergency in Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Hyogo from April 25, after a recent surge in C-19 cases. Announcing the emergency till 11th May, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said that the emergency is intended to be short and intensive. He said, it is to stop people from travelling and spreading the virus during Japan's Golden Week holidays from late April through the first week of May.
- This is Japan's third state of emergency since the pandemic began and comes after a month of an earlier emergency in the Tokyo area. The measures include shutdown orders for bars,

department stores, malls, theme parks, theatres and museums. Restaurants that do not serve alcohol and public transportation services are asked to close early. Schools will stay open, but universities are asked to return to online classes. Mask-wearing, staying home and other measures for the general public remain non-mandatory requests.

4chan founder Chris Poole leaves Google

- 4chan founder Chris Poole no longer works at Google. Google hired Poole in 2016 to work on the company's doomed social media project, Google+.
- Poole lasted just five years at Google, which CNBC notes is usually just long enough for any employee's shares attached to hiring to vest. It sounds like Poole never found a solid landing spot at Google, as he had three different positions during his five years.

Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel has been officially sworn in as the 'First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba'

- Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel has been sworn in as the 'First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba', following the resignation of Raul Castro. The Secretary of the Communist Party is the most powerful position in one party ruling Cuba. Díaz-Canel now holds Cuba's two most important positions, head of the party and president of the state.
- Raúl Castro announced that he would step down from the key position of the party and hand over the leadership to a younger generation. Díaz-Canel is almost thirty years younger than his predecessor and will now hold Cuba's two most important positions, head of the party and president of the state. Castro had been in the post since 2011 when he took over from his older brother, Fidel Castro.

Italy launched first ever mega food park in Gujarat

- Italy has launched its first-ever mega food park project in India, at Fanidhar in the Mehsana district of Gujarat. The project aims to create synergy between agriculture and industry of the two countries and focuses on the research and development of new and more efficient technologies in the sector.
- With this Italy also aims to explore the great opportunities offered by the Indian market. This is the first Italian-Indian food park project, an initiative in the food-processing field, which serves as a pillar of the partnership between India and Italy.

Microsoft buys AI speech tech company Nuance for \$19.7 billion

- Microsoft has made its second-biggest acquisition after LinkedIn. The tech giant has bought AI speech tech firm Nuance for \$19.7 billion. The move will help Microsoft's prowess in voice recognition and will give it a boost in the health care market. Nuance is known for its Dragon software which helps to transcribe speech using deep learning. In 2016, Microsoft had purchased LinkedIn for \$26 billion.
- The acquisition will combine solutions and expertise to deliver new cloud and AI capabilities across healthcare and other industries, and represent the latest step in Microsoft's industry-specific cloud strategy.

- Nuance provides the AI layer at the healthcare point of delivery and is a pioneer in the real-world application of enterprise AI.
- Nuance's products include multiple clinical speech recognition software as a service (SaaS) offerings built on Microsoft Azure. The firm's solutions work with core healthcare systems, and are currently used in 77% of U.S. hospitals.

US President Biden announced complete troop withdrawal from Afghanistan by September

- US President Joe Biden has announced that all American troops would be withdrawn from Afghanistan by September 11 this year, thus bringing to end the country's longest war. US troops, as well as forces deployed by our NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) Allies and operational partners, will be out of Afghanistan before the 20th anniversary of that heinous attack on September 11 (2001).
- Biden and his team are refining national strategy to monitor and disrupt significant terrorist threats not only in Afghanistan, but anywhere they may arise — Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and elsewhere.
- Before making the announcement, Biden had spoken with former US presidents Barack Obama and George Bush.
- The US and the Taliban signed a landmark deal in Doha on February 29, 2020, to bring lasting peace in war-torn Afghanistan and allow US troops to return home from America's longest war.

3400-year-old 'Lost golden city of Luxor' discovered by archaeologists in Egypt

- 'Lost golden city of Luxor' discovered by archaeologists in Egypt. The 3400-year-old royal city was built by Amenhotep III, abandoned by his heretic son, Akhenaten, and contains stunningly preserved remains.
- Egyptologist Betsy Bryan has called the discovery 'the second most important one since the tomb of Tutankhamun'. Akhenaten, who left the 'golden city' for a new capital at Amarna, encouraged a startlingly different style of Egyptian art. Here he is shown with his wife, Nefertiti, and three daughters.

Sanskrit learning app 'Little Guru' has launched in Bangladesh

- A Sanskrit learning app 'Little Guru' has launched in Bangladesh by the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre of the High Commission of India. The Sanskrit learning app is part of the campaign being run by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations to promote the Sanskrit language among students, religious scholars, Indologists and historians across the world.
- The Sanskrit learning app 'Little Guru' is based on an interactive platform that will make Sanskrit learning easy, entertaining and fun.
- This app will help people who are already learning Sanskrit or those who are desirous to learn Sanskrit to do so in an easy manner based on games, competition, rewards, peer to peer interactions, etc.
- This App combines education with entertainment, said a press release issued by the High Commission of India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 2021 “Raisina Dialogue”

- Prime Minister Modi has inaugurated the 2021 “Raisina Dialogue”, through video-conferencing. The Raisina Dialogue 2021 is the sixth edition of the annual dialogue, organised from April 13 to 16, 2021, in full digital form for the first time due to the coronavirus pandemic. Raisina Dialogue is India’s flagship conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics, organised annually since 2016.
- The theme for the 2021 conference is “#ViralWorld: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control”.
- The four-day dialogue is jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the think-tank Observer Research Foundation.
- President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame and Prime Minister of Denmark, Mette Frederiksen joined the Inaugural Session as Chief Guests.
- The event will have a total of 50 sessions. Around 150 speakers from 50 countries and multilateral organizations are participating in the dialogue.
- The Raisina Dialogue is one of the leading global conferences on international affairs. It brings together leading minds from the global strategic and policy-making community to discuss broader foreign policy and strategic issues facing the world.

Bangladesh : International flight suspension

- The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) on Sunday decided to suspend international flights for one week starting from April 14 with the commencement of the hard-lockdown in the country to contain the spread of Covid-19.
- However, no restriction will be imposed on the movement of chartered flights, cargo flights and special flights carrying high commissioners of different countries and foreign nationals, CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman said.

Singapore: Becomes first country to ratify mega free trade agreement ‘RCEP’

- Singapore ratified the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, the world’s largest free trade agreement, led by China. In doing so, Singapore became the first among 15 participating countries to ratify RCEP.
- The RCEP must first be ratified by at least six ASEAN and three non-ASEAN member states to come into effect. Once implemented, RCEP would be the world’s largest free trade agreement, covering around one-third of the world’s population and about 30% of the world’s economy.

India gifted Rs 100 crore patrol vessel “PS Zoroaster” to Seychelles

- India formally handed over Rs 100 crore patrol vessel “PS Zoroaster” to Seychelles during the virtual summit between Indian PM Narendra Modi and Seychelles President Wavel Ramkalawan. The PS Zoroaster is the fourth made-in-India patrol boat developed for Seychelles since 2005. The other vessels gifted by India include PS Topaz (2005), PS Constant (2014), Patrol Boat Hermes (2016).

- The 48.9-metre patrol boat has been built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineering at an estimated cost of Rs 100 crore.
- The vessel has a top speed of 35 knots and an endurance of 1,500 nautical miles.
- It will be used for multi-purpose operations, such as patrolling, anti-smuggling and anti-poaching operations, and search and rescue.

Kosovo: Vjosa Osmani elected as a president

- Kosovo's parliament elected Vjosa Osmani as the country's new president. Osmani received 71 votes from the lawmakers at the third round of voting in the Assembly of Kosovo.
- While 82 deputies participated in the vote in the 120-member parliament, 11 votes were declared invalid. The 38-year-old politician studied law at the University of Pristina in Kosovo and earned a doctorate from Pittsburgh University in the US.

Vietnam National Assembly select Prime Minister & President

- Vietnam's legislature voted to make Pham Minh Chinh, a member of the Communist party with a history as a security official, the country's next Prime Minister. Outgoing Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc was appointed the new President.
- The votes of the nearly 500 members of the National Assembly rubber-stamped the leadership picks the Communist party made during its national congress in January.

Jeff Bezos tops Forbes' Annual Billionaire list fourth year in a row

- The Amazon.com Inc founder, Jeff Bezos has topped Forbes' annual world's billionaires list for the fourth consecutive year. India's richest billionaire Mukesh Ambani ranked at 10th position with a total net worth of USD 84.5 billion.
- The 35th edition Forbes World's Billionaires list was released on April 06, 2021, comprising a record-breaking 2,755 billionaires. The list is prepared based on the wealth using stock prices and exchange rates from March 5, 2021.

Carl Bildt appointed WHO special envoy for ACT-Accelerator

- Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO), appointed Carl Bildt as WHO Special Envoy for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-Accelerator). Bildt succeeds Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and Andrew Witty in the special envoy role. He will help lead the collective advocacy for the ACT-Accelerator in his new role, mobilising support and resources so it can deliver against its strategy for 2021.
- The ACT-Accelerator is a groundbreaking global collaboration to accelerate development, production, and equitable access to novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) tests, treatments and vaccines, according to the WHO website.
- It brings together governments, scientists, businesses, civil society, and philanthropists and global health organizations.
- These include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CEPI, FIND, Gavi, The Global Fund, Unitaid, Wellcome, the WHO and the World Bank.

Indian Army to participate in Military Exercise SHANTIR OGROSHENA 2021

- A multinational Military Exercise named 'SHANTIR OGROSHENA' 2021 (Front Runner of the Peace) is scheduled to be held in Bangladesh from April 04 to 12, 2021. The theme of the exercise is "Robust Peace Keeping Operations". The exercise is being held to commemorate the birth centenary of Bangladesh 'Father of the Nation' Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and mark glorious 50 years of liberation of the country.
- The Indian Army is also participating in this multinational exercise, along with a contingent of the Royal Bhutan Army, Sri Lankan Army and Bangladesh Army.
- The Indian contingent will comprise 30 personnel including Officers, JCOs and Jawans of a Battalion from The DOGRA Regiment.
- USA, UK, Turkey, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Singapore will also attend the exercise as Military observers.

NATIONAL

Vaishali is the first woman officer to Appointed in BRO

- Vaishali S Hiwase became the first woman officer to be appointed as officer commanding in the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) where she will be responsible for providing connectivity through an Indo-China border road.

Odisha government has started ambitious initiative of crop diversification

- Odisha government has started ambitious initiative of crop diversification in mega lift point (MLIP) ayacut areas of the State.
- The action plan for coming Khariff season towards this effect was discussed in a high level meeting held on digital mode under the chairmanship of chief secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra here in Lokseba Bhawan wherein agriculture secretary Suresh Kumar Vashishth outlined the issues for discussion.

Uttar Pradesh Govt. won "E-Panchayat Puraskar 2021"

- The Uttar Pradesh government won the "E-Panchayat Puraskar 2021", ranking first in Category I. It was followed by Assam and Chhattisgarh at the second position, while Odisha and Tamil Nadu stood third.
- Every year, the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj awards those states, which ensure maximum use of information technology to keep a tab on the work done by gram panchayats.

India's first 3d printed house at Madras

- India's first 3D printed house built by IIT-Madras startup Tvasta was inaugurated on the campus.
- The house, which has a built-up area of 600 square feet, has a bedroom, a hall and a kitchen. The entire house was designed using software and printed using concrete 3D printing technology.
- Using this technology, a new house can be built in five days against four or five months in

conventional mode. Further, the cost of the house is reduced by around 30% and life of the building can exceed 50 years.

Government Extended Deadline for making payment under 'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme till 30 June 2021

- The government has once again extended the deadline for making payment under the direct tax dispute settlement scheme 'Vivad Se Vishwas' by two months till June 30, 2021 to provide relief to the taxpayers facing hardships amid the pandemic. This is the fourth time that the deadline is being extended by the Ministry of Finance, since the launch of the scheme. The deadline was extended for the first time from March 31, 2020, to June 30, 2020, followed by December 31, 2020, and then again till March 31, 2021.
- The 'Vivad Se Vishwas' scheme was announced in the Union Budget 2020, as per which a taxpayer would be required to pay only the amount of the disputed taxes and will get a complete waiver of interest and penalty provided he pays by 31st March 2020.

Panchayati Raj Day: PM Modi Launched the distribution of e-property cards under the Extension of 'SVAMITVA scheme' Across India

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the distribution of e-property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme on National Panchayati Raj Day on April 24, 2021, through video conferencing. SVAMITVA stands for Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas. The launch marked the rollout of the implementation of the SVAMITVA scheme across the entire country. About 4.09 lakh property owners were given their e-property cards during the event, in more than 5 thousand villages.
- The Svamitva Scheme was launched by Prime Minister on 24 April 2020 as a Central Sector Scheme to promote a socio-economically empowered and self-reliant rural India.
- It was launched on pilot basis in the 6 states, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh.

19th India-French Naval Exercise "VARUNA" begins in the Arabian Sea

- The 19th edition of the Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise 'VARUNA-2021' conducted in the Arabian Sea from 25 to 27 April 2021. During the three day exercise, the units of both the navies will undertake high tempo-naval operations at sea, which will include advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises, intense fixed and rotary wing flying operations, tactical manoeuvres, surface and anti-air weapon firings, underway replenishment and other maritime security operations.
- The Indian Navy will participate with its guided-missile stealth destroyer INS Kolkata, guided-missile frigates INS Tarkash and INS Talwar, Fleet Support Ship INS Deepak, with Seaking 42B and Chetak integral helicopters, a Kalvari class submarine and P8I Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

DRDO to set up covid hospital in Ahmedabad

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said that another dedicated 1200 bed Covid hospital

will be set up at Gandhinagar in Gujarat. He made a visit to the 900 bed dedicated Covid hospital set up by DRDO and Gujarat Government at Gujarat University Convention and Exhibition Centre in Ahmedabad.

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said that the 1200 bed dedicated Covid hospital will be set up at Helipad ground in Gandhinagar. This hospital will have 600 ICU beds. It will be set up by DRDO in collaboration with Tata Trust. Mr. Shah said that Ahmedabad will also have Isolation centers for which Karnavati club, Rajpath Club, Ahmedabad District Cooperative Bank, Gujarat State Cooperative Bank and Umiya Pariwar have given their consent.

Chhattisgarh government announces to deduct one day salary of officers and employees

- The Chhattisgarh Government has announced that it will deduct one day salary of officers and employees in the month of April for contribution to the Chief Minister Relief Fund in order to help the needy people of the state affected by corona infection.
- Meanwhile, efforts are being made by the Chhattisgarh government to increase the number of beds in hospitals and to ensure continuous supply of medical oxygen as well as for the adequate deployment of doctors and para- medical staff in various Covid hospitals. Amidst surge in Covid cases, the Health Department of Chhattisgarh has made the posting of 296 new doctors who have completed their M.B.B.S to address shortage of doctors. These doctors have been posted in various government medical college hospitals, district hospitals as well as community and primary health centers of the state. These doctors have been instructed to join their respective hospitals within ten days.

PM Modi Participated in Leaders' Summit on Climate hosted by Joe Biden

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the "Leaders' Summit on Climate", hosted by the President of the U.S.A. Joe Biden. The two-day conference has been organised virtually, which coincides with the fifth anniversary of the opening of the Paris Agreement on climate change for signature.
- The theme of the summit: Our Collective Sprint to 2030.
- A total of 40 national leaders have been invited by Biden to attend this two-day virtual climate summit.
- The Summit is being held in the run-up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) that will take place in November 2021 in Glasgow.

Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021 held

- The opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021 was held in Boao, south China's Hainan Province. The theme of the conference – "A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation".
- The forum, now celebrating its 20th anniversary, has not only played a unique role in pooling consensus and putting forward valuable "Boao proposals," but also engaged countries in addressing global issues and promoting world development and prosperity.

Rekha Menon is the First Woman Chairperson of NASSCOM

- IT industry's apex body Nasscom on Thursday appointed Rekha M. Menon, chairperson and senior managing director at Accenture in India, as its chairperson for 2021-2022. With this, she becomes the first woman to take on the role of chairperson for Nasscom in its 30-year history.
- Menon, earlier the vice chairperson, succeeds U.B. Pravin Rao, chief operating officer, Infosys Ltd, who served as chairman of Nasscom for 2020-2021.

Indian Navy deployed DSRV

- The Indian Navy deployed a deep submergence rescue vessel to support the Indonesian Navy's hunt for a submarine that went missing with 53 people on board.
- They said the Indian DSRV is fitted with latest technology and that it has a side scan sonar for locating the position of submarines in distress at sea.

CAG GC Murmu has been chosen as an external auditor by OPCW

- Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, GC Murmu has been chosen as the external auditor by a prestigious intergovernmental organisation working for the elimination of chemical weapons.
- According to the External Affairs Ministry, the Hague-based Conference of State Parties of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) selected the CAG as its external auditor for a three-year term starting 2021.
- The appointment was made through an election process at the OPCW conference yesterday where India received overwhelming support ahead of others.

Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh launched Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme

- The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Yeduguri Sandinti Jagan Mohan Reddy released the first tranche of Rs 672 crores under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme for the year 2021-22. This reimbursed the fees for 10.88 lakh students. So far, a total of Rs 4, 879 crores have been disbursed under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme.
- The main objective of the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme is to provide scholarships to all the students who are not able to pay their fees because of their financial burden.

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) is the first party to declare name of electoral bonds donor

- The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) is the first party that has declared the name of the entity which made donations to it through electoral bonds. A declaration of a ₹1 crore donation was made in the party's 2019-2020 contribution report. According to the contribution report of the ruling party in Jharkhand, the donation was made by aluminium and copper manufacturing company Hindalco.
- The association said the most common and popular source of income for national and regional political parties in 2019-20 were donations through electoral bonds. This raises the question as to whether political parties are aware of the identity of the donors who have contributions through electoral bonds, as can be seen in this case.

(WSAI) has been established by the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) at Tehri Dam

- Water Sports and Adventure Institute (WSAI) has been established by the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) at Tehri Dam in Uttarakhand. The institute was inaugurated on by Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju. ITBP's Mountaineering and Skiing Institute at Auli will independently run this institution, which will impart training in aero, water and land-related sports and adventure activities.
- Training in kayaking, rowing, canoeing, water skiing, para-gliding, para-sailing, speed boating, kite surfing, jet skiing, etc, will also be provided at this institute. Apart from this, water rescue and life-saving courses will be conducted here. It has been targeted to train at least 200 youth in water sports at this institution every year.

Priyanka Mohite : first Indian woman to scale Mount Annapurna

- Priyanka Mohite from Satara in western Maharashtra has scaled Mount Annapurna, the tenth highest mountain peak in the world, became the first Indian woman climber to achieve the feat.
- Mount Annapurna is a massif in the Himalayas located in Nepal that includes one peak over 8,000 metres and is considered to be one of the toughest mountains to climb.

Punjab Planned to 'Har Ghar Jal' State by 2022

- Punjab State reiterated the commitment of the State to achieve the 'Har Ghar Jal' target by 2022 as planned. Punjab has 34.73 lakh rural household, out of which 25.88 lakh (74.5%) have tap water supply. In 2021-22, the State plans to provide 8.87 lakh tap connections, thereby providing tap connection to every rural household. So far, 4-districts, 29 blocks, 5,715 panchayats and 6,003 villages in Punjab have been declared 'Har Ghar Jal', which means every rural household has access to water through the tap.
- To ensure transparency and accountability, Punjab has set up a well-equipped digital 24x7 call centre with Interactive Voice Responsive System. This analog grievance redressal system was upgraded in December 2020. Last year, the redressal rate was 97.76%. The pending complaints daily monitoring is done by sending reminders to the Executive Engineer via SMS, What's App messages, e-mail and over the phone.

Gender Samvaad event launched by Ministry of Rural Development

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

DRDO to reopen its C-19 Hospital

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will reopen its Sardar Vallabhbhai

Patel Covid Hospital in Delhi Cantt today. The facility was shut in the first week of February after daily Covid-19 cases came down. The 1,000-bed DRDO medical facility got 250 additional ICU beds last November to provide treatment to patients.

- This took the total number of ICU beds at the hospital to 500. The hospital was built by DRDO in record time of 12 days with assistance from the armed forces, ministry of home affairs, ministry of health and family welfare and Tata Trust. The facility became operational in July last year.

RT-PCR test mandatory for kumbh returnees: State Government

- The Odisha government has made the RT-PCR test mandatory for people who had travelled to Haridwar for the Kumbh Mela earlier this month. It also said that all Kumbh Mela returnees will have to follow a 14-day quarantine period.
- Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena has shared the list of persons who had registered with the Uttarakhand government to participate in the event, with all district collectors and municipal commissioners and asked them to contact all these persons and find out their location and travel plans.

First ever online exhibition on Ramayana

- Tourism and Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel has inaugurated the first-ever online exhibition on Ramayana. The weblink for the online exhibition is www.nmvirtual.in/Virtual_Tour/Ramayan. Mr Patel addressed a webinar 'India's Heritage: Powering Tourism' on the occasion of World Heritage Day 2021 yesterday.
- The online exhibition showcases forty nine miniature paintings collections of National Museum, New Delhi from different art schools of India.

Railway to run "Oxygen Express" trains

- The Railways will run 'Oxygen Express' trains over the next few days to transport liquid medical oxygen and oxygen cylinders across the country.
- Amid spiralling coronavirus cases in the country, the demand for medical oxygen in the country has gone through the roof.
- Empty tankers will begin their journey from Kalamboli and Boisar railway stations in and near Mumbai on Monday to load liquid medical oxygen from Vizag, Jamshedpur, Rourkela and Bokaro.

Tap water connection by 2022 in Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh presented their Annual Action Plan (AAP) under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) today via video conferencing setting out the State's action plan to provide tap water connections to rural households in 2021-22 as well as the saturation plan, so that every rural home of the State gets tap water supply in a time-bound manner. Madhya Pradesh is likely to get about Rs 3,000 Crore Central fund in 2021-22. Considering this quantum jump of allocation of almost 2.5 times of previous year, the State has to make provision for matching State share and prepare a realistic expenditure plan for effective utilization funds.

- A month-long planning exercise is currently underway which involves two States/ UTs presenting their AAP daily to a committee chaired by Secretary, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti and members from different Central Ministries/ Departments and NITI Aayog. The committee jointly reviews the proposed Annual Action Plan (AAP) before finalizing the same. Thereafter, fund is released in tranches throughout the year and regular field visits, review meetings are held to ensure implementation of the AAP to achieve the goal of Jal Jeevan Mission.
- Madhya Pradesh has 1.23 Crore rural households, out of which 37.69 lakh (31%) have tap water supply in their homes. In 2020-21, Madhya Pradesh has provided 19.89 lakh tap water connections and has been one of the top performers in the country under Jal Jeevan Mission. In 2021-22, the State has planned for saturation of 7 districts and 22 lakh new tap water connections.

Manipur presented its annual Action Plan

- State of Manipur presented its Annual Action Plan under Jal Jeevan Mission today via video conferencing before the committee of the Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, with members from different Central Ministries/ Departments and NITI Aayog.
- Manipur has around 4.51 lakh rural households, out of which 2.27 lakh households have tap water supply, as on 31st March 2021. 1.96 lakh new tap water connections were provided in 2020-21 despite Covid-19 pandemic. The State has planned for 100% saturation by 2021-22 under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) by providing tap water connections to remaining 2.25 lakh households.

8th Indo-Kyrgyz Special Forces Exercise 'Khanjar' Flags off

- The 8th Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Special Forces Exercise "Khanjar" was inaugurated at the Special Forces Brigade of National Guards of the Kyrgyz Republic in Bishkek, the capital of the host Kyrgyzstan. Initiated first in 2011, the two-week-long special operations exercise focuses on high-altitude warfare, mountain warfare and counter-extremism exercises.
- The Indian contingent for the exercise and felicitated their role as a bridge in promoting the shared mountain and nomadic heritage of both nations. A ceremonial parade graced the occasion along with a display of equipment's and weapons and a visit to the training arena and barracks.

'Aahaar Kranti' mission launched by Health Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan

- Union Health Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan has launched Aahaar Kranti, a mission dedicated to spreading awareness about nutrition. It is designed to address the peculiar problem of hunger and diseases in abundance, being faced by India and the world. Studies show that India produces as much as two times the amount of calories it consumes.
- However, many in the country are still malnourished. The root cause of this strange phenomenon is a lack of nutritional awareness. Keeping this in mind, Aahaar Kranti has been launched with the motto of Uttam Aahaar- Uttam Vichaar or Good Diet-Good Cognition.

- The movement proposes to address the problem by working to rouse the people to the values and richness of India's traditional diet, to the healing powers of local fruits and vegetables and to the miracles of a balanced diet. Vijnana Bharati, Global Indian Scientists and Technocrats Forum, Vigyan Prasar, and Pravasi Bharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark have come together to launch this mission.

Government to set up oxygen plant under PM-CARES

- With hundreds of C-19 patients gasping for breath due to shortage of medical oxygen at hospitals across states, the central government on Thursday formulated a plan under which the PM-Cares Fund would be used to set up medical oxygen manufacturing units at 100 hospitals so that they become self-reliant.
- Medical oxygen is a critical component in the treatment of C-19 patients.
- The decision was taken at a meeting of the central 'Empowered Group-2' on C-19. During the meeting, the group took three key decisions to create short and long-term availability of medical oxygen in the country.

First woman mayor of Bathinda municipal corporation

- Raman Goyal was unanimously appointed as mayor of Bathinda city, Thursday. She is the first woman mayor to head the Bathinda Municipal Corporation. While Ashok Pradhan was appointed senior deputy mayor, Master Harmandar Singh Sidhu's name was unanimously agreed to for the post of deputy mayor of Bathinda city.
- Punjab Finance Minister Manpreet Badal said that new development projects would be undertaken for Bathinda city in coming days under the leadership of Raman Goyal.
- In the recently held civic polls, Congress had won 43 out of 50 wards in Bathinda Municipal Corporation.

"Online Grievance Management Portal" launched

- Union Minister for Communication & IT and Law & Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad launched the "Online Grievance Management Portal of National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)".
- NCSC Grievance Management portal would make it easier for Scheduled Castes population of our country to register their complaint from any part of the country.
- The portal shall enable them to file their application and other atrocity and services related grievances online and to get them addressed in a time bound manner.
- NCSC aims to streamline the grievance redressal specially of the Scheduled Caste population through this portal.
- The portal designed in collaboration with the Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG-N), a Centre of Excellence under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India will facilitate an end-to-end e-filing of complaints and grievances and their tracking.
- Finally, it is intended to make the hearing process work on similar lines as e-courts.
- This portal is linked to the Commission's website and one can file one's complaint upon

registering on it.

- The facility to upload documents and audio/video files is also available. This would supplement the physical submission of complaints and grievances.

Mental-Health Digital Platform MANAS Launched

- The Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India virtually launched the “MANAS” App to promote wellbeing across age groups.
- MANAS stands for Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System.
- MANAS is a comprehensive, scalable, and national digital wellbeing platform and an app developed to augment mental well-being of Indian citizens.
- The App integrates the health and wellness efforts of various government ministries, scientifically validated indigenous tools with gamified interfaces developed/researched by various national bodies and research institutions.
- It was initiated by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India.
- It was jointly executed by NIMHANS Bengaluru, AFMC Pune and C-DAC Bengaluru.
- The app must be integrated with the public health schemes like the National Health Mission, Poshan Abhiyan, e-Sanjeevani and others so that it is used widely.
- Catering to the overall wellbeing of people of all age groups, the initial version of MANAS focuses on promoting positive mental health in the age group of 15-35 years.

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Launched “e-SANTA”, an Electronic Marketplace For Aqua Farmers

- Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal has inaugurated e-SANTA, an electronic marketplace, to provide a platform for connecting aqua farmers and buyers. e-SANTA aims to raise income, lifestyle, self-reliance, quality levels, traceability, of aqua farmers.
- e-SANTA stands for Electronic Solution for Augmenting NaCSA farmers’ Trade-in Aquaculture.
- Here, the term National Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture (NaCSA) is an extension arm of the Marine Products Export Development Authority.
- It will act as an alternative marketing tool between farmers & buyers by eliminating middlemen.
- The platform will help the farmers to get a better price and the exporters to directly purchase quality products from the farmers and enhancing traceability.
- e-SANTA Portal can be accessed through the following link: <https://esanta.gov.in/>

NITI Aayog launched ‘Poshan Gyan’, a digital repository on health, nutrition

- NITI Aayog, in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University launched called “Poshan Gyan”, a national digital repository on health and nutrition. The website can be accessed through the following link: <https://poshangyan.niti.gov.in/>

- The unique feature of the repository is that it has a crowdsourcing feature that allows anyone to submit communication material for inclusion on the website, followed by a review by a designated committee.
- Poshan Gyan repository enables the search of communication materials on 14 thematic areas of health and nutrition across diverse languages, media types, target audiences and sources.
- Content for the repository has been sourced from the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare and Women and Child Development and developmental organizations.
- The website provides an intuitive interface that means multi-parametric search, multiple downloads at a point in time, easy sharing of materials via social media and easy viewing on any type of smartphone.
- The portal will have a dedicated “Theme of the Month” in line with MoHFW and MoWCD guidelines to promote key topics.

Defence Minister inaugurated IAF Commanders’ Conference 2021 in New Delhi

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated the First bi-annual Indian Air Force, IAF Commanders’ Conference 2021 at Air Headquarters Vayu Bhawan in New Delhi. The conference is attended by the Air Officers Commanding-in-Chief of all Commands of IAF, all Principal Staff Officers and all Director Generals posted at Air Headquarters.
- The conference of apex level leadership is aimed at addressing the issues of IAF’s operational capabilities in the times to come.
- A series of discussions would be conducted over a period of three days to address strategies and policies related to capabilities that would give IAF a significant edge over its adversaries.
- Various welfare and Human Resource measures to improve HR and administrative efficiency will also be discussed. The Conference provides a forum to the senior leadership of the IAF to discuss critical issues pertaining to Operations, Maintenance and Administration.

“To Honour” BR Ambedkar, Indian-American Congressman Introduces Resolution

- In the US House of Representatives, an Indian-American Congressman has introduced a resolution for a second consecutive year to honour Bhimrao Ambedkar, the architect of India’s Constitution on his 130th birth anniversary.
- Indian-American Democratic Congressman Ro Khanna said “Today, I’m reintroducing my resolution to honour B R Ambedkar, in the hopes that young leaders around the world will read his work and be inspired by his vision for equalitu.”

Maharashtra gets India’s first Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU)

- First Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) of India has arrived at H-Energy’s Jaigarh Terminal in the Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra, on the west coast of India. FSRU based LNG Terminals aim at providing the ability to enhance the pace of natural gas import capability in an environment-friendly and efficient manner”. The port is the first

deepwater, 24x7 operational private port in Maharashtra.

- Höegh Giant will deliver regasified LNG to the 56-km long Jaigarh-Dabhol natural gas pipeline, connecting the LNG terminal to the national gas grid. The facility will also deliver LNG through truck loading facilities for onshore distribution, the facility is also capable to reload LNG onto small-scale LNG vessels for bunkering services.

Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam issues India's first municipal green bonds

- Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam has announced successfully raising and listing India's first Green Municipal bond issue. GNN raised ₹150 crores at a cost of 8.1 per cent.
- Money will be used to clean up dirty water by setting up a tertiary water treatment plant and supply piped water through water meters to places like Sahibabad. Ghaziabad is debt-free and has maintained a revenue surplus position in the last few years, according to India Ratings.

Odisha Chief Minister has launched a 14-day "Mask Abhiyan"

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched a 14-day "Mask Abhiyan" as part of efforts to prevent the spread of coronavirus in view of rising cases and urged people to strictly follow the safety guidelines. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik sought their cooperation in turning the use of mask into a habit to tackle the current resurgence of the virus.
- Bringing an amendment to the Odisha Covid-19 Regulations under the Epidemic Diseases Act-1897.
- In order to ensure that the 14 days mask Abhiyan gives results, the state government yesterday enhanced the fines for the violators from 1,000 rupees to 2000 rupees. Meanwhile, the state's covid-19 active caseload mounted further to about 6000 with the detection of 1282 fresh cases yesterday, even as the state surpassed a milestone in administering more than 40 lakh vaccine doses as of date.

Supreme Court: Persons above Eighteen years are free to choose religion

- The Supreme Court ruled on April 9, 2021 that people above the age of Eighteen years are free to choose their religion. The ruling was delivered by an SC bench comprising Justices RF Nariman, BR Gavai and Hrishikesh Roy.
- The bench gave the direction while refusing to entertain a plea seeking directions to the Centre and states to control black magic and religious conversion.
- The bench came down heaving on the counsel of petitioner, senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayana, demanding, "What kind of writ petition is this under Article 32. We will impose a heavy cost on you. You argue on your own risk."

Union Minister for Sports & Youth Affairs inaugurated Khelo India State Centre of Excellence in Srinagar

- Union Minister for Sports & Youth Affairs, Kiren Rijiju inaugurated the Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE) for Rowing discipline at the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council Water Sports Academy at the Nehru Park in the world-famous Dal Lake in Srinagar. This is

one of the two KISCEs from Jammu & Kashmir. The other being the Maulana Azad Stadium for Fencing discipline in Jammu.

- There are currently 24 KISCEs across 23 States and Union Territories and each of them focuses on Olympics sports discipline. This is an ongoing endeavour to scale up existing centres from the States and Union Territories to the world standard level keeping in mind the big picture of getting India to excel at the Olympics.

Kerala's High Court adoption guidelines

- The Kerala High Court on 10 April 2021 held that a child born to a couple in a live-in relationship will be treated as a child born to a married couple for the purpose of the Juvenile Justice Act and Adoption Guidelines.
- Therefore for surrendering a child for adoption, live-in couples to be treated as married couples.

Centre Government to start construction ravi canal

- Minister of State for Prime Minister's Office Dr. Jitendra Singh on 10 Apr'21 laid the foundation stone for the work of 'construction of balance portion of Ravi Canal' of Shahpur Kandi Dam Project at Basantpur, Kathua, Jammu.
- The project has been inaugurated after a gap of 60 yrs since Indus water treaty came into being.
- The project aims to utilize full water of Ravi river in Indian territory.

Lieutenant Colonel Bharat Pannu Breaks two Guinness World Records

- Indian Army's Lieutenant Colonel, Bharat Pannu has earned two Guinness World Records for his fastest solo cycling feats from October 2020. The first record was created when Lt Col Pannu cycled from Leh to Manali (472 km distance) on October 10, 2020, in just 35 hours and 25 minutes.
- Lt Col Pannu created a second record when he cycled the 5,942-km-long 'Golden Quadrilateral' route, which connects Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, in 14 days, 23 hours and 52 minutes.

Tika Utsav/ Vaccine Festival: C-19 Vaccination Drive

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently appealed to the Chief Ministers of the States to organise "Tika Utsav". Tika Utsav is a vaccine festival. It is to be held between April 11, 2021, and April 14, 2021. The main objective of the festival is to vaccinate as many people as possible. It will also focus on zero wastage of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Currently, three states are receiving a maximum number of COVID-19 doses. They are Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.
- COVAXIN and COVISHIELD are the two major COVID-19 vaccines that are currently administered in India.
- So far, India has shipped 64 million doses of vaccines to 84 countries in the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia. The major recipient countries of the Indian COVID-19 vaccines are Mexico,

Canada, and Brazil.

- The GoI has planned to cover 250 million people included in the “high priority” category by July 2021 under its vaccination programme.

Union Health Minister launched Integrated Health Information Portal

- The Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Harsh Vardhan virtually launched the Integrated Health Information Platform- IHIP.
- During the launch, the minister stated that this day will always be remembered as it marks a milestone in the history of disease surveillance.
- He added that we have started a new chapter in public health trajectory. India has become the first country to adopt such an advanced disease surveillance system.
- While terming IHIP as the biggest online disease surveillance platform in the world, the Union Minister informed that it is in sync with the National Digital Health Mission. It is also fully compatible with the other digital information systems that are currently being used in India.

Centre has approved 28 projects in Uttarakhand

- The Centre has approved 28 highway projects worth Rs 1,210.17 crore in Uttarakhand, union Minister Nitin Gadkari said.
- These projects are for building 231.04 kms of highways.
- These include strengthening work of National Highway-309B on EPC (engineering, construction and procurement) mode in Uttarakhand under State Public Works Department (PWD) with a budget of Rs 48.19 crore.

Education Minister launched SARTHAQ initiative for implementation of National Education Policy

- Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched an initiative SARTHAQ which will help in the implementation of National Education Policy in the country.
- The students and teachers holistic advancement through quality education, SARTHAQ has been initiated as a part of the Amrit Mahotsav celebrations.
- The Education Minister said, it will pave the way for the children and youths to meet the diverse national and global challenges.
- It will also help them to imbibe 21st century skills, indian tradition, culture and value system as envisioned in National Education Policy.
- The implementation of SARTHAQ would benefit all stakeholders including 25 crore students, 15 lakh schools, 94 lakh teachers.

FM N. Sitharaman participated 103rd Development Committee Meeting of World Bank-IMF

- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the 103rd Meeting of the Development Committee Plenary, via video conferencing. During the meeting, she shared the measures taken to combat C-19 including social support measures for the poor and vulnerable, and relief measures for firms in statutory and regulatory compliance matters.

- World Bank Group (WBG) and International Monetary Fund Support for Debt Relief Under the Common Framework and Beyond;
- C-19 pandemic: World Bank Group Support for Fair and Affordable Access to Vaccines by Developing Countries;
- From C-19 Crisis Response to Resilient Recovery – Saving Lives and Livelihoods while Supporting Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development (GRID).

Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare launched Madhukranti portal

- The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar launched a portal 'Madhukranti' and Honey Corners on April 07, 2021, with the aim to bring an increase in income of farmers, employment generation and increase in exports. Madhukranti portal is an initiative of the National Bee Board (NBB). The portal is being developed for online registration to achieve traceability source of Honey and other beehive products on a digital platform.
- The portal will also check the source of adulteration and contamination in honey. It will have an end-to-end record to track the source of honey. Honey Corner is a specially designed space in National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) stores dedicated to the sale of honey.

CJI launched top court's AI-driven research portal 'SUPACE'

- The Supreme Court of India has launched its Artificial Intelligence portal "SUPACE" (Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Courts Efficiency). Through this portal, the SC intends to leverage machine learning to deal with the vast amounts of data received at the time of filing of cases.
- SC's Artificial Intelligence Committee:**
- Justice L Nageshwara Rao, who is also the chairman of the SC's Artificial Intelligence Committee, delivered the opening address during the virtual launch of SUPACE.
 - Chief Justice of India (CJI) SA Bobde was the first-ever chairman of the Artificial Intelligence Committee.
 - CJI Bobde first spoke of the use of AI to assist the Supreme Court soon after he took oath as the Chief Justice in 2019.

India completes arch of world's highest railway bridge in J&K

- The construction of the arch of the world's highest railway bridge that soars 359 metres above the bed of the Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir was completed. The 1.3-kilometre-long bridge aims to boost connectivity to the Kashmir Valley and it is being constructed at a cost of ₹ 1,486 crores as part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Link (USBRL) project.
- The iconic Chenab Bridge:-**
- The construction of the Chenab bridge was declared as a national project in 2002.
 - Indian Railways is constructing the iconic Arch Bridge on River Chenab as a part of the USBRL project to connect the Kashmir valley to the rest of the nation.

- This bridge is 1315m long.
- This is the highest Railway Bridge in the world being 359m above the river bed level.
- It will be 35 meters higher than the iconic Eiffel Tower in Paris (France).
- The overall weight of Arch is 10,619 MT.
- The most sophisticated 'Tekla' software used for structural detailing.
- Structural steel was suitable for -10°C to 40°C temperature.
- Bridge designed to bear earthquake forces of highest intensity zone-V in India.
- Bridge designed to withstand high wind speed up to 266 Km/Hour.

TRIFED launches "Sankalp se Siddhi"- Village and Digital Connect Drive

- Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (TRIFED) has launched Sankalp Se Siddhi - Village & Digital Connect Drive. It is a 100-day drive which was started on the 1st of April. The drive entails 150 teams visiting 10 villages each of which 10 in each region from TRIFED & State Implementation Agencies, visiting 10 villages each.
- The main aim of this drive is to activate the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras. Ministry of Tribal Affairs in a statement said that 100 villages in each region and 1500 villages in the country will be covered in the next 100 days.
- They will also identify tribal artisans and other groups and empanel them as suppliers so that they can have access to larger markets through the Tribes India network - both physical outlets and TribesIndia.com.
- It is expected that Sankalp Se Siddhi will aid in effecting a complete transformation of the tribal ecosystem across the country.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan approves National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2021

- Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan has approved National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2021. The policy aims to lower the high cost of treatment for rare diseases, with an increased focus on indigenous research & local production of medicines. The Policy also focuses on early screening and prevention through primary and secondary health care infrastructure such as Health and Wellness Centres and District Early Intervention Centres.
- A provision for financial support up to Rs.20 lakh under the Umbrella Scheme of Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi is proposed for treatment of those rare diseases that require a one-time treatment (diseases listed under Group 1 in the policy). Benefits to be extended to about 40% of the population eligible under PM Jan Arogya Yojana.

J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurates Tulip Festival

- In the Kashmir Valley, Tulip Festival in Srinagar was inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. Over 15 lakh flowers of more than 64 varieties are in full bloom on the foothills of the Zabarwan Mountains. The five-day-long Tulip Festival in Asia's largest tulip garden at the foothills of Zabarwan hills on the banks of world-famous Dal Lake in Srinagar.
- The Tulip Garden was opened for tourists and the general public on the 25th of March.
- Last year the Tulip Festival could not be held because of the unprecedented situation of COVID-19.

- However, this time, the Tulip Festival is being organized on a large scale to attract more and more tourists.
- The Tulip Festival, to be held from 3rd to 7th of April, will showcase Kashmiri folk music apart from a painting competition.

Rajasthan becomes the 1st state to provide free health insurance to all

- Rajasthan becomes the first state in the country where the state government is providing free health insurance facility to all the citizens of the state. This plan was announced by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot in the state budget of 2021-22. The State began the registration for its cashless 'mediclim' scheme Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme.
- Each family will get annual health insurance up to 5 lakhs.
- Registrations have started for the Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme from 1 April, while the scheme will start benefiting the residents after its implementation on May 1.
- In this health insurance cover, 1576 packages and procedures for the treatment of various diseases have been included.
- The cost of treatment related to OPD, examination, medicines and related package of 15 days after discharge will also be included in the free treatment before the patient is admitted to the hospital.

India's biggest floating solar power plant to be set up in Telangana

- The biggest floating solar power plant in India is to be set up at Ramagundam in Telangana. It is expected to be opened in May 2021. The cost of the project has been estimated as Rs 423 crores. The power plant will have 4.5 lakh photovoltaic panels.
- The solar power plant is being set up at the Ramagundam Thermal Power Plant reservoir.
- The solar power plant is to be set up in 450 acres of the reservoir.
- The project is commissioned by NTPC (National Thermal Power Corporation).
- NTPC aims to reduce its carbon footprints and increase its green energy production to 30% of its capacity through this solar power plant. The capacity of the solar power plant is 100 MW.

NPCI sets up subsidiary NPCI Bharat Billpay

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has announced the formation of its wholly-owned subsidiary firm – NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd. (NBBL). The new entity came into effect from April 1, 2021. The brand under the new entity – Bharat BillPay – offers various recurring payment services to customers, including bill payments for electricity, telecom, DTH, Gas, Education fees, water and municipal taxes, NETC FASTag recharge, Loan repayments, Insurance, Cable, Housing Society, Subscription Fees, Hospital, Credit card, Clubs and association, etc.
- Bharat BillPay is constantly creating innovative payment infrastructure for recurring payments across the country in order to provide safe and convenient experience to customers – thereby eliminating the need of going around to multiple biller touchpoints.

Odisha proposes a second Biosphere Reserve – Mahendragiri

- Biosphere Reserves are protected areas, for conserving Flora, Fauna and the natural habitat. India has 18 such Biosphere Reserves update to date. Recently, Odisha government proposed a second Biosphere Reserve in the state – Mahendragiri (The first biosphere of Odisha is Simlipal Reserve). If the move is accepted, our count of Biosphere Reserves increases to 19.
- Mahendragiri, a mountain in Gajapathi district of Odisha, acts as a transition between South India and The Himalayan mountains. This mountain lies in Eastern Ghats and stands tall with 1501 metres high. So, this grabs the rank – “ The 2nd highest peak of the state”.

India's biggest floating solar power plant to be set up at Ramagundam in Telangana

- India's biggest floating solar power plant with a capacity of 100 MW will be set up at Ramagundam in Telangana. The project expected to be opened in May, is being set up at Ramagundam thermal power plant reservoir. The solar project is commissioned by the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC). The project, which is estimated to cost around 423 crore rupees, will have 4.5 lakh photovoltaic panels.
- The solar panels will cover 450-acre area of the reservoir and can be expanded in the future. NTPC's efforts to set up floating solar power projects is aimed at reducing its carbon footprints and accelerate its green energy production to 30 per cent of its capacity.

IIT Delhi becomes first institute to cut 50% carbon footprint

- The Indian Institute of Technology has become the first Central Government-funded technical Institute to reduce its carbon footprint by more than 50 per cent. This was made possible by the recent bilateral 2MW power purchase contract made by IIT Delhi with a hydro power generator in Himachal Pradesh.
- “Open access provisions in Electricity Act 2003 made it possible to buy power from the generators of their choice through bilateral contracts or energy exchange, for large consumers of power like IIT Delhi, and we made use of these provisions by involving PTC India Limited as a trader to identify a source of ‘green’ power,” said IIT director V Ramgopal Rao.

TRIFED launches ‘Be the Brand Ambassador of Tribes India’ and ‘Be a Friend of Tribes India’ Contest

- Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation Ltd (TRIFED) under the Union tribal ministry has launched two interesting competitions, ‘Be the Brand Ambassador of Tribes India’ and ‘Be a Friend of Tribes India’ Contest.
- The competitions are being organized in association with MyGov.in, the citizen-government engagement platform.
- “These competitions have been launched with the sole objective of promoting tribal craft, culture and lifestyle.

Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launched "MyNEP2020" platform of NCTE Web Portal

- Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has launched the "MyNEP2020" Platform of National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Web Portal which will be operational from April 1 to May 15, 2021. The platform seeks to invite suggestions/inputs/membership from the stakeholders for preparing a draft for the development of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) and National Mission for Mentoring Program membership (NMM).
- This exercise of digital consultation envisages the participation of teachers, education professionals, academicians, and other stakeholders in preparing the documents on teacher policy for sustainable and positive change in the Teacher's Education Sector. For preparing the documents on the above two major recommendations of NEP 2020, NCTE will work in close consultation with individuals/organizations. The expert committee will extensively review the inputs collected during the consultation period and will finally formulate the drafts for public review.

West Central Railway becomes first fully electrified Indian Railways zone

- Indian Railways' West Central Railway zone gets fully electrified!, after CCRS Inspection and Commissioning of electrification of Kota – Chittaurgarh railway section (Srinagar – Jalindri) in the state of Rajasthan. West Central Railways has become the first fully electrified railway zone in the country. The zonal railway now boasts a 3012 Route Km electrified network.
- According to Railway Minister Piyush Goyal, trains passing through this railway section can now be operated at a faster speed. Electrification of this railway section will provide various benefits such as saving fuel, reduction in travel time, as well as environmental protection.

Gol declares 14th April, birthday of Dr B R Ambedkar as public holiday

- The central government has declared April 14, Dr BR Ambedkar's birthday a public holiday. Dr B R Ambedkar was the sculptor of the Indian Constitution and the country already celebrates his birthday as Ambedkar Jayanti every year. The government has announced that from this year 14th April will be declared as a public holiday. It will be Ambedkar's 130th birth anniversary on April 14, 2021.
- Babasaheb Ambedkar's original name is Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar.
- His father Ramji Sakpal was a Subedar in the army and his mother Bhimbai Kapal was a housewife.
- The family settled in Mumbai in 1897 and Babasaheb enrolled at Elphinstone High School. After matriculation, he took admission to Elphinstone College in 1907.
- He graduated from Bombay University in 1912 with a degree in Economics and Political Science. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a renowned social reformer and a Dalit icon, he spoke unequivocally against the inequality, injustice, and discrimination faced by the members of the Dalit community.
- Babasaheb Ambedkar died on December 6 in 1956. In 1990, he was posthumously awarded

the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.

Maharashtra: Amboli named as biodiversity heritage site

- The Maharashtra government has declared an area at Amboli in Western ghats in Sindhudurg district, where a rare freshwater fish species was discovered, as a biodiversity heritage site. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's son Tejas Thackeray, who is a wildlife researcher, and his team had discovered the new freshwater fish species – Schistura Hiranyakeshi" near Amboli in Sawantwadi tehsil of Sindhudurg district. The State government issued a notification declaring the area at Amboli as a biodiversity heritage site. Schistura is a small and colourful fish that lives in water and streams in an abundance of oxygen.
- Earlier, the State government had declared the Glory of Allapalli in Gadchiroli district, Landor Khori Park in Jalgaon, Ganesh Khind in Pune, myristica swamp vegetation in Sindhudurg district as biodiversity heritage sites. The discoveries of the freshwater fish species were published in the International Journal of Ichthyology in the October 2020 edition by Tejas Thackeray and co-authors.

Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam in Uttar Pradesh lists itself at BSE

- Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam listed itself at BSE and successfully raised Rs. 150 Crores by issuing Municipal Bond on Private Placement Basis using BSE BOND. This is the first-ever green bond issuance by any Municipal Corporation in the country. The money will be used for the construction of a tertiary sewage treatment plant at Indirapuram in Ghaziabad. The money will be used to fund the project partly which is worth Rs 240 crore. This treatment plant will enable the sewage water to be used for industries after treatment.
- Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam is the second Municipal Corporation to raise funds in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Earlier, Lucknow Municipal Corporation had listed itself at BSE.

4th batch of three Rafale fighter jets land in India

- The fourth batch of three Rafale fighter jets landed in India after flying non-stop from Istres Air Base France, in a further boost to the strike capability of the Indian Air Force (IAF). The Rafale fighter jets were provided mid-air refuelling by air force tankers of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- The three Rafale fighter aircraft which took off from France for India were scheduled to land at the Jamnagar airbase. The planes equipped with the Hammer missiles have enhanced their capability to carry out air-to-ground strikes like the one in Balakot.

Centre withdraws order cutting interest rates on small savings schemes

- The government has withdrawn its order slashing interest rates on small savings schemes, including National Savings Certificates (NSC) and Public Provident Fund (PPF), for the first quarter of 2021-22. Earlier on March 31, 2021, the Finance Ministry had announced a sharp cut in interest rates for small savings schemes by 50-110 basis points. Interest rates for small savings schemes are notified on a quarterly basis.

- However, the orders issued were withdrawn by the government on April 01, 2021. This marks the fourth consecutive quarter that the government has maintained the rates on such schemes that are effective from April 1 and remain in effect till June 30, 2021.

PAN-Aadhaar linking deadline extended to June 30

- The central government has extended the deadline for linking the Aadhaar number with the permanent account number (PAN) to June 30, 2021, in view of the difficulties arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic. The earlier deadline was March 31. The government had said those who miss the deadline will be liable to pay a penalty of up to Rs 1,000 and their PAN will become invalid.
- The date for issue of notice under Section 148 of Income Tax Act, 1961, the passing of consequential order for direction issued by the Dispute Resolution Panel (DRP) and processing of equalisation levy statements has also been extended to 30th April 2021. The government passed the Finance Bill 2021 in the Lok Sabha last week where it inserted a new section 234H under which a person shall be liable to pay a late fee of up to Rs 1,000 in case of non-linking of their PAN with Aadhaar.

AYUSH Ministry in collab with Vinoba Seva Pratishtan organizes 'Ayurveda Parav'

- In a bid to promote Ayurveda as the mainstream treatment for the prevalent lifestyle-related diseases, Vinoba Seva Pratishtan (VSP), in collaboration with the Ministry of AYUSH, has successfully organized a 3-day "Ayurveda Parav" in Bhubaneswar. This unique initiative aims to not only ensure greater acceptance of Ayurveda among the masses but also to popularize Ayurveda as the main line of treatment for the current lifestyle diseases.
- The Ministry of AYUSH provided full-fledged support to this programme. During this Parv, nearly 25 research papers were presented by experts and researchers. The initiative generated tremendous response as thousands of patients turned up and showed their trust towards Ayurveda medication. They did get their diagnosis and consequent medicine.

Govt further extends Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme to June 30, 2021

- The Central Government has extended the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS 3.0) by another three months till June 30, 2021, or till such time that an amount of Rs. 3 lakh crore is sanctioned under the Scheme. Additionally, the government has also introduced certain modifications in the ECLGS scheme to further contribute towards economic revival.

Modified rules:

- The limit of credit has been enhanced to 40 per cent of outstanding loans as of February 29, 2020. This limit was 20 per cent earlier.
- The scheme would now also cover borrowers with total credit outstanding up to Rs 500 crore, with overdues for 60 days or less on February 29 2020, as compared to 30 days overdue earlier.
- The tenor of loans granted under ECLGS 3.0 is 6 years with a moratorium period of 2 years on repayment of principal. In ECLGS 2.0, the tenor was five years with a 12-month

moratorium.

- Further, the scheme has also introduced providing an incentive to MLIs (member lending institutions) to enable the availability of additional funding facility to the eligible beneficiaries.
- The ECLGS was announced as part of the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Package of Central Government to provide fully guaranteed and collateral-free additional credit to MSMEs, business enterprises, individual loans for business purposes and MUDRA borrowers.

Education Minister inaugurates 'Anandam: The Center for Happiness' at IIM Jammu

- Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal has inaugurated "Anandam: The Center for Happiness" at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jammu virtually. The centre will help people overcome mental stress and help spread positivity and it will encourage and propagate holistic development for all the stakeholders at IIM Jammu. Lieutenant Governor, Jammu, and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha; Founder, Art of Living Foundation, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar virtually graced the occasion.
- The purpose of establishing 'Anandam' at IIM Jammu is to bring holistic well-being. Regular physical exercises at the Center will contribute to the wellness at the physical level for both the students and the faculty. Under the concept of 'Anandam: The Center for Happiness' will be divided into five broad categories, namely, Counselling, Holistic wellness, Elective courses on Happiness Development, Research and Leadership & Faculty Development.

SPORTS

ASBC Asian boxing championship 2021 will be held in Dubai

- In the wake of international travel restrictions to India, the Boxing Federation of India (BFI), in consultation with Asian Boxing Confederation (ASBC), has decided to conduct the upcoming 2021 edition of the ASBC Asian Elite Men and Women Boxing Championships in Dubai.
- The event will now be organised by BFI in association with UAE Boxing Federation.
- The prestigious tournament was earlier scheduled to take place between May 21 to 31 at Indira Gandhi Sports Complex in New Delhi. BFI had also received the NOC from the Sports Ministry to host the tournament and the preparations were in full swing.

Rafael Nadal wins 12th Barcelona Open title

- Rafael Nadal beat Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-4, 6-7, 7-5 to win his 12th Barcelona Open title. It was Nadal's 87th career title, and his 61st title on clay.
- This is the second tournament where Nadal has captured 12 or more titles. The 13-time Roland Garros champion will return to No. 2 in the FedEx ATP Rankings.

Manchester City won League Cup football tournament fourth time

- Manchester City won the League Cup for a record-equalling fourth time in succession with a deserved victory over a disappointing Tottenham Hotspur side at Wembley.
- City's victory equalled Liverpool's achievement in the early 1980s of winning the

competition four years in a row.

Tamil Nadu's, Arjun Kalyan became India's 68th Chess Grandmaster

- Tamil Nadu's, Arjun Kalyan became India's 68th Chess Grandmaster when he crossed the 2500 ELO mark after beating Dragan Kosic in the fifth round of GM Round Robin "Rujna Zore-3" in Serbia.
- Arjun is coached by IM Saravanan and Ukrainian GM Aleksandr Goloshchapov and began playing chess at the age of nine and got his FIDE rating a year later. Viswanathan Anand became the country's first Grandmaster, in 1988.

Stefanos Tsitsipas has won his first ATP Masters 1000 series

- Stefanos Tsitsipas has won his first ATP Masters 1000 series after a flawless performance against Andrey Rublev in Monte Carlo. The Greek star had lost his previous two finals at this level, with Rafael Nadal denying him in Toronto and Novak Djokovic beating him in Madrid.
- Rublev beat 11-time Monte Carlo champion Nadal in the quarter-finals. Rublev knocked out Roberto Bautista Agut, Rafael Nadal and Dan Evans en route to the final but could not find a way past Tsitsipas.

Max Verstappen Wins Emilia Romagna F1 Grand Prix 2021

- Max Verstappen (Red Bull – Netherlands) won the Emilia Romagna F1 Grand Prix 2021, in Imola, Italy. This win is his first victory of the season. The race was the second round of the 2021 Formula One World Championship.
- The seven-time Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) finished second, following a crash and sustaining damage involving Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas. Lando Norris (McLaren – Great Britain) took third place.

Asian Weightlifting Championships: India's Mirabai Chanu creates world record

- India's Mirabai Chanu set a new World Record in the women's 49kg Clean and Jerk with an impressive 119 kg lift at Asian Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent yesterday. The 26-year-old lifted 86kg in snatch and a world record of 119kg in clean and jerk for a total of 205kg which also won her the bronze medal at the event.
- The gold medal went to Hou Zhihui of China who created a new world record in snatch and total weight with an effort of 213kg while her compatriot Jiang Huihua clinched the silver, lifting 207kg in the gold level Olympic qualifier.

BCCI agrees to issue visas to Pakistan team

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has got the approval for visas for the Pakistan cricket team as well as the touring media for the upcoming T20 World Cup that is scheduled to begin in India in October this year. It was announced at BCCI's Apex Council meeting yesterday.
- The BCCI has informed the apex council that the Indian government has agreed to issue visas to the Pakistan cricketers and the touring media for the T20 World Cup.

- While the details are still being worked out, the apex council members were informed that the Board has received a nod from the government over the visas, even though a call on the fans will be taken by the ministry in due course. However, this wouldn't yet break the deadlock between the Indian and Pakistan cricket boards.
- The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ehsan Mani had earlier said that they are looking for visas for not just the players and the media but also for their fans. A failure on that count from the Indian board will push them into asking the International Cricket Council (ICC) to host the tournament in UAE.

Babar Azam becomes No. 1 ODI batsman

- Pakistan captain Babar Azam is now the No.1-ranked ODI batsman, ending India captain Virat Kohli's long reign at the top of the charts. Babar's match-winning 82-ball 94 in the third ODI against South Africa helped him gain 13 rating points to reach career-best 865 points.
- Azam made a total of 228 runs in Pakistan's famous series win against South Africa, including a century in the first match in Centurion. That helped him move ahead of Kohli - who has been No. 1 since displacing AB de Villiers in October 2017 - by a point, but he dropped to 852 after his score of 31 in the second ODI and remained at No. 2 by the time of the last weekly rankings update.

Kane Williamson awarded Sir Richard Hadlee medal

- New Zealand star cricketer Kane Williamson was recently awarded the Sir Richard Hadlee medal. It was his 4th Sir Richard Hadlee award in 6 years. He had a great test season. He scored 251 against West Indies followed by a century on the boxing day. Williamson's staggering performance against Pakistan helped New Zealand book a place in the ICC World Test Championship final. He captained the team to 17 wins out of 20 resulting in victory in all 7 series.
- On the other hand, the Women's team all-rounder Amelia Kerr was also honoured along with the upcoming star Devon Conway at the New Zealand Cricket Awards for the 2020-21 season. Meanwhile, Devon Conway was awarded the Men's Player of the year award in both ODIs and T20s.
- Whereas the 21-year old Fin Allen was honoured with the Super Smash player of the year award for his staggering strike rate of 193.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar has won the ICC Player of the Month award

- India seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar has won the ICC Player of the Month award for his superlative show in the recent limited over series against England in March. Bhuvneshwar became the third successive Indian recipient of the award since its inception early this year.
- The 31-year-old Indian took six wickets with an economy rate of 4.65 in the three ODIs while capturing four wickets with a fantastic economy rate of 6.38 in the five T20Is to emerge as the standout bowler on either side in the white ball series.

Tokyo Olympics 2021: Four Indian sailors qualify

- Four Indian sailors, in a historic first for the country, have qualified for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics. The pair of Ganapathy Chengappa, Varun Thakkar, and Vishnu Saravanan made the cut during an ongoing Asian Qualifiers in Oman on April 8, 2021.
- This was after Nethra Kumanan on April 7 became the first Indian woman sailor for qualifying for the Olympics in the laser radial event in Mussanah Open Championship. It is an Asian Olympic Qualifying event.
- It will also be the first time that India will be competing in three sailing events in the Olympics. So far, the country had competed in only one event in all the earlier Olympic games though two Indian sailors had represented the country on four occasions.

French Open 2021 tournament postponed due to C-19 pandemic

- The French Tennis Federation on April 08, 2021 announced that the 2021 Roland Garros tournament has been postponed by one week. The decision came in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and nationwide restrictions in France.
- The 2021 Roland Garros tournament, also called the French Open and the only 'clay-court' Grand Slam tournament, will now run from May 24 till June 13, 2021. The qualifying rounds will be conducted from May 24 to May 28, 2021, followed by the main draw starting from May 30 till June 13, 2021.

The Great Khali inducted in WWE Hall of Fame 2021

- The Great Khali has been inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame Class of 2021. The Great Khali went on to battle many of WWE's most legendary Superstars, including John Cena, Batista, Shawn Michaels and fellow 2021 Inductee Kane, whom he defeated to pick up his first win on The Grandest Stage of Them All, WrestleMania.
- Standing 7-foot-1 and tipping the scales at 347 pounds, Khali made his titanic presence felt from the moment he first entered the WWE Universe in 2006, standing toe-to-toe with the legendary Undertaker and bulldozing over The Deadman, a rare sight between the ropes. The official name of "The Great Khali" is Dalip Singh Rana.

Pakistan and Chad football federations suspended by FIFA

- FIFA has suspended the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) and Chadian Football Association (FTFA) with immediate effect due to claims of outside interference. The suspension will be lifted once the relevant government decisions have been repealed.
- A group of football officials led by Ashfaq Hussain, which was elected by the Supreme Court in 2018 to run the PFF but was not recognised by FIFA, took over the headquarters recently and seized control from the FIFA Normalisation Committee headed by Haroon Malik. The decision to suspend the PFF was prompted by the "hostile takeover" which constituted a serious violation of its statutes. Pakistan was also suspended by FIFA for third-party interference in 2017.
- The Chadian Ministry of Youth and Sports had stripped the country's FA of its powers on March 10 following concerns over the way it was being run and a breakdown in

communication. Last month the country was disqualified from the Africa Cup of Nations by the Confederation of African Football due to interference.

Hurkacz beats Sinner to win Miami Open

- Hubert Hurkacz of Poland won the biggest title of his career by beating 19-year-old Jannik Sinner of Italy 7-6 (4), 6-4 in the Miami Open final.
- Hurkacz became his country's first Masters 1000 champion. The world number 37 is the lowest-ranked player to win a Masters event since Tomas Berdych in Paris in 2005.

Tashkent To Host 2023 Men's Boxing World Championships

- The 2023 men's boxing World Championships will be held in Uzbekistan capital Tashkent, the International Boxing Association (AIBA) announced on Friday. AIBA President Umar Kremlev confirmed Tashkent as the host city during a visit to Uzbekistan. "I am happy to announce Uzbekistan, the country which has strong boxers and a champion's character.
- AIBA said a bid was presented by the Boxing Federation of Uzbekistan, which saw the organisation's Board voting in favour of its candidature.
- During his visit to Uzbekistan, Kremlev held a working meeting and a press conference with the chairman of the NOC Rustam Shaabdurakhmonov and the first deputy chairman of Boxing Federation of Uzbekistan Saken Polatov, where he discussed the development of boxing in Uzbekistan and central Asia and the first stages of preparation for the World Championships, the statement read.

Jio starts Call of Duty Mobile Aces Esports Challenge on JioGames platform

- Jio in partnership with an arm of mobile chip-maker Qualcomm announced the hosting of the online shooting game Call of Duty Mobile Aces Esports Challenge on the JioGames Esports platform.
- Call of Duty game, published by US based Activision Publishing, is a competitor of PUBG that is banned in India. Jio and Qualcomm CDMA Technologies Asia Pacific Pte (QCTAP) have started registration for the first e-contest of 'Call of Duty' in India with a prize pool of Rs 25 lakh.
- The tournament "Call of Duty Mobile Aces Esports Challenge" will be open for both Jio and non-Jio users, according to the joint statement.
- Qualcomm India president and vice president Rajen Vagadia said mobile gaming is one of the fastest growing segments in India and almost 90 per cent of the gamers in India are using their mobile as their primary device for gaming.

Aniyan Midhun wins gold at south Asian Wushu tourney

- Aniyan Midhun of Nattika won the gold at the South Asian Wushu Championship that concluded in Nepal on March 31. The 28-year-old youth represented the country in the 70-kg category in the championship. He is the first Wushu player from southern India to reach the Indian team.
- Midhun is a black belt in karate and he is also a national champion in wushu as well as

kickboxing. In fact, the 28-year-old was introduced to wushu when he was in the fifth standard and hasn't looked back since. He is currently training with veteran coach Kuldeep Handu who is an Arjuna Award winner and the Indian wushu head coach.

Lewis Hamilton won bahrain Grand Prix 2021

- Mercedes star Lewis Hamilton got his bid for an eighth world title off to a thrilling start with victory in the Bahrain Grand Prix 2021. Hamilton after his 96th career win.
- Max Verstappen (Red bull) and V Bottas (Mercedes) stand 2nd and 3rd Position Respectively.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

India retained its position as the third biggest military spender

- India has retained its position as the third biggest military spender in the world in 2020, according to new data titled 'SIPRI Military Expenditure Database' published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on April 26, 2021.
- As per the new report, the top five biggest spenders in 2020 were the United States (\$778 billion), China (\$252 billion), India (\$72.9 billion), Russia (\$61.7 billion) and the United Kingdom (\$59.2 billion) respectively.
- These five nations together accounted for 62 per cent of global military expenditure.

Indian Navy has joined the rescue operation for an Indonesian submarine

- The Indian Navy has joined the rescue operation for an Indonesian submarine and its 53-person crew that went missing more than 4 days ago.
- Indonesia had sought assistance from India after its 44-year-old submarine, KRI Nanggala-402, went missing while conducting a torpedo drill north of the island of Bali. The Navy's Deep-Submergence Rescue Vessel (DSVR) left from Visakhapatnam.

NASA successfully flew its tiny helicopter Ingenuity on Mars

- NASA successfully flew its tiny helicopter Ingenuity on Mars, the first powered flight on another planet and a feat a top engineer called "our Wright brothers' moment." Data and images from the autonomous flight were transmitted (278 million kilometres) back to Earth where they were received by NASA's array of ground antennas and processed more than three hours later.
- Ingenuity was on autopilot for its entire flight, out of sight, direct control, or contact with the men and women on Earth who had ordered it aloft—because radio signals take too long to travel between the planets for any human operator to intervene.

NASA Awards \$2.9 billion contract to SpaceX

- The United States space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has picked Elon Musk's SpaceX for its Artemis programme, to develop the first commercial lander and take the next two US astronauts to the moon. The total value of this contract is \$2.89 billion.

- SpaceX will develop a spacecraft 'SpaceX Starship' to land next to two US astronauts, including a women astronaut at the lunar south pole region, by 2024.
- NASA also aims to bring the first person of colour to the moon's surface as part of the Artemis programme. Between 1969 and 1972, the US brought 12 astronauts to the moon.

NASA to launch SpaceX Crew 2 on April 22

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is set to launch four astronauts to the International Space Station on World Earth Day (April 22). NASA is to launch the mission along with SpaceX. It is the second crewed operational flight of Crew Dragon Spacecraft.
- The mission will transport four scientists to the International Space Station. The astronauts to travel to the International Space Station are from NASA, JAXA and ESA. JAXA is the Japanese Space Agency and ESA is European Space Agency.
- Crew Dragon was the first space vehicle to launch humans from American soil in nine years. It was first launched in May 2020.
- It was funded through NASA's Commercial Crew Programme. It evolved from an earlier design called Dragon 1.

DRDO develops Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard naval ships

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed an Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard naval ships against missile attack. The development of Advanced Chaff Technology by the DRDO lab is another step towards Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- Chaff is a passive expendable electronic countermeasure technology used worldwide to protect naval ships from enemy's radar and Radio Frequency (RF) missile seekers. The importance of this development lies in the fact that a very less quantity of chaff material deployed in the air acts as a decoy to deflect the enemy's missiles for the safety of the ships.

Light weight Bullet Proof Jacket developed by DRDO lab

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has congratulated DRDO and DMSRDE Kanpur for developing a LightWeight Bullet Proof Jacket. India needs more such innovative product design and development to realize the dream of Atma Nirbhar Bharat.
- DMSRDE Kanpur, a DRDO laboratory has developed a LightWeight Bullet Proof Jacket weighing 9 kg meeting the qualitative requirements of the Indian Army. The Front Hard Armour Panel jacket was tested successfully at TBRL Chandigarh and met relevant BIS standards.

OBITUARY

Allahabad high court judge passed away due to C-19

- Justice Virendra Kumar Srivastava of the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court died of Covi-19 on Wednesday. He was 59.
- Srivastava, who had tested positive for coronavirus, was undergoing treatment at the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute (SGPGI) in Lucknow.

Eminent Indian educationist, popular columnist Manoj Das Passed Away

- Eminent Indian educationist, popular columnist and prolific author, who wrote in Odia and English, Manoj Das has passed away.
- The first book of Das was of poetry called 'Satavdira Artanada', in Odia, which was published when he was in high school. He was honoured with Padma Shri in 2001 and Padma Bhushan in 2020 for his contributions in the field of literature and education.

Renowned Gujarati poet Dadudan Gadhvi Passed Away

- Veteran Gujarati poet and folk singer Dadudan Pratapdan Gadhvi has passed away. He was 80 years old. He was also known as Kavi Dad.
- He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2021 for his contribution in literature and education. Besides, he had written songs for 15 Gujarati films.

Former MD of Maruti Suzuki, Jagdish Khattar Passed Away

- Jagdish Khattar, the former Managing Director of Maruti Suzuki, has passed away. He had served at Maruti Suzuki India Limited from 1993 to 2007. He is credited for establishing Maruti as India's largest car company.
- Khattar joined Maruti in July 1993 as Director, and was eventually elevated as Managing Director in 1999, first as government nominee, and then in May 2002, as Suzuki Motor Corporation nominee. After his retirement from Maruti in October 2007, Khattar launched an entrepreneurial venture named Carnation Auto.

Justice M Shantanagoudar passed away

- Supreme Court judge Justice Mohan M Shantanagoudar passed away. Justice Shantanagoudar was elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court on February 17, 2017. He would have remained in office till May 5, 2023.
- Shantanagoudar was born on May 5, 1958, in Karnataka and got himself enrolled as an advocate on September 5, 1980. He was appointed as an additional judge of the Karnataka High Court on May 12, 2003, and became a permanent judge in the court in September 2004. Later, Justice Shantanagoudar was transferred to the Kerala High Court, where he assumed charge as the acting chief justice on August 1, 2016. He became the chief justice of the Kerala High Court on September 22, 2016, before being elevated as an apex court judge.

Veteran Scientist Krishnamurthy Santhanam Passed away

- Indian nuclear scientist Krishnamurthy Santhanam, who played a noteworthy role in the 1998 nuclear tests at Pokhran, has passed away. He was deeply associated with Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA).
- Santhanam was the field director of Defence Research and Development Organization during the tests of Pokhran-II. He was awarded with the Padma Bhushan, the third-highest

civilian award, in 1999 by the Government of India.

Hindustani classical singer Pandit Rajan Mishra Passed Away

- Renowned Hindustani classical singer, from 'Banaras Gharana' of India, Pandit Rajan Mishra, has passed away. He was a vocalist in the khyal style of Indian classical singing.
- Mishra was awarded Padma Bhushan in the field of art in 2007. Pandit Rajan Mishra was also a recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, the Gandharwa National Award and the National Tansen Samman.

Justice Mohan M. Shantanagoudar passed away at 62

- He was born in 1958 and enrolled as an advocate in 1980 and was the ninth seniormost judge of the Supreme Court.
- Supreme Court judge Justice Mohan M. Shantanagoudar died at a private hospital in Gurugram on Sunday.
- He was 62. He was admitted to the Medanta Hospital on developing a lung complication and was shifted to the Intensive Care Unit. There is no official confirmation whether Justice Shantanagoudar's demise was related to C-19.

Hindustani classical singer Rajan Mishra passed away at 70

- Rajan Mishra, renowned classical singer and a Padma Bhushan awardee, passed away on April 25, 2021, at St. Stephen hospital in Delhi.
- He was 70 years old. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences, "His passing away is an irreparable loss to the art and music world."

Former SSB chief Arun Chaudhary passed away at 66

- Former Sashastra Seema Bal chief Arun Chaudhary has succumbed to coronavirus on Sunday. He was 66.
- A 1977-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Bihar cadre, Chaudhary served for nearly two decades in the Intelligence Bureau (IB) where he headed the Jammu and Kashmir desk.
- In his early service days, he served in various positions in his cadre state and also had a stint with the Central Industrial Security Force, where he headed its airport security unit.
- In December 2012, he was appointed director general of the SSB and retired from service on April 30, 2014.

Iconic composer duo of "Nadeem-Shravan" Fame Shravan Rathod Passed Away

- Veteran music composer Shravan Rathod of Nadeem-Shravan fame has passed away due to coronavirus complications. The iconic composer duo Nadeem-Shravan (Nadeem Saifi and Shravan Rathod), were among the most sought-after composers of the 90s.
- Together they composed some of the iconic hits for movies such as Aashiqui (1990), Saajan (1991), Hum Hain Rahi Pyar Ke (1993), Pardes (1997) and Raja Hindustani (1996), among others. The Nadeem-Shravan duo parted ways in the 2000s, however, they again reunited to

compose for David Dhawan-directed Do Knot Disturb in 2009.

Gujarati and Hindi Film Actor Amit Mistry Passed Away

- Popular Gujarati and Hindi film actor Amit Mistry, who was last seen in the Amazon Prime Video series “Bandish Bandits”, has passed away. The actor was a prominent face in the Gujarati theatre circuit.
- He was also known for his memorable performances in Bollywood films like Kya Kehna, Ek Chalis Ki Last Local, 99, Shor In The City, Yamla Pagla Deewana and A Gentleman as well as TV-like Tenali Rama, Ssshhh...Koi Hai, Maddam Sir and Shubh Mangal Savadhan, besides OTT shows.

President of the Republic of Chad, Idriss Deby Itno, has passed away

- The President of the Republic of Chad, Idriss Deby Itno, has passed away, following a confrontation with rebels after which he suffered wounds on the battlefield.
- He had ruled the central African nation for more than three decades and was even declared winner of the 2021 presidential election, paving the way for him to stay in power for six more years. Deby first won elections in 1996 and 2001. After this, he continued to win in 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021.

Veteran actor Kishore Nandlaskar passed away

- Veteran actor Kishore Nandlaskar, who was a popular face in both Marathi and Hindi films, has passed away due to C-19 complications. The actor made his debut with Marathi film in 1982 titled ‘Navare Sagle Gadhav’ and went to act in movies like ‘Bhavishyachi Aishi Taishi: The Prediction’, ‘Gaon Thor Pudhari Chor’ and ‘Jara Japun Kara’.
- In Hindi films, Nandlaskar is known for his roles in Khakee (2004), Vaastav: The Reality (1999), Singham (2011), Jis Desh Mein Ganga Rehta Hain (2000), Simmba (2018) and many more. He was last seen in the Mahesh Manjrekar web series ‘1962: The War In The Hills’.

Eminent Bengali poet Shankha Ghosh passed away

- Noted Bengali poet, Shankha Ghosh has passed away following C-19 complications. He was known by his pen name Kuntak.
- He was honoured with numerous awards for his contribution to Bengali literature, some of which includes: Padma Bhushan in 2011, the Jnanpith Award in 2016, and the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1977 for his book ‘Babarar Prarthana’, as well as Saraswati Samman and Rabindra Puraskar among other awards.

Qawwali singer Farid Sabri passed away on 58.

- Qawwali singer Farid Sabri of the renowned musical duo 'Sabri Brothers' from Rajasthan passed away on Wednesday morning at a hospital in Jaipur.
- He was reportedly admitted to the facility on Tuesday night due to sudden deterioration in his condition, as the singer was allegedly suffering from pneumonia for the past few days. Sabri was 58.

- His brother, singer Amin Sabri confirmed that Farid had not tested positive, but was suffering from lung infection and kidney ailments, besides being diabetic. Doctors have confirmed the same.
- The singer was cremated at the Miskin Shah Cemetery, after his body was taken to the Sabris' ancestral place of Mathura Walon ki Haveli in Jaipur.

American politician Walter Mondale Passed Away

- Former American politician, diplomat, and lawyer Walter Mondale, who served as the 42nd Vice President of the United States, has passed away recently.
- He served as Vice President from 1977 to 1981 under President Jimmy Carter. He also served as U.S. ambassador to Japan from 1993 to 1996 under Bill Clinton.

Former Reserve Bank of India Governor Maidavolu Narasimham passed away

- The former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Maidavolu Narasimham, has passed away recently. He was famously known as the “Father of Indian Banking Reforms”.
- He was the 13th Governor of RBI and served from May 2, 1977, to November 30, 1977. He was known for being the chair of two high-powered committees on banking and financial sector reforms.

Senior BJP leader Bachi Singh Rawat Passed Away

- The senior BJP leader and former Union Minister Bachi Singh Rawat has passed away. He was a four-time MP from the Almora-Pithoragarh constituency in Uttarakhand.
- He had served as the Union Minister of State for Science and Technology in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government.

Veteran Tamil actor and comedian Vivek passed away

- Renowned Tamil actor and comedian Vivek has passed away. He was launched by legendary filmmaker K Balachander in the late 1980s. He went on to become one of the most sought after comedy actors of Tamil cinema in the 1990s and retained a stronghold in the industry.
- The actor was awarded the Padma Shri in 2009 for his excellent work in Tamil cinema. He acted in over 200 movies. He was last seen in Dharala Prabhu, which was the Tamil remake of the Hindi film Vicky Donor.

Marathi filmmaker Sumitra Bhave passed away

- Acclaimed Marathi filmmaker, Sumitra Bhave has passed away. Sumitra Bhave was popular as a duo with filmmaker Sunil Sukthankar in Marathi cinema and Marathi theatre. She was known for her out-of-the-box content and also for the way she handled social issues in her films.
- The duo of Sumitra and Sunil together directed several popular films like Doghi, Dahavi Fa, Vastupurush, Devrai, Badha, Ek Cup Chya, Samhita, Astu, Kaasav, among others. They have won National Film Awards in Best Non-Feature Film on Family Welfare, Best Educational / Motivational / Instructional Film, Best Film on Other Social Issues, Best Feature Film

categories.

Kannada writer Ganjam Venkatasubbiah passed away

- Veteran Kannada writer Ganjam Venkatasubbiah, who also was a grammarian, editor, lexicographer and literary critic, has passed away. He was 107. He was commonly known as a walking encyclopedia of Kannada language and culture, in his literary circles.
- Professor G Venkatasubbaiah had compiled 12 dictionaries and had authored around 60 books. He received the Padma Shri in 2017 for his proficiency in Kannada literature, poetry, essays and translations. Apart from this, we were also a recipient of the Kannada Sahitya Akademi Award and the Pampa Award among others.

Former Indian Footballer Ahmed Hussain Passes Away

- Former India's International Football defender, Ahmed Hussain Lala has passed away due to C-19. He represented India in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, where India finished fourth. Besides, he was also part of the Indian team that won the gold medal in the 1951 Asian Games.
- Ahmed also took part in the 1958 Asian Games in Tokyo, Japan, in which India finished fourth. In Club Football, Ahmed played for Hyderabad City Police, Mohun Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting Club. In his career, he had won two Santosh Trophy, three Durand Cups and six Rovers Cups.

Former election commissioner G.V.G. Krishnamurthy passed away

- Former election commissioner, GVG Krishnamurthy passed away due to age-related ailments.
- An Indian Legal Service officer, Krishnamurthy became the election commissioner in October 1993 to September 1996.

Former CBI Chief Ranjit Sinha passed away

- Former Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director Ranjit Sinha has passed away. He was a 1974-batch IPS officer of the Bihar cadre, who served as CBI Director from 3 December 2012 to 2 December 2014.
- Prior to being appointed as CBI Director, Sinha had headed Director General of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) force, the Railway Protection Force and several other senior positions in the CBI in Patna and Delhi.

Renowned Radiologist Dr. Kakarla Subba Rao Passed Away

- Renowned radiologist, Dr Kakarla Subba Rao, who served as the first director of Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), Hyderabad, has passed away.
- Rao was conferred Padma Shri in 2000, by the Government of India for his contributions to the field of medicine. He was the founder president of the Telugu Association of North America (TANA), an umbrella organisation for Telugu speaking people in the United States.

Eminent Historian Yogesh Praveen passed away

- Eminent Historian and an expert on Awadh especially Lucknow Yogesh Praveen. Through his books and articles, he enabled the public to know about the rich heritage and culture of Avadh.
- He was awarded Padma Shri in 2019. The titles of his books like 'Dastan-e-Avadh', 'Tajdare-Avadh', 'Bahar-e-Avadh', 'Gulistan-e-Avadh', 'Doobta Avadh', 'Dastan-e-Lucknow' and 'Aapka Lucknow' tell a long-lasting affair he had with the city.

Hockey Player Balbir Singh Junior passed away

- Balbir Singh Junior, who was a member of the silver medal-winning 1958 Asian Games Indian hockey team passed away.
- In 1962, he joined the Army as an emergency commissioned officer. He played for the Services hockey team in the national tournaments at Delhi. Singh retired as a Major in 1984 and later settled in Chandigarh.

Legendary actor Satish Kaul passes away

- Legendary actor Satish Kaul, who had 300 Punjabi and Hindi films to his credit and played the role of Lord Indra in the TV show Mahabharat, passed away.
- The actor began his career in the early '70s, juggling between Hindi and Punjabi films. While his popular Bollywood films include Ram Lakhan, Pyaar Toh Hona Hi Tha and Auntie No 1 etc.

Renowned shooting coach Sanjay Chakravarty Passes away

- Legendary shooting coach Sanjay Chakravarty passed away due to C-19.
- The Dronacharya awardee had trained some of the finest Indian shooters including Abhinav Bindra, Gagan Narang, Anjali Bhagwat and Suma Shirur, Deepali Deshpande, Anuja Jung and Ayonika Paul.

Britain's Prince Philip passes away at the age of 99 years on April 9

- Britain's Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh passed away at the age of 99 years on April 9, 2021.
- The Buckingham Palace confirmed the same through a statement that read, "It is with deep sorrow that Her Majesty The Queen has announced the death of her beloved husband, His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh."

First female cricket commentator of India, Chandra Naidu passed away

- India's first female cricket commentator Chandra Naidu passed away. She was the daughter of the country's first Test captain CK Naidu.
- She had done her first commentary during a match between national champions Bombay (now Mumbai) and MCC in Indore in 1977. She had also penned a book titled 'CK Nayudu: A Daughter Remembers' on her late father, who was a distinguished cricketer.

Padma Shri awardee Fatima Rafiq Zakaria passed away

- Fatima Rafiq Zakaria, a Padma Shri awardee, renowned journalist, academician and chairman of Maulana Azad Educational Trust and Khairul Islam Trust Mumbai, passed away. She was awarded the Padma Shri in recognition of her work in education in 2006.
- Ms Zakaria, who had played an eminent role in the field of education, was also honoured with the Sarojini Naidu Integration Award for Journalism in 1983.

Gita Press president Radheshyam Khemka passes away

- The president of Gita Press, Radheshyam Khemka, passed away. He is credited for taking the Sanatan literature to the masses. Khemka for 38 years was the editor of the prominent 'Kalyan' magazine printed at the press.
- He last edited the magazine's April 2021 issue. Gita Press is the world's largest publisher of Hindu religious texts.

Former Union Minister and Gujarat MLA Digvijaysinh Zala passes away

- Former Union Environment Minister and an MLA from Wankaner in Gujarat, Digvijaysinh Zala has passed away.
- The veteran Congress leader became the first Environment Minister of India under the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi from 1982 to 1984.

Malayalam screenwriter P. Balachandran passes away

- Malayalam screenwriter, filmmaker, dramatist and actor, P. Balachandran has passed away. He is best known for the play Paavam Usman for which he won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award and Kerala Professional Nataka Award in the year 1989.
- Balachandran has scripted many films including Ulladakkam (1991), Pavithram (1994), Agnidevan (1995), Punaradhivasam (2000), and Kammatti Paadam (2016). His directorial debut is Ivan Megharoopan (2012). He has also acted in a few films, the most notable being Trivandrum Lodge (2012).

Veteran film and TV actress Shashikala passes away

- Veteran film and TV actress Shashikala Om Prakash Saigal passed away. She was more popularly known by her first name, Shashikala has famously appeared as various supporting characters in over 100 films.
- Shashikala was honoured with the prestigious Padma Shri by the Indian government for her unparalleled contribution to the world of cinema and arts in 2007. She was also conferred with the coveted Lifetime Achievement Award at the V. Shantaram Awards in 2009. Apart from this, Shashikala bagged two Filmfare awards for her work in Aarti and Gumrah.

Samajwadi Party founder member Bhagwati Singh passes away

- Founder member of the Samajwadi Party and former UP minister Bhagwati Singh passed away. He was 89-year-old.
- The last rites of Singh will not be done as he had pledged to donate his body to the King

George Medical University.

Beloved children's author of US, Beverly Cleary passes away

- Beloved children's author of US, Beverly Cleary passed away. She was named a Living Legend in 2000 by the Library of Congress. In 2003, she was chosen as one of the winners of the National Medal of Arts.
- The author whose memories of her Oregon childhood were shared with millions through the likes of Ramona and Beezus Quimby and Henry Huggins.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Ravindra Jadeja has appointed ASICS brand ambassador

- Japanese Sportswear brand ASICS announced that it has appointed Ravindra Jadeja, the all-rounder of the Indian cricket team and Chennai Super Kings as its brand ambassador. The company, which focuses on sporting gear for the running category.
- ASICS has been working with young and fresh athletic talent across various genres of sports. In India, ASICS is promoted by actor Tiger Shroff. In Asia, ASICS currently has over 55 stores across India, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

Arun Raste has appointed new MD & CEO of NCDEX

- Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has approved to the appointment of Arun Raste as MD and CEO of National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX) for a period of five years.
- Raste is currently associated with the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) as an Executive Director and prior to NDDB, he has worked with organisations like IDFC First Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, NABARD, ACC Cement, and a non-profit NGO IRFT.

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw joins the board of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

- Biocon Ltd has announced that its Executive Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has been appointed to the Board of Trustees of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK), a leader in cancer treatment and research, based in New York, US. She will serve for a term of three years.
- Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw is among the 52 members on the board and will serve for a term of three years with effect from April 14, 2021 and she is the first woman of Indian nationality to be appointed for this prestigious role.

T V Soma Nathan new finance secretary

- Expenditure Secretary TV Somanathan has been designated as the Finance Secretary.
- He is a 1987-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved designating Mr Somanathan, Secretary, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance as the Finance Secretary.

Amit Banerjee becomes CMD, BEML

- At a Public Enterprise Selection Board meeting that was held on April 26, 2021, Amit Banerjee was selected to be posted as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD), Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML). Presently, he is serving as Director (Rail & Metro), BEML Limited.
- Banerjee is a graduate in Mechanical Engineering from IIT (BHU), Varanasi. He had joined BEML as an assistant engineer in 1984.

Justice N. V. Ramana takes oath as 48th Chief Justice of India

- Justice Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana was sworn in as the 48th Chief Justice of India. Justice Ramana's will hold the post for sixteen months, until August 26, 2022.
- Justice Ramana takes over at a time when the judiciary is going back to a virtual mode, due to the second wave of C-19, and is entrusted with ensuring un-interrupted access to justice. As Chairperson of the National Legal Services Authority, Justice Ramana led efforts to ensure training to lawyers and litigants to adapt to e-courts during the pandemic.

RBI approved Atanu Chakraborty as HDFC Bank's part-time chairman

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the appointment of former Economic Affairs Secretary, Atanu Chakraborty, as the part-time chairman and additional independent director of the private sector lender HDFC Bank. He retired as Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs in April 2020. Prior to that, he served as Secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM).
- Chakraborty, a 1985 batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, has been appointed for a period of three years with effect from May 5, 2021 or the date of his taking charge, whichever is later.

Chithra Thomas appointed HR head at Tesla India

- Tesla has appointed its new country HR leader, Chithra Thomas. With 18 years of experience in HR backing her, Thomas has moved from Reliance Retail where she was the VP-HR, handling the HR operations for AJIO, an e-commerce initiative of Reliance Retail.
- At Reliance Retail, she led a team of 90 members and looked after total rewards, talent acquisition and designing of learning and development initiatives. She also handled the core HR operations for 25,000 employees.
- After completing an MBA in HR, Thomas started her career with HPE India and worked with them for six years.

Revolut names Paroma Chatterjee as India CEO

- UK-based fintech company Revolut, which was valued at \$5.5 billion last year, has named Paroma Chatterjee as its CEO in India as it eyes an expansion in the country this year.
- Chatterjee was previously Lendingkart's Chief Business Officer. She has also held senior executive roles at Airtel Money, Flipkart and Via.com.

Puma ropes two cricketers as brand ambassadors

- Global sportswear brand Puma has signed long-term endorsement deals with cricketers Washington Sundar and Devdutt Padikkal. Puma India, which recently announced its partnership with Royal Challengers Bangalore, has been consistently investing in India's sports ecosystem.
- The duo will be joining the company's roster of brand ambassadors that include Indian captain Virat Kohli; wicketkeeper-batsman KL Rahul; women's national cricketer, Sushma Verma and veteran cricketer Yuvraj Singh.

Murali Natarajan re-appointed as DCB Bank MD and CEO

- Private sector lender, DCB Bank has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India for the re-appointment of Murali M. Natrajan as the Managing Director & CEO, for a further period of one year from April 29, 2021.
- He was appointed as MD and CEO of DCB Bank in May 2009. Prior to joining DCB, Natrajan has worked with foreign banks Standard Chartered & Citibank.

Siddharth Longjam take over as the National Anti-Doping Agency's Director-General

- IAS officer, Siddharth Singh Longjam will take over as the National Anti-Doping Agency's Director-General. Longjam is currently serving as joint secretary in the sports ministry and is also the CEO of the currently suspended National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL).
- He will replace Navin Agarwal who listed the creation of Athletes Biological Passport (ABP) for around 60 elite Indian sportspersons as one of the highlights of his tenure.

Poonam Gupta the new director-general of NCAER

- Poonam Gupta will be the new director-general of the policy think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). Gupta will succeed the current head of the think tank, Shekhar Shah, to become the first woman to hold the post. Currently, Gupta is the lead economist at the World Bank in Washington DC.
- Prior to joining the World Bank in 2013, she was the Reserve Bank of India Chair Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy and a professor of macroeconomics at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).

Punjab appoints Sonu Sood as state's C-19 vaccination ambassador

- Bollywood actor Sonu Sood has been made the brand ambassador for Punjab's anti-coronavirus vaccination programme. During the coronavirus-induced lockdown last year, the actor had helped migrants reach their home states.
- Sood catapulted to the national spotlight for feeding thousands of underprivileged people amid the C-19 pandemic. During his meeting with Punjab Chief Minister, the actor presented his book 'I am no Messiah', which he said captures the experiences of his journey from Moga to Mumbai.

Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra named as next CEC of India

- The incumbent Election Commissioner (EC) Sushil Chandra has been named to become the next Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India. He will assume charge with effect from April 13, 2021. He will replace incumbent CEC, Sunil Arora, who will retire on April 12, 2021.
- The Election Commission of India consists of three members, namely Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners. The two ECs are Rajiv Kumar and Sushil Chandra.

Ouhoumoudou Mahamadou as New Prime Minister of Niger

- Niger President Mohamed Bazoum appointed Ouhoumoudou Mahamadou to head his new cabinet as the country's new prime minister.
- He was previously served as a minister in charge of the finance and mining portfolios. He was the chief of staff to former President Mahamadou Issoufou between 2015 and 2021. He was sworn as Niger's first democratic transition of power since independence in 1960.

Government appoint S. Ramann as SIDBI CMD

- The government has appointed S Ramann as Chairman and Managing Director of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). Ramann, a 1991-batch Indian Audit & Accounts Service officer, is currently the CEO of National E-Governance Services Ltd, India's first Information Utility.
- The appointment is for a period of three years from the date of his assuming the charge or until further orders. Banks Board Bureau, the headhunter for state-owned banks and financial institutions, had recommended his name for the post.

Justice N V Ramana to assume charge as next CJI

- The senior-most Supreme Court judge Justice Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana has been appointed as the next Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- Justice Ramana would succeed incumbent CJI Sharad Arvind Bobde to take over as the 48th CJI. He would assume charge of the office from April 24, 2021, till August 26, 2022.

Cabinet Appoints Tarun Bajaj as new Revenue Secretary

- The Central Government has approved the appointment of Tarun Bajaj as the new Revenue Secretary under the Ministry of Finance.
- Prior to this, Bajaj, a 1988 batch Haryana-cadre IAS officer, was serving as the Economic Affairs Secretary since April 30, 2020. The cabinet has also approved the appointment of Ajay Seth, a 1987 batch Karnataka-cadre IAS officer, as new Economic Affairs Secretary in place of Bajaj.

Chintan Vaishnav appointed as Mission Director of Atal Innovation Mission

- Noted socio-technologist, Dr Chintan Vaishnav has been appointed the mission director of Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), the government's flagship initiative under NITI Aayog. Vaishnav will take over from Ramanathan Ramanan later this month. Ramanan has been

leading AIM as its first mission director since June 2017. Vaishnav is currently at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), US. He holds a PhD in technology, management, and policy from MIT.

- AIM's mission is to create and promote a vibrant ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the country. Over the past four years, since its inception, AIM's various initiatives have achieved notable successes. So far, AIM has established 72,59 Atal Tinkering Labs in schools across 650 districts, providing over 3.5 million students access to emerging technologies.

Shabir Khandwawala appointed new BCCI ACU chief

- Shabir Hussein Shekhadam Khandwawala, who has served as the Gujarat Director General of Police (DGP) before, is the new BCCI Anti-Corruption Unit chief.
- The 70-year-old, a 1973 batch IPS officer, takes over from Ajit Singh whose tenure ended on March 31. After retiring as Gujarat DGP in late 2010, Khandwawala worked with the Essar Group as an advisor and was also part of the central government's Lokpal Search Committee.

Digit Insurance roped Virat Kohli as brand ambassador

- Digit Insurance has roped in cricketer Virat Kohli as its brand ambassador. Kohli has also invested in Digit Insurance in the past. Digit Insurance, a general insurance company that became the first unicorn of 2021 with a valuation of \$1.9B.
- With this association, the company aims to carry the message of 'making insurance simple' through the cricketer. Digit was able to get the Indian Men's Cricket Team Captain to invest in the company before he planned to become the face for the brand.

RBI deputy governor BP Kanungo retires

- BP Kanungo has stepped down from the post of the deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India after his term ended on 2 April, cutting short all expectations of an extension of his tenure.
- He was appointed deputy governor in 2017 for three years. His term was extended by one more year in 2020. The other deputy governors of the RBI are Rajeshwar Rao, M.K. Jain and Michael Patra.

Adil Zainulbhai appointed chairman of Capacity Building Commission

- Former Quality Council of India (QCI) chief Adil Zainulbhai has appointed chairman of Capacity Building Commission. The government has approved a commission under National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB), also known as 'Mission Karmayogi', to train civil servants at all levels.
- The approved Capacity Building Commission will coordinate with and supervise all the government offices, training institutes to monitor and evaluate the implementation of plans and create shared resources. The Commission will comprise of a Chairperson and two Members.

Mallika Srinivasan appointed chairperson of PESB

- Chairman and Managing Director of Tractors and Farm Equipment (TAFE) Limited, Mallika Srinivasan has been appointed as the chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB), an order issued by the personnel ministry. This is for the first time that a private sector specialist has been appointed as the head of the PESB, responsible for the appointment of top management posts in the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Srinivasan as the chairperson of PESB for a period of three years from the date of assumption of charge, or until the attainment of the age of 65 years.

Urjit Patel appointed as additional director of Britannia

- Former Reserve Bank of India Governor Dr Urjit Patel has been appointed as Additional Director of Britannia Industries with effect from 31st March 2021 for the tenure of 5 years. The company has announced that its board of directors has approved the appointment.
- The Board of Directors of the company at their meeting held 31 March 2021, approved the appointment of Dr Urjit Patel, as an additional director of the company in the category of non-executive and independent director with effect from 31 March 2021 for a term of 5 years i.e., up to 30th March 2026, subject to the approval of the shareholders of the company.

Subhash Kumar takes additional charge as CMD of ONGC

- Subhash Kumar has assumed the additional charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on April 01, 2021.
- He is serving as Director (Finance) at ONGC. Kumar succeeds incumbent CMD, Shashi Shanker, who superannuated on March 31, 2021.

Mukhmeet S. Bhatia takes over as Director General of ESIC

- Senior IAS officer, Mukhmeet S. Bhatia took over the charge of Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) on April 04, 2021. He is a 1990 IAS Officer of the Jharkhand cadre. Earlier, he has worked as the Additional Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.
- ESIC is a Statutory and an Autonomous Body under the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Ayushman Bharat Diwas: April 30

- Ayushman Bharat Diwas is celebrated on April 30 every year in India. The Ayushman Bharat Diwas is celebrated to achieve twin missions. They are to promote health and wellness to the poor and also to provide insurance benefits to them. The day aims to promote affordable medical facilities in remote areas of the country based on the Socio-Economic Caste Census database. It will also promote health and wellness and provide insurance benefits to the poor.

- The Scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2018.
- According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Ayushman Bharat Scheme has so far operationalised 75,532 Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre. It has fixed a target of 1.5 lakh Health and Wellness Centre by 2022.

International Jazz Day: 30 April

- The International Jazz Day is celebrated on 30 April every year to highlight the importance of jazz and its diplomatic role in uniting people in all corners of the globe. The 2021 celebration marks the 10th Anniversary of International Jazz Day. The day was created on the idea of jazz pianist and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Herbie Hancock.
- The musical form of Jazz was developed by African Americans. It was influenced by both European harmonic structure and African rhythms. It originated in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

International Dance Day 29 April 2021

- The International Dance Day is observed globally on 29 April every year. The day celebrates the value and importance of the dance and encourages participation and education in this art form through events and festivals. The day 29 April has been chosen as it marks the birth anniversary of Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810), who is known as the creator of modern ballet.
- The theme of International Dance Day 2021: 'Purpose of dance'.
- The day was created in 1982, by the Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), the main partner for the performing arts of UNESCO.

Workers' Memorial (International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers) Day: 28 April

- The Workers' Memorial Day, also known as International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers occurs every year on 28 April. The day has been organized worldwide by the International Trade Union Confederation since 1996.
- Theme 2021: 'Health and Safety is a fundamental workers' right.'
- Its purpose is to remember workers killed in incidents at work or by diseases caused by work and honour the victims of occupational accidents and diseases by organizing worldwide mobilizations and awareness campaigns on this date.

World Day for Safety and Health at Work observed every year on 28 April

- World Day for Safety and Health at Work is observed globally on 28 April every year. This day is observed to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally and raise awareness to ensure health and safety at the workplace.
- The theme for 2021 is "Anticipate, prepare and respond to crises – Invest Now in Resilient Occupational Safety and Health Systems".
- The World Day for Safety and Health at Work is an annual international campaign to promote safe, healthy and decent work. It is persisted 28 April and has been observed by

the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 2003.

International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day is observed every year on April 26

- The International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day is observed every year on April 26 to raise awareness of the consequences of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster and the risks of nuclear energy in general.
- The United Nations (UN) proclaimed the day on April 26, 2016, that marked the 30th anniversary of the 1986 nuclear disaster. On this day in 1986, a reactor exploded at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine with devastating consequences.

World Intellectual Property Day: 26 April 2021

- World Intellectual Property Day is observed globally on April 26 every year. It was established by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2000 to “raise awareness of how patents, copyright, trademarks and designs impact on daily life” and “to celebrate creativity and the contribution made by creators and innovators to the development of societies across the world”.
- Theme 2021: ‘Intellectual property and small businesses: Taking big ideas to market’.
- WIPO proclaimed, 26 April was chosen as the date for World Intellectual Property Day because it coincides with the date on which the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization entered into force in 1970.

International Delegate’s Day: 25 April 2021

- International Delegate’s Day observed globally on 25 April every year. This day is observed to raise awareness of the role of the representatives and delegates of the Member States to the United Nations. International Delegate’s Day marks the anniversary of the first day of the San Francisco Conference which is also known as the United Nations Conference on International Organization.
- On 25 April 1945, delegates from 50 countries came together for the first time in San Francisco. The conference happened after the devastation of the second world war. The delegates aimed to set up an organization that would restore world peace and imposes rules on the post-war world order. On 2 April 2019, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 25 April as International Delegate’s Day.

World Malaria Day (WMD) is observed globally on 25 April each year

- The World Malaria Day (WMD) is observed globally on 25 April each year to recognize the efforts of the people worldwide to control malaria. The Day was established in May 2007 at the 60th session of the World Health Assembly, WHO’s the decision-making body. The theme of World Malaria Day 2021 is ‘Reaching the zero malaria target’.
- World Malaria Day was developed from Africa Malaria Day which was first held in 2008. It is basically an occasion that had been observed since 2001 by African governments. They worked towards the progress goal which aimed toward controlling malaria and reduces its mortality in African countries.

World Day for Laboratory Animals is observed every year on 24 April

- The World Day For Animals In Laboratories (WDAIL)(World Lab Animal Day or World Day for Laboratory Animals), is observed every year on 24 April. The day was instituted in 1979 by the National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS), as an “international day of commemoration” for animals in laboratories.
- WDAIL aims to end the suffering of animals in laboratories around the world and promote their replacement with advanced scientific non-animal techniques. Apart from this, the “World Week for Animals In Laboratories” (Lab Animal Week) is celebrated from April 20 to 26.

World Veterinary Day is observed on the Fourth Saturday of April every year

- The World Veterinary Day is observed on the Fourth Saturday of April every year. In 2021, the day falls on April 24, 2021.
- The theme of the 2021 World Veterinary Day is ‘Veterinarian response to the COVID-19 crisis.’ The day was created by the World Veterinary Association (WVA) in 2000 to celebrate the contributions of veterinarians to the health of animals and society.

National Panchayati Raj Day observed every year on 24 April

- Nation celebrates National Panchayati Raj Day on 24 April every year. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj organizes the National Panchayati Raj day or the National Local Self Government Day. India celebrates the first National Panchayati Raj Day or the National Local Government Day on April 2010.
- 24th April 1993 marks a defining moment in the history of decentralization of power to the grassroots, with the institutionalization of Panchayati Raj, through the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 which came into force with effect from that day. Ministry of Panchayati Raj commemorates the 24th April of every year as the National Panchayati Raj Day(NPRD), as the 73rd Constitutional Amendment came into force on this date. Rajasthan was the first state that carried the Panchayati Raj System in 1959 during the times of late Prime Minister Jawarharlal Nehru.

UN English Language Day & UN Spanish Language Day : 23 April

- The UN English Language Day and UN Spanish Language Day is observed annually on 23 April. For English, 23 April has been chosen to mark both the birthday and date of death of William Shakespeare. For the Spanish Language, the Day was chosen because the day is also observed as Hispanic Day in Spain, meaning the Spanish speaking world.
- They are one of the six official languages used by the United Nations throughout the Organization. These are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.
- Each language has been assigned a day of celebration by the UN’s Department of Public Information in 2010 to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six official languages throughout the Organization.

World Book and Copyright Day organized on April 23

- The World Book and Copyright Day (also known as 'International Day of the Book' and 'World Book Day'), is an annual event organized on April 23 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to promote reading, publishing, and copyright.
- April 23 is chosen because it marks the birth and death of several prominent authors. For instance, William Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes, and Josep Pla died on April 23 and Manuel Mejia Vallejo and Maurice Druon were born on April 23.

International Mother Earth Day observed globally on 22 April

- Earth Day (International Mother Earth Day) is observed globally on 22 April every year. The Day will be celebrated all over the world to spread awareness for Earth's wellbeing and to encourage people to support environmental protection. World Earth Day 2021 will mark the 51st Anniversary of the day since it started being observed in 1970. Earth Day was renamed officially by the UN in 2009 as International Mother Earth Day.
- The theme of 2021 International Mother Earth Day is Restore Our Earth.

International Girls in ICT Day is observed on 22nd April 2021

- International Girls in ICT Day marked annually on the fourth Thursday of April. This year International Girls in ICT Day is observed on 22nd April 2021. International Girls in ICT Day aims to inspire a global movement to increase the representation of girls and women in technology. Today, let's recommit to the goal of equal access for young women and girls to opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math.
- The United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is highlighting the need to promote technology career opportunities for girls and women in the world's fastest-growing sector.

World Creativity and Innovation Day is observed globally on: 21 April

- World Creativity and Innovation Day is observed on 21 April every year. This day is celebrated to raise awareness around the importance of creativity and innovation in problem-solving with respect to advancing the United Nations sustainable development goals, also known as the "global goals".
- The main objective of the day is to encourage people to use new ideas, make new decisions, and do creative thinking. Creativity is what makes the world go 'round.

National Civil Services Day is celebrated on April 21 every year:

- In India, 'Civil Services Day is celebrated on April 21 every year. It is a day to appreciate the tremendous work done by officers engaged in public administration, in various departments of the central and state governments.
- The Government of India chose April 21 as the National Civil Service Day as on this day the country's first home minister, Sardar Vallabh bhai Patel addressed the newly appointed Administrative Services Officers in 1947. The historic occasion took place at the Metcalf

House in Delhi. In his address, he called Civil Servants, the 'Steel Frame of India'.

UN Chinese Language Day observed on 20 April

- UN Chinese Language Day is observed globally on April 20 every year. The day has been chosen to pay tribute to Cangjie, who is a mythical figure who is presumed to have invented Chinese characters about 5,000 years ago.
- The 1st Chinese Language Day was celebrated in 2010 on the 12th of November, but since 2011 the date has been on the 20th of April. The day celebrates multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as promote equal use of all six of its official working languages throughout the organization.

World Liver Day observed every year on 19 April

- World Liver day is observed on the 19 April every year to spread awareness about the second largest organ in the body. The liver is the second largest and the most complex organ in the body, with the exception of the brain.
- Liver diseases can be caused by hepatitis A, B, C, alcohol and drugs. Viral Hepatitis occurs due to consumption of contaminated food and water, unsafe sexual practices and drug abuse.

World Heritage Day observed every year on 18 April

- World Heritage Day observed globally on 18 April every year. The day is observed to raise awareness about the cultural heritage that we see around us. It is also aimed at promoting historical monuments and sites through which we can actually preserve the cultural integrity of a community as well.
- This year's theme "Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures" reflects on the need to acknowledge global calls for greater inclusion and recognition of diversity.
- The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1982 announced, 18 April as the World Heritage Day. This was approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983, with an aim of enhancing awareness about the importance of cultural heritage, monuments and conserving them.

World Hemophilia Day observed globally: 17 April

- World Hemophilia Day observed globally on 17 April every year. This day is observed to raise awareness for hemophilia and other bleeding disorders. The date was chosen in honour of the World Federation of Hemophilia founder Frank Schnabel birthday. This year is the 30th edition of World Haemophilia Day.
- The theme for 2021 World Hemophilia Day is "Adapting to Change: Sustaining care in a new world". The day is being held since 1989, which marks the birthday of Frank Schnabel, founder of the World Federation of Hemophilia.
- It is a rare disorder in which your blood doesn't clot normally because it lacks sufficient blood-clotting proteins /factors. If you have hemophilia, you may bleed for a longer time after an injury than you would if your blood clotted normally.

World Chagas Disease Day is observed on 14 April Every year

- The World Chagas Disease Day is observed on 14 April to raise public awareness and visibility among people about Chagas Disease (also called American trypanosomiasis or silent or silenced disease) and the resources needed for the prevention, control or elimination of the disease. The World Health Organization approved the designation of Chagas Disease Day on May 24, 2019, at the 72nd World Health Assembly. It is one of 11 official global public health campaigns marked by WHO.
- The first World Chagas Disease Day was observed on 14 April 2020. The day has been named after Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas, the Brazilian doctor who diagnosed the first case on 14 April 1909.

Ambedkar Jayanti or Bhim Jayanti is observed on 14 April Every year

- Ambedkar Jayanti (or Bhim Jayanti) is an annual festival observed on 14 April to commemorate the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar who was born on 14 April 1891. The Day has been observed as an official public holiday throughout India since 2015. In 2021, we are marking the 130th birth anniversary of Babasaheb.
- Dr Ambedkar is known as the Father (chief architect) of the Indian Constitution. He was the first Law and Justice Minister of the country after the independence. Dr Bhim has been bestowed with the country's highest civilian honour, Bharat Ratna in 1990 posthumously.

International Turban Day is observed on 13 April Every year

- International Turban Day is celebrated every year on April 13 since 2004 to bring awareness of the strict requirement on Sikhs to put the turban as a mandatory part of their religion.
- The 2021 Turban Day marks the 552nd birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev and the festival of Baisakhi. The turban, also known as "dastar" or "pagri" or "pag" refer to the garment worn by both men and some women to cover their heads.

102 years of Jallianwala Bagh Amritsar Massacre

- The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, took place on 13 April 1919. This year we commemorate the 102nd anniversary of the terror that shook the entire country to a standstill. The Jallianwalabagh garden has been converted into a memorial. And thousands of people on this day come to pay their respects to the martyred men, women, who were killed on that fateful day for the nation.
- Acting Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer ordered troops of the British Indian Army to fire their rifles into a crowd of unarmed Indian civilians in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, Punjab.
- General Dyer, the British India army officer, felt the people gathering for such a cause was anti-national. He ordered the 50 of his troops consisting of Sikh, Gurkha, Baluchi, and Rajput to open fire on the unarmed men and women. The resulting figures would make you go numb as 379 men and women were killed for no fault of theirs and 1100 injured.

International Day of Human Space Flight Celebrated globally on 12 April Every Year

- The International Day of Human Space Flight is observed globally on April 12 every year. The UN General Assembly passed a resolution on April 7, 2011, had declared April 12 to be celebrated as International Day of Human Space Flight.
- On 12 April 1961, was the date of the 1st human space flight was carried out by Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet citizen, who became the first person to journey into outer space. This historic incident opened the way for space exploration for the benefit of all mankind. 12 April was also the date of the 1st Space Shuttle STS-1 of Columbia launched in 1981, which is also commemorated on this date.

World Parkinson's Day Celebrated on 11 April Every Year

- Every year, April 11 is observed as World Parkinson's Day to raise awareness of Parkinson's disease, which is a progressive nervous system disorder.
- The day marks the birthday of Dr James Parkinson from London, who was the first person to systematically described the six individuals with the symptoms of Parkinson Disease.

National Safe Motherhood Day observed on 11 April

- National Safe Motherhood Day is observed on April 11 every year. National Safe Motherhood Day is an initiative of the White Ribbon Alliance India (WRAI), to enforce that women must have availability and adequate access to care during pregnancy childbirth and postnatal services. The day also marks the birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi, the wife of the father of Nation Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi.
- At the request of WRAI, an alliance of 1800 organizations, in 2003, the Government of India declared April 11th, the anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi's birth, as National Safe Motherhood Day. India is the 1st country in the world to have socially declared a National Safe Motherhood Day.

World Homeopathy Day is celebrated every year on April 10

- World Homeopathy Day is celebrated every year on April 10 to spread awareness about homoeopathy and its contribution to the world of medicine. The day marks the birth anniversary of German physician Dr Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann, who is considered the founder of the system of alternative medicine called Homeopathy. The year 2021 marks the 266th birthday of Hahnemann.
- The Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH), Ministry of AYUSH, organised a two-day scientific conference on the occasion of #WorldHomoeopathyDay from April 10 & 11, 2021 in New Delhi.
- The theme of the conference is "Homoeopathy – Roadmap for Integrative Medicine" exchange of experience by policymakers and experts to identify strategic actions towards an effective and efficient inclusion of Homoeopathy in integrative care.

CRPF Valour Day or Shaurya Diwas: 09 April

- Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Valour Day (Shaurya Diwas) is observed on 9 April

every year, as a tribute to the brave men of the Force. 2021 marks the 56th CRPF Valour Day.

- It was on this day in 1965, a small contingent of CRPF created history by defeating an invading Pakistani army, several times larger, at the Sardar Post located in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat. The CRPF men eliminated 34 Pakistani soldiers and captured four alive. In the conflict, CRPF lost six personnel who had attained martyrdom.

International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Rwanda Genocide

- International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda observed globally on 7 April every year. The International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda was announced by the United General Assembly in 2003. On April 7th, the date where the genocide against members of the Tutsi began. For approximately 100 days, over 800,000 Tutsi were assassinated.
- UNESCO aims to educate the world population regarding genocides and the consequences of the crime. UNESCO is committed to promoting education about genocides as a means to sensitize learners for the causes, dynamics and consequences of such crimes and to strengthen their resilience against all forms of discrimination.

World Health Day observed globally on 7 April

- The World Health Day is a global health awareness day celebrated on 7 April every year. On April 7th every year, governmental as well as non-governmental health organizations organize events that focus on promoting healthier habits of living. From exciting activities to pledges and support plans, these events aim to create awareness about what can increase the life expectancy of people around the world.
- The Theme of World Health Day 2021: “Building a fairer, healthier world for everyone”.
- In 1948, the WHO held the First World Health Assembly. The Assembly decided to celebrate 7 April of each year, with effect from 1950, as World Health Day. The World Health Day is held to mark WHO’s founding and is seen as an opportunity by the organization to draw worldwide attention to a subject of major importance to global health each year.

International Day of Sport for Development and Peace: 6 April

- The United Nations celebrates the 6th of April every year as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace. Sport has historically played an important role in all societies, be it in the form of competitive sport, physical activity or play. Sports also presents a natural partnership for the United Nations (UN) system.
- Sport can help promote fairness, team building, equality, inclusion and perseverance. Sport and physical activity can also help us get through times of crisis, like COVID-19, by reducing anxieties and improving physical and mental health. The professional sport also provides employment and income to many people around the world and an integral sector to the economic success of many communities and regions.

International Children's Book Day: 02 April

- International Children's Book Day (ICBD) is organised annually on 2nd April since 1967, by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), an international non-profit organization, to inspire a love of reading and to call attention to children's books.
- Theme 2021: "The Music of Words."
- Each year a different National Section of IBBY has the opportunity to be the international sponsor of ICBD and decide upon a theme. The IBBY United States is the sponsor for International Children's Book Day 2021.

World Autism Awareness Day: 02 April

- The World Autism Awareness Day is observed internationally on 2 April every year, to raise awareness about people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) throughout the world. The 2021 World Autism Awareness Day observance will address these issues through a virtual event that will include moderated panel discussions with individuals on the autism spectrum who have themselves experienced the challenges and seen these new opportunities in the employment market.
- The very first World Autism Day was observed in the year 2008 on April 2. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 2007. World Autism Day is one of only seven official health-specific UN Days.

Utkal Divas or Odisha Day is celebrated on 1 April

- Utkal Divas or Utkala Dibasha is celebrated on April 1 every year to remember the formation of the Odisha state after a struggle to be recognised as an independent state. Under British rule, Odisha was part of the Bengal presidency, which consisted of the present-day Bihar, West Bengal, and Odisha. The state was originally called Orissa but the Lok Sabha passed the Orissa Bill, and Constitution Bill (113rd amendment), in March 2011 to rename it Odisha.
- The region became part of Kalinga after it was conquered by Magadha King Ashoka in 261 BC to expand his Mauryan rule. After Mauryan rule, King Kharavela's rule began in Odisha. Kharavela managed to avenge the Mauryan invasion by defeating Magadh. Historians credit Kharavela for laying the foundation for Odisha's fame as a land of art, architecture and sculpture. He also managed to establish a powerful political state.
- Gajapati Mukunda Deva was the last Hindu king of Odisha. He was defeated by the Mughals in 1576. A few hundred years later, the British took over and divided the state into different parts. The northern and western districts of the state became part of what was then called the Bengal presidency.
- The new province of Odisha was formed after people's continued struggle, which finally paid off on April 1, 1936. Sir John Hubbak was the first governor of the state. Notable leaders from that movement are Utkala Gouraba, Madhusudan Das, Utkala Mani, Gopabandhu Das, Fakir Mohan Senapati, Pandita Nilakantha Das, and many others.

International Transgender Day of Visibility: 31st March

- International Transgender Day of Visibility observed globally on 31st March every year. The day is dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide, as well as a celebration of their contributions to society.
- The day was founded by US-based transgender activist Rachel Crandall of Michigan in 2009. As a reaction to the lack of LGBT recognition of transgender people, citing the frustration that the only well-known transgender-centred day was the Transgender Day of Remembrance which mourned the murders of transgender people but did not acknowledge and celebrate living members of the transgender community. The first International Transgender Day of Visibility was held on March 31, 2009. It has since been spearheaded by the U.S.-based youth advocacy organization Trans Student Educational Resources.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

Project Ladakh Ignited Minds: Indian Army signs MoU with HPCL & NIEDO

- Ladakhi youth Army under the aegis of Fire and Fury Corps signed MoU for Ladakh Ignited Minds project with corporate partner Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and executing agency National Integrity and Educational Development Organisation (NIEDO) HQ 14 Corps Leh.
- The project Ladakh Ignited Minds: A Centre of Excellence and Wellness has been conceptualized to secure a better future for the youth of UT of Ladakh.
- The programme under the aegis of Fire and Fury Corps of the Indian Army would be executed by National Integrity & Educational Development Organisation (NIEDO) a Kanpur-based NGO.

Australia and India for Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative

- Australia has announced a grant of Rs 81.2 million (AUD 1.4 million) under the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). IPOI was proposed by Indian Prime Minister Modi at the East Asia Summit in November 2019 and Australia is co-leading New Delhi in the marine ecology pillar of the initiative.
- The initiative will help to support a free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific.
- The Australia-India Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative Partnership forms the core of this “shared vision” of both countries.

GOI-Germany enter into an agreement to prevent plastic waste entering oceans

- The Government of India and Germany Government have signed an agreement for Technical Cooperation in enhancing practices to prevent plastic from entering the marine environment at a virtual ceremony in New Delhi India. The project titled ‘Cities Combating Plastic Entering the Marine Environment’ will be implemented for a period of 42 months.
- The outcome of the project is completely in line with the objectives of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban focusing on sustainable solid waste management and Prime Minister Modi’s vision to phase out single-use plastic by 2022.

- The agreement was signed between the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH India on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

Indian space agency, ISRO has signed an agreement

- The Indian space agency, ISRO has signed an agreement with the space agency of France CNES for cooperation in its first human space mission, Gaganyaan. CNES will train Indian flight physicians and CAPCOM mission control teams at French facilities. The Gaganyaan orbital spacecraft project was kicked off in August 2018. It originally intended to send astronauts from Indian soil to mark the 75th anniversary of India's independence in 2022.
- CNES will provide equipment developed by it, tested and still operating aboard the International Space Station (ISS) to Indian crews.
- It will also supply fireproof carry bags made in France to shield equipment from shocks and radiation.
- The agreement provides for the CNES to support the implementation of a scientific experiment plan on validation missions, exchange information on food packaging and the nutrition programme, and above all the use by Indian astronauts of French equipment, consumables and medical instruments.

India-Netherlands Virtual Summit 2021

- Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of the Netherlands Mr Mark Rutte, held a Virtual Summit. During the India- Netherlands virtual Summit, the two leaders reviewed the existing bilateral engagements and also exchanged views on further expanding and diversifying the relationship in trade and economy, water management, agriculture sector, smart cities, science & technology, healthcare and space.
- Apart from this the two Prime Ministers also agreed on instituting a 'Strategic Partnership on Water' to further deepen the Indo-Dutch cooperation in the water-related sector and upgrading the Joint Working Group on the water to Ministerial-level.
- They also exchanged views on regional and global challenges such as climate change, counter-terrorism and the Covid-19 pandemic and agreed to leverage the emerging convergences in new areas like Indo-Pacific, Resilient Supply Chains and Global Digital Governance.

Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs attends 2nd Virtual G20 Finance Ministers

- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman has participated virtually in the Second G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting. This meeting held under the Italian Presidency to discuss policy responses to global challenges to restore strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth.
- The G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors discussed Updates of the G20 Action Plan in response to C-19.
- They also discussed supporting the financing needs of the most vulnerable economies, the

progress on the international taxation agenda, promoting greener transitions and the pandemic related financial regulation issues.

- Smt. Sitharaman urged all G20 members to ensure equitable access and widespread distribution of vaccines.
- Smt. Sitharaman reflected on the global growth projections and underlined the need for continued coordination amidst the persistence of uncertainties associated with the virus.
- The Finance Minister said that the G20 Action Plan has served as a good guidance tool and shaping recovery is the mainstay of its current update.

India and Japan signed an MoU for Academic and Research Cooperation

- The Union Cabinet recently apprised an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) signed between India and Japan. The MoU was signed between the National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL) that operates under the Department of Space, GoI and the Research Institute for Sustainable Humanosphere called the RISH that operates under the Kyoto University of Japan.
- According to the MoU signed, the NARL and RISH will continue their cooperation in the areas of technology, atmospheric sciences, collaborative scientific experiments and other related modelling studies.
- They will exchange scientific materials, information, publications, students, faculty members and researchers.
- The MoU will allow the countries to utilize the facilities such as Middle and Upper atmosphere radar in Japan, Mesosphere-Stratosphere-Troposphere radar, Equatorial Atmosphere Radar in Indonesia.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Wild Innovator Award 2021: Krithi Karanth becomes 1st Indian woman

- Dr. Krithi K Karanth, Chief Conservation Scientist at Bengaluru-based Centre for Wildlife Studies (CWS), has been chosen as the first Indian and Asian woman for the 2021 'WILD Innovator Award'. This award given by the "WILD ELEMENTS Foundation" brings together a coalition of innovators, advocates and partners to "disrupt the status quo and identify solutions to global sustainability and conservation,".
- The Foundation's distinctive approach to addressing climate change is the "Power of Three," recognising the interconnectedness of animal-kind, humankind, and plantkind for the future planetary wellness of our shared home.

National Panchayat Awards 2021 conferred by PM Modi

- The National Panchayat Awards 2021 was conferred by PM Modi. Prime Minister will transfer the award money (as Grants-in-Aid) through the click of a button, ranging from Rs.5 lakh to Rs.50 lakh. The amount will be directly transferred to the bank account of the Panchayats concerned in real-time. This is being done for the first time.

The National Panchayat Awards 2021:

- Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar to 224 panchayats,

- Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar to 30-gram panchayats, Gram
- Panchayat Development Plan Award to 29-gram panchayats, Child-friendly Gram
- Panchayat Award to 30 Gram Panchayats and e-Panchayat Puraskar to 12 states.

93rd Academy Awards 2021 announced in Los Angeles

- The 93rd Academy Awards ceremony, also known as the Oscars Award, took place in Los Angeles on April 25, 2021. The award is presented annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS). 2021 Oscars honoured the best films of 2020 and early 2021.
- American drama 'Nomadland' won most honours with three awards. Chloe Zhao, who directed "Nomadland", was crowned best director, and with this, she became the only second woman to claim the title and the first woman of colour to win that award. Indian film personalities Irrfan Khan and Bhanu Athaiya were honoured in the "In Memoriam" montage showcased at the event.

Oscars 2021: Chloe Zhao becomes second woman to win best director for 'Nomadland'

- Chloé Zhao has made history at the Academy Awards. Zhao won the Oscar for best director for "Nomadland," becoming just the second woman and the first woman of color to win the award.
- Kathryn Bigelow was the first woman to win, for "The Hurt Locker," in 2009.
- This was the only year in Oscar history with two female nominees, Zhao and "Promising Young Woman" director Emerald Fennell. Only seven women have ever been nominated.

Hyderabad's Rumana Sinha Sehgal won the Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021

- Rumana Sinha Sehgal, Software engineer turned entrepreneur from Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, won the Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021 by the Diplomatic Mission Global Peace. She was virtually awarded for her contribution to the field of developing innovative and functional green products by recycling varied materials and non-biodegradable materials.
- Nationwide Award -under 50- Business Leader 2021 of Social entrepreneurship.
- International Influencer of the year 2021' at the Influencer Summit in January 2021.
- ReXKarmaveer Chakra (silver) and Global Fellowship award 2019 for her work in the zone of women and child empowerment. She was crowned as the 'Mrs Universe Successful 2018'.

Lifetime Achievement Award received by Director Roberto Benigni

- Director Roberto Benigni will be receiving the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 78th Venice International Film Festival, which runs from September 1 to 11. The organisers confirmed the news about the two-time Oscar-winning actor-director.
- The filmmaker had starred in and directed the holocaust comedy-drama film Life Is Beautiful (1997), for which he received the Academy Awards for Best Actor (the first for a non-English speaking male performance) and Best International Feature Film. He was last seen in Matteo Garrone's live-action Pinocchio, for which he won a David di Donatello Award.

Marathi film “Puglya” wins Best Foreign Feature at Moscow International Film Festival 2021

- The Marathi film “Puglya” has won the Best Foreign Language Feature award at Moscow International Film Festival, 2021. The film Puglya has been directed and produced by Vinod Sam Peter under the banner Abraham Films.
- So far, this film has won over 45 awards and recognitions at various international film festivals. The film is yet to be released in India. The film revolves around a pug and two boys, who are around 10 years old.

Wisden Almanack’s 2021 edition announced

- To perpetuate the 50th anniversary of the first One-Day International, five ODI cricketers of the decade have been listed in Wisden Almanack’s 2021 edition. One cricketer has been selected from each decade between 1971 and 2021, with the Indian captain being granted the award for the 2010s.
- India captain Virat Kohli Wisden Almanack’s ODI player of the 2010s.
- Sachin Tendulkar is the ODI Cricketer of the 1990s.
- Kapil Dev was named as the ODI Cricketer for the 1980s.
- England all-rounder Ben Stokes is ‘Leading Cricketer of the Year’.
- Australia’s Beth Mooney is ‘Leading Women’s Cricketer in the World’.
- West Indies all-rounder Kieron Pollard was adjudged the ‘Leading T20 Cricketer in the World’.
- Meanwhile, Jason Holder, Mohammed Rizwan, Dom Sibley, Zak Crawley, and Darren Stevens have been awarded the Wisden Cricketers of the Year 2021.

Spanish city of Seville will host the 22nd Laureus World Sports Awards in a virtual ceremony

- The Spanish city of Seville will host the 22nd Laureus World Sports Awards in a virtual ceremony owing to the raging C-19 pandemic. The awards show, featuring presentations and related news stories will be available to the world’s media and broadcast extensively on Laureus social media platforms. The winners of Laureus World Sports Awards are selected by a jury comprising 69 members of the Laureus World Sports Academy. The last was in Barcelona in 2007, which is a long time.
- Among the many big names who have had a year to remember and who will be in contention for the awards are Rafael Nadal, Lewis Hamilton, LeBron James, Robert Lewandowski (Sportsman), Naomi Osaka, Federica Brignone (Sportswoman).

Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank presented the AICTE Lilavati Awards, 2020 in New Delhi

- The Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank recently presented the AICTE Lilavati Awards, 2020 in New Delhi. The awards were presented based on the theme “Women Empowerment”. The winners were selected by AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) in six sub-themes.
- SWEAT (Sona Women Entrepreneurship and Training) from Sona College of Technology, Tamil Nadu won the award under the ‘Women Entrepreneurship’ sub theme.

- Another college from Tamil Nadu, Paritrana from St. Joseph's College of Engineering won the award for the 'Self Defense' sub theme.
- Under the 'Literacy' sub theme, Bharatiya Vidyapeeth of the Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development Pune won the award.
- The Lilavati Award under the "Women's Health" sub theme was won by the WIT Women Health Coalition from Walchand Institute of Technology, Maharashtra.
- Radiant Seetha from Thiagarajar Polytechnic College won the contest in the 'Legal Awareness' sub theme.
- Under the 'Sanitation & Hygiene' sub-theme, Smt. Kishoritai Bhoyar College of Pharmacy, Nagpur, Maharashtra won the award.

Filmmaker Guneet Monga conferred with Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters honour

- Acclaimed filmmaker, Guneet Monga to be conferred with honour of the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres). It is the second-highest civilian French honour and has earlier been awarded to big Hollywood names like Meryl Streep, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Bruce Willis.
- As a producer, Guneet has several critically acclaimed films to her credit. The list includes Masaan, Lunchbox, Haraamkhor, Peddlers; Oscar-winning short film documentary — Period, End of Sentence, among others.
- Earlier, Indian celebrities like Shah Rukh Khan, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Amitabh Bachchan, Nandita Das, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Anurag Kashyap, Kalki Koechlin, among others, have been felicitated with the honour.

Indian Business Tycoon Yusuffali MA Gets Top Civilian Award In UAE

- Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan has honoured Indian-origin businessman Yusuffali MA and 11 other individuals with Abu Dhabi's top civilian award for their noble and charitable contributions to the community. The prestigious award was given to Mr Yusuffali, who was born in Kerala, for his outstanding contribution to Abu Dhabi's business, industry and support to various philanthropic initiatives.
- Mr Yusuffali, the Chairman and Managing Director of Abu Dhabi-based LuLu Group which operates hypermarkets and retail companies in many countries, was honoured on Friday by the Crown Prince.
- The individuals were honoured for a wide range of contributions, including efforts in the healthcare field, community service and volunteering, humanitarian work, as well as culture, heritage and environmental preservation. The awards, which were given at the 10th edition of the Abu Dhabi Awards held at Qasr Al Hosn, a historical landmark and the oldest stone building in Abu Dhabi, celebrate compassionate individuals who have selflessly devoted their time and effort to spreading goodness and serving the community.

BAFTA Awards 2021: Nomadland, Frances McDormand, Sir Anthony Hopkins wins big

- The 74th edition of the British Academy Film Awards- BAFTA 2021 was held at Royal Albert Hall in London with nominees attending the awards virtually.

- However, that was not the only unconventional part of this year's award as, amid the pandemic, the ceremony of the prestigious BAFTA took place in over two days.
- The opening night ceremony was on April 10, 2021, during which the winners of the technical categories were announced while the remaining major awards were announced on April 11, 2021.
- India's Netflix Film, The White Tiger, which was nominated for Best Actor and Best Adapted Screenplay lost to Sir Anthony Hopkins's 'The Father'. Nomadland, the US road movie, won big and bagged four major awards including Best Actress, Best Film, and Best Director.

SAG Awards 2021: 'The Crown', 'Schitt's Creek' win top honours

- The winners of the 27th Screen Actors Guild Awards have been announced. The award ceremony aired on April 4, 2021, honouring excellence across TV and films.
- The starry cast of 'The Trial of the Chicago 7', a 1960s courtroom drama, bagged the top prize. At the virtual award ceremony, the actors of color, for the very first time, won the individual movie awards.
- All the main acting awards went to a group of actors of color. It includes Chadwick Boseman for the Best Male Actor, Viola Davis for the Best Female Actor, Yun-Jung Youn for Best Female Supporting Actor, and Daniel Kaluuya for Best Male Supporting Actor.

Dutee Chand chosen for Chhattisgarh Veerni Award

- Indian sprinter, Dutee Chand has been chosen for the inaugural edition of the Chhattisgarh Veerni Award, by the Chhattisgarh state government. The award, which recognises the contribution of Indian women in different fields, including sports, will be given virtually on April 14, 2021.
- The Odisha sprinter became the first Indian woman to win a gold medal at the World University Games held in Italy in 2019. She is a silver-medalist in 100 and 200 metres at the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games. Apart from this, Dutee holds the national record of 11.22 secs in 100m.

Ashutosh Bhardwaj has been awarded to the famous Devishankar Awasthi Award 2020

- The famous Devishankar Awasthi Award has been awarded to the prolific Hindi prose, journalist, and critic Ashutosh Bhardwaj. This honour has been given to him for his work 'Pitra-Vadh'. He was elected by the selection committee of Ashok Vajpayee, Nandkishore Acharya, and Rajendra Kumar.
- Ashutosh Bhardwaj has been a native English journalist and his experiences of Bastar have been well discussed in both Hindi and English. This book has been published in English under the name of 'The Death Trap'. Apart from this, his work on important topics like modernism and nationalism has been well-known in Indian novels. He has also been a fellow of the Shimla Institute of Advanced Studies and is writing independently.

Suman Chakraborty to get 30th GD Birla Award for Scientific Research

- Professor Suman Chakraborty has been selected for the 30th GD Birla Award for Scientific

Research for his outstanding contribution to engineering science and its applications in developing technologies for affordable healthcare. He is a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur's department of mechanical engineering.

- He is credited with establishing the first microfluidics laboratory in the framework of an academic institution in India to facilitate the study of how tiny volumes of fluids flow through small channels. Apart from being a reputable academic, Chakraborty has invented technologies that have not only been patented but also licensed to industrial houses for commercialisation.

Alfred Aho Wins the 2020 ACM Turing Award

- Lawrence Gussman Professor Emeritus of Computer Science, Alfred V. Aho has won the 2020 Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) A.M. Turing Award, known informally as the "Nobel Prize of computing." Aho shares the award with his long-time collaborator Jeffrey David Ullman.
- Aho and Ullman began working together at Bell Labs in 1967 and their early efforts included developing efficient algorithms for analyzing and translating programming languages. Even when Ullman began a career in academia in 1969 while Aho remained at Bell Labs, they continued their collaboration for several decades and shaped the foundations of programming language theory and implementation, as well as algorithm design and analysis.

Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan receives Kalinga Ratna award

- Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan has been conferred the 'Kalinga Ratna' award for the year 2021.
- The award instituted by Sarala Sahitya Sansad was presented to Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan by M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India, during the 600th Birth Anniversary of Adikabi Sarala Das and 40th Annual Celebrations of Sarala Sahitya Sansad during the programme held at Sarala Bhawan.

Legendary Actor Rajinikanth to be honoured with 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award

- The legendary actor Rajinikanth has been selected to be honoured with the 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Awards, the highest film honour in India. The iconic actor Rajinikanth will receive the Dadasaheb Phalke award for 2019 for his stupendous contribution to Indian cinema. Rajinikanth will receive the Dadasaheb Phalke Award on May 3, 2021.
- Rajinikanth is the 12th South Indian to get this award. Legends like Dr Rajkumar, Akkineni Nageshwar Rao, K Balachander have been awarded before. The legendary actor has been honoured with the Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan in the past.
- The jury this year for the prestigious award included playback icon Asha Bhosle, director-producer Subhash Ghai, Malayalam superstar Mohanlal, music composer and singer Shankar Mahadevan and Biswajeet Chatterjee.

Dr Sharankumar Limbale to receive Saraswati Samman 2020

- Noted Marathi writer Dr Sharankumar Limbale will receive Saraswati Samman, 2020 for his book Sanatan. The award carries fifteen lakh rupees, a citation and a plaque. Saraswati Samman, instituted by KK Birla Foundation in 1991, is recognised as the most prestigious and highest literary award in the country.
- Dr Limbale's Sanatan has been published in 2018. Sanatan is an important social and historical document of the Dalit struggle. Speaking first to All India Radio, Dr Limbale was overjoyed with emotion as he started his career with the public broadcaster.

Maggie O'Farrell's 'Hamnet' wins book critics award for fiction

- Maggie O'Farrell's Hamnet, an imagined take on the death of Shakespeare's son from the bubonic plague, has won the National Book Critics Circle prize for fiction. Hamnet, an unfortunately well-timed story for the current pandemic, explores the impact of the boy's illness and death on his family. He was Shakespeare's only son, and scholars have long speculated about his influence — if any — on "Hamlet," which Shakespeare worked on in the years following Hamnet's death.
- Tom Zoellner's Island on Fire: The Revolt That Ended Slavery in the British Empire won for nonfiction, and Amy Stanley's Stranger in the Shogun's City: A Japanese Woman and Her World was the winner in biography. The autobiography award went to Cathy Park Hong for Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning.

RANKING

India Ranked 49th in CGGI 2021

- India has been placed at 49th position among 104 nations in the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) 2021. Finland has topped the CGGI Index 2021 and Venezuela is the last ranked country at 104.
- The Chandler Good Governance Index is released by the Chandler Institute of Governance headquartered in Singapore. The index is prepared based on seven pillars namely leadership and foresight, strong institutions, robust laws and policies, attractive market place, financial stewardship, helping people rise, global influence and reputation.

WEF Global Energy Transition Index 2021 released: India Ranks 87th

- India is placed at the 87th position among 115 countries in the 2021 Energy Transition Index (ETI). The report is published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), prepared in collaboration with Accenture to track nations on the current performance of their energy systems across various aspects.
- The index benchmarks 115 countries on the current performance of their energy systems across three dimensions — economic development and growth, environmental sustainability, and energy security and access indicators — and their readiness to transition to secure, sustainable, affordable, and inclusive energy systems.

World Press Freedom Index 2021, released: India at 142nd

- India has been placed at 142nd position among 180 countries in the latest World Press Freedom Index (WPF) 2021, released on April 20, 2021. India was at 142nd position in 2020 as well. Norway has retained its top spot for the fifth year running, followed by Finland and Denmark at second and third place respectively. Eritrea is at the bottom of the index at 180th place.
- The index is published every year by the international journalism not-for-profit body, “Reporters without Borders (RSF)”, to evaluate the press freedom situation in 180 countries and territories.

Henley Passport Index 2021 released India stands at number 84

- Amid the rising COVID-19 cases and subsequent restrictions on travel overseas, when many countries are banning individuals from worst-hit nations, the Henley Passport Index on April 17 released its list of the most powerful passports.
- India stands at number 84 on the list, as the Indian citizens can visit Visa-Free or Visa-on-Arrival in over 58 places. Japan, Singapore and Germany, South Korea stand in Top 3 respectively.

Inclusive Internet Index 2021: India has been ranked at 49th spot globally

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), in partnership with Facebook, has released the Inclusive Internet Index 2021. India has been ranked at 49th spot globally. It shares its rank with Thailand. This index measures the extent to which the internet is available and affordable by region, and highlights additional insight into how people around the world are using the web.

Top 5 Countries:

1. Sweden
2. United States
3. Spain
4. Australia
5. Hong Kong

Academic Ranking of World Universities 2020 published and released by Shanghai Ranking Consultancy

- The 2020 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) is released by Shanghai Ranking Consultancy. The Indian Institute of Science (IISc Bangalore) has secured the top position among the best higher education institutes in India, while Calcutta University became the best varsity in the country, as per the published Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU 2020).
- The Indian institutes are not even in the top 100 list, the best higher education institute, (IISc Bangalore) is in the category of 501- 600.

India ranks 140th in WEF's gender gap index 2021

- India has slipped 28 places to rank 140 among 156 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report 2021, by World Economic Forum. In 2020, India ranked 112th among 153 countries. Iceland has topped the index as the most gender-equal country in the world for the 12th time. Afghanistan is the worst-performing country in the report.

South Asia:

- India emerged as the third-worst performing country in South Asia.
- Bangladesh is the best performer in South Asia.
- Among India's neighbours, Bangladesh ranked 65, Nepal 106, Pakistan 153, Afghanistan 156, Bhutan 130 and Sri Lanka 116.
- In South Asia, only Pakistan and Afghanistan ranked below India.

Global Gender Gap Report

- The Global Gender Gap Report 2021 is the 15th edition of the annual publication by WEF.
- The Global Gender Gap Index was first introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006 to compare countries' gender gaps across four dimensions: economic opportunities, education, health and political leadership.

Top 10 gender-equal country

1. Iceland
2. Finland
3. Norway
4. New Zealand
5. Rwanda
6. Sweden
7. Namibia
8. Lithuania
9. Ireland
10. Switzerland

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

A new book title "Living Mountain" written by Amitav Ghosh

- "The Living Mountain" is a new story by Jnanpith winner and internationally renowned author Amitav Ghosh, written during the course of the pandemic. It is a fable for the current times: a cautionary tale of how humans have systematically exploited nature, leading to an environmental collapse.
- HarperCollins Publishers India will publish The Living Mountain as a special standalone edition in January 2022 under its prestigious Fourth Estate imprint. The book will also be published simultaneously in Hindi, and as an ebook and an audiobook.

Jhumpa Lahiri's New Novel 'Whereabouts'

- Renowned American author Jhumpa Lahiri has launched her new novel titled "Whereabouts". The book is an English translation of the Italian novel 'las Dove Mi Trovo' which was written by the author Jhumpa Lahiri itself and published in 2018.

The novel has been translated into English by the author herself. The book is about an unnamed female protagonist over 45 years as she looks at her life, glancing, sideways, back and forth, chronicling life, relationships and burden of relationships, in short, succinct chapters.

Author Aakash Ranison launched his E-Book “Climate Change Explained – For One And All”

- The climate activist-author, Aakash Ranison has come out with a new e-book titled “Climate Change Explained – for one and all”, on the occasion of Earth Day. Through the e-book, the author explains the impact of climate change and aims to motivate readers to reduce its outcome with the help of simple sustainable solutions.
- The book is a mix of facts, data, and information about climate change, having topics like “Greenhouse effect, global warming, Carbon footprint” and their effects on earth in the near future.

The new Book of JK Rowling “The Christmas Pig” released in October

- JK Rowling has a new book coming this autumn, a festive children’s story with all new characters. The story is about a boy named Jack and his toy Dur Pig, who goes missing on Christmas Eve.
- The book is set to be released worldwide on October 12. “The Christmas Pig” is Rowling’s first children’s novel since Harry Potter.

Modi Ji released 4 books related to Babasaheb Ambedkar

- PM Narendra Modi has paid tribute to India’s first law minister and the architect of the Indian Constitution Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar on his birth anniversary and released four books based on his life. PM Modi has addressed the 95th Annual Meet and National Seminar of Vice-Chancellors of the Association of Indian Universities via video conferencing and launched four books related to Dr BR Ambedkar, written by Kishor Makwana.

Suresh Raina’s memoir ‘Believe’ to release in May 2021

- A book titled ‘Believe – What Life and Cricket Taught Me’, the much-awaited Suresh Raina autobiography is set to hit the bookstands in May 2021. The book is Co-authored by Raina and sports author Bharat Sundaresan, the biography will be published by the prestigious publishing house, Penguin India.
- The book expected to follow Raina’s lightning-fast rise in the Indian cricket team and the hardships that he encountered on the way to becoming a record-breaking batsman. The book should also help unwind the story of Raina’s early days as a budding cricketer in UP.

PM Modi to released Hindi version of ‘Odisha Itihaas’

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release the Hindi translation of the book ‘Odisha Itihaas’, written by Utkal Keshari Harekrushna Mahtab, on 9th April at the Ambedkar International Center.
- The event marking the release of the Hindi version has been organised by the Harekrushna

Mahtab Foundation.

A book titled 'Manohar Parrikar: Brilliant Mind, Simple Life' by Nitin Gokhale

- A new book titled 'Manohar Parrikar: Brilliant Mind, Simple Life' authored by Nitin Gokhale was released. The book is published by Bloomsbury. It is an attempt to capture Parrikar's persona — the man, the politician and the patriot. Gokhale is a renowned author, media trainer and founder of a specialised defence related website BharatShakti.in. and StratNewsGlobal.com.
- Through this book, the author presents the journey of the contribution of Parrikar to nation-building and his service to the Goan society, from being an IIT student to a social worker and to India's defence minister. The book is a tribute to Parrikar, India's former defence minister and four-time chief minister of Goa, the first IIT-ian to become a chief minister.

Vice President releases book 'Suparipalana' by Dr Shailendra Joshi

- Vice President Venkaiah Naidu has released a book 'Suparipalana' by retired civil servant Dr Shailendra Joshi.
- The book 'Suparipalana' is the Telugu translation of "Echo T Calling: Towards People-Centric Governance", written by former Telangana Chief Secretary, Shri S K Joshi. The translator of the book is Shri Annavarapu Brahmaiah and the publisher is Shri Maruthi.

A book titled "Names of the Women" by Jeet Thayil

- A book titled "Names of the Women" authored by Jeet Thayil. The book talks about the women whose roles were suppressed, reduced, or erased in the Gospels.
- Jeet Thayil is a renowned author, best known for his book 'Narcopolis' which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize 2012 and won the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature. His most recent book 'Low' was released in 2020.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

ICICI Bank launched Digital banking Platform 'Merchant Stack'

- The ICICI Bank has announced the launch of a digital and contactless banking platform, especially for retail merchants. The service, called 'Merchant Stack', is targeted at the over 2 crore retail merchants in the country, covering grocers, supermarkets, large retail store chains, online businesses and large e-commerce firms.
- Retail merchants can avail the 'Merchant Stack' services on InstaBIZ, the mobile banking application of ICICI Bank for businesses.
- The wide range of banking, as well as value-added services, will enable merchants to meet their banking requirements seamlessly so that they can continue to serve their customers in the challenging times during the pandemic.

Oxford Economics has revised downwards the GDP growth forecast for India

- The Global forecasting firm Oxford Economics has revised downwards the GDP growth

forecast for India to 10.2 per cent for fiscal 2021-22.

- Earlier it predicted this at 11.8 per cent. The downward revision is based on the country's serious health burden, weak vaccination rate and lack of a convincing government strategy to contain the pandemic.

Shivalik Small Finance Bank Limited commenced operations as a Small Finance Bank

- The UP-based Shivalik Small Finance Bank Limited commenced operations as a Small Finance Bank (SFB) with effect from April 26, 2021. It must be remembered that the Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank (SMCB) is the first urban co-operative bank (UCB) in India to receive licence from RBI to operate as a Small Finance Bank (SFB).
- The bank has received the licence from RBI under Section 22 (1) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 to carry on the business of small finance bank in India. Shivalik SFB area of operation is Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, and parts of Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

RBI cancelled licence of Bhagyodaya Friends Urban Co-operative Bank Limited due to inadequate capital

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the licence of Maharashtra-based Bhagyodaya Friends Urban Co-operative Bank Limited due to inadequate capital. On liquidation, every depositor is entitled to receive deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to a monetary ceiling of Rs 5 lakhs from the DICGC subject to the provisions of the DICGC Act, 1961.
- According to the regulator, the bank with its present financial position would be unable to pay its present depositors in the full and public interest would be adversely affected if the bank is allowed to carry on its banking business any further. The bank has failed to comply with the requirements and the continuance of the bank is prejudicial to the interests of its depositors.

RBI allows commercial banks to pay up to 50% of pre-Covid dividends

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed commercial banks to pay dividends on equity shares for FY21, from the profits for the fiscal ended March 31, 2021, subject to certain conditions and limits. The new notification of RBI allows commercial banks to pay dividends not more than 50 per cent of the amount determined as per the dividend payout ratio prescribed. This means that banks may pay dividends up to 50% of what they paid before the Covid scenario.
- Earlier, RBI had asked all banks not to make any dividend payment on equity shares for FY20 from the profits due to the ongoing stress and heightened uncertainty on account of C-19. For co-operative banks, all the restrictions on dividends have been removed and they have been permitted to pay the dividend on equity shares from the profits of the financial year ended March 31, 2021. However, RBI has also instructed all banks to continue to meet the applicable minimum regulatory capital requirements after dividend payment.

RBI has Cancelled Licence of Sambandh Finserve

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a show-cause notice prior to cancelling the licence of fraud-hit Sambandh Finserve Pvt Ltd. after its networth eroded below the regulatory minimum and financial situation worsened beyond redemption over the recent months. Sambandh is registered as an NBFC-MFI.
- The Managing Director and CEO of Sambandh, Deepak Kindo, who was allegedly the main perpetrator of the fraud, has been arrested by Economic Offence Wing, Chennai. According to the RBI norms, NBFC is required to maintain minimum capital levels consisting of Tier-I and Tier-II capital, of not less than 15 per cent of their aggregate risk-weighted assets.

India elected to three bodies of U.N. Economic and Social Council

- India has been elected by acclamation, to three bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2022.
 1. Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)
 2. Executive Board of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
- Executive Board of the World Food Programme (WFP)

LIC has appointed homegrown payments player Paytm to facilitate its digital payments

- State-run Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has appointed homegrown payments player Paytm to facilitate its digital payments. Following a tie-up with another payment gateway earlier, the country's largest life insurer has sought a new deal as the majority of its payments have moved to digital modes.
- LIC has witnessed an upsurge in e-payments following the C-19 pandemic. The PSU insurer collects premiums worth Rs 60,000 crore via digital mode, which doesn't comprise payments made through banks.

RBI sets up committee to review working of Asset Reconstruction Companies

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a six-member panel to carry out a comprehensive review of the working of Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) in the financial sector ecosystem.
- The panel will be headed by former Executive Director of RBI, Sudarshan Sen.

Rating Agencies downgrade India's GDP forecasts for financial year 2022

- With the resurgence of C-19 cases posing risks to economic recovery, the leading brokerages have downgraded India's GDP growth projections for the current fiscal year 2021-22. Current fiscal year to as low as 10 per cent on local lockdowns threatening fragile recovery.
- In the C-19 ravaged 2020-21 fiscal (April 2020 to March 2021), the economy is projected to have contracted by up to 8 per cent. The low base of FY'21 was seen aiding a double-digit growth rate in the current fiscal before moderating to 6.8 per cent in FY'23.

RBL Bank and Mastercard have announced their partnership

- RBL Bank and Mastercard have announced their partnership to launch a mobile-based consumer-friendly payment solution 'Pay by Bank App', a first-of-its-kind payment functionality in India. RBL Bank account holders can now enjoy contactless transactions across the world through their mobile banking application both in-store and online. This functionality will be available at all Mastercard accepting merchants, worldwide that accept contactless and online payments.
- To provide enhanced security, 'Pay by Bank App' ensures that Bank customer's payment credentials are never exposed to the merchant, making the transaction completely secure.
- Customers will continue to receive the Mastercard consumer protection benefits that they currently enjoy on their debit cards.

Punjab National Bank launched digital initiative PNB@Ease

- Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched a digital initiative "PNB@Ease" under which every transaction undertaken by a bank branch will be initiated and authorised by customers themselves. This facility will enable the customers to avail all banking services under one roof.
- On its 127th foundation day, PNB announced other digital initiatives such as the instant opening of online saving accounts via video-KYC, insta pre-approved loan, insta Demat account and insurance facility through internet and mobile banking services. PNB's 127th Foundation Day celebrated on Apr 12, 2021.
- This facility will enable the customers to avail all banking services under one roof, he said, adding, PNB@Ease outlets would boost the bank's distribution capability and lower the cost of customer acquisition.
- The service can range from savings accounts opening to availing various loans and more, without visiting a branch or help from the bank employees.

Amazon launched \$250-million Venture Fund for Digitizing SMEs in India

- The e-commerce giant Amazon has launched a \$250 million (Rs 1,873 crore) venture fund called "Amazon Smbhav Venture Fund", to invest in Indian startups and entrepreneurs, with a focus on digitizing SMEs. The launch of the Amazon Smbhav Venture Fund aims to attract the best ideas and empower entrepreneurs in the country to partner in this vision.
- Digitisation of small and medium businesses (SME) in India
- Drive innovation in Agri-tech innovations to empower farmer productivity and reach
- Drive innovation in Health-tech to provide universal and quality health care
- As a part of its first investment through the 'Smbhav' fund, Amazon invested in Gurugram-based M1xchange which connects SMEs with banks and financiers.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will be set up a new Regulations Review Authority

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will be set up a new Regulations Review Authority (RRA 2.0) from May 1, 2021, to review the regulations, circulars, reporting systems and compliance procedures of the central bank for streamlining them and making them more effective. The

RRA will be set up for a period of one year unless the timeline is extended by the RBI.

- M Rajeshwar Rao, Deputy Governor, RBI will be the head of the Regulations Review Authority.
- RRA will be tasked with making regulatory and supervisory instructions more effective by removing redundancies and duplications if any.
- It must be noted that prior to this, a similar RRA was set up by RBI on April 1, 1999, for a period of one year to review the regulations, circulars, reporting systems, based on the feedback from the public, banks, and financial institutions.

Ashok Leyland incorporates new unit for freight business

- Commercial vehicles maker Ashok Leyland on Thursday said it along with Hinduja Leyland Finance has incorporated a company to take care of the freight mobility business.
- The company and its subsidiary Hinduja Leyland Finance Ltd have jointly incorporated a firm in the name of 'Gro Digital Platforms Limited' on April 14, 2021, Ashok Leyland said in a regulatory filing.
- "Gro Digital Platforms Ltd (GDPL) is incorporated to carry on the business of freight mobility and associated services relating to fleet-owners," it added.
- The firm, with its registered office in Chennai, is yet to commence operations, Ashok Leyland added.

Axis Bank became co-promoter of Max Life Insurance Company Limited

- Axis Bank Ltd informed it has become co-promoters of Max Life Insurance Company Limited, after completion of the acquisition of 12.99% stake collectively by the Axis Entities in the company. Axis Bank and its two subsidiaries Axis Capital Limited and Axis Securities Limited will collectively own a 12.99% stake in Max Life after the consummation of the deal.
- The Axis Entities have a right to acquire an additional stake of up to 7% in Max Life, in one or more tranches, subject to regulatory approvals. Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India gave its formal approval in February of 2021.

Bharti AXA Life and Fincare Small Finance Bank join hands for bancassurance partnership

- Bharti Axa Life and Fincare Small Finance Bank have joined hands for a bancassurance partnership under which the bank will sell insurance policies to its customers. This alliance will make life insurance solutions reachable to over 26.5 lakhs customers of Fincare Small Finance Bank and provide financial security to them.
- Under the partnership, Bharti AXA Life Insurance will offer its comprehensive suite of life insurance products, including protection, savings and investment plans, to the customers of Fincare Small Finance Bank across its 747 branches and digital network presence across the country.

Nomura has revised India's GDP forecast to 12.6% in FY22

- The Japanese brokerage company Nomura has revised the GDP forecast of India in the

financial year 2021-22 (FY22) to 12.6 per cent from the previous estimate of 13.5 per cent, amid rising coronavirus cases and higher inflation.

- Nomura has pegged the calendar year GDP growth at 11.5 per cent, a decline from 12.4 per cent estimated earlier.

SBI MF becomes first mutual fund company to cross Rs 5 lakh crore AAUM

- SBI Funds Management Pvt. Ltd has informed that it has become the first mutual fund house in India to cross the Rs. 5 lakh crore average assets under management (AAUM) mark. SBI MF has seen a growth of 35% during the financial year 2020-21, with its average AUM increasing from Rs 3.73 lakh crore to Rs 5.04 lakh crore.
- The company, which is a joint venture between India's largest lender, State Bank of India, and Europe's largest asset manager, Amundi. The fund house's SIP book has increased to ₹1,382 crores from ₹1,180 crores over the last year recording a growth of 17%.

RBI enhances temporary liquidity limit for states, UTs by around 46%

- The Reserve Financial institution of India has enhanced the momentary liquidity restrict for states and union territories by about 46% to assist them tide over their money movement mismatches.
- The revision of the restrict was really helpful by an advisory panel fashioned by the central financial institution to assessment the matter.
- The restrict was final enhanced in February 2016 beneath the methods and means advance (WMA) mechanism.

Bharti Airtel has entered into an agreement with Reliance Jio

- Bharti Airtel has entered into an agreement with Reliance Jio Infocomm to transfer 'Right to Use' for some of its 800 MHz spectrum in three circles to the Mukesh Ambani-led firm. Following this agreement, Bharti Airtel will receive a consideration of ₹1,037.6 crores from Reliance Jio for the proposed transfer. In addition, Reliance Jio will assume future liabilities of ₹459 crores relating to the spectrum.
- As per the agreement, which is subject to statutory approvals, Reliance Jio will acquire the right to use spectrum in the 800MHz band in Andhra Pradesh (3.75 MHz), Delhi (1.25 MHz) and Mumbai (2.50 MHz) circles through spectrum trading.

RBI to release Financial Inclusion Index (FI Index) annually

- The Reserve Bank of India has announced that it will periodically publish a "Financial Inclusion Index" (FI Index) annually in July for the financial year ending previous March. The FI Index would be based on multiple parameters and shall reflect the broadening and deepening of financial inclusion in the country, a statement on regulatory and developmental policies of RBI.
- Financial Inclusion has been a thrust area for the government, the Reserve Bank and other regulators, with significant progress made over the years. To measure the extent of financial inclusion in the country, the Reserve Bank proposes to construct and publish a

Financial Inclusion Index (FI Index) based on multiple parameters.

RBI Monetary Policy: Policy Rate unchanged

- The six-member monetary policy committee of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) headed by Governor Shaktikanta Das, has decided to keep key lending rates unchanged for the fifth consecutive time, in its April 2021 policy review meeting held between April 5 to 7, 2021. The Reserve Bank of India is likely to keep policy rates unchanged amid the uncertainty created by a fresh surge in coronavirus infections.

Major Decisions of Monetary Policy Committee meeting are:

- Policy Repo Rate: 4.00%
- Reverse Repo Rate: 3.35%
- Marginal Standing Facility Rate: 4.25%
- Bank Rate: 4.25%
- CRR: 3%
- SLR: 18.00%

RBI Monetary Policy Key Decisions:

- The Consumer Price Index of 2022 is predicted to be at 5.1%.
- RBI has also kept the accommodative monetary stance unchanged.
- Meanwhile, the GDP growth of India is projected at 10.5% in the financial year 2021-22.
- RBI is to buy Rs 1 lakh crores of G-Sec under the G-Sec Acquisition Programme.
- The Apex Bank has increased the centre's Ways and Means Advances by 46%. The current limit is Rs 32,225 crores. It has now been increased to Rs 47,010 crores.
- Maximum End of Pay balance for payment banks has been doubled to Rs 2 lakhs.
- Additional liquidity facility of Rs 50,000 crores announced for NABARD, SIDBI and NHB in 2021-22.

IMF revises GDP growth forecast of India to 12.5% for FY22

- International Monetary Fund (IMF) has raised its growth forecast for the Indian economy by 100 basis points to 12.5 per cent for the fiscal year 2021-22. GDP growth for FY23 is pegged at 6.9 per cent.
- The revised forecast was published in the IMF's World Economic Outlook. India is the only country among major world economies that is projected to grow at a double-digit rate during FY22.

World Bank, AIIB approve loan for USD 300 million projects to Punjab

- The World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) have approved the loan for USD 300 million (about Rs 2,190 crore) canal-based drinking water projects in Punjab. The project is aimed at ensuring quality drinking water and minimise water losses for Amritsar and Ludhiana. The entire project will be co-financed by IBRD (World Bank) – USD 105 million, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank – USD 105 million and the Punjab government – USD 90 million.
- The Infrastructure has been designed to meet the water demand for 30 years. It would

benefit the residents of Amritsar with an estimated population of 14.51 lakh for 2025 and 22.11 lakh for 2055.

- At present, the Canal Based Water Supply Project for Amritsar has been awarded to M/s Larsen & Toubro Limited at a contract amount of Rs.784.33 Crore.
- The total estimated Design-Build Cost of the Ludhiana Project is Rs.1093.92 Crore and the period for completion of the same is 36 months.
- The estimated Operation & Maintenance cost is Rs.270.73 Crore for 10 years. The total amount for the project comes out to Rs.1364.65 Crore.

World Bank approves USD 32 million project to Mizoram

- The World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved a USD 32 million projects to improve management capacity and quality of health services in Mizoram. The project titled "Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project" will strengthen the governance and the management structure of the Mizoram Health department and its subsidiaries. This project will support the state government's efforts to deliver quality healthcare for the poor and vulnerable and those located in remote areas.
- The key focus will be to strengthen the effectiveness of the state health insurance programme, build synergies with the Government of India's Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PMJAY), and thereby reduce financial barriers in accessing hospital services, prevent catastrophic out of pocket expenditure for health by poor families and expand coverage.
- The Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project will benefit the people across the state. It will also benefit healthcare personnel by strengthening their planning and management capabilities along with building their clinical skills and competencies.

Dalmia Bharat receives securities worth Rs 344 cr back from IL&FS Securities

- Cement maker Dalmia Bharat Ltd on Friday said securities worth Rs 344 crore have been credited back to the demat account of its arm by IL&FS Securities Services following an order of the Supreme Court.
- Mutual fund units of its two erstwhile subsidiaries were earlier "fraudulently and illegally transferred" by Allied Financial Services Pvt Ltd (AFSPL) "in collusion with IL&FS Securities Services Limited (ISSL)", Dalmia Bharat said in a regulatory filing.
- The two subsidiaries were of Dalmia Bharat's step-down firm Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited (DCBL).

ICICI Bank, PhonePe Tie Up For Issuance Of FASTags

- ICICI Bank and PhonePe announced their partnership for the issuance of FASTag using UPI on the PhonePe App. This integration allows over 280 million registered PhonePe users to order and track the ICICI Bank FASTag conveniently on the app.
- PhonePe users, who may be customers of any bank, will have a fully digitised experience as they don't have to visit physical stores or toll locations to buy a FASTag. ICICI Bank is the first bank to partner with PhonePe for the issuance of FASTag. NPCI, IHMCL and NHA are working together to make toll payments fully digital.

GST revenue collection in March 2021

- India's economic recovery is gathering steam. The GST collections for the month of March have topped Rs 1.23 lakh crore, setting a new record since the implementation of Goods and Services Tax in July 2017. The gross GST revenue collected in the month of March 2021 rose to a record of ₹ 1,23,902 crore of which CGST is ₹ 22,973 crore, SGST is ₹ 29,329 crore, IGST is ₹ 62,842 crore and Cess is ₹ 8,757 crore.

GST Collection previous months

- February 2021: ₹ 1,13,143 crore
- January 2021: ₹ 1,19,847 crore
- December 2020: ₹ 1,15,174 crore
- November 2020: ₹ 1.04 lakh crore
- October 2020: ₹ 1,05,155 crore

Facebook and Google to build new cables under the sea called 'Echo' and 'Bifrost'

- Facebook and Google are planning to build new subsea cables from the US to Singapore and Indonesia. Facebook has partnered with leading regional and global partners to build two new subsea cables Echo and Bifrost that will provide vital new connections between the Asia-Pacific region and North America. While Google is only investing in Echo. These cables will increase overall transpacific capacity by 70 per cent.
- These projects are still subject to regulatory approvals, when completed, these cables are expected to deliver much-needed Internet capacity, redundancy, and reliability. The announcements come at a time when the Covid-19 pandemic has increased the need for reliable Internet access.

UNESCAP: India's Economic Growth Of 7% in 2021-22

- The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) said in the latest update that, India's is estimated to record economic growth of 7% in 2021-22, over a contraction of 7.7% witnessed in the previous fiscal on account of the pandemic's impact on normal business activity.
- It also noted that maintaining low borrowing costs while keeping non-performing loans in check would be a challenge.

Paytm Money opens new R&D centre in Pune

- Online investment platform Paytm Money has set up a new R&D facility in Pune, Maharashtra, which will drive product innovation, especially in the area of equity, mutual funds, and digital gold. The company added that it plans to hire over 250 engineers and data scientists to build new wealth products and services.
- Paytm Money aims to achieve over 10 million users and 75 million yearly transactions in FY21, with the majority of users coming from small cities and towns.

Axis Bank to sell UK arm to tech platform

- Private sector lender Axis Bank has entered into a Share Purchase Agreement for sale of 100 per cent stake in its subsidiary, Axis Bank UK Limited to OpenPayd Holdings Ltd. The agreement was entered on March 31, 2021, and the transaction is subject to approval by the UK Financial Regulator, the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA).
- The consideration or the value for the transaction would be the completion net asset value (book value of the bank on the date of completion), plus a fixed premium of \$5,500,000. Axis Bank expects the sale to be completed by September 30, 2021 subject to the approval of 'Change in Control', received from the UK Financial Regulator, the PRA.

SBI inks USD 1 billion loan agreement with Japan Bank

- India's largest lender, State Bank of India, has raised \$1 billion from Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) to extend loans to the supply chain of the Japanese automobile industry in India. The loan is in the form of refinancing against the funding support provided to the manufacturers, suppliers and dealers of Japanese automobiles in India.
- This collaboration between SBI and JBIC will help the bank in extending loan facility to the entire supply chain at a time when people are preferring a personal mode of transport. Now the total loan facility between SBI and JBIC has become \$2 billion. Earlier in October 2020, SBI inked a similar agreement for \$1 billion with JBIC.

Govt pegs market borrowing at Rs 7.24 lakh crore in 1st half of FY22

- The government has decided to borrow Rs 7.24 lakh crore in the first half of 2021-22 fiscal (FY22) to meet resources to revive the economy hit by coronavirus pandemic. This borrowing is 60.06 per cent of the estimated gross issuances for fiscal 2021-22.
- According to Budget 2021-22, the estimated gross borrowing is pegged at Rs 12.05 lakh crore in the financial year beginning April 01, 2021. The government raises money from the market to fund its fiscal deficit through dated securities and treasury bills.

RBI extends deadline for processing auto-debit payments by 6 months

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended the timeline for processing recurring online transactions by 6 months to September 30, 2021. Earlier in December 2020, RBI had directed all banks including RRBs, NBFCs, and payment gateways that the processing of recurring transactions (domestic or cross-border) using cards or Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) or Unified Payments Interface (UPI) would not be continued beyond March 31, 2021, if they do not comply with Additional Factor of Authentication (AFA).
- This means that with effect from April 30, 2021, there were supposed to be no automatic recurring payment for various services, including recharge and utility bill, under arrangements/practices not compliant with AFA. However, banks and payment gateways had sought additional time to comply with the RBI directive on automatic recurring payment. Taking it into consideration, RBI decided to further extend the timeline.

Government announces Rs 14,500 crore capital infusion in 4 PSBs

- The Central Government has announced to infuse Rs 14,500 crore in four state-owned lenders namely Central Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of India and UCO Bank in 2020-21, by issuing non-interest bearing bonds to these banks. This infusion will complete the government's total capital infusion of Rs 20,000 crore in public sector banks for the current financial year 2020-21. Earlier in December 2020, it infused Rs 5,500 crore in Punjab and Sind Bank.
- The Recapitalisation bonds will be issued with six different maturities, and the special securities would be "at par" for the amount as per the application made by the eligible banks. Banks require capital to meet the mandatory reserve requirements laid out by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), make provisions for bad loans and kick-start the lending cycle when demand revives in the economy.

Union Bank of India launched "UNI – CARBON CARD"

- Union Bank of India has launched "UNI – CARBON CARD", an HPCL co-branded credit card on the Rupay platform of NPCI. It is a unique card designed with association with one of the largest Public Sector Bank, Union Bank of India and HPCL, a leader in the fuel retail and Rupay – India's largest card payment network. It will create an opportunity to create value for the customers.

Benefit:

- The Bank is having a total network of 9590+ branches and 13280+ ATMs across India, this co-branded credit card is a Bank's maiden joint venture.
- While using this card at HPCL retail outlets, the cardholder gets Cashback/Rewards in addition to the waiver of fuel surcharge provided by the Bank.
- Cardholders will be able to enjoy many freebies and offer brought out by NPCI such as Entertainment, Lifestyle, Travel, Shopping, Food delivery, etc.,
- The card is offered to salaried and others. The card limit offered is 20% of gross annual income with a minimum of Rs 50,000/- with no upper limit.