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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Ashgabat most expensive city for foreign workers in the world

- Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan in Central Asia, has been named the world's most expensive city for foreign workers. The city topped the list in a 2021 cost-of-living survey by consultancy firm Mercer. Hong Kong was on the second position, followed by Beirut in Lebanon and Tokyo in Japan.
- The annual report ranks 209 cities based on the cost of expenses like housing, food and transport. Most of the cities in the top 10 are those where economic growth has contributed to an increase in the cost of living. Three are Swiss cities, of which Zurich dropped to fifth, followed by Shanghai and Singapore. London was placed 18th.
- Ashgabat is known for its magnificent marble buildings and monuments. It is also home to one of Central Asia's most colourful bazaars called Tolkuchka Bazaar. Other tourist attractions include the National Museum, White Marble, Turkmenbashi Cableway, Museum of Fine Arts, Alem Cultural and Entertainment Center, and Turkmen Carpet Museum. Mumbai remains India's most expensive city at 78th rank but has dropped 18 places in this year's ranking "due to a relatively weak Indian rupee in comparison with other cities in the ranking." Other Indian cities on the list are New Delhi (117), Chennai (158), Bengaluru (170), and Kolkata (181).

World Bank Approved 125 million financial support for Kerala

- The World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved a \$125 million support for the 'Resilient Kerala Program' to help the state in preparedness against natural disasters, climate change impacts, disease outbreaks, and pandemics. The \$125 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has a final maturity of 14 years including a grace period of six years.
- The heavy monsoons of 2018 were the worst Kerala had seen in nearly a century, triggering devastating floods and landslides. It impacted more than 5 million people, mainly in the Pamba River Basin.

Amazon acquired an American instant messaging app 'Wickr'

- Amazon has acquired an American instant messaging app 'Wickr' to offer secure communications for businesses, government agencies, and individuals, who are moving to hybrid work environments, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It must be noted that Wickr offers the most secure, end-to-end encrypted, communication technology, with advanced security features, that are not available with traditional communications services across messaging, voice and video calling, file sharing, and collaboration.
- Wickr app has been acquired by Amazon.com Inc's cloud computing unit Amazon Web Services (AWS), for an undisclosed amount. Wickr is an encrypted messaging services, founded in 2012, and primarily used by

government agencies in the United States.

India and Bhutan jointly launched TIWB

- India and Bhutan have jointly launched the “Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB)”. It has been launched for strengthening the tax administration of Bhutan. It will focus on International Taxation and Transfer Pricing. TIWB programme aims to strengthen tax administrations among developing countries by transferring technical know-how and skills to their tax auditors and by sharing general audit practices & dissemination of knowledge products with them. This programme is another milestone in the relationship between India and Bhutan. It will be completed in 24 months’ duration.
- Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB) initiative was launched in 2015. Its main aim is to strengthen developing countries’ auditing capacity.

Nikol Pashinyan elected as the new Prime Minister of Armenia

- Armenia’s acting prime minister, Nikol Pashinyan, kept power in a parliamentary election that boosted his authority despite being widely blamed for a military defeat last year in the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave. Nikol’s Civil Contract party won 53.92% of the votes cast. An alliance led by his rival, ex-leader Robert Kocharyan, came second with 21%, according to the results based on ballots from 100% of precincts counted. Kocharyan was Armenia’s president from 1998 to 2008.

World Investment Report 2021: India was fifth largest recipient of FDI in 2020

- As per the World Investment Report 2021 by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), India was the fifth-largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows in the world in 2020. The country received USD 64 billion FDI in 2020, which is an increase of 27 per cent, over USD 51 billion inflows in 2019. The United States remained the largest recipient of FDI, although, the FDI inflow to the country decreased by 40 per cent, to \$156 billion, in 2020. China was the second-largest recipient with USD 149 billion FDI. The global FDI flows decreased by 35 per cent in 2020 to USD 1 trillion from USD 1.5 trillion in 2019.

Ebrahim Raisi will be new President of Iran

- Ebrahim Raisi has won the 2021 Iranian presidential election, winning 62 per cent of the vote with about 90 per cent of ballots counted. The 60-year-old Raisi will succeed Hassan Rouhani in August 2021, to begin his four-year term. He is also the Chief Justice of Iran since March 2019.

ESA will launch world’s first wooden satellite from New Zealand

- The European Space Agency (ESA) has planned to launch the world’s first wooden satellite. It is going to be launched from New Zealand. It will be launched from a Rocket Lab Electron rocket by the end of 2021. The satellite is the brainchild of Jari Makinen.
- The satellite, WISA Woodsat, is a nanosatellite. It is 10cm on each side, length, height, and width.

- The sensors of the satellite have been developed by the European Space Agency (ESA) and designers have placed the wood in a thermal vacuum chamber to keep it dry. A very thin aluminium oxide layer has been used to minimize the vapour coming from the wood and to protect it from the erosive effects of atomic oxygen. The non-wooden external parts are made up of aluminium rails.

SIPRI has released the SIPRI Yearbook 2021

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute(SIPRI) has released the SIPRI Yearbook 2021. The report assesses the current state of armaments, disarmament and international security. China is in the middle of significant modernisation and expansion of its nuclear weapon inventory, and India and Pakistan also appear to be expanding their nuclear arsenals.
- According to the yearbook, India possessed an estimated 156 nuclear warheads at the start of 2021 compared to 150 at the start of last year, while Pakistan had 165 warheads, up from 160 in 2020.
- China's nuclear arsenal consisted of 350 warheads up from 320 at the start of 2020. The nine nuclear-armed states – the U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea – together possessed an estimated 13,080 nuclear weapons at the start of 2021.

NATO leaders declared China a global security challenge

- NATO leaders declared that China poses a constant security challenge and is working to undermine global order. This is a message in sync with US President Joe Biden's efforts to get allies to speak out with a more unified voice against China's trade, military and human rights practices.
- The NATO leaders said that China's goals and 'assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to alliance security. The warning to China comes as Biden has stepped up his effort to rally allies to put up a unified voice about China's human rights record. Biden has also criticised China's trade practices and its military's increasingly assertive behaviour that has unnerved US allies in the Pacific.

Satya Nadella as new chairman of Microsoft

- Microsoft Corp, named Chief Executive Officer, Satya Nadella as its new chairman. He took over as the software giant's CEO in 2014, succeeding Steve Ballmer. He is credited with bringing new energy to the company, founded in 1975. The company also appointed former chairman John Thompson as a lead independent director. The top-level executive change comes just over a year after Gates stepped down from the board, saying he would focus on philanthropic works of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, one of the world's biggest charities.

Joe Biden names big tech critic Lina Khan as FTC chair

- President Joe Biden named Lina Khan chairwoman of the Federal Trade Commission, an

unexpected move that puts one of the most prominent advocates of aggressive antitrust enforcement against US technology giants in charge of the agency.

- News of Khan's appointment came hours after the Senate confirmed her for a seat on the FTC by a vote of 69-28. She will take over the agency from Acting Chairwoman Rebecca Kelly Slaughter, who has been a commissioner for three years and had been expected by some to be tapped by Biden to lead the agency permanently.
- Khan's elevation to chairwoman marks her rapid rise to the top of US antitrust enforcement. Currently a professor at Columbia Law School, just a few years ago she was a law student at Yale University. Now the 32-year-old is in charge of one of two agencies responsible for policing competition in the US. The other is the Justice Department's antitrust division.

2021 NATO Summit Held in Brussels, Belgium

- The leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) held a face-to-face summit on NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. The 2021 Brussels summit of NATO was the 31st formal meeting of the heads of state and heads of government of the alliance. The summit of the 30-member NATO group was held as a part of U.S. President Joe Biden's first foreign trip since he took office.
- All the leaders agreed on the "NATO 2030" agenda, a comprehensive initiative to make sure that the alliance remains ready to face future challenges.
- The agenda also states that NATO will strengthen political consultation and the resilience of society, reinforce defence and deterrence, sharpen the technological edge, and develop its next Strategic Concept in time for the summit in 2022.
The bloc agreed on a new cyber defence policy, to ensure that the bloc has strong technical capabilities, political consultations, and military planning in place to "keep its systems secure."

Naftali Bennett is Israel's new Prime Minister

- Naftali Bennett, the former Defence Minister of Israel, and leader of the Yamina party took oath as the Prime Minister of the country. The 49-year-old former tech entrepreneur replaces Benjamin Netanyahu, who has been forced out of office after 12 years (2009 to 2021). (Netanyahu is the longest-serving PM of Israel).
Bennett will lead a new coalition government, formed with Yair Lapid, head of the centrist Yesh Atid party. The new Coalition government will run on a rotation basis, which means that Bennett would serve as Israel's prime minister until September 2023, following which Lapid would take charge of the office, for the next two years, until 2025.

Israel will become the World's First Mask-Free Country from June 15

- Israel will become the world's first mask-free country in the Corona period. Here the rule of applying masks in closed places will end from June 15. This was announced by Israel's Health Minister Yuli Edelstein. The rule of applying masks outside has already been abolished in the country.
However, most restrictions related to foreign travel have not yet been lifted. For example,

travel to nine countries is still banned. There is a rule of quarantine for travellers coming from these countries. His corona test is also being done.

India ties with Russia as 4th largest forex reserves holder

- As per Reserve Bank of India's data, the foreign exchange reserves of India has crossed \$600 billion marks for the first time. The Forex reserve of India increased by USD 6.842 billion to \$605.008 billion in the week ended June 04, 2021. This is the lifetime high of India's foreign asset. With this, India has tied with Russia as the fourth largest reserve holder in the world. The forex reserve of Russia is calculated to be \$605.2 billion.

Former Mongolian prime minister Khurelsukh wins presidential election

- Former Mongolian Prime Minister, Ukhnaa Khurelsukh became the country's sixth democratically elected president, further consolidating the power of the ruling Mongolian People's Party (MPP) with a landslide victory. With 99.7% of votes counted overnight, Khurelsukh's tally had reached 821,136, or 68% of the total, the largest share of the vote since the democratic era began in 1990. Khurelsukh will replace incumbent Khaltmaa Battulga, who was denied an opportunity to seek re-election following controversial changes to Mongolia's constitution that restricted presidents to one term in office.

UK Asian Film Festival 2021: India's Tillotama Shome wins Best Actor award

- Indian actress Tillotama Shome has made the country proud by winning the Best Actor award at the 2021 UK Asian Film Festival (UKAFF). Tillotama won the award for her role in the film Raahgir: The Wayfarers. The film has been directed by Goutam Ghose. The UK Asian Film Festival (UKAFF) 2021 was the 23rd edition of the annual event. Apart from Tillotama, filmmaker Goutam Ghose has also won the Best Director award at the UKAFF.
- The film Raahgir: The Wayfarers, stars Adil Hussain (Lakhua), Tillotama Shome (Nathuni) and Neeraj Kabi (Chopatlal). It is a story of three strangers, living on a daily wage basis, who cross each other's path accidentally on a journey and develop a strong bond.

Google to build the longest undersea cable

- Google on Wednesday said it is building an open subsea cable that will connect the East Coast of the US and Las Toninas, Argentina with additional landings in Brazil and Uruguay.
- With the new cable, the tech giant aims to bolster internet connectivity to users in South America and enhance its existing cable investments in the region.
- The Firmina cable, named after Brazilian abolitionist and author Maria Firmina dos Reis, will be the longest cable in the world. It is capable of running entirely from a single power source at one end of the cable if its other power source(s) become temporarily unavailable, Google said in a blog post.

US traders have benefited the most in Bitcoin Investment Gain in 2020

- The US traders have benefited the most in Bitcoin Investment Gain in 2020, with a profit of

\$4.1 billion, according to the latest report by Chainalysis, a blockchain analysis company based in Manhattan, New York. Chinese traders stood second, with a profit of \$1.1 billion. India has been ranked at 18th spot with a profit of \$241 million, among the top 25 countries, in Bitcoin investment gains 2020.

List of top 5 countries in realised Bitcoin gains for 2020:

1. United States
2. China
3. Japan
4. United Kingdom
5. Russia

El Salvador becomes first country to adopt bitcoin as legal tender

- El Salvador has become the first country in the world to grant legal tender status to bitcoin. The use of bitcoin as legal tender will become law in 90 days.
- El Salvador's economy heavily relies on remittances and so those who are working abroad can send money back home in bitcoins. The use of bitcoin will be totally optional. It will bring financial inclusion, investment, tourism, innovation and economic development to the country.
-

Interpol launched "I-Familia" to identify missing persons

- Interpol has launched a new global database named "I-Familia" to identify missing persons through family DNA and help the police solve cold cases in member countries. Describing it as a groundbreaking database officially launched this month, the Interpol in a statement said it applied cutting-edge scientific research and used the DNA of relatives to identify missing persons or unidentified human remains around the world.
- I-Familia is a global database launched to identify missing persons through family DNA. It will help the police to solve cases in member countries.
- Interpol applies cutting-edge scientific research and uses the DNA of relatives to identify missing persons or unidentified human remains around the world.
- DNA kinship matching is used mostly in cases where a direct sample of the missing person is not available.

Indo-Thai CORPAT Begins in Andaman Sea

- The 31st edition of the India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) kicked off on June 09, 2021, in the Andaman Sea. The three-day coordinated patrol between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy is being conducted from 09 to 11 June 2021. From the Indian side, an indigenously built Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Saryu, is participating and from Thailand Navy, HTMS Krabi is participating in CORPAT, along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both navies.
- The CORPAT exercise is being conducted between the two navies bi-annually since 2005, along their International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).

CORPAT builds up understanding and interoperability between navies and develops measures to prevent and suppress unlawful activities like Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing, drug trafficking, maritime terrorism, armed robbery and piracy.

Abdullah Shahid was elected President of the 76th United Nations General Assembly

- Maldivian foreign minister, Abdullah Shahid was elected President of the 76th United Nations General Assembly (PGA) with an overwhelming majority. He garnered 143 votes in favour with 48 against – that gave him victory by a three-fourths majority. The post of the UN General Assembly President rotated annually among regional groupings. The 76th session (2021-22) is the turn of the Asia-Pacific group and this is the first time Maldives will be occupying the office of the PGA.
- The PGA's office is the highest office in the UN System and reflects the collective goodwill of the 193 Member States of the UN. Both Maldives and Afghanistan have friendly ties with India. India's vote however went to the Maldives since New Delhi had committed support to Shahid prior to Rassoul entering the fray.

India elected as member of UN ECOSOC for 2022-24

- India has been elected as a member of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the six main organs of the United Nations, for three-year terms of 2022-24. India was elected to the 54-member ECOSOC, by the UNGA on June 7, 2021, in the Asia-Pacific States category, along with Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Oman. ECOSOC serves as the central platform for discussing international economic, social and environmental issues and formulating policy recommendations addressed to member states and the United Nations system.

UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration officially launched

- The United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration has been officially launched, which will run from 2021 to 2030. United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration will be co-led by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO). It was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in a 2019 resolution.
- Protection and revival of millions of hectares of ecosystems all around the world for the benefit of people and nature. This in turn will contribute to the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals.
- A Multi-Partner Trust Fund has also been launched for the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Germany is the first country to provide funding of Euro 14 million towards this fund.

In order to support the launch of the UN Decade, a report has also been released which defines the need of having such a global restoration effort.

Pakistan To Produce Chinese C-19 Vaccine As 'PakVac

- Pakistan has launched a C-19 vaccine named 'PakVac' which will be manufactured in Pakistan. The vaccine is made with the assistance of the all-weather ally China to an extent

that it is said to be a localised version of China's CanSinoBio vaccine. Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Health Dr Faisal Sultan expressed happiness over the launch and said Pakistan will soon be able to start the production of the vaccine.

The vaccine is categorically said to be a localised version of the CanSinoBio vaccine of China, which means the vaccine has been designed and developed in China.

Bill Gates and EU pledge \$1 billion boost for green technology

- The European Union and an energy investment programme founded by Bill Gates plan to raise up to \$1 billion to roll out the low-carbon technologies Europe is betting on to meet its climate change goals. The partnership would see Gates-founded Breakthrough Energy use private capital and philanthropic funds to match funding provided by the EU.
- The aim is to together provide up to 820 million euros, or \$1 billion, from 2022 to 2026. Support will target hydrogen produced from renewable energy, sustainable aviation fuels, technology to suck CO₂ out of the atmosphere, and long-duration energy storage. Those technologies are seen as critical to slashing emissions from sectors like heavy industry and aviation but remain too expensive to scale up without support and compete with cheaper fossil fuel alternatives.

World's first CO₂ neutral cement plant in Sweden

- HeidelbergCement, the world's second-largest cement maker, plans to turn its Swedish factory in Slite into the world's first CO₂-neutral cement plant by 2030 via carbon capture technology. Following the planned retrofit, which will cost at least 100 million euros (\$122 million), the plant will be able to capture up to 1.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year.

UN Sustainable Transport Conference will be held in China

- The second United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference will be held from 14-16 October 2021 in Beijing, China. It will provide an opportunity to focus attention on the opportunities, challenges and solutions towards achieving sustainable transport worldwide.
- The conference will follow up on the first Global Sustainable Transport Conference, held in 2016 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, and is expected to indicate a way forward for sustainable transport to help achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

China confirmed first human case of H10N3 bird flu

- A 41-year-old man in China's eastern province of Jiangsu has been confirmed as the first human case of infection with the H10N3 strain of bird flu, China's National Health Commission (NHC). The man, a resident of the city of Zhenjiang, was hospitalised on April 28 after developing a fever and other symptoms. He was diagnosed as having the H10N3 avian influenza virus.
- H10N3 is a low pathogenic, or relatively less severe, the strain of the virus in poultry and the risk of it spreading on a large scale was very low.

First ever Asia-Pacific cybersecurity council launched by Microsoft

- The first Asia Pacific Public Sector Cyber Security Executive Council has been launched by Microsoft. It consists of policymakers and influencers from Brunei, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The council aims to accelerate public-private partnerships in cybersecurity and share threat intelligence. The council will meet virtually on a quarterly basis. As part of the council, government agencies and state leaders will join a forum. The forum includes Microsoft and its cybersecurity industry advisors. Encounter rates for malware and ransomware attacks are higher than average in the case of APAC. APAC means Asia-Pacific (A-sia PAC-ic).

Isaac Herzog: The New President of Israel

- Veteran Israeli politician, Isaac Herzog, has been elected as the President of the country on June 01, 2021, during the 120 members parliamentary election for 2021.
- 60-year-old Herzog will be the 11th President of Israel, assuming office with effect from July 09, 2021. He will succeed Reuven Rivlin, who is set to complete his tenure in July 2021 after seven years in office.

Dr Patrick Amoth Appointed as the Chairman of WHO Executive Board

- Dr Patrick Amoth, the acting Director-General for Health, Ministry of Health of Kenya has been appointed as the Chairman of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Executive Board, for a period of one year. The announcement was made during the 149th session of the WHO Executive Board, on June 02, 2021, by the outgoing Chair Dr Harsh Vardhan. Mr Amoth replaces Union Health Minister, Government of India, Dr Harsh Vardhan, who completed his tenure as Chairman of WHO Executive Board on June 02, 2021. Dr Vardhan will continue to be a member of the Executive Board of WHO till 2023. The chairman's post is held on a rotation basis for one year among regional groups.

WHO named C-19 variants first found in India as 'Kappa' and 'Delta'

- The UN health agency, World Health Organisation (WHO), has given easy-to-say labels to two variants of the C-19, first found in India. The two variants are B.1.617.1 and B.1.617.2. The B.1.617.1 variant of the C-19 has been named as 'Kappa' while the B.1.617.2 variant is named as 'Delta.' The naming of these variants do not aim at replacing the existing scientific names of these #SARSCoV2 Variants of Concern (VOCs) & Interest (VOIs), but is aimed at helping the public discussion about VOI/VOC.

NATIONAL NEWS

Andhra Pradesh started a Supporting Andhra's Learning Transformation (SALT) Programme

- Andhra Pradesh has started a Supporting Andhra's Learning Transformation (SALT) programme to transform foundational learning in government schools for which the World

Bank has approved a loan of 250 million dollars. The main objectives of the programme are strengthening foundation schools and providing training and skill development to teachers. Andhra Pradesh's public school education system has more than 40 lakh children and nearly 2 lakh teachers.

- The five-year programme is result-oriented with the WB releasing funds after key goals are achieved. The government has converted all Anganwadis into pre-primary schools and attached them to the nearest schools.

Law & Justice Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad launched 'itat e-dwar'

- Union Minister for Law & Justice, Communications and Electronics & IT, Ravi Shankar Prasad has formally launched the e-filing portal of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), 'itat e-dwar', in New Delhi. The newly developed e-Filing Portal would enable the parties to file their Appeals, Miscellaneous Applications, documents, paper books, etc., electronically. The portal will enable the online filing of appeals, applications and documents by various parties. According to Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, the launch of the e-filing portal of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), should be seen as a larger narrative of transformation the country is undergoing through the digital medium.

CM Dr. Pramod Sawant announced Goa becomes first state to go rabies free

- Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant announced that Goa has become the first state in the country to be Rabies free. CM informed that not a single case of rabies had been found in the state since the last three years. The team of mission rabies had been very effectively doing its job and had been also conducting vaccination for dogs.
- As per information, no rabies cases were reported in the state in 2018. The progress came on the heels of Mission Rabies, a statewide drive in place since 2014 which saw almost one lakh dogs given the anti-rabies vaccine yearly, and an awareness campaign that educated 5.2 lakh school children and 23,000 teachers about the virus. This included 50,316 vaccinations administered and 78,437 students reached until August 31st this year alone.

RK Sabharwal honoured with the highest civilian award of Mongolia 'The Order of Polar Star by his excellency

- Engineers India Limited (EIL) Chairman & Managing Director (CMD), RK Sabharwal has been honoured with the highest civilian award of Mongolia 'The Order of Polar Star by his excellency. The President of Mongolia recognises the outstanding contribution made by him towards the establishment of the first-ever oil refinery in Mongolia. On behalf of the government of Mongolia, this award was presented by His Excellency, the Ambassador of Mongolia to India, Gonching Ganbold, at a ceremony organised at the Embassy of Mongolia. The 'Order of Polar Star' is the most desirable and prestigious state award bestowed by the President of Mongolia which is highly valuable and distinguished and recognises individuals who have made an invaluable contribution with their outstanding hard work, intelligence and sincerity to the prosperity of Mongolia and its friendship with other nations, as well for outstanding contributions in the fields of arts, culture, science and humanity.

Rajnath Singh to inaugurate 63 bridge

- From Kungyam village in eastern Ladakh, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today virtually inaugurated 63 bridges. From Kunjan bridge on Leh-Loma road, Minister inaugurated the bridges built by Boarder Roads Organization (BRO) in Eight States across the country. The bridges include, 11 in Ladakh, four in Jammu and Kashmir, three in Himachal Pradesh, six in Uttarakhand, eight in Sikkim, 29 in Arunachal Pradesh and one each in Nagaland and Manipur. BRO used the latest technologies in building of these bridges. These are Class-70 bridges and can bear the load of movement of Tanks and other heavy vehicles. These bridges will facilitate strategic and quicker access not just to Armed forces but to people living in the border villages also.

Tamil Nadu CM announces Rs. 3 crore for gold medal winners

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Saturday announced that his government will reward sportspersons who bag medals in the upcoming Tokyo Olympic Games.
- CM MK Stalin said that sportsperson who win a gold medal will be given Rs 3 crore as prize money, while those winning silver medals will be given Rs 2 crore and Rs 1 crore will be given to bronze medal winners.
- Gagan Narang, a Chennai native who represented India in shooting and won a bronze in the 2012 London Olympics in the Men's 10m Air Rifle event, is still the only individual medallist from the state.

Delhi Govt launched Mukhyamantri C-19 Pariwar Aarthik Sahayata Yojana

- Delhi government has launched "Mukhyamantri C-19 Pariwar Aarthik Sahayata Yojana" to provide financial assistance to the families who lost a member due to the C-19 pandemic. According to notification by Social Welfare Department, Rs 50,000 ex-gratia will be provided to every family that has lost a member amid a pandemic. A pension of Rs 2,500 per month would also be given to those families that lost the sole breadwinner to the C-19 pandemic.
- Children who lost their both parents or single parent to C-19 will also be provided ₹2,500 per month till they achieve 25 years of age. The Delhi government will also provide free education to them.

LIC launched IT Platform 'e-PGS'

- Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has launched a centralized web-based workflow-based IT platform called "e-PGS". The new technology platform, e-PGS, has been designed to provide a centralized collection and payment accounting with a high level of bank integration. It has been designed to provide very innovative features of seamless and integrated banking with automatic reconciliations.
- This system is capable of providing comprehensive self-servicing capabilities through the customer portal. On this portal, corporate customers will be able to view their data, initiate actionable processes and lodge & track claims.

NSDC And WhatsApp Launch “Digital Skill Champions Program”

- The National Skill Development Corporation and WhatsApp announced an alliance to launch the Digital Skill Champions Program that aims to train India’s youth on digital skills, in order to make them employment ready. The partnership identifies two broad areas of collaboration viz., WhatsApp Digital Skills Academy and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (PMKK) and WhatsApp Business App Training sessions. Through this program, school and university students would be coached to imbibe digital and online skills that would culminate with WhatsApp and NSDC awarding ‘Digital Skill Champions’ certification. The course is based on a module format, is comprehensive and intensive in imparting knowledge about important aspects of the online ecosystem, equipping students with technology-based learning on campuses across tier 3 and 4 towns and cities throughout the country.

9th Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable to be hosted by India in 2022

- International Energy Forum (IEF) announced that India has agreed to host the 9th Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable (AMER9). The 9th Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable will be held in 2022. Dates of this conference will be announced later and it will take forward the understandings reached in the previous meeting in Abu Dhabi during 2018.
- The decision of India to be the host of this Energy Roundtable came after a virtual meeting between IEF Secretary-General Joseph McMonigle and Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.
- Chief executive officers of Indian Oil Corp, Bharat Petroleum, and Hindustan Petroleum Corp, in addition to senior officers from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, were also present at the meeting.

Central government released Smart Cities Awards 2020 winners

- The Central government has declared Smart City awards 2020 in which Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Surat (Gujarat) won the award jointly for their overall development. Whereas Uttar Pradesh emerged on the top among all states, followed by Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu under the Smart City award, 2020. The Smart City awards were given across the themes of Social Aspects, Governance, Culture, Urban Environment, Sanitation, Economy, Built Environment, Water, Urban Mobility. According to the Centre, of the total, proposed projects under the Smart Cities Mission, 5,924 projects (115% by number) worth Rs.1,78,500 crore have been tendered so far. Whereas work orders have been issued for 5,236 projects (101% by number) worth Rs.1,46,125 crore.

Odisha’s CM Naveen Patnaik launched ‘Ashirbad’ for education and health of C-19 orphans

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced a new scheme ‘Ashirbad’ for the education, health and maintenance of C-19 orphans. The Chief Minister announced that Rs 2500 per month will be deposited in the bank accounts of family members who have taken the responsibility for the children after the death of their parents.
- Children who lost their parents or the main earning person of the family on April 1, 2020, or

thereafter to C-19 will be eligible to be covered under the scheme. Such children under distress have been divided into three categories. Those who have lost both their parents, those who have lost either father or mother and those whose main earning member of the family, either father or mother have died.

NTPC won recognition as India's Best Employers among Nation-Builders 2021

- For the first time, NTPC won recognition as India's Best Employers among Nation-Builders 2021. It has been recognized as the 'Great Place to Work' for the 15th straight year by the Great Places to Work Institute. It has been ranked at 38th. It was ranked 47 last year.
- It also won its first-ever recognition of India's Best Employers among Nation-Builders 2021. NTPC, a Maharatna Community and Public Sector Unit work under the Ministry of Power. The PSU has also won the CII HR Excellence Role model award in March 2021. It is the highest award in the field of people management in the country. The 'Great Place to Work' certification is recognised worldwide and is considered the gold standard in identifying and recognizing great workplaces with high trust and high-performance cultures. It is the most definitive 'Employer of Choice' recognition certification that the organization aim to achieve.

Vijay Rupani CM of Gujarat launched Agricultural Diversification Scheme

- Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has virtually launched the 'Agricultural Diversification Scheme-2021', with the aim of making agriculture sustainable and profitable in the tribal areas of the state. The scheme will benefit more than 1.26 lakh vanbandhu- farmers from 14 tribal districts in Gujarat.
- The state government would distribute fertilizer-seed assistance worth around Rs. 31 crores to tribal farmers, which will also include 45 kg of urea, 50 kg of NPK and 50 kg of ammonium sulphate.
- Gujarat government has already provided assistance of Rs. 250 crore to 10 lakh tribal farmers under this scheme in the last ten years.

Jamsetji Tata tops inaugural Philanthropists of the Century

- Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, Indian pioneer industrialist and founder of the Tata Group, has topped the inaugural, EdelGive Hurun Philanthropists of the Century list, which ranks the world's 50 most generous individuals in the last century. As per the report, the total donations made by Mumbai-based Jamsetji Tata is estimated at US\$102.4 billion. He is the only Indian among the top 10 list, compiled by Hurun Research and EdelGive Foundation.
- The only other Indian in the list of 50 global philanthropists is Azim Premji, former chairman of Wipro. He is ranked at 12th position. Bill Gates & Melinda French Gates ranked second with donations worth \$74.6 billion. They are followed by Henry Wellcome (\$56.7 billion), Howard Hughes (\$38.6 billion), and Warren Buffett (\$37.4 billion) respectively.

Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi launched "JaanHaiToJahaanHai" awareness campaign

- The Minority Affairs Minister, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi launched a nationwide “JaanHaiToJahaanHai” awareness campaign on C-19 vaccination for rural and remote areas.
- The aim of this campaign is to aware people of the C-19 vaccination and to crush rumours and apprehensions related to C-19 vaccination. It has been launched by the Ministry of Minority Affairs in association with various socio-educational organizations, NGOs, and Women Self Help Groups.

Indian Navy and European Naval hold first joint exercise

- In a first, the Indian Navy is participating in a joint exercise with the European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR). Stealth frigate INS Trikand, will participate in the two-day exercise in the Gulf of Aden as it is already deployed in the region on anti-piracy operations. The aim of the exercise is to enhance and hone their war-fighting skills and their ability as an integrated force to promote peace, security and stability in the maritime domain. Along with the Indian Navy, other naval forces are from Italy, Spain and France. The naval exercise included advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises, tactical manoeuvres, Search & Rescue, and other maritime security operations.

Finance Ministry allowed HFCs above Rs 100 crore to use to SARFAESI law

- Ministry of Finance has allowed housing finance companies (HFCs) with asset size of over Rs. 100 crore to recover the dues using SARFAESI law. This move is expected to be a shot in the arm for thousands of small HFCs, as it will facilitate quick recovery of dues and encourage these companies to lend more.
- Earlier HFCs with assets over Rs. 500 crore (and notified by Finance Ministry) were allowed to use SARFAESI law to recover dues. Currently, there are nearly 100 HFCs that are registered with NHB. The top-10 HFCs account for 70-80 per cent of the assets of the housing finance industry. SARFAESI Act 2002 allows banks and other financial institutions to auction residential or commercial properties (of Defaulter) to recover loans.

No tax on cash deposits made by housewives during the demonetization scheme 2016

- The Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), Agra bench consisting of Judicial Member Lalit Kumar and the Accountant Member Dr Mitha Lal Meena has ruled that cash deposit made by the housewives during the demonetization scheme 2016, cannot be subject to addition if such deposits are below Rs 2.5 lakh and such amount shall not be treated as income of the assessee.
- The Tribunal was considering an appeal filed by a housewife, the assessee who deposited the cash of Rs 2,11,500 in the bank account during the demonetization period. It was the case of the assessee that she had collected/saved the above-said sum from her previous saving, given by her husband, son, relatives for the purposes of her and her family's future.

Arunachal Pradesh's woman, Tadang Minu becomes first to be appointed in AIBA

- Arunachal Pradesh woman, Dr Tadang Minu, becomes the first in the state and the second Indian woman in the country to be appointed as a member of the Coaches Committee of the

International Boxing Association (AIBA). She has been appointed by AIBA for her enormous knowledge and experience in the field of boxing.

Dr Tadang is currently the HOD of Physical Education at Rajiv Gandhi University(RGU) and is the chairman of the Boxing Federation of India's Women's Commission for two years.

PM Modi launched mYoga App on the occasion of Yoga Day

- On the occasion of the seventh International Yoga Day on June 21, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has unveiled the mYoga mobile app. The app has been developed in collaboration between the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (Ministry of AYUSH), Government of India.
- The mYoga app is preloaded with many yoga training videos and audio practice sessions, in different languages, that can be done in the comfort of our own homes.
- Currently, the mYoga app is available in English, Hindi and French, but will be made available in other UN languages in the upcoming months. Through this initiative, PM Modi government aims to achieve the 'One World, One Health' motto."

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar launched 'Mukhya Mantri Udyaymi Yojana'

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has launched two ambitious schemes christened as the 'Mukhya Mantri Yuva Udyaymi Yojna' and the 'Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyami Yojana. Both the schemes launched to promote entrepreneurship among youth and women of all sections under the state's 'Mukhaya Mantri Udyami Yojana scheme. The schemes were promised by the chief minister during the 2020 Bihar elections. Youth and Women-irrespective of caste and creed, wishing to start entrepreneurship, will get a loan of Rs 10 lakh, in which Rs 5 lakh would be a grant from the state government and the rest Rs 5 lakh will come as a loan, refundable in 84 instalments. He also launched a portal on which youth and women from all sections can register themselves for availing of the loan from the government.

PAN to be declared 'INOPERATIVE' if not linked before June 30, 2021

- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) had recently extended the deadline to link Permanent Account Number (PAN) with Aadhaar number to June 30, 2021, due to the difficulties posed by the ongoing C-19 pandemic. So now as the deadline is fast approaching, here are some guidelines which must be kept in mind. As per the new Section 234H of the Income-tax Act 1961, which has been recently introduced during Budget 2021, the PAN cards which are not linked to Aadhaar after June 30, 2021, would be declared "inoperative", as well as a penalty of Rs 1,000 may also be imposed. On the other hand, the person will be considered as an individual without a PAN card.

CM Arvind Kejriwal launched 'Jahan Vote, Wahan Vaccination' Campaign

- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched the 'Jahan Vote, Wahan Vaccination' campaign, with the aim to vaccinate all people above 45 years against C-19 in Delhi within

the next four weeks. There are around 57 lakhs people above 45 years in Delhi. Among them, 27 lakhs have been administered the first dose. The rest 30 lakh people still remain to be vaccinated with the first dose.

- The booth level officers (BLO) are being trained for this purpose. The BLOs will reach every home and enquire about people above 45 years. These officials will inform about the slots for vaccination at the nearest booth. If a person refuses to go to the vaccination centres, the BLOs will request him and try to convince him in this regard.

PM Narendra Modi launched crash course to train one lakh 'C-19 warriors'

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a crash course to train more than one lakh "C-19 warriors" as he called on the country to be prepared for challenges the coronavirus pandemic may pose in the future. The programme will be to be carried out from 111 training centres spread across 26 states. Amid all these efforts, skilled manpower is critical. For this and to support the current force of coronavirus warriors, one lakh youths are being trained. This training should be over in 2-3 months.
The training will be imparted to C-19 warriors in six customised job roles — Home Care Support, Basic Care Support, Advanced Care Support, Emergency Care Support, Sample Collection Support, and Medical Equipment Support. This will include fresh skilling as well as upskilling of those who have some training in this type of work.

MP Govt launched 'Yuva Shakti C-19 Mukti Abhiyan'

- The Government of Madhya Pradesh has launched 'Yuva Shakti C-19 Mukti Abhiyan' to make the people of the state aware of the ongoing C-19 pandemic. It translates to free from C-19 with the help of the youth power campaign. Students in colleges in small groups will be given information and details about the significance of C-19-friendly behaviour and vaccination.
- On the instructions of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the campaign has been launched by the higher education and the technical education department of the state in collaboration with the public healthcare and family welfare department.

Rajasthan govt will set Vedic Education and Sanskar Board for Sanskrit scriptures and Vedas

- The Rajasthan government will soon set up a Vedic Education and Sanskar Board to revive the knowledge of Sanskrit scriptures and Vedas. The board is likely to be formed in the next four to five months.
A committee, formed to define aims, objectives and functioning of the board, has submitted its report to the state government, Minister of State (MoS) for Sanskrit Education Subhash Garg mentioned, adding modules will be presented before the board based on the report. He stated the Vedic board would come into function after approval from Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

Validity of Udyog Aadhaar Memorandum extended till 31 December 2021

- The extension would facilitate the holders of EM Part II and UAMs to avail benefits of the provisions under the various existing schemes and incentives including Priority Sector

Lending benefits of MSME, the ministry said.

- In a bid to provide relief to the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) amid the Covid scenario, the government has extended the validity of the Udyog Aadhaar Memorandum (UAM) from March 31 to December 31.
- The ministry of micro, small and medium enterprises has issued an amendment to the original notification and extended the validity of Enterprise Memorandum (EM) Part II for the same duration as well. The extension would facilitate the holders of EM Part II and UAMs to avail benefits of the provisions under the various existing schemes and incentives including Priority Sector Lending benefits of MSME, the ministry said.

Telangana government has launched the Telangana AI Mission (T-AIM)

- Telangana government has launched the Telangana AI Mission (T-AIM) powered by Nasscom and as part of the T-AIM, an accelerator programme called “Revv Up” has been launched to enable and empower AI startups. The programme that will begin its first cohort in July is another step towards making Telangana and Hyderabad a global destination for AI and other emerging technologies.
- The accelerator programme, exclusively designed for growth-stage AI startups, will cover various sectors.
- Telangana Industries and IT principal secretary Jayesh Ranjan stated, “Telangana is committed to its vision of positioning the State as the leader in AI.

Government of India launched “Project O2 for India” initiative

- The government of India has launched ‘Project O2 for India’ to step up production of medical oxygen to meet the potential increase in demand due to further waves of the pandemic. ‘Project O2 for India’, an initiative of the Office of Principal Scientific Adviser, Government of India (GoI), aims to help stakeholders working to augment the country’s ability to meet the rise in demand for medical oxygen.
- Under the project, a ‘National Consortium of Oxygen’ is enabling the supply of critical raw materials such as zeolites, setting up of small oxygen plants, manufacturing compressors, final products such as oxygen plants, concentrators, and ventilators. Besides, the consortium is also working to strengthen the manufacturing ecosystem for long-term preparedness.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Approved Budgetary Support of Rs 499 cr for innovations

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the budgetary support of Rs 498.8 crore for iDEX-DIO (Innovations for Defence Excellence – Defence Innovation Organisation) for the next five years. The funds will be used to provide financial support to nearly 300 start-ups, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and individual innovators with a larger goal of ensuring self-reliance in the defence sector. The scheme is in sync with the government’s push to cut imports of military hardware and weapons and make India a hub for defence manufacturing.
- Facilitate rapid development of new, indigenized, and innovative technologies for the Indian defence and aerospace sector in shorter timelines.

- Create a culture of engagement with innovative startups, to encourage co-creation for defence and aerospace sectors.
- Defence Innovation Organisation(DIO) is a not-for-profit Organisation, incorporated under Section 8 of the Companies Act.
Founding Members: Its two founding members are Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) & Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) – Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).

Narendra Modi virtually addressed the 5th edition of VivaTech

- Prime Minister, Narendra Modi virtually addressed the 5th edition of VivaTech. VivaTech is one of the largest digital and startup events of Europe, held in Paris every year since 2016. PM Modi was invited as a Guest of Honour to deliver the keynote address at VivaTech 2021, which has been organised from 16-19 June 2021 in Paris. During his address, PM Modi invited the world to invest in India based on the five pillars: Talent, Market, Capital, Eco-system and, Culture of openness.
- Other prominent speakers of the event include the President of France Mr. Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister of Spain Mr. Pedro Sanchez, and Ministers/MPs from various European countries.
- VivaTech is jointly organized by Publicis Groupe, a prominent advertising and marketing conglomerate, and Les Echos, a leading French media group.
- The event brings together stakeholders in technology innovation and the startup ecosystem.
- It includes exhibitions, awards, panel discussions and startup contests.

IIT Bombay Hosts Conference of BRICS Network Universities 2021

- The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) is hosting a three day virtual “Conference of BRICS Network Universities”. This conference is being held as a part of India’s Chairmanship of the 13th BRICS Summit in 2021. The basic objective of BRICS Network University is enhancing educational cooperation in general, and especially in the realm of research and innovation. The theme of the Conference of BRICS Network Universities is “Electric Mobility”.
- The event will see 18 experts from Brazil, Russia, India, China and S. Africa deliver keynotes on various aspects of electric mobility like traffic management, hydrogen technology, hybrid vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and linkage between e-mobility and livelihoods.
- Around 100 students, researchers and faculty from the BRICS Network Universities of the five-member countries will participate in the conference.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan addressed the Global Yoga Conference 2021

- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare addressed the inaugural ceremony of Global Yoga Conference 2021. The event was organised by ‘Mokshayatan Yog Sansthan’ along with the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India & Indian Council for Cultural Relations to mark the occasion of the 7th International Day of Yoga which falls on 21st June 2021.
- Dr Harsh Vardhan highlighted how Yoga has helped people during COVID restrictions on

public activities. The benefits of Yoga in immunity building and management of stress are well documented with evidence. With programmes like this Global Yoga Conference, more people shall be drawn into the fold of practising Yoga and related activities.

Raja Parba- Odisha's Famous Festival celebrated

- Raja Parba festival celebrated in Odisha. It is a 3-days unique festival in which the onset of monsoon and the earth's womanhood is celebrated by the state. It is believed that during this time the Mother Earth or Bhudevi undergoes menstruation. The fourth day is the day of the 'purification bath'. During 3 days, women don't work.

This festival is synonymous with varieties of cakes (pithas). Thus, Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) has also launched a special programme named 'Pitha on Wheels'. Different kinds of pithas such as 'Poda Pitha', 'Manda', 'Kakara', 'Arisha', 'Chakuli' and 'Chandrakala' have been made available on 'Pitha on Wheels' (kiosks on wheels). These vehicles selling traditional cakes have been stationed in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Sambalpur.

IIT Ropar develops India's first power-free CPAP device 'Jivan Vayu'

- The Indian Institute of Technology, (IIT) Ropar has developed a device dubbed 'Jivan Vayu' which can be used as a substitute for Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) machine. Jivan Vayu can deliver high flow oxygen up to 60 Litres Per Minute (LPM).
- This machine is India's first such device that functions even without electricity and can work on both kinds of oxygen generation units like O2 cylinders and oxygen pipelines in hospitals.
- Earlier these provisions were not available in existing CPAP machines. CPAP therapy is a treatment method for patients having breathing problems during sleep called sleep apnea.

Jammu kashmir to set up mythological theme park

- The Jammu and Kashmir administration is planning to set up a theme park to showcase Indian mythology, particularly the Ramayana and Mahabharata, near the famous Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district and has sought investors for the project.
- The Katra Theme Park will combine education and entertainment and of course, mythology will headline Jammu and Kashmir's economic development, which aims to take a different route.
- The Union Territory's attempt at development, senior government officials said, will not be by building cement-making factories, but by using unique methods.

IIT launches new centre for digital Health

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay has set up the 'Koita Centre for Digital Health' (KCDH) under the aegis of the Koita Foundation. KCDH will be focused on driving academic programmes, research and industry collaboration in Digital Health. KCDH's academic and research focus areas include clinical applications (including electronic patient records and medical imaging), healthcare data management (including healthcare data

privacy and security), healthcare analytics, healthcare AI/ML, consumer health, public health and public policy.

- KCDH will offer minor, dual degree, Masters and PhD programs in Healthcare Informatics. KCDH will conduct industry, outreach programs for healthcare and industry professionals in digital health and enable them to act as force-multipliers.

Weyan village in Bandipora, India's first to inoculate all adults

- Weyan, a village in district Bandipora (J&K) has become the first village in the country, where the entire population above 18 years has been vaccinated. The vaccination in Weyan village was covered under the J&K model, a 10-point strategy to inoculate everyone who is eligible for the shots at a faster pace.
The Union territory also achieved 70 per cent vaccination for those in the 45+ age group despite the initial vaccine hesitancy, almost double the national average. The village is located only 28 kilometres away from Bandipora district headquarters, but a distance of 18 kilometres has to be covered by foot as there is no motorable road.

AISHE 2019-20 report released by Union Education Minister

- All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20 report has been released by Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'. As per AISHE in the last five years (2015-16 to 2019-20), student enrolment has grown by 11.4%. As per AISHE, female enrolment in Higher Education has increased by 18.2% from 2015-16 to 2019-20. AISHE 2019-20 is the 10 in the series of All India Survey on Higher Education. Department of Higher Education releases it annually.
- Total Enrolment in Higher Education: It stands at 3.85 crores in 2019-20.
- Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER): It is defined as the percentage of students belonging to the eligible age group enrolled in Higher Education. It is 27.1% in 2019-20.
- Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Higher Education: It stands at 1.01 in 2019-20. It shows improvement in the relative access to higher education for females of eligible age group compared to males.

European Space Agency to Launch 'EnVision' Mission to Venus in 2030

- European Space Agency (ESA), is now developing its own probe to study Venus, for holistic view of planet from its inner core to upper atmosphere. The mission dubbed as "EnVision" will probably be launched to the planet in early 2030.
- EnVision probe of ESA will determine how and why Venus and Earth evolved so differently, even while being in the habitable zone to the Sun.
- ESA will undertake this mission with contributions from NASA.
- EnVision spacecraft will carry a range of instruments to study the planet's atmosphere and surface, monitor trace gases in the atmosphere and analyse its surface composition. NASA would provide a radar to image and map the surface.

Ministry of Ayush Launches 'Namaste Yoga' App

- The Ministry of Ayush organised a curtain raiser event for the 7th International Day of Yoga. The event was organised by the Ministry of Ayush in association with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY). The event brought together several Yoga Gurus and experienced Yoga exponents on the virtual platform, to appeal to the world community to adopt Yoga in their daily life for the betterment of both the individual self and mankind. The event underlined the importance of the central theme of IDY 2021 "Be With Yoga, Be At Home". As a part of the event, a mobile application devoted to Yoga named "Namaste Yoga", was also launched. The Namaste Yoga" app has been designed as an information platform for the public, with the aim to raise awareness about yoga and make it accessible for the larger community.

Chief minister of Assam Sarma launched Sishu Seva Achoni for C-19 Orphans

- Assam chief minister, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma has dedicated Chief Minister Sishu Seva Scheme to the service of the beneficiaries and handed over the cheques of financial assistance to few beneficiaries who lost both their parents due to C-19. It may be noted that under the scheme an amount to the tune of Rs. 7,81,200 would be parked in the bank as fixed deposit in the name of each beneficiary.
- Monthly financial assistance of Rs. 3500 which will be realised from the fixed deposit will be given to the beneficiaries till they attain 24 years of age. On completion of 24 years of age, the principal amount parked as a fixed deposit against each beneficiary would be credited to their bank accounts.

DBS tops World's Best Banks 2021

- DBS Bank has been named by Forbes in their list of World's Best Banks 2021. DBS was ranked #1 out of 30 domestic and international banks in India for the second consecutive year. This is the third edition of the 'World's Best Banks' list by Forbes, conducted in partnership with market research firm Statista. Over 43,000 banking customers across the globe were surveyed on their current and former banking relationships. The customer survey rated banks on general satisfaction and key attributes like trust, digital services, financial advice, and fees.
- Recently, DBS Bank India was recognised as 'India's Best International Bank 2021' by Asiamoney. DBS was named 'Safest Bank in Asia' for the 12th consecutive year by New York-based trade publication Global Finance in 2020.

Anemia Mukht Bharat Index : Himachal in third spot

- Himachal Pradesh has climbed to the third spot in the Anemia Mukht Bharat Index 2020-21 national ranking with a score of 57.1. Himachal Pradesh was at rank 18 in the year 2018-19, but with consistent efforts of the government and the field functionaries, the state was able to achieve the third spot. Madhya Pradesh is in the first position with a score of 64.1 followed by Odisha with a score of 59.3. The prevalence of soil-transmitted helminths had decreased from 29% to 0.3% in a short span of three years.

- Anemia remains a major public health issue with high prevalence across the country irrespective of gender, age and geography.

First International Maritime Cluster of India to come up at GIFT City

- Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) will set up the country's first international maritime services cluster at GIFT City. The maritime cluster will be developed as a dedicated ecosystem comprising ports, shipping, logistics services providers and government regulators, all present in the same geographic vicinity — GIFT City. GIFT City is India's first operational smart city and international financial services.
- This will be a first-of-its-kind commercial maritime services cluster in India, which has been conceptualised to enhance the competitiveness and self-sufficiency of India in the maritime sector and provide a one-stop solution for the entire maritime fraternity.

Haryana CM announced creating 'Oxi-van' in Karnal

- Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar, announced to create of 80 acres of 'Oxi-van' (a forest) in the Karnal district. It was announced on the occasion of World Environment Day on June 5, 2021. Oxi-van will consist of 10 types of forests. On the occasion, highlighting the importance of trees and encouraging promotion, protection, planting of trees Haryana Government launched four important schemes:

Pran Vayu Devta Pension Scheme:

- Under this scheme, a pension amount of Rs 2500 will be provided in name of Pran Vayu Devta to maintain trees above 75 years. This pension would increase each year on the line of old age Samman pension.

Panchavati Plantation in Haryana:

- Under this initiative, the plantation will be done in name of Panchvati across the villages in Haryana. It will promote the process of getting natural oxygen from trees. Agroforestry will also be promoted on vacant land under the initiative. Thus, it will increase the income of Panchayats in rural areas.

Oxy-Van in Karnal:

- Oxy Forest was launched on Forest Department land in Mughal Canal, Karnal. Panchavati, trees of Bel, Amla, Ashoka, Banyan and Peepal were planted. It will be built on 80 acres area.

Oxy-Van in Panchkula:

It will be established in Bir Ghaggar on the area of one hundred acres in a bid to create Mother Nature's green lungs, for residents of Panchkula, to get in fresh oxygen. Rs One crore has been sanctioned for this initiative.

Grading index in school Education: Punjab tops performance

- Punjab, which has improved its showing from the 13th position it attained in 2018-19, topped the charts this time among all the states and union territories with a score of 929 out of 1,000, followed by Chandigarh (912) and Tamil Nadu (906).
- The performance grading index ranks the states on a set of 70 parameters relating to

learning outcomes and quality, access, infrastructure and facilities, equity and governance processes to catalyse transformational change in the field of school education.

Raimona reserve forest sixth national park of Assam

- Raimona in Kokrajhar district has become Assam's sixth national park. The 422 sq ft wildlife habitat in Kokrajhar district adjoins the western-most buffer to Manas Tiger Reserve. The five national parks that existed prior to the 422 sq. km Raimona are Kaziranga, Manas, Nameri, Orang and Dibru-Saikhowa.
- The Pekua river defines Raimona's southern boundary. Raimona is an integral part of the 2,837 sq. km Manas Biosphere Reserve and the Chirang-Ripu Elephant Reserve. Such secured transboundary ecological landscape will ensure the long-term conservation of endemic species like the golden langur, the mascot of Bodoland Territorial Council and endangered species such as the Asian elephant, the Bengal tiger and varied other flora and faunal species it support.

Rhea Chakraborty has bagged the number 1 spot in 'Times 50 Most Desirable Women 2020'

- The Times 50 Most Desirable Women 2020 list has been unveiled, and it features women under 40 across various fields. Rhea Chakraborty has bagged the number 1 spot on Times Most Desirable Women 2020 list. She was in the news for most of last year due to the sudden demise of Sushant Singh Rajput and the controversy around his death. Miss Universe 2020, 3rd runner-up Adline Castelino bagged the second spot in the list. Actress Disha Patani, Kiara Advani and Deepika Padukone were on the third, fourth and fifth spot respectively.

PM Modi Launched Three E-100 Ethanol Dispensing Stations in Pune

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually addressed the World Environment Day event, which was jointly organised by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. During the event, PM Modi also released the "Report of the Expert Committee on Road Map for ethanol blending in India 2020-2025". The theme of the report is 'promotion of biofuels for a better environment'.
- PM Modi also launched a Pilot Project of E 100 ethanol dispensing stations at three locations in Pune, for the production and distribution of ethanol across the country, because ethanol has a better impact on the environment as well as on the lives of farmers.

Tamil Nadu CM forms panel to study NEET

- Chief Minister MK Stalin on Saturday constituted a high-level committee headed by retired judge of Madras High Court AK Rajan, to study and submit a report on the impact of National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) on admissions to medical courses in State.
- In a statement, Stalin said that many educationists have opined that NEET had denied students hailing from rural areas, those from poor economic background, and those from Tamil medium of education, a chance at medical education.
- Keeping this in mind, the State government has been fighting a legal battle to ensure that

the admission to medical courses is granted on the basis of class 12 marks, and for scrapping NEET. The committee headed by AK Rajan would study whether the NEET has affected socially backward students during the past few years and if so, the panel would suggest alternative admission procedures to set right the ill-effects.

Rajasthan launches free coaching scheme

- Rajasthan has launched Chief Minister Anuprati Coaching Scheme to help underprivileged students prepare for entrance examinations to civil services and professional courses, with an aim to give them equal opportunity, said a circular issued by the state finance department.
- Students belonging to scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, other backward classes (OBC), extremely backward castes, minority and economically weaker sections with annual family income less than ₹8 lakhs per annum will be able to avail the scheme run by the tribal area development, minority affairs, and social justice and empowerment departments.
- Coaching will also be provided for engineering and medical entrance examinations apart from Common Law Admission Test (CLAT). Students' eligibility for the scheme will be based on marks scored in class 10 and 12.

Uttarakhand police to plant 1 lakh saplings

- The Uttarakhand Police on the occasion of World Environment Day, started a tree plantation campaign under which one lakh saplings will be planted in police premises across the state. The campaign will end on July 16. Environmentalist Dr Anil Joshi who inaugurated the campaign said, "If we do not take care of the environment even now, then destruction is certain."

Govt extends visa validity of foreigners stuck in India till August 31

- Owing to C-19 restrictions on international commercial flights, the government on Friday extended visa validity of foreigners stuck in India since March last year to August 31, 2021. Earlier, these foreigners had to get their visa extended every month.
- "In the light of non- resumption of normal commercial flight operations, it has been decided that the Indian visa or stay stipulation period of such foreign nationals stranded in India will be considered as deemed to be valid till 31.08.2021 on gratis basis without levy of any overstay penalty. These foreign nationals will not be required to submit any application to the FRRO/FRO concerned for extension of their visas," a statement from the Ministry of Home Affairs said.

Uttarakhand to establish 451 health centre

- Under the Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Program a budget of Rs one crore has been approved for establishing five new dialysis centres will be established in Bageshwar, Chamoli, Champawat, Tehri, Uttarakashi district, a statement issued by state government on Friday said.
- Along with the dialysis centre, the peritoneal dialysis centre is also to be established in Doon

Medical College for which a total budget of Rs 52 lakh have been approved.

- Under NPCDCS Programme, two five bedded cardiac care units will be established in Rudraprayag and Uttarkashi district, for which Rs 170 lakh at 85 lakh per unit have been approved.
- The government will also establish an NCD clinic in 34 CHC of Uttarakhand for which Rs. 34 lakh has been approved.

Adani launches green tariff initiative

- Adani Electricity Mumbai Limited (AEML) has decided to offer a Green Tariff Initiative for its consumers in Mumbai suburban area.
As per the company's official release, all consumers right from corporates, industrial, commercial, hotels, restaurants, and residential consumers can now switch to green energy.

Asia's first International Memory Studies Workshop hosted by IIT Madras

- Indian Institute of Technology Madras' Centre for Memory Studies recently hosted virtually Asia's first International Memory Studies Workshop. Indian Network for Memory Studies (INMS), the first national network in the field in Asia under the aegis of the International Memory Studies Association, Amsterdam.
- This international workshop on Memory Studies, the first of its kind in Asia, precedes the official launch of the Indian Network for Memory Studies (INMS).
- The launch of the INMS will take place in mid-June 2021 through a virtual event at IIT Madras.

Gujarat's Vishwamitri river project gets NGT nod

- The Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) recently directed the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC), Gujarat and other authorities to implement the Vishwamitri River Action Plan, including preparation for demarcation, plantation and maintaining the integrity of the river. The crocodiles, turtles & highly protected species have been breeding in the stretches of the river.

In its order, the NGT has observed that the river consists of catchments, floodplains, tributaries, ponds, river-bed and adjoining ravines which, along with the soils and vegetation on both sides, is the river's natural mechanism to retain the additional water, prevent floods and provide habitat for various species. The NGT has observed that the Vishwamitri River in Vadodara is among the 351 polluted river stretches identified by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), and the restoration of such stretches has also been "exhaustively considered" by the Tribunal in another hearing of a petition by the same applicants.

Wipro touched Rs. 3 trillion in market capitalisation for the first time

- Wipro has touched Rs 3 trillion in market capitalisation for the first time, becoming the third Indian IT firm to achieve the milestone after Tata Consultancy Services and Infosys. The company won its largest deal ever from German retailer Metro and has seen deal wins of \$7.1 billion. India has a total of 13 listed firms that have crossed the Rs 3 trillion m-cap.

Wipro now ranks 14th.

Reliance Industries is India's most valued company with a market capitalisation of Rs.14.05 trillion, followed by Tata Consultancy Services Ltd and HDFC Bank with an m-cap of Rs.11.58 trillion and Rs.8.33 trillion, respectively.

Narendra Singh Tomar virtually launched Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar virtually launched the Horticulture Cluster Development Programme (CDP) to ensure holistic growth of horticulture. In a pilot phase, the programme will be implemented in 12 horticulture clusters out of the total 53 clusters selected for the programme. A central sector programme implemented by the National Horticulture Board (NHB) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, CDP aims at growing and developing identified horticulture clusters to make them globally competitive.
- The programme is designed to leverage geographical specialisation and promote integrated and market-led development of horticulture clusters. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (MoA&FW) has identified 53 horticulture clusters, of which 12 have been selected for the pilot launch of the programme. Based on the learnings from the pilot project, the programme will be scaled up to cover all the identified clusters.

Third edition of the SDG India Index and Dashboard 2020–21 released

- The third edition of the SDG India Index and Dashboard 2020–21 was released by NITI Aayog today. Since its inaugural launch in 2018, the index has been comprehensively documenting and ranking the progress made by States and Union Territories towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Now in its third year, the index has become the primary tool for monitoring progress on the SDGs in the country and has simultaneously fostered competition among the States and Union Territories.
- NITI Aayog Vice Chairperson Dr Rajiv Kumar launched the report titled, SDG India Index and Dashboard 2020–21: Partnerships in the Decade of Action, in the presence of Dr Vinod Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, Shri Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog, and Ms. Sanyukta Samaddar, Adviser (SDGs), NITI Aayog. Designed and developed by NITI Aayog, the preparation of the index followed extensive consultations with the primary stakeholders—the States and Union Territories; the UN agencies led by United Nations in India; Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), and the key Union Ministries.

XraySetu Launched to Detect C-19 in Rural Population via WhatsApp

- A new AI-driven platform called 'XraySetu' has been developed to help in the early detection of C-19, with the help of Chest X-ray. The solution will be beneficial for early detection especially in rural areas, where RT-PCR tests and CT-Scans are not easily available. XraySetu will operate through WhatsApp. It will identify COVID positive patients even from low-resolution Chest X-Ray images sent over Whatsapp-based Chatbot.
- The solution has been developed by ARTPARK (AI & Robotics Technology Park), a not-for-profit foundation established by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, with

support from the Department of Science & Technology (DST), GOI, in collaboration with Bangalore based HealthTech startup Niramai and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

Bihar to provide 33% reservation for Girls : Nitish Kumar

- Female students in Bihar will get 33% reservation in seats of all engineering and medical colleges in the state, chief minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday announced. He was chairing a meeting via video conferencing where a presentation of proposed draft for the establishment of Bihar Engineering and Medical University. CM Nitish Kumar ordered the officials to implement the 33% reservation of seats for girls in the engineering and medical colleges, at the earliest.

The reservation will be for the girls who are domicile of Bihar. The state government is already providing 35% reservation for females in all state government jobs. The reservation for girls in the technical colleges will encourage them to take admissions in these colleges and increase the enrolment ratio of girls, the CM said.

Sanjay Dutt received UAE's Golden Visa

- The UAE government awarded Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt with its Golden Visa. The Golden Visa system essentially offers long-term residency to people with outstanding talents. In 2019, UAE implemented a new system for long-term residence visas enabling foreigners to live, work & study there without the need of a national sponsor & with 100% ownership of their business.
- Sanjay Dutt is the first mainstream to receive the Golden Visa. The visas have a validity of either 5 or 10 years and are renewed automatically.

Government launched YUVA PM Scheme For Mentoring Young Authors

- The Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education has launched a new initiative called 'YUVA- Prime Minister's Scheme For Mentoring Young Authors'. YUVA stands for Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors. It is an Author Mentorship programme to train young and budding authors, below 30 years of age to promote reading, writing and book culture in the country, and project India and Indian writings globally.
- The National Book Trust, India under the Ministry of Education will be the Implementing Agency for the scheme.
- A total of 75 authors will be selected through an All India Contest, that will be conducted through <https://www.mygov.in/> from 1 June – 31 July 2021.
- The young winning authors will be trained by eminent authors/mentors.
- A consolidated scholarship of Rs.50,000 per month for a period of six months per author will be paid under the Mentorship Scheme.

NSA Doval commissioned Indian Coast Guard's ship Sajag

- National Security Advisor (NSA), Ajit Doval has commissioned the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) Sajag, which has been constructed by Goa Shipyard Limited.

- Sajag is the third in a series of five offshore patrol vessels indigenously designed in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' vision. The indigenously-built ship is fitted with advanced technology equipment, weapon and sensors capable to carry a twin-engine helicopter and four high-speed boats.

CBSE launched Young Warrior movement to combat C-19

- CBSE launched a nationwide Young Warrior movement to engage 5 million young people to fight against C-19. This movement is expected to impact 50 million people. The Board has launched the movement together with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, YuWaah-UNICEF, and a multi-stakeholder consortium of over 950 partners.
- Students and teachers between the ages of 10 and 30 years can join this movement to safeguard themselves, their families, their communities, and the country.
- The movement will comprise a series of easy and real-life tasks with the Young Warriors earning a UNICEF certificate for their participation and completion of tasks.
- The tasks include promoting access to verified health and essential services, vaccine registration, C-19 appropriate behaviours, myth-busting etc. These tasks will be hosted in 10 regional languages to protect themselves, their families and their neighbourhood against C-19.

SPORTS

ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 now shifted to UAE & Oman

- ICC Men's T20 World Cup, originally slated to be held in India, will now be shifted to the UAE. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), which holds the hosting rights of this year's event, will inform the International Cricket Council (ICC) in this regard. The T20 World Cup was postponed last year due to the pandemic.
- The BCCI will remain the hosts of the event, which will now be held in Dubai International Stadium, the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi, the Sharjah Stadium, and the Oman Cricket Academy Ground, from 17 October to 14 November 2021.

Madhya Pradesh's all-rounder cricketer Anshula Rao first woman to get dope ban

- Madhya Pradesh all-rounder Anshula Rao became the first women cricketer to be handed a four-year ban after failing the dope test. She was handed the ban by the panel of the National Anti-Doping Agency for faking a dope test which dates back to July 2020. Earlier she was also found guilty of consuming a banned anabolic steroid '19-Norandrosterone. The U-23 cricketer has taken part in several BCCI organised domestic tournaments. She last took part in the 2019-20 U-23 event organised by the governing body.

Fourth win of Verstappen in the 2021 Formula One season

- Max Verstappen (Netherlands-Red Bull) has won the 2021 Styrian Grand Prix. This is the fourth win of Verstappen in the 2021 Formula One season. Also, with this win, Verstappen leads the 2021 driver's championship standings with 156 points followed by Hamilton (138). Lewis Hamilton (Britain-Mercedes) stood second. Valtteri Bottas (Finland- Mercedes) came third.

Deepika kumari bags three gold medals

- Olympic-bound archer Deepika Kumari helped India claim three recurve gold medals in the Archery World Cup Stage-3 here on Sunday.
- Thanks to Deepika's consistent efforts, India took the top honour in women's team, mixed team and women's individual events.
- With one compound gold, the country gathered four gold medals here.
- Deepika first joined hands with Komalika Bari and Ankita Bhakat to beat Mexico's Alejandra Valencia, Ana Vazquez and Aida Roman 5-1 in the final and take the women's team title.

Cristiano Ronaldo becomes joint top-scorer in men's international football

- Cristiano Ronaldo has become the joint-top scoring men's international player of all time. He is currently tied with Iran legend Ali Daei, who scored 109 times in 149 matches between 1993 and 2006.
Cristiano Ronaldo scored two penalties to tie the overall men's scoring record with 109 goals in 176 matches and Portugal advanced to the round of 16 at the European Championship after a 2-2 draw with France.

Neeraj chopra bags bronze medal

- Tokyo-bound javelin thrower from India, Neeraj Chopra on Saturday won the bronze medal at the Kuortane Games in Finland.
Neeraj Chopra threw an 83.12m in his first throw and improved it to 86.79m with his second attempt. The Indian's remaining four throws were fouls.

Australian swimmer Kaylee McKeown breaks 100-meter backstroke world record with a time of 57.45 seconds

- Australian swimmer Kaylee McKeown breaks the 100-meter backstroke world record at the South Australian Aquatic Centre with a time of 57.45 seconds from the previous mark of 57.57 seconds set by American Regan Smith in 2019.
Emily Seebohm finished second in 58.59 to qualify for her fourth Olympics..

India's official Olympic theme song 'Lakshya Tera Samne Hai' released

- Ahead of the Tokyo Games, the official Olympic theme song for the Indian contingent was launched. Mohit Chauhan has composed and sung the song titled "Lakshya Tera Samne Hai". The Games will open on July 23 and over 100 Indian athletes have qualified for the event so far.
The event was organised by Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and attended by its President, Secretary-General, Deputy Chef De Mission, Sports Secretary and DG Sports Authority of

India (SAI). Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju was the chief guest at the event.

New Zealand won first ICC World Test Championship

- New Zealand defeated India to win the first ICC World Test Championship. New Zealand chased down the target of 139 to win the first-ever World Test Championship final with eight wickets in hand.
- The last day of the match was played on June 23, 2021. The match saw 6 days play in place of the regular 5 days due to the rain factor. Kyle Jamieson (NZ) has been adjudged as the “Player of the match”, while Kane Williamson (NZ) is the “Player of the series”.

Rani Rampal, Manpreet Singh named captains of Indian hockey teams

- Midfielder Manpreet Singh was named captain of the 16-member Olympic-bound Indian men’s hockey team, while experienced defenders, Birendra Lakra and Harmanpreet Singh, were named vice-captains. This will be Manpreet’s third Olympics. Under Manpreet’s captaincy, the Indian team won the Asia Cup in 2017, the Asian Champions Trophy in 2018 and the FIH Series Final in 2019. The team led by Manpreet also made it to the quarterfinals of the FIH Men’s World Cup 2018 in Bhubaneswar.
- Rani Rampal was named the captain of the 16-member Olympic-bound Indian Women’s Hockey Team, announced Hockey India. Rani is the obvious choice not just for her on-field exploits but also for her innate ability to guide the youngsters in the team. Under Rani’s Captaincy, the Indian team over the past four years have achieved significant results including winning the Asia Cup in 2017, Winning Silver at the Asian Games 2018, Silver at Asian Champions Trophy 2018 as well winning the FIH Series Final in 2019. The team led by Rani also made it to the quarterfinals of the FIH Women’s World Cup 2018 in London for the first time.

Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce becomes second fastest woman of all-time ahead

- Jamaican sprinter Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce became the second-fastest woman of all-time behind 100 metres world record holder Florence Griffith-Joyner when she clocked 10.63 seconds at a meet in Kingston.
American Griffith-Joyner still holds the women’s 100m world record of 10.49 seconds, set in Indianapolis in 1988, as well as the three fastest times ever, with 10.61 and 10.62, also in 1988.

New Zealand’s Weightlifter Laurel Hubbard will be first trans athlete to compete at Olympics

- The New Zealand weightlifter Laurel Hubbard is poised to make history and headlines, as well as significant controversy, after being confirmed as the first transgender athlete to compete at an Olympic Games. The 43-year-old, who will be the fourth oldest weightlifter at an Olympics, is regarded as a genuine medal contender in the women’s super heavyweight 87kg-plus category in Tokyo.
But while her inclusion has been welcomed by trans groups, it has also been questioned by those who believe she has unfair advantages in strength and power, having gone through male puberty before transitioning in 2012.

Ireland's all-rounder cricketer Kevin O'Brien Announces Retirement

- Ireland all-rounder Kevin O'Brien has announced his retirement from one-day internationals. The 37-year-old Dubliner, who remains available for Test and T20 cricket, won 153 caps in the 50-over format, scoring over 3,000 runs and taking a national record 114 wickets in the format with his lively medium pace. But he is best known for a blistering World Cup hundred that saw Ireland beat England by three wickets in Bangalore during the 2011 edition. His 50-ball hundred remains the quickest in World Cup history, with O'Brien hammering an England attack that featured James Anderson, Stuart Broad, and off-spinner Graeme Swann.

Madhya Pradesh's para shooter wins gold at Peru event; creates world record

- Madhya Pradesh shooter Rubina Francis has set a world record and won herself the gold in the 10-metre air pistol para women event at World shooting Para Sport Cup in Peru on Wednesday. Rubina, 21, scored 238.1 points and beat the world record of Aysegul Pehlivanlar of Turkey, also securing the Paralympic quota for India at the Tokyo games this year. Rubina started the learning basics of shooting in 2006 in a camp organised by an academy in Jabalpur where she practised for 10 years before moving to Bhopal. In 2017, she started practising at MP Shooting Academy.

Wrestler Vinesh Phogat clinched gold medal in Poland open

- Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat won the gold medal in the 53 kg category at the Poland Open. It is her third title of the season. Earlier, She had won gold at the Matteo Pellicone event (March) and Asian Championship (April).
- She defeated Ukraine's Khrystyna Bereza in the final. Khrystyna Bereza won the silver medal at the Poland Open. Earlier, Indian wrestler Anshu Malik pulled out of the 57kg competition due to fever.

Portugal legend Ronaldo breaks Euros goal record and becomes first player to feature at five finals tournaments

- Cristiano Ronaldo now stands alone as the all-time record goalscorer at European Championships, after also becoming the first player to feature at five finals tournaments in Portugal's 3-0 win over Hungary in Budapest on Tuesday.
- The Juventus forward has represented his country at every Euros since Portugal hosted the tournament in 2004, and he remains the talisman of the reigning champions 17 years later. Ronaldo added several records to his impressive individual collection of honours on Tuesday, becoming the top scorer in Euros history when he netted his 10th goal in the competition with a late penalty, which was followed by his 11th in stoppage time.

Vinoo Mankad and 9 others inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

- The ICC has inducted 10 icons of the game, including India's Vinoo Mankad, into its

illustrious Hall of Fame with two players each from five eras, dating back to cricket's early days, making it to the list. The announcement has been coincided with the inaugural World Test Championship final, to be played between India and New Zealand from June 18 in Southampton.

- The 10 legends of the game to be inducted have all made a significant contribution to the history of Test cricket, and join an illustrious list of ICC Hall of Famers, taking the total number to 103 as a result of this intake. The inductees are:
- Aubrey Faulkner of South Africa and Monty Noble of Australia for the early era (pre-1918),
- Sir Learie Constantine of West Indies and Stan McCabe of Australia for the inter-war Era (1918-1945),

D. Gukesh wins Gelfand Challenge chess title

- D. Gukesh sensationally won the \$15,000 Gelfand Challenge chess title and with it, a 'wild card' for the elite Meltwaters Champions Chess Tour. He won all four rounds, including the key battle against Praggnanandhaa, and emerged on top after a series of favourable results from the games involving other title-contenders.

Novak Djokovic wins French Open Tennis Title 2021

- Novak Djokovic defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas to lift the French Open title for the second time in his career. Djokovic, with his 19th Grand Slam title, has closed in on Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal on the all-time Grand Slam titles list. Both the players have won 20 Grand Slams each. Djokovic has also become the first man in the Open Era to complete the career Grand Slam twice. (He has won the Australian Open nine times, Wimbledon five times, and the US Open three times.) He has become the first man in 52 years, after Rod Laver, to win all the four Grand Slams twice. Overall, he is the third male tennis player to achieve this unique feat. The third being Roy Emerson.

Patiala to host Indian Grand Prix 4

- The Athletics Federation of India (AFI), announced that the Indian Grand Prix 4 will be held on June 21 at the National Institute of Sports in Patiala. The decision to host the domestic events was made to give Indian athletes the maximum chance to qualify for Tokyo. India's star sprinters Dutee Chand & Hima Das are expected to participate in the fourth Indian GP of 2021. National Inter-State Athletics Championships will be held at the same venue from June 25.

EFA named Debbie as Football Association's first chairwoman

- England's Football Association named corporate executive and former RAC chief, Debbie Hewitt as its first woman chair, ending months of speculation over Greg Clarke's successor following his exit over inappropriate remarks. The FA, which was formed in 1863 and has been working to become more inclusive, launched its 'Pursuit of Progress' initiative in 2018. FA is the governing body of football located in England.

Sunil Chhetri surpasses Argentina's Lionel Messi and become the second-highest active international goal-scorer

- Sunil Chhetri surpasses Argentina's Lionel Messi and he has become the second-highest active international goal-scorer with 74 strikes. He made this record in a joint preliminary qualifying round match for the 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup. He is currently behind Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo (103) in the active international goal-scorer list. Chhetri also helped India register its first win in six years in World Cup qualifiers. Chhetri is just a goal away from entering world football's all-time top-10. Sunil Chhetri is an Indian professional footballer. He is popularly known as Captain Fantastic.

Indian Cricketer Sehwag launched cricket coaching website 'Cricuru'

- Indian star cricketer Virender Sehwag has launched an experiential learning portal for Cricket coaching named CRICURU. CRICURU is India's first AI-enabled coaching website, to offer a personalised learning experience for the younger players. The website can be accessed at www.cricuru.com

The curriculum for each player has been developed personally by Virender Sehwag along with former Indian Player and Batting Coach of the Indian Cricket team Sanjay Bangar (2015-19). Young players will be able to learn to play cricket through master classes by 30 player-coaches from across the globe like AB de Villiers, Brett Lee, Brian Lara, Chris Gayle, Dwayne Bravo, Harbhajan Singh, Jonty Rhodes, who will share their experience and learning with users.

Oman will host Hockey World Cup in 2024

- Oman has been named as the host of the inaugural International Hockey Federation (FIH) Hockey's World Cup. The FIH said the men's and women's events will take place in Oman's capital city Muscat in January 2024. The governing body said its Executive Board named Oman as host, after a recommendation from the organisation's Events Bidding Task Force. The FIH Executive Board announced the launch of the Hockey5s World Cup in 2019. The launch comes as Hockey is becoming an increasingly popular format of the sport, played on a smaller pitch and which has featured at the last two Summer Youth Olympic Games.

Germany's footballer Sami Khedira announced retirement

- Germany's FIFA World Cup-winner, Sami Khedira has announced retirement. He began his career at VfB Stuttgart and helped them win the league title in the 2006-07 season before moving to Real Madrid, where he won the league and Champions League in a trophy-laden spell. He played 77 games for Germany scoring seven goals and helped them win the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

Sergio Perez of Red Bull wins Formula 1's Azerbaijan Grand Prix

- Red Bull's Sergio Perez won a chaotic Azerbaijan Grand Prix with both Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton failing to finish. This was the first win for Perez since joining Red Bull.

Sebastian Vettel for Aston Martin and Pierre Gasly for Alpha Tauri completed the unexpected podium. Verstappen crashed with five laps to go and the race at his mercy. Hamilton then locked up at the restart when on target for the second.

Singapore F1 Grand Prix Cancelled Due To C-19 Pandemic

- Formula One's Singapore Grand Prix has been called off this year due to C-19 restrictions, local organiser Singapore GP Pte Ltd have confirmed. "To cancel the event for a second year is an incredibly difficult decision, but a necessary one in light of the prevailing restrictions for live events in Singapore." said Colin Syn, deputy chairperson of Singapore GP Pte Ltd.

Djokovic Wins Belgrade open

- World No. 1 Novak Djokovic captured the 83rd title of his career with victory on home soil at the Belgrade Open. The Serbian superstar lost his serve three times in the first set before changing his game to defeat Slovakian qualifier and first-time ATP Tour finalist Alex Molcan 6-4, 6-3 in 88 minutes at the Novak Tennis Center.

ICC Expands Men's ODI Cricket World Cup to 10 teams to 14 teams

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced that the Men's Cricket World Cup in 2027 and 2031, will once again be a 14-team, 54-match tournament. Earlier in the 2019 World Cup, only 10 teams contested, compared to 14 teams in the 2015 World Cup. These 14 teams will split into two groups of seven, top three from each group will be progressing to a Super Six stage, followed by semifinals and final. ICC has also decided to expand the men's T20 World Cup to 20 teams. The tournament will take place every two years from 2024-2030.

India's Sanjeet Kumar wins gold medal in Asian Boxing Championship

- India's pugilist Sanjeet Kumar won a gold medal in the 91 kg weight category at the ASBC Asian Boxing Championships.
- Sanjeet pulled off a massive upset as he defeated five-time Asian Championships medallist and Rio Olympic silver medalist Vassiliy Levit of Kazakhstan in a 3-2 split decision in the final of Asian Championships in Dubai to clinch the gold.

Utah Jazz's Jordan Clarkson wins 2021 Sixth Man of the Year

- Utah Jazz guard Jordan Clarkson has won the 2020-21 Kia NBA Sixth Man Award for his contributions in a reserve role. This is the first Sixth Man honour for Clarkson, who becomes the first player to win the annual award with the Jazz. Clarkson becomes the first player in Jazz franchise history to win the award and was presented the trophy by his teammate and fellow Sixth Man of the Year Finalist Joe Ingles. Clarkson received 65 first-place votes and earned 407 total points from a global panel of 100 sportswriters and broadcasters.

IPL 2021 expected to resume in the UAE in September-October

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has confirmed that the IPL 2021 Phase 2 will be held in the UAE during the September-October window. In a Special General Meeting chaired by BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) confirmed to the State units that the tournament will have to be shifted out of India on account of 'monsoon.'

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DRDO successfully flight-tests 'Agni P' Ballistic Missile off Odisha Coast

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested a New Generation Nuclear-Capable Ballistic Missile "Agni P (Prime)" from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha, Balasore. As per Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) officials, Agni-Prime is a new generation advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles. Agni P (Prime) is a new-generation advanced variant from the Agni class of missiles. It is a canisterised surface-to-surface ballistic missile having a range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 km.

DRDO Successfully Test Fires Enhanced Pinaka Rocket Off Odisha Coast

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test-fired an extended-range version of the indigenously developed Pinaka rocket. The rockets were launched from a Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL) at Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha. The enhanced range version of the Pinaka Rocket System can destroy targets at distances up to 45 km. 25 Enhanced Pinaka Rockets were launched in quick succession against different range targets. The Pinaka Rocket system has been developed jointly by Pune based Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) with manufacturing support from M/s Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur.

Microsoft Launched new Windows operating system 'Windows 11'

- Microsoft officially launched its new Windows operating system 'Windows 11'. It is being called as the "next generation" of Windows. The release comes nearly six year after the current latest Windows Operating System 'Windows 10' was launched in July 2015. Windows 11 is special because it focuses on a new user interface, a new Windows Store, and improvements to performance, including a centre-aligned Taskbar and Start button.
- One of the unique features of Windows 11 is that it will support Android apps via Amazon's app store. It will work better in touch mode as well. Windows 11 operating system (OS) will be available as a free upgrade for Windows 10 users in late 2021, as long as the user has a compatible PC that meets the requirements of

Microsoft's new operating system.

IIT Roorkee prof bags NSG award for 'blast-resistant' helmet

- Shailesh Govind Ganpule, an assistant professor at the mechanical and industrial engineering department (MIED), was conferred the award with the 'NSG Counter-IED and Counter-Terrorism Innovator Award 2021' for developing a "blast-resistant" helmet. This was the second edition of the annual award by NSG. Ceremony held at the National Security Guard (NSG) campus in Maneswar, near Gurgaon. The 'Blast-Resistant Helmet' designed by Prof. Shailesh Ganpule is an advanced version of conventional helmets to protect military personnel from IED-induced blast waves with a technology readiness of 4.

OBITUARY

National Award-winning Mollywood's cinematographer Sivan passed away

- Mollywood's veteran cinematographer and director, Sivan passed away recently. The ace cinematographer rose to fame in the Malayalam film industry with the photographs, he took for a film titled Chemeen. He has won a National Award three times in his career. His popular films include Abhayam, Yagam, Keshu, Kochu Kochu Mohangal, Oru Yathra, etc.

Founder of McAfee antivirus software J.D. McAfee, passed away

- British-American Software pioneer, John David McAfee, the creator of the McAfee antivirus software, has passed away. John was found dead in his cell in a jail near Barcelona, where he had been since October 2020, for evading taxes. The incident happened shortly after his extradition to the United States was authorized by Spain's National Court, on criminal charges filed in Tennessee by the Justice Department's tax division. He was accused to have deliberately failed to file tax returns between 2014 and 2018, despite earning millions from consulting work, cryptocurrencies, among other things.

DPIIT Secretary G. Mohapatra Passed Away due to C-19

- Guruprasad Mohapatra, the Secretary in the Department of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), has passed away due to C-19 related complications. Before being appointed as DPIIT secretary in August 2019, Mohapatra served as Chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI). He was a Gujarat cadre 1986 batch IAS officer, who had earlier served as joint secretary in the Department of Commerce.

Mufti Faiz-ul-Waheed, passed away

- Renowned Jammu-based Islamic scholar Mufti Faiz-ul-Waheed, who first translated Quran into Gojri language, has passed away in a Jammu. The scholar had also authored several booklets including 'Siraj-um-Muneera', 'Ahkam-e-Mayyat' and 'Namaz Kae Masayil Quran-o-Hadees Ki Roshni Mei'.

- Gurjari – also known as Gujari, Gujri, Gojari, or Gojri – is a variety of Indo-Aryan spoken by the Gurjars and other tribes of India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. The language is mainly spoken in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab, Delhi and other parts of India.

First President of Zambia Kenneth Kaunda passed away

- Zambian politician Kenneth Kaunda, who served as the first President of Zambia, has passed away.

Mr Kaunda served as the first President of independent Zambia for 27 years from 1964 to 1991. Zambia gained independence from Britain in October 1964.

Legendary the Flying Sikh/Milkha Singh passed away

- Legendary Indian sprinter, Milkha Singh has passed away due to C-19virus disease (C-19), at the age of 91. A former army man, Milkha Singh won several laurels for the country in track and field events across the globe.

Singh won four gold medals for India in the Asian Games, winning the 200 metre and 400-metre races in the 1958 Tokyo Asiad. He followed it up with gold medals in the 400 metre and 4×400 metre relay races in the 1962 Jakarta Asiad. He was unlucky to have missed out on an Olympic medal as he finished a close fourth in the 400 metres final at the 1960 Rome Olympics.

National award winning Kannada actor Sanchari Vijay passes away

- Veteran Kannada film actor Sanchari Vijay, who won the National award in 2015, has passed away.
- He made his debut in films in 2011 with the Kannada film Rangappa Hogbitna. His 2015 film Naanu Avanalla...Avalu, fetched him the Best Actor Award at the 62nd National Film Awards, in which he played the role of a transgender.

Former Indian volleyball captain Nirmal Milkha Singh passes away

- The former Indian women volleyball team captain Nirmal Milkha Kaur, who is the wife of sprint legend Milkha Singh (Flying Sikh), has passed away due to COVID-19 complications. Nirmal Milkha Singh was also a former Director of Sports for Women in the Punjab Government.

Mahavir Chakra recipient Brigadier Raghbir Singh passes away

- Mahavir Chakra recipient legendary veteran, Brigadier Raghbir Singh has passed away. He was commissioned on 18 Apr 1943 into the Sawaiman Guards as a Second Lieutenant and fought a number of wars including the second world war. For this gallant act, the then President of India, Dr S Radhakrishnan, honoured Lieutenant Colonel (later Brigadier) Raghbir Singh with Maha Vir Chakra, the second-highest gallantry award in the country.
- He participated in the Burma war in 1944 and went to Japan to fight. Thereafter, he fought in the Indo Pak war of 1947-48 in the Uri sector immediately after independence.

Padma Shri Awardee Eminent Environmentalist Radhamohan Passes Away

- Padma Shri winning noted Economist and Environmentalist, Prof Radhamohan Ji has passed away.
He was the former information commissioner of Odisha and had also served as a lecturer of Economics in different colleges in Odisha. He along with his daughter Sabarmatee were conferred with the prestigious Padma Shri Award in 2020 for their contribution to the agriculture sector.

Olympian S.S. Mathur passed away

- Olympian Surat Singh Mathur, the first from independent India to complete a marathon at the Olympics, passed away.
Running with the legendary Emil Zatopek in the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, Mathur completed the marathon in the 52nd place in 2:58.92s. A bronze medallist at the first Asian Games in 1951, Mathur, who was born in Mohammadpur Majri village (Karala) in Delhi, was a two-time National champion.

Dingko Singh, Asian Games gold-winning boxer, passed away

- Former Asian Games gold medalist boxer Ngangom Dingko Singh passed away early Thursday morning at his Sekta Mayai Leikai residence, in Imphal East district, after battling a prolonged illness. He was 47.
- Dingko had a long battle with liver cancer for which he received treatment in 2017. He also tested positive for C-19 last year but had recovered.

National award-winning Bengali Filmmaker Buddhadeb Dasgupta Passed Away

- The National award-winning eminent Bengali film Director Buddhadeb Dasgupta has passed away. He had won several National Awards for his contribution to Bengali cinema. Some of his national award-winning films include:
Bagh Bahadur(1989), Charachar(1994), Lal Darja(1997), Mondo Meyer Upakhyan (2002) and Kaalpurush(2005) – National Awards for Best Film.

Noted writer Kalipatnam Rama Rao passes away

- A renowned literary luminary Kalipatnam Rama Rao, popularly known as KaRa Master, has passed away. He was 97. Telugu literary persons and other celebs have mourned the writer's death. According to the reports, the writer had been suffering from age-related ailments for the past few days. The Central government has felicitated the eminent Telugu story writer with Sahitya Akademi Award.
- Born in 1924 in the Srikakulam District, KaRa Master rose to fame in 1964 with his story 'Yagnam,' a critique of feudal society. The former teacher has founded Katha Nilayam(Library) in 1997. It is a rich archive of rare Telugu literary works written by numerous authors from across the state.

Lima Bello passed away due to C-19

The demise of IOC Honorary Member Fernando F. Lima Bello, who passed away at the age of

89. Lima Bello was a world champion sailor (Snipe) in 1953 and competed at two Olympic Games, Mexico City 1968 and Munich 1972 (Dragon). He was later a member of the International Sailing Federation (now World Sailing) and President of the Olympic Committee of Portugal.

T.M. Kaliannan, former member of Constituent Assembly, passed away

T.M. Kalliannan Gounder, the last surviving former member of the Indian Constituent Assembly, died at the age of 101. He served as a Member of the Legislative Council in Tamil Nadu and also as an MLA thrice, between 1952 and 1967. He was reportedly the youngest member in the Constituent Assembly then and also a member of India's first provisional parliament.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Former judge S. N. Srivastava appointed as the chairman of IFUNA

- Justice (Retd.) Shambhu Nath Srivastava, a former judge of Allahabad High Court and former chief Lokayukta of Chhattisgarh, has been appointed the chairman of the Indian Federation of United Nations Associations (IFUNA).
Indian Federation of United Nations Associations, a non-profit organisation to promote objectives of the United Nations and its specialised agencies. IFUNA enjoys special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN.

P. Sinha appointed as Special Director of Central Bureau of Investigation

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Praveen Sinha as the Special Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Special Director is the second senior-most position in the agency after the Director.
- The post was vacant since the last three years and was earlier held by Rakesh Asthana. Sinha is an IPS officer of the 1988 batch from Gujarat-cadre and prior to this, he was posted as Additional Director in the CBI.

Twitter appoints California-based Jeremy Kessel as India Grievance Officer

- Twitter has announced the appointment of California-based Jeremy Kessel as the new Grievance Officer for India. Kessel is the Global Legal Policy Director of Twitter. The appointment of Grievance Officer by social media companies is mandated under the new Information Technology Rules, 2021.
However, the appointment of Kessel is not seen to be in line with new IT rules guidelines, which mandate that the grievance redressal officer should be a resident of India.

Suresh N Patel appointed as acting Central Vigilance Commissioner

- The incumbent Vigilance Commissioner, Suresh N Patel has been appointed as the acting Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) of India in the Central Vigilance Commission with

effect. He has been appointed in place of Sanjay Kothari, who completed his term on June 23, 2021. He will remain on the post until the appointment of the new Central Vigilance Commissioner.

The Central Vigilance Commission is headed by the CVC and can have a maximum of two vigilance commissioners. Currently, Mr Patel is the only VC in the commission. The Personnel Ministry has invited applications for the posts of CVC and a vigilance commissioner.

Karnam Malleswari appointed as the First vice chancellor of Delhi Sports University

- The Delhi government appointed former Olympic medalist weightlifter Karnam Malleswari as the first Vice-Chancellor of Delhi Sports University. She is the first Indian woman weightlifter to bring home an Olympic medal. She created history at the Sydney Olympics in 2000 by lifting 110 kilograms and 130 kilograms in the 'snatch' and 'clean and jerk' categories. She has also been awarded the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, Arjuna Award and Padma Shri.

Jasprit Bumrah appointed as the brand ambassador of OnePlus

- OnePlus, the global technology brand welcomed cricketer Jasprit Bumrah as Brand Ambassador for its Wearables category. The partnership with Bumrah reiterates the brand philosophy of 'Never Settle' and the company's pursuit towards perfection. The OnePlus Wearable category includes the OnePlus Watch, the first global smart wearable from OnePlus that offers a premium design, seamless connection, smart fitness tracking and an incredible battery life.

Senior psychiatrist Pratima Murthy appointed as director of NIMHANS

- Dr Pratima Murthy, head of Department of Psychiatry, National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru has been appointed as Director of the Institute for a period of five years. She will retire in March 2026. She was awarded the WHO Regional Director's Special Recognition Award on 'World No Tobacco Day 2021'. She has been appointed by NIMHANS on the approval of the central government as the full-term director of the institute of national importance after Prof and Head of Neurology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Dr Padma Srivastava could not assume the top office due to some technical reasons.

British lawyer Karim Khan sworn in as the new chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court

- British lawyer Karim Khan was sworn as the new chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court. He pledging to reach out to nations that are not members of the court and to try to hold trials in countries where crimes are committed. He has defended clients at international courts including former Liberian President Charles Taylor & Kenya's Deputy President William Ruto.
- Khan, a 51-year-old English lawyer, has years of experience in international courts as a prosecutor, investigator and defence attorney. He takes over from Fatou Bensouda of the

Gambia, whose nine-year term ended.

Upasana Kamineni named 'Ambassador of Forest Frontline Heroes' at WWF India

- WWF India has inducted Upasana Kamineni, Director, Apollo Hospitals, as "Ambassador of Forest Frontline Heroes" with the aim to appreciate the efforts of frontline workers in hospitals and in the wildlife protection space. The focus of this will be on several States across the country covering most eco-regions. Frontline forest staff are often local community members themselves and play an important role in building an interface between communities and conservation.

Montek Ahluwalia named member of World Bank-IMF High Advisory Group

- Former Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Montek Singh Ahluwalia was named a member of a high-level Advisory Group formed by the World Bank and IMF. The group will be jointly led by Mari Pangestu, Ceyla Pazarbasioglu and Lord Nicholas Stern. The group was formed by the World Bank and IMF in the face of the dual crisis posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change. Mari Pangestu is Managing Director for Development Policy and Partnerships, World Bank. Ceyla Pazarbasioglu is Director, Strategy, Policy and Review Department, International Monetary Fund. The group will also include Gita Gopinath. Gita Gopinath as an Economic Counsellor and Director of the Research Department at the IMF.

Government of India appointed Aashish Chandorkar as director at India's WTO mission

- The government of India has appointed a private person Aashish Chandorkar as Counsellor in India's Permanent Mission in the World Trade Organisation for three years. For the first time, a private person has been appointed at the Mission.
- Chandorkar is director of Bengaluru-based policy think tank Smahi Foundation of Policy and Research. The WTO is a 164-member multi-lateral body, which deals with global trade. India is a member since 1995.

Puma India has extended partnership with Yuvraj Singh

- Global sports brand Puma India has extended partnership with former Indian cricketer Yuvraj Singh, who has been associated with the brand for over a decade. Moving from cricket to the fast lane, Yuvraj will now be seen in a new avatar as the face of Puma Motorsport in India, showcasing his passion for fast cars and sports-inspired fashion. With this, Yuvraj has joined the brand's global league of legends like Thierry Henry, Boris Becker and Usain Bolt. Globally, Puma is associated with Scuderia Ferrari, Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team, Aston Martin Red Bull Racing, BMW M Motorsport and Porsche Motorsport. With India being one of the biggest markets for Puma motorsport, the brand looks to capitalise on the growing demand for streetstyle products inspired by performance gear.

Mukesh Sharma appointed honorary member of WHO's Technical Advisory Group

- Mukesh Sharma, a faculty at IIT Kanpur, has been appointed as an honorary member of the

World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Air Pollution and Health – Technical Advisory Group (GAPH-TAG). Members of the Technical Advisory Group are selected across the globe and appointed by the Director-General, WHO. Sharma, associated with the civil engineering department at IIT Kanpur and an air quality expert, has melded rigorous research with policy engagement.

- The Technical Advisory Group is an advisory body to provide technical guidance and inputs to support the WHO's efforts and work in the fields of air pollution and health issues. It also helps with how member countries could achieve the sustainable development goals (SDG) related to air pollution and health such as SDGs 3.9.1, 7.1.2 and 11.6.2.

Bijender Goel Nominated as Founder President of the Indian Delphic Council (INDC)

- Mr. Bijender Goel - a Former Special Representative to Jharkhand (Cabinet Minister Rank), Former Adviser to Union Labour and Employment Minister, Government of India, Chairman of the National Council on Disaster management, ASSOCHAM, Member, Governing Council of Bir Tikendrajit University, Manipur and known for introducing earthquake onsite early warning technology in South Asia; has been nominated as the Founding President of the Indian Delphic Council (INDC) to head the Indian movement. He is also Advisor of the South Asian Affairs of the International Delphic Council.

Biotechnology company MyLab appoints Akshay Kumar as brand ambassador

- Bollywood superstar, Akshay Kumar has been appointed as the new brand ambassador of biotechnology company Mylab Discovery Solutions. This announcement comes days after the Pune-based firm launched the country's first COVID-19 self-test kit "CoviSelf". The partnership with Akshay is aimed at creating awareness for Mylab's products and kits such as CoviSelf.

India's Nagraj Adiga elected in International Association of Ultrarunners Council

- India's Nagraj Adiga has been elected as the Asia-Oceania Representative at the recently concluded 2021 International Association of Ultrarunners (IAU) Congress at which the IAU council elections were held.
- Adiga works closely with the Athletics Federation of India and with various Government bodies to promote health, fitness, and encourage budding sportspersons.

Rebeca Grynspan appointed as Secretary-General of UNCTAD

- The U.N. General Assembly has approved the appointment of Costa Rican economist Rebecca Grynspan, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). She will serve a four-year term of office. She is the first woman and Central American to head UNCTAD. She was nominated as Secretary-General by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Grynspan would replace Isabelle Durant, who is serving as acting Secretary-General since 15 February 2021. Prior to this, Grynspan served as UNDP's regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean and second vice president of Costa Rica from 1994 to 1998.

Ferrari appointed Benedetto Vigna as new company CEO

- Ferrari has named Benedetto Vigna as its new company CEO, taking over from interim chief John Elkann.
- Vigna currently serves as the president of STMicroelectronics' Analog, MEMS and Sensor Group, and is a member of the company's executive committee. Ferrari S.p.A. is an Italian luxury sports car manufacturer based in Maranello, Italy.

IFS officer K. N. Naidu named to lead UN bureaucracy for a year

- Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, K Nagaraj Naidu was named chef de cabinet by the incoming UN general assembly president, Maldivian foreign minister Abdulla Shahid. He was appointed for the duration of one-year tenure to lead the world body through its return to normalcy as countries strive to bring the pandemic under control. Naidu is India's deputy permanent representative to the UN, and he will be on loan from the Indian government to the United Nations for a position that is comparable to the Indian prime minister's principal secretary, who oversees the cabinet bureaucracy; also something like the chief of staff to the US president.

LIC Chairman M R Kumar got extension till March 2022

- The appointments committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the extension of the tenure of MR Kumar as the Chairman of state-owned insurance company Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC).
- Now under the extended term, Mr Kumar will serve on the post till March 13, 2022. Earlier his term as LIC chairman was supposed to end on June 30, 2021.

Facebook named Spoorthi Priya as grievance officer for India

- Facebook has named Spoorthi Priya as its grievance officer for India, the company said on its website. This move comes close on the heels of the new Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, coming into force last month. According to the new government guidelines, social media companies with over 50 lakh users have to appoint a grievance officer, nodal officer and a chief compliance officer.
- All three personnel will have to be residents of India. Facebook owned messaging platform WhatsApp appointed Paresh B Lal as the grievance officer a few days ago. WhatsApp, Facebook, and Google had shared information on their compliance officer, resident grievance officer and nodal contact person with the government on May 29. Two days after the new IT rules kicked into action.

M. K. Jain gets two-year extension as RBI Deputy Governor

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the re-appointment of Mahesh Kumar Jain as the Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for two more years with effect from June 22, 2021. The three-year term of MK Jain as RBI Deputy Governor was to end on June 21, 2021. Currently, Michael Patra, M Rajeshwar Rao and Rabi Sankar are the other three serving RBI

Deputy Governors.

Antonio Guterres second five-year term as chief of the world organisation

- The UN Security Council has recommended Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for a second five-year term as chief of the world organisation beginning January 1, 2022.
- The 15-nation Council held a closed meeting where it unanimously adopted a resolution recommending Guterres' name to the 193-member General Assembly for a second term as Secretary-General. Last month, India had conveyed its support to Guterres for his candidature as chief of the world body for a second term beginning January 2022.

CS Ghosh MD & CEO of Bandhan Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India has granted approval for the re-appointment of Chandra Shekhar Ghosh as MD and CEO of Bandhan Bank, for a period of three years. The re-appointment as above is subject to the approval of shareholders at the ensuing annual general meeting of the bank.

Ghosh, who has been one of the foremost proponents of microfinance in India, founded Bandhan in 2001 as a not-for-profit enterprise that stood for financial inclusion and women empowerment through sustainable livelihood creation. He was at the forefront of its transformation into an NBFC-MFI and finally the universal bank.

Anup C. Pandey appointed as new election commissioner of India

- The Union government has appointed Anup Chandra Pandey, a retired IAS officer of the 1984 batch, Uttar Pradesh cadre, as Election Commissioner. In the Election Commission, Pandey will have a little under three years in office and will retire in February 2024.
- Pandey has been appointed to the position left vacant by former Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora's retirement on April 12. Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar are the other two members of the panel. This restores the three-member commission to its full strength, which will now oversee the next set of crucial assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Goa, Manipur and Uttarakhand next year.

Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar assumes Charge as Director General Naval Operations

- Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, AVSM, VSM has assumed charge as Director General Naval Operations. The Flag Officer is a specialist in Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) and has served on frontline warships of the Navy as ASW Officer and later as the Executive Officer and Principal Warfare Officer of Guided Destroyer INS Mysore. He has commanded the missile corvette INS Kora, the missile frigate INS Shivalik and the aircraft carrier INS Viraat.

R Disale Appointed World Bank Education Advisor

- Ranjitsinh Disale has been appointed as the World Bank Education advisor, starting from June 2021 to June 2024. He is the first Indian to have been awarded the Global Teacher Award in 2020, will now be working on the Coach Project, launched by the World Bank in

March 2021. The project's aim is to 'help countries accelerate learning by improving teacher professional development.'

- Disale is from Paritewadi Village in the Solapur district of Maharashtra. He had initially wanted to become an engineer, but later took up the teacher's training programme. He is the first Indian to have been awarded the Global Teacher Award in 2020. He won the award in recognition of this work in promoting the education of girls.

Vishwavir Ahuja New MD and CEO of, RBL Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India has approved the appointment of Vishwavir Ahuja as the Managing Director and CEO of RBL Bank for a one-year period with effect from June 30, 2021.
- He has been the Managing Director & CEO of RBL Bank since June 30, 2010. Before RBL Bank, Ahuja was the Managing Director & CEO of Bank of America, India.

World Oceans Day 2021: 8 June

- World Ocean Day is observed globally on 8th June every year. This day is observed to raise global awareness about the importance of the ocean in our lives and the ways through which we can protect it. The purpose of the Day is to tell the general public of the impact of human actions on the ocean, develop a worldwide movement of citizens for the ocean, and mobilize and unite the world's population on a project for the sustainable management of the world's oceans.
"The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods" is the theme for World Oceans Day 2021, as well as a declaration of intentions that launches a decade of challenges to get the Sustainable Development Goal 14, "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources", by 2030. This year's theme is especially relevant in the lead-up to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, which will run from 2021 to 2030. The Decade will strengthen international cooperation to develop scientific research and innovative technologies that can connect ocean science with the needs of society.

Rajesh Nambiar appointed head of digital biz

Cognizant's India chairman Rajesh Nambiar appointed head of digital biz. Cognizant Technology Solutions Corp. has appointed Rajesh Nambiar, chairman and managing director of India operations, as president of Digital Business & Technology (DB&T) effective 4 June.

Vivek Ram Chaudhari appointed as IAF Vice Chief

- The Indian Air Force will see a number of changes at the top as Air Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari has been appointed as the next Vice Chief of Air Staff in the Air headquarters. Air Marshal Ballabha Radha Krishna would be succeeding Chaudhari at the Western Command in Delhi while Air Marshal RJ Duckworth would be taking charge of the Central Air Command in Prayagraj.

Amul's RS Sodhi elected to board of International Dairy Federation

- The International Dairy Federation (IDF) has unanimously elected R S Sodhi, managing

director, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd or GCMMF that sells Amul branded products in India, to its board during the general assembly held on 1 June. He is alumni of the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA). He joined GCMMF (Amul) in the year 1982 after completing his post-graduation from IRMA.

IDF is an international non-governmental, non-profit association and represents the global dairy sector. The federation ensures that right policies, standards, practices and regulations monitor the production of dairy products globally.

Vice-Admiral Ravneet Singh assumed charge as Deputy Chief of Naval Staff

- Vice-Admiral Ravneet Singh, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM), and Nausena Medal (NM) holder assumed charge as the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff.
- He relieves Vice Admiral MS Pawar, a Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM), AVSM, Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM) holder, who superannuated on May 31.

Dr Vinay K Nandicoori appointed as Director of Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology

- Former IITian, Dr Vinay K Nandicoori, has been appointed as the Director at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad, Telangana. He is a well-known molecular biologist, and a scientist at the DBT-National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi. Dr Nandicoori's research interest extensively spans molecular signalling networks in Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the micro-organism that causes TB. His research has found national and international relevance and recognition.

Magma Fincorp appointed Adar Poonawalla as chairman

- Magma Fincorp has appointed Adar Poonawalla as its chairman as part of a management overhaul following the Poonawalla-controlled Rising Sun Holdings acquiring a controlling stake in it. Rising Sun invested Rs 3,456 crore in the non-bank lender earlier this month.
- Magma will soon be rebranded as Poonawalla Group company. The lender has also appointed Abhay Bhutada as MD & Vijay Deshwal as CEO.

Justice A.K. Mishra will be the new chairperson of the NHRC

- Former Supreme Court judge Arun Kumar Mishra will be the new chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) after a high-powered recommendation committee proposed his name. The selection panel consisted of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Harivansh, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge.
- Former Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court, Mahesh Mittal Kumar, and former Director of Intelligence Bureau, Rajiv Jain, had also been recommended by the high-powered panel as members of the NHRC but the official notification is yet to be out until the filing of this report.

IBF appointed Justice (retired) Vikramjit Sen as the chairman

- The Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) announced the appointment of former Supreme

Court judge Justice Vikramjit Sen as the Chairman of its newly formed self-regulatory body Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC). DMCRC is formed as per the mandate of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. The move was done to bring together the broadcasters and OTT (over-the-top) platforms.

Tata Steel's T.V. Narendran takes over as CII president

- Tata Steel Ltd chief executive officer and managing director, T.V. Narendran has taken over as president of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for 2021-22. He takes over the leadership of the industry body from Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd managing director and chief executive officer Uday Kotak, who has completed his term. Narendran, an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, has been associated with the CII for many years. He was the chairman of CII eastern region during 2016-17 and has led the industry body's national committees on leadership and human resources, besides being chairman of CII Jharkhand.

CRPF DG Kuldip Singh gets additional charge of National Investigation Agency

- Director-General of Central Reserve Police Force, Kuldip Singh has been given additional charge of Director General of National Investigation Agency, NIA. He will hold the additional post after 31st or this month after the superannuation of Y C Modi. The Ministry of Home Affairs assigned the additional charge to Singh, a 1986-batch West Bengal cadre officer, who has been handling the post of CRPF Director General since March 16 this year. He has been appointed as DG, CRPF up to September 30, 2022—the date of his superannuation.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Asteroid Day 2021: 30 June

- International Asteroid Day is observed globally on 30th June every year. International Asteroid Day aims to raise public awareness about the asteroid impact hazard and to inform the public about the crisis communication actions to be taken at the global level in case of a credible near-Earth object threat.
- In December 2016 the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/71/90, declaring 30 June International Asteroid Day in order to “observe each year at the international level the anniversary of the Tunguska impact over Siberia, Russian Federation, on 30 June 1908, and to boost public awareness about the asteroid impact hazard.”

International Day of Parliamentarism 2021: 30 June

- International Day of Parliamentarism is observed globally on 30 June every year. The International Day of Parliamentarism is a time to review the progress that parliaments have made in achieving some key goals to be more representative and move with the times,

including carrying out self-assessments, working to include more women and young MPs, and adapting to new technologies.

The Day was established in 2018 through a United Nations General Assembly Resolution. This day also acknowledges the formation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the global organization of parliaments that was established in 1889.

National Statistics day 2021: 29th June

- The government of India is celebrated National Statistics day on 29th June on the birth anniversary of Prof. P C Mahalanobis. The Day is celebrated to create awareness among youth about the role of statistics in socio-economic planning and policy formulation. The Day to popularize the use of Statistics in everyday life and sensitize the public as to how Statistics helps in shaping and framing policies.
- End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and Improved Nutrition and Promote Sustainable Agriculture (Sustainable Development Goal or SDG 2 of the UN) is the theme of this year's National Statistics Day.
- National Statistics Day was first celebrated on 29th June 2007. The Government of India decided to celebrate the outstanding contribution made by Late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the field of economic planning and statistical development and hence mark his birth anniversary as 'National Statistics Day.'

International Day of the Tropics 2021: 29th June

- The United Nations observe 29 June as International Day of the Tropics. The International Day of the Tropics celebrates the extraordinary diversity of the tropics while highlighting unique challenges and opportunities nations of the Tropics face. It provides an opportunity to take stock of progress across the tropics, to share tropical stories and expertise, and to acknowledge the diversity and potential of the region.
The inaugural State of the Tropics Report was launched on 29 June 2014, as the culmination of a collaboration between twelve leading tropical research institutions. The report offers a unique perspective on this increasingly important region. Marking the anniversary of the report's launch the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/70/267 in 2016, which declared that 29 June of each year is to be observed as the International Day of the Tropics.

Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day 2021: 27 June

- The United Nations Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day is held on June 27 since 2017 to celebrate the work of MSME in local and global economies and their contribution to sustainable development. The day also recognises the contribution of these industries in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
In 2021, the theme is "MSME 2021: key to an inclusive and sustainable recovery." That is why the UN will be hosting a series of events to explore how MSMEs – the backbone of our economies – can be equipped to ensure an equitable and sustainable post-C-19 recovery.

International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking 2021 : 26th June

- International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is observed globally on 26th June every year. The day is observed by the United Nations as an expression of its determination to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.
- The theme of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking 2021 is “Share Facts On Drugs, Save Lives”.
- On 7 December 1987, the United Nations General Assembly decided to observe 26 June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking as an expression of its determination to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse by passing a resolution 42/112.

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture 2021 : 26th June

- International Day in Support of Victims of Torture is observed on 26th June every year. This day is observed by the United Nations to raise awareness among the people about human torture that it is not only unacceptable but it is also a crime. On 12 December 1997, The UN General Assembly passed a resolution 52/149 and decided to watch 26 June because the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture to eradicate torture and therefore the effective functioning of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. it's to be remembered that pain or suffering caused by the legal penalty isn't considered as torture. On 26 June 1998, the primary International Day in Support of Victims of Torture was held.

World Vitiligo Day 2021: 25 June

- World Vitiligo Day is observed on June 25 to build global awareness about vitiligo. Vitiligo is a skin disorder leading to loss of colour in the skin creating a variety of patterns on the skin from loss of pigment.
- Vitiligo is often called a disease instead of a disorder and that can have a significant negative social or psychological impact on patients. The first World Vitiligo Day was observed on June 25, 2011.

Day of the Seafarer 2021: 25 June

- The International Maritime Organization (IMO) celebrates the annual Day of the Seafarer (DoS) on June 25 each year to pay respect to Seafarers and sailors who help the entire world function by conducting sea transport. 2021 marks the 11th anniversary of DoS. In the wake of the C-19 pandemic, seafarers found themselves both on the front line of the global response and subject to difficult working conditions surrounding uncertainties and difficulties around port access, re-supply, crew changeovers, repatriation, etc.
- The theme of the 2021 campaign is “Seafarers: at the core of shipping's future”. The day was proposed by International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 2010 to celebrate the contribution of the seafarer to the world economy and civil society. This special day has been celebrated since 2011.

International Olympic Day 2021: 23 June

- The International Olympic Day is held on June 23 each year. The day is celebrated to encourage more people to participate in the Olympic Games and spread awareness about the event and promote the Olympic Movement. Based on the three pillars – “move”, “learn” and “discover” – the National Olympic Committees are deploying sports, cultural and educational activities to encourage participation regardless of age, gender, social background, or sporting ability.
- The Olympic Day 2021 theme is “Stay healthy, stay strong, stay active with the #OlympicDay workout on 23 June.”
- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) approved to observe Olympic Day in January 1948 to commemorate the creation of the International Olympic Committee on 23 June 1894. The creation of the modern-day Olympic Games is inspired by the ancient Olympic Games held in Olympia, Greece, from the 8th century BC to the 4th century AD. The first Olympic Day was celebrated in the year 1948.

United Nations Public Service Day 2021: 23 June

- United Nations Public Service Day is observed globally on 23rd June every year. This day is to highlight the contribution of public service in the development process and to value public service to the community. This day is widely known by various public service organisations and departments around the world by organising several events to recognise the role of public servants in making developments and improvements in the community. As a part of the occasion, the Division of Public Institutions and Digital Government of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs will host a virtual event, in collaboration with the government of the United Arab Emirates, under the theme of “Innovating the Future Public Service: New Government Models for a New Era to Reach the SDGs”.

World Music Day 2021: 21st June

- World Music Day is observed globally on 21st June every year. This day is celebrated to honour amateur and professional musicians. Over 120 countries celebrate World Music Day by organizing free public concerts in parks, streets, stations, museums and other such public places. The aim of celebrating World Music Day is to provide free music to everyone, and also to encourage amateur musicians to showcase their work to the world. World Music Day was founded by France’s Minister of Culture, Jack Lang and also Maurice Fleuret, a French composer, music journalist, radio producer, arts administrator, and festival organiser, on the day of the summer solstice in Paris in 1982.

International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice 2021: 21 June

- International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice is observed globally on 21st June. This day bring awareness about solstices and equinoxes and their significance for several religions and ethnic cultures. The International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 20th June 2019 within Resolution A/RES/73/300.

- Solstice is that the point at which the Sun is at its greatest distance from the world and equinox is when space is that the lowest. Both solstice and equinox have their own significance for Christians, Muslims, and other religions. A solstice derived from the Latin sol (“sun”) and sistere (“to stand still”) because the seasonal movement of the Sun’s daily path (as seen from Earth) appears to “standstill” at a northern or southern limit before reversing direction is an occasion that occurs when the Sun reaches its most northerly or southerly day-arc relative to the equator.

International Day of Yoga 2021: 21 June

- United Nations celebrates International Day of Yoga globally on 21 June every year to raise awareness worldwide of the many benefits of practising yoga. Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India. The word ‘yoga’ derives from Sanskrit and means to join or to unite, symbolizing the union of body and consciousness.
- Recognizing this important role of Yoga, this year’s commemoration of the International Day of Yoga focuses on “Yoga for well-being” – how the practice of Yoga can promote the holistic health of every individual.
- India proposed the draft resolution establish the International Day of Yoga and the proposal was endorsed by a record 175 member states. Recognizing its universal appeal, on 11 December 2014, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga by resolution 69/131.

World Refugee Day 2021: 20 June

- World Refugee Day is observed every year on June 20 to respect and honour the courage and resilience of refugees across the world. The United Nations observes this day to honour the refugees who have been forced outside of their homes. The day aims to build understanding and empathy for refugees building their lives in countries new to them.
 - This year the theme for World Refugee Day is ‘Together we heal, learn and shine’. The United Nations has stated that the coronavirus disease (C-19) pandemic has made it evident that we can only succeed by standing together. The UN has called for the greater inclusion of refugees in the healthcare system across the world.
- World Refugee Day was celebrated for the first time on June 20, 2001, on the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention. The United Nations General Assembly officially designated June 20 as World Refugee Day in December 2000.

National Reading Day 2021: 19 June

- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) celebrates National Reading Day annually on 19 June. The Day is celebrated to honour the father of the ‘Library Movement in Kerala’, the late P.N. Panicker, whose death anniversary falls on June 19. In 2021, 26th National Reading Day is being celebrated. The week following June 19 will be observed as Reading Week and the entire month till July 18 will be observed as Reading Month.
- The first Reading Day celebration was held in 1996. On June 19, 2017, Prime Minister launched the 22nd National Reading Month Celebrations and called for unity to spread the

message of 'Read and Grow' among all the citizens of the country by 2022.

International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict 2021 : 19 June

- International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is observed globally on 19th June every year. The day aims to raise awareness of the need to put an end to conflict-related sexual violence, honour the victims and survivors of sexual violence around the world and pay tribute to all those who have courageously devoted their lives to and lost their lives in standing up for the eradication of these crimes.

On 19 June 2015, the United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/69/293) announced 19 June of consistently the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. The date was picked to recognize the selection on 19 June 2008 of Security Council goals 1820 (2008), during which the Council censured sexual savagery as a strategy of war and a hindrance to peacebuilding. 2021 marks the seventh year of celebration of the day.

Autistic Pride Day 2021: 18 June

- Every year, Autistic Pride Day is observed on June 18 globally to create awareness about autism among people and recognise the importance of pride for autistic people and its role in bringing about positive changes in the broader society.
- The day is represented by a rainbow infinity symbol which denotes the infinite possibilities that autistic people have. Autistic Pride Day was first celebrated in Brazil in 2005, at the initiative of an organisation named Aspies for Freedom.

Sustainable Gastronomy Day 2021: 18 June

- Sustainable Gastronomy Day is observed on 18 June globally to focus the attention of the world on the role that sustainable gastronomy plays in our lives. The day was designated by UN General Assembly on 21 December 2016.

Gastronomy means the practice or art of choosing, cooking, and eating good food. In other words, Sustainable gastronomy takes into account where the ingredients are from, how the food is grown and how it gets to our markets and eventually to our plates. The day reaffirms that all cultures and civilizations are contributors and crucial enablers of sustainable development.

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought 2021: 17 June

- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed on 17th June every year. The day is celebrated to raise awareness of the presence of desertification and drought, and highlight methods of preventing desertification and recovering from drought.
- "Restoration. Land. Recovery. We build back better with healthy land" is the theme for 2021 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought.

In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly declared June 17 the "World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought" to market public awareness of the difficulty. The World Day to Combat Desertification may be a unique occasion to remind everybody that desertification is often effectively tackled, that solutions are possible, which key tools to the present aim lay in strengthened community participation and co-operation in the least levels.

Global Wind Day 2021: 15 June

- Every year the Global Wind Day is celebrated worldwide on 15 June to spread awareness about wind energy, the various uses of wind energy, and the ways and possibilities as to how wind energy can help change the world. Global Wind Day was first observed as Wind Day in 2007. Later, it was renamed Global Wind Day in 2009. Global Wind Day is organized by WindEurope and the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC). According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), wind energy is one of the fastest-growing renewable energy sources in the world. India will install 20GW of wind capacity over 2021-25. Wind energy is a source of clean energy and it is inexhaustible. At present, India has a total installed wind power capacity of 38.789 GW. India has the fourth-largest installed wind power capacity in the world.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2021: 15 June

- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is observed globally on 15th June every year. This day is celebrated to raise a voice for the elderly who are abused and victimized. The main objective of this day is to provide an opportunity for communities around the globe to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by creating awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect. The day was officially recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2011 bypassing the resolution 66/127 of the United Nations following a request from the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA).

International Albinism Awareness Day: 13 June

- The International Albinism Awareness Day (IAAD) is celebrated annually on June 13 to celebrate the human rights of persons with albinism worldwide. Each year events are held to educate people and celebrate people with albinism who continue to suffer all types of human rights violations.
- “Strength Beyond All Odds” is the theme for this year’s International Albinism Awareness Day. In the mid-2000s, there had been reports of violent attacks on and murders of people with albinism in Tanzania. The attacks were linked to beliefs that people with albinism had magical powers, so they were preyed upon for parts to be used as lucky charms and in occult rituals.

World Day Against Child Labour 2021: 12 June

- World Day Against Child Labour is observed globally on 12th June every year. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), there are about 152 million children globally who are engaged in child labour, 72 million of whom are in hazardous work. This year’s World Day Against Child Labour focuses on action taken for the 2021 International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour. The theme of this year’s World Day Against Child Labour is Act now: End child labour!. It is the first World Day since the universal ratification of the ILO’s Convention No. 182 on the

Worst Forms of Child Labour and takes place at a time when the C-19-19 crisis threatens to reverse years of progress in tackling the problem.

World Accreditation Day 2021: 9th June

- World Accreditation Day (WAD) is celebrated every year on 9 June to promote the role of accreditation in trade & the economy. The theme for WAD 2021 is “Accreditation: Supporting the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”. It provides the opportunity for ILAC and IAF members to share examples with stakeholders, regulators and consumers of how accreditation may be applied to meet objectives such as increasing trade, addressing environment and health and safety concerns, and improving the general overall quality of output in an economy. WAD is a global initiative, jointly established by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation.

World Food Safety Day: 7th June

- World Food Safety Day is observed on 7th June globally. The aim of the day is to raise awareness about different foodborne risks and the measures of how to prevent it. The campaigns will also spread awareness that how food safety is very much important and related to different other important factors of life such as human health, economic growth, and many others. Also, the day will surely ensure in building up a connection between food safety and other elements such as agriculture, sustainable development, and market access.
- This year’s theme is “Safe food today for a healthy tomorrow”. It discusses the fact that the production and consumption of safe food have immediate and long-term benefits. Recognizing the systemic connections between the health of people, animals, plants, the environment and the economy will help us meet the needs of the future.

UN Russian Language Day: 06 June

- The UN Russian Language Day is observed annually on 06 June. It is one of the six official languages used by the United Nations throughout the Organization. The day was established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2010.
- 6 June is chosen as UN Russian Language Day as it coincides with the birthday of Aleksandr Pushkin, a Russian poet who is considered the father of the modern Russian language. Each of the six official languages 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 Pest Day: 06 June

- Every year, World Pest Day (also sometimes called World Pest Awareness Day) is observed on 06 June. The main purpose of the day is to increase public, government, and media

awareness of the important role pest management organization plays in protecting public health, project the professional image of the pest management industry, promote the use of professional pest management in a scientific and socially responsible way and call attention to the big threats caused by small pests.

The first World Pest Day was marked in 2017. World Pest Day was initiated by the Chinese Pest Control Association, and co-sponsored by the Federation of Asian and Oceania Pest Managers' Association (FAOPMA), the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), and the Confederation of European Pest Management Associations (CEPA).

World Environment Day 2021: 5th June

- World Environment Day is observed globally on 5th June every year. This day is observed to raise awareness about protecting the environment and to remind people not to take nature for granted. The day provides an opportunity to broaden the “basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises, and communities in preserving and enhancing the environment.”

The theme of this year's World Environment Day is 'Reimagine. Recreate. Restore.' as this year marks the beginning of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Pakistan is the global host for the day to highlight the importance of ecosystem restoration this year.

International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression 2021: 04 June

- International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression is observed globally on 4th June every year. This day affirms the UN's commitment to guard the rights of children. This day is to acknowledge the pain suffered by children throughout the planet who are the victims of physical, mental and emotional abuse. The main aim of celebrating today is to spread the notice about the pain and sufferings faced by the victims as children. On August 19, 1982, during an emergency session on the question of Palestine, the UN General Assembly, appalled at the amount of innocent Palestinian and Lebanese child victims of Israel's acts of aggression, decided to commemorate 4 June of every year because of the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression.

World Bicycle Day 2021: 3rd June

- United Nations celebrates World Bicycle Day every year on 3rd June to advance the use of the bicycle as a means of fostering sustainable development. The day aims to strengthen education for children and young people, preventing disease, promoting health, promoting tolerance, mutual understanding and respect and facilitating social inclusion and a culture of peace.

The day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in April 2018. World Bicycle Day is being observed every year to encourage member nations to give particular attention to the bicycle in cross-cutting development strategies and to improve road safety and integrate it into sustainable mobility and transport infrastructure planning and design. It also

aims to promote the bicycle among all members of society.

World Milk Day 2021: 01st June

- The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations celebrates World Milk Day every year on 01st June to recognize the importance of milk as a global food, and to celebrate the dairy sector. It aims to encourage people to talk about the advantages of dairy with regards to health including nutrition, accessibility and affordability.
- This year, our theme will focus on Sustainability in the dairy sector with messages around the environment, nutrition and socio-economics. In doing so we will re-introduce dairy farming to the world.

Global Day of Parents 2021: 01st June

- United Nations celebrates Global Day of Parents on the 1st of June every year to honour all the parents throughout the world. The Global Day of Parents recognizes the primary responsibility of the family in nurturing and protecting their children. Hence, the day acknowledges the selfless commitment of all parents for their children including their lifelong sacrifice towards nurturing this relationship.

The Global Day of Parents emphasizes the critical role of parents in the rearing of children. The day was designated by the General Assembly in 2012 to honour all the parents throughout the world.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

JSCA, SAIL-BSL inks MoU for International Cricket Stadium in Bokaro

- The Jharkhand State Cricket Association (JSCA) has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SAIL Bokaro Steel Plant (BSL), for the construction of an International Cricket Stadium in Bokaro city. Once the stadium is ready, Bokaro will become the third city in Jharkhand to have an International Cricket Stadium after Jamshedpur and Ranchi. The MoU is a lease agreement under which Bokaro Steel Plant will transfer 20.17 acres of its land to JSCA for 33 years, for the construction of an international cricket stadium in the Balidih area of Bokaro. The proposed stadium will also be the first stadium to be constructed in SAIL township.

Jio and Google Cloud to Collaborate on 5G Technology

- Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited and Google Cloud are embarking on a comprehensive, long-term strategic relationship with a goal of powering 5G in enterprise and consumer segments nationwide. In addition, Reliance will also take advantage of Google Cloud's scalable infrastructure thereby enabling its retail business to achieve better operational efficiency, modernize and scale for growth, and deliver better performance and experiences to

customers.

As part of the partnership, Reliance will also augment its compute workload for retail business taking advantage of Google's AI/ML, e-commerce, and demand forecasting offerings. This will help Reliance to rapidly grow its new commerce business to leverage Google Cloud with increased reliability and performance, as well as scale up as needed to respond to customer demand. Jio will also adopt Google Cloud's scalable, serverless data analytics platform to advance its data-led innovation strategy.

India and World Bank signs an loan agreement for Mizoram

- The Government of India, along with the Government of Mizoram has signed a \$32 million loan agreement with World Bank for Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project. The project aims to improve the management capacity and quality of health services in Mizoram, with a focus on the benefit of under-served areas and vulnerable groups.
- The project will strengthen the governance and the management structure of the Department of Health and Family Welfare (DoHFW) and its subsidiaries, improve the quality and coverage of services delivered by the state government health systems, and invest in a comprehensive Quality Assurance program which would enable quality certification of health facilities.

The Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project will benefit the people across all eight districts of the state. It will also benefit health sector staff, specifically at the secondary and primary levels, by strengthening their planning and management capacity along with building their clinical skills and competencies.

India and Fiji inks MoU for cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors

- A virtual meeting was held between the Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, GoI, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar with Dr. Mahendra Reddy, Minister of Agriculture, Waterways & Environment, Government of Fiji. During the meeting, both the ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in the field of Agriculture and allied sectors. This MoU will further strengthen the multi-faceted cooperation between the two countries.

Bharti Airtel and Tata Group partner for 5G network solutions

- Bharti Airtel and Tata Group have announced a strategic partnership for implementing 5G network solutions for India, which will be available for commercial development from January 2022. Tata Group has developed an O-RAN (open-radio access network)-based radio and non-standalone architecture/stand-alone architecture (NSA/SA) core and has integrated a totally indigenous telecom stack, leveraging the capabilities of the group and its partners.
- The NSA/SA are radio technology that controls the signalling of 5G radio. While NSA can control signalling of 5G to the 4G core, the SA can connect the 5G radio directly to the 5G core network and control signalling does not depend on the 4G network.

Airtel will pilot and deploy this indigenous solution as part of its 5G rollout plans in India and start the pilot in January 2022, as per the guidelines formulated by the government. According to sources, Tata Group will work with Indian tech companies and start-ups for hardware solutions, Tata 'acting as a super integrator'. It can benefit from this partnership to export the technology to other countries such as Africa and Sri Lanka.

A new trade agreement between UK and Australia

- A new free trade agreement with the United Kingdom will deliver more Australian jobs and business opportunities for exporters, bringing both countries closer together in a changing strategic environment. Prime Ministers Scott Morrison and Boris Johnson have agreed on the broad outlines of an Australia-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The FTA is the right deal for Australia and the United Kingdom, with greater access to a range of high-quality products made in both countries as well as greater access for businesses and workers, all of which will drive economic growth and job creation in both countries. Australian producers and farmers will receive a significant boost by getting greater access to the UK market.

RRU Signs MoU With The Black Cat Commandos, National Security Guard (NSG)

- Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) has signed an MoU with the Black Cat Commandos to create indigenous anti-drone systems and other advancements.
- Taking the endeavors to create indigenous anti-drone systems, agile bomb disposal suits, night vision optics, and setting up a state-of-the-art forensics lab ahead, Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) has signed an MoU with the Black Cat Commandos. Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU), an Institute of National Importance pioneering in National Security and Police Administration of India set up under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India with a mandate to serve the nation by inculcating the latest technology for better Policing and National Security has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Security Guard (NSG) an elite zero error force under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The MoU was signed between Prof. (Dr.) Bimal N. Patel, Vice-Chancellor, RRU, and Shri M.A. Ganapathy, IPS, Director General, NSG in presence of Dr. Akshat Mehta, University Dean, RRU; Shri Konark Rai, Managing Director, Security, and Scientific-Technical Research Association and the entire NSG echelons. The occasion was witnessed online by Dr. Hemant Darbari, Director-General, C-DAC (RRU Partner), and the dignitaries from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

NTPC Joins UN's CEO Water Mandate for Water Conservation

- India's largest power utility, NTPC Ltd, under the Ministry of Power, has become a signatory to the prestigious UN Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate, that focus on efficient water management. The initiative also provides a platform for companies to partner with like-minded businesses, UN agencies, public authorities, civil society organizations, and other

key stakeholders.

The CEO Water Mandate is an initiative by the UN Global Compact, designed to assist companies in the development, implementation, and disclosure of comprehensive water strategies and policies, to better their water and sanitation agendas as part of long term Sustainable Development Goals.

SCO Agreement On Mass Media Cooperation Gets India's Retrospective Nod

- The Cabinet accorded an ex post facto approval for signing and ratifying an agreement on cooperation in the field of mass media between all member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The agreement aims to promote equal and mutually beneficial cooperation among associations in the field of mass media. The agreement, which was signed in June 2019, would provide an opportunity for the member states to share best practices and new innovations in the field of mass media. The main areas of cooperation in the agreement are the creation of favourable conditions for the wide and mutual distribution of information through mass media in order to further deepen the knowledge about the lives of the peoples of their states. The agreement shall promote equal and mutually beneficial cooperation among professional associations of journalists of the states in order to study the available professional experience, as well as to hold meetings, seminars and conferences.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Journalist P. Sainath wins Japan's Fukuoka Grand Prize 2021

- Journalist Palagummi Sainath has been awarded the Fukuoka Grand Prize for 2021. He is a committed journalist who has continued to investigate impoverished farming villages in India and captured the reality of the lifestyle of the residents in such areas. The award, established by Japan's Fukuoka city and the Fukuoka City International Foundation, is given to individuals and organisations for their work in preserving Asian culture.
- Besides the Grand Prize, there are two more award categories, academics and culture. The Academics Prize was given to Professor Kishimoto Mio, a historian from Japan who specialises in the socio-economic history of China in the Ming-Qing period. Thailand-based writer and filmmaker Prabda Yoon received the Arts and Culture Award. Sainath was born in Chennai and has served as the editor of The Hindu and as the vice-editor of political magazine Blitz.

French non-fiction author Emmanuel Carrere wins top Spanish award

- French author Emmanuel Carrere, popular for his non-fiction books in a high literary vein, has been granted this year's Spanish Princess of Asturias Literature Award. The 50000-euro award is one of the 8 prestigious prizes by the foundation named after the

heir to the Spanish throne, Princess Leonor. The 8 prizes cover different disciplines-arts, social sciences, sports etc.

Cochin International Airport won honour in airport service quality award

- Cochin International Airport (CIAL) won Airport Council International (ACI) Director General's Roll of Excellence honour in Airport Service Quality. This recognition is awarded to those airports which, in the opinion of passengers, consistently delivered excellent services. Cochin International Airport has consistently delivered excellence in customer service by winning multiple awards for five years in past 10 years. It is one among six airports across the world that will receive recognition in 2021.

Chemist Sumita Mitra honoured with prestigious European Inventor Award 2021

- Indian-American chemist Sumita Mitra has been honoured with the European Inventor Award 2021 in the 'Non-European Patent Office countries' category. She was the first to have successfully integrated nanotechnology into dental materials to produce stronger and more aesthetically pleasing fillings. The award, one of Europe's most prestigious innovation prizes, is presented annually by the European Patent Office (EPO) to recognise outstanding inventors from Europe and beyond.

Environmental Organisation 'Familial Forestry' wins prestigious UN Award

- The 2021 Land for Life Award has been won by Familial Forestry of Rajasthan, a unique concept that relates a tree with a family, making it a green "family member." The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) organises the Land for Life Award every two years to recognize excellence and innovation in efforts towards land in balance.
- The theme for the 2021 Award is "Healthy Land, Healthy Lives". The Land for Life Award was launched at the UNCCD COP (Conference of Parties) 10 in 2011. and is considered as the world's highest reward regarding land conservation and restoration. Familial Forestry is an environment conservation concept by climate-activist Shyam Sunder Jyani, an Associate Professor for Sociology in Rajasthan, who has been campaigning for Familial Forestry for over 15 years.

LTI Awarded Snowflake Global Innovation Partner of the Year

- Larsen & Toubro Infotech, a global technology consulting and digital solutions company has been recognized as the Global Innovation Partner of the Year by Snowflake, the Data Cloud Company. LTI received this prestigious recognition during Snowflake Virtual Partner Summit.
- The award represents a key milestone for the strategic partnership between LTI and Snowflake and will strengthen collaboration between the companies to empower enterprises with innovative solutions and services.

ReNew Power CMD Sumant Sinha recognised as SDG Pioneers by UNGC

- United Nations Global Compact has recognised Sumant Sinha, Chairman & MD of ReNew Power, as one of the ten SDG Pioneers 2021, for his work to advance access to clean and affordable energy. SDG Pioneers are business leaders selected by the UN Global Compact for doing an exceptional job to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This honour comes in recognition of Sumant 's work to advance access to clean and affordable energy (SDG 7). As the leader of India's leading renewable energy company, ReNew Power, Sumant has set an example by building the core business of ReNew Power around the targets of SDG 7.

RS Sodhi conferred with Asia Pacific Productivity Champion award

- The Managing Director of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (Amul), R.S. Sodhi, was conferred with the regional award as Asia Pacific Productivity Champion from Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Tokyo, Japan in recognition of enhanced productivity and efficient milk supply chain. He is the first Indian to have received the prestigious award, in the last 20 years. The award is conferred to eligible individuals who have significantly contributed to advancing the productivity movement in the Asia-Pacific region and those in a specific member economy of the APO. The APO regional awards are conferred every five years and each country can nominate only one candidate out of all nominations. Every five years only five regional nominees receive the award. Sodhi received the award on behalf of 3.6 million dairy farmers.

Zimbabwean novelist Tsitsi Dangarembga wins PEN Pinter prize 2021

- Tsitsi Dangarembga, the Booker-shortlisted Zimbabwean writer who was arrested last year in Harare while protesting against corruption, has been awarded the PEN Pinter prize, praised for her "ability to capture and communicate vital truths even amidst times of upheaval". Dangarembga was also shortlisted for the 2020 Booker Prize for her work, This Mournable Body. Established in 2009, PEN Pinter prize is given in memory of Nobel-laureate playwright Harold Pinter. The annual award is given to an author who, the website specifies, must have "a significant body of plays, poetry, essays, or fiction of outstanding literary merit, written in English."

BAFTA TV Awards 2021

- The winners of the BAFTA TV Awards 2021 were announced. The ceremony itself, filmed at London's Television Centre and hosted by Richard Ayoade, was a hybrid event that kept in line with COVID-19 protocols by allowing a number of nominees from the main performance categories to attend, with others taking part digitally.

Winners of BAFTA TV Awards 2021 are:

S.N.	Category	Winner
1	Leading Actress	Michaela Coel, I May Destroy You
2	Leading Actor	Paul Mescal, Normal People
3	Drama Series	Save Me Too
4	Best Comedy Performance	Charlie Cooper and Aimee Lou Wood
5	Best Comedy Series	Inside No. 9
6	Original Music	Harry Escott, Roadkill
7	Sports	England v West Indies Test Cricket - Sky Sports Cricket

Thomas Vijayan Wins Nature TTL Photographer of the Year 2021

- Kerala-based Thomas Vijayan, who is now settled in Canada, has won the 2021 Nature TTL Photography Awards for his photo of an Orangutan clinging to a tree. The photograph is titled 'The World is Going Upside Down'.
Vijayan was adjudged as the overall winner of the competition from over 8,000 entries for Nature TTL Photographer of the Year 2021, which carries a grand prize of 1,500 pounds (Rs.1.5 lakh). Nature TTL is the world's leading online nature photography resource.

Nitin Rakesh and Jerry Wind win International Business Book of the Year Award 2021

- Nitin Rakesh and Jerry Wind won the International Business Book of the Year Award 2021. The authors made history this week by winning the prestigious International Business Book of the Year Award for 2021 for their recently launched book "Transformation in Times of Crisis", published by Notion Press. Their book Transformation in Times of Crisis brings entrepreneurs and business owners the knowledge that can help their business thrive even in a crisis.
- Author Nitin Rakesh is a distinguished leader in the Technology and Financial services industries and is the CEO and Executive Director of IT major Mphasis, since 2017. His Co-author Jerry Wind, is an internationally renowned academician and is currently Lauder Professor Emeritus and Professor of Marketing at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

First French novelist David Diop wins International Booker 2021

- David Diop has become the first French novelist to win the International Booker prize for translated fiction with *At Night All Blood Is Black*, his first novel translated into English. Diop, the author of two novels, and his translator Anna Moschovakis split the £50,000 annual prize, which goes to the best author and translator of a work translated into English. The International Booker Prize, formerly known as the Man Booker International Prize, has been awarded since 2005 when it was won by Albanian writer Ismail Kadare. It is a sister prize to the Booker Prize, awarded to a novel written in English.

RANKING

Bengaluru ranked as one of the Top 5 technology centers in Asia Pacific

- Bengaluru has emerged as the top five technology centres in the APAC region while Hyderabad is ranked in the Top 10 list, a report by Colliers titled 'Growth Engines of Innovation: How Asia Pacific Technology Hubs are Reshaping Regional Real Estate'. The report ranks the most attractive technology submarkets within major APAC cities, which should serve as a navigation tool for technology groups, as they plan their expansion. Beijing, Shanghai, Bengaluru, Shenzhen and Singapore currently rank as the top five technology centres in APAC; they offer a compelling balance of infrastructure and talent for occupiers and are well-positioned to deliver future growth and investment opportunities for owners. Other cities are developing strengths in specific areas of technology, e.g., Seoul and Hong Kong in fintech, while new centres such as Hyderabad and Sydney are emerging.

Ease of Living Index 2020: Bengaluru 'most liveable' city of India

- Bengaluru has been named as the most liveable city of India, in the Ease of Living Index 2020, released by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE). The Ease of Living Index 2020 is part of the report titled State of India's Environment 2021. Bengaluru is followed by Chennai, Shimla, Bhubaneshwar, and Mumbai, as the top five best cities respectively.
- The report focused on four parameters to determine the ease of living index score of each city, which are: quality of life, economic ability, sustainability and citizens' perceptions.
- Each city was rated out of 100 in all parameters.
- The Ease of Living Index 2020 is the second edition of the index after the first one was launched in 2018.

6th Edition of Sustainable Development Report 2021: India's Rank 120th

- According to the 6th Edition of 'Sustainable Development Report 2021 (SDR 2021)' released by Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), India with a score of 60.1 has been placed at 120th rank out of 165 countries. Finland topped the Index followed by Sweden & Denmark.

For the 1st time since 2015, all countries have shown a reversal in progress in achieving

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. SDR 2021 has been written by a group of authors led by Professor Jeffrey Sachs, President of the SDSN and has been published by Cambridge University Press.

World Competitiveness Index 2021: India maintains 43rd rank

- India maintained 43rd rank on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by the Institute for Management Development (IMD) that examined the impact of C-19 on economies around the world this year.
The IMD World Competitiveness Ranking ranks 64 economies and assesses the extent to which a country promotes the prosperity of its people by measuring economic well-being through hard data and survey responses from executives.

Turkey first & India ranked Second in share of central bank surplus transfers

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was second in terms of reserves transferred to the government as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) for the fiscal year 2020-21. Turkey has been ranked first.
- RBI has transferred Rs 99,122-crore surplus to the government for FY21 which is 73% higher than the Rs 57,128 crore paid out in 2019-20. The surplus transferred by RBI constitutes 0.44% of GDP, while that of the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey constitutes 0.5% of GDP.

15th edition of Global Peace Index 2021 released

- The 15th edition of the Global Peace Index (GPI) announced by Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) Sydney, the GPI is the world's leading measure of global peacefulness. The index ranks 163 independent states and territories according to their level of peacefulness. This report presents the most comprehensive data-driven analysis to date on trends in peace, its economic value, and how to develop peaceful societies.

Global

- Iceland remains the most peaceful country in the world, a position it has held since 2008.
- It is joined at the top of the index by New Zealand, Denmark, Portugal, and Slovenia.
- Afghanistan is the least peaceful country in the world for the fourth consecutive year, followed by Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, and Iraq.

South Asia:

- India has moved up two notches from its previous year's ranking to become the 135th most peaceful country in the world and the 5th in the region.
- Bhutan and Nepal are named as the first and second most peaceful in this region.
- Bangladesh has been ranked 91th out of 163 countries in Global Peace Index for 2021. According to the list, Bangladesh is the 3rd most peaceful in South Asia.
- Sri Lanka has slipped down 19 rungs from 2020, to become 95th globally in this year's rankings, and the 4th in South Asia.

The largest improvement in peacefulness in South Asia occurred in Pakistan, which ranked 150th globally and 6th in the region, by moving up two notches from the previous year's

ranking.

International Day of Family Remittances: 16 June

- The International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and is observed on 16 June. The IDFR recognizes the more than 200 million migrant workers, women and men, who send money home to over 800 million family members.
- This day further highlights the great resilience of migrant workers in the face of economic insecurities, natural and climate-related disasters and a global pandemic. The first International Day of Family Remittances was celebrated on June 16, 2015.

India ranked 14th in World Giving Index 2021

- India has been ranked at 14th spot among 114 countries in the World Giving Index 2021, by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF). This rank is up from its 10-year global rank of 82. The World Giving Index ranking has been topped by Indonesia, followed by Kenya, Nigeria, Myanmar and Australia in the top five respectively. Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) is an international organisation based in the United Kingdom, that promotes giving to transform lives and communities across the world. World Giving Index offers a unique glimpse of global trends in generosity, and people from which country are most likely to engage in social activities for the benefit of their communities and to champion the growth of global giving.

India ranks 67th in Coursera's Global Skills Report 2021

- As per the 'Global Skills Report 2021' released by Coursera, India has been ranked 67th overall globally. The report reveals that, overall, India ranks 67th globally, with 38 per cent proficiency, with mid-rankings in each domain, 55th in business and 66th in both technology and data science. Indian learners have high proficiency in digital skills like Cloud Computing (83%) and Machine Learning (52%) & 54% in Mathematical skills. Improvement is needed in digital skills because in Data Analysis and Statistical programming, ranked only at 25% and 15% skills proficiency. But, Indians trail behind in data skills and need to focus on that. The report is based on performance data of about 77 million learners (from across 100 countries) on the platform collected since the onset of the pandemic. It benchmarks skills proficiency across 3 categories – Business, Technology and data science.

QS World University Rankings 2022 released

- The London-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) has released the QS World University Rankings 2022 which compares and ranks Universities from across the globe on various parameters. Eight Indian universities have found a place among the best 400 global universities in the QS World University Rankings 2022, released on June 09, 2021. However, only three Universities namely the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, IIT-Delhi, and IISc Bangalore feature among the top 200.
- IIT-Bombay is ranked as the best University in India with a rank of 177. It is followed by IIT-

Delhi (185) and IISc (186).

- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, has also been adjudged as “world’s top research university, achieving a perfect score of 100/100 for Citations Per Faculty (CPF) indicator, which measures research impact.

This is the first time that any Indian institute has scored a perfect 100 in research or any other parameter.

Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2021 released

- Times Higher Education Asia university rankings 2021, three Indian universities secured positions in the top 100 list. IISc Bangalore, IIT Ropar and IIT Indore have secured ranks among the top 100 universities in Asia. Like last year, not a single Indian varsity made it to the elite top 10. IISc Bangalore ranked at 37th position. IIT Ropar is placed at 55th rank and IIT Indore at 78th rank among the top 100 universities.
- Tsinghua University, China has gained the first position in the Asia university rankings 2021. The second place is also secured by China’s Peking University. The third and fifth ranks have been secured by Singapore varsities. Whereas, the University of Hong Kong is at fourth rank.

Sustainable Development Goals report

- India’s rank has slipped by two places from last year to 117 on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted as a part of the 2030 agenda by 193 United Nations member states in 2015. India ranks below four South Asian countries: Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The State of India’s Environment Report 2021 revealed that India’s rank was 115 last year and dropped by two places primarily because of major challenges like ending hunger and achieving food security (SDG 2), achieving gender equality (SDG 5) and building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation (SDG 9) remain in the country.

Centre for World University Rankings 2021-22 announced

- Centre for World University Rankings 2021-22 has announced, 19,788 institutions were ranked, and those that placed at the top made the global 2000 list. Harvard University has topped the ranking globally followed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Stanford University, University of Cambridge, and Oxford University respectively.

As many as 68 Indian institutes have made it to the list of the top 2000 higher education institutes across the world, as per the Centre for World University Rankings (CWUR) 2021-22. The Indian pack is led by the IIM-Ahmedabad which has bagged 415th rank followed by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) at 459th rank.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Book “Kashmiri Century: Portrait of a Society in Flux” authored by Khemlata Wakhlu released

- A book titled “Kashmiri Century: Portrait of a Society in Flux” authored by Khemlata Wakhlu. She is a writer, a political leader and a social worker, who has devoted the past fifty years to using her many talents to improve a lot of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.
- A Kashmiri Century is a powerful and rare compilation of human-interest stories. Spanning a full century, it throws a compassionate light on the innocent and hard-working people who live in the beautiful valley of Kashmir.
- The stories are all based on the author’s personal experiences and her intimate understanding of what it means to be a Kashmiri-speaking native. They cover the period from the late 19th century to the present day.

Book “Policymaker’s Journal: From New Delhi to Washington, DC” authored by Kaushik Basu

- A book titled “Policymaker’s Journal: From New Delhi to Washington, DC” authored by Kaushik Basu released soon. This book charts the course of Kaushik Basu’s career over seven years, as he moved out of the cloisters of academe to the frenetic world of policymaking, first in India as Chief Economic Adviser to the Indian Government and after that as Chief Economist at the World Bank in Washington.
Kaushik Basu is an Indian economist who was the Chief Economist of the World Bank from 2012 to 2016. He is the C. Marks Professor of International Studies and Professor of Economics at Cornell University. From 2009 to 2012, during the UPA government’s second term, Basu served as the Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India.

Book “Fiercely Female: The Dutee Chand Story” by Sundeep Mishra

- Journalist Sundeep Mishra’s book titled ‘Fiercely Female: The Dutee Chand Story’ chronicles Chand’s journey with a detailed narrative of the gender-identity controversy that made her an iconic figure in Indian sport. The book was published by Westland Books.
Dutee Chand, the first openly homosexual athlete from India, scripted history in 2019 when she became the first Indian to win gold in a 100-metre event at the World Universiade in Naples. Coming from a small village in Odisha, Dutee Chand went on to hold the national record in the women’s 100 metres and is only the fifth Indian to participate in the women’s 100 metres at the Olympics when she qualified for the 2016 Rio Games.

Ruskin Bond’s New book ‘It’s a wonderful Life’

- Indian British author Ruskin Bond has authored a new book titled ‘It’s a Wonderful Life’ is published by Aleph Book Company.
The book is written in a perceptive, uplifting, deeply moving, and non-fictional way. He is a recipient of Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan. His First Novel was the Room on the Roof’.

‘Will’ is the autobiography of Actor Will Smith

- Actor Will Smith, who revealed the title and cover of his upcoming autobiography “Will”. The book, to be published Nov. 9 by Penguin Press. Will Smith is co-writing the book with author Mark Manson, and the cover is designed by New Orleans artist Brandan “BMike” Odums. Smith will also narrate the audiobook of Will from Penguin Random House Audio.
- The book will delve into him being raised in West Philadelphia to entering superstardom as

an actor and rapper. He's a two-time Academy Award nominee and won a four-time Grammy winner. Smith starred in The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, Bad Boys, Men in Black and Pursuit of Happyness. He's won Grammys for Summertime, Men In Black, Gettin' Jiggy Wit It and Parents Just Don't Understand.

Harsh Vardhan unveils 'My Joys and Sorrows – as a Mother of a Special Child' book

- Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan has unveiled Krishna Saksena's book "My Joys and Sorrows – as a Mother of a Special Child". It is the epitome of the bravery and endurance of a mother, in the best tradition of Indian motherhood. The book is full of beautiful photographs, including some black and white ones which have historical significance, not only because some of them feature public personalities but also because it chronicles the domestic as well as the professional context of the times.

Arvind Gaur releases book 'Habba Khatoon' written by Kajal Suri

- Theatre personality Arvind Gaur has released the book 'Habba Khatoon' written by Kajal Suri. The book 'Habba Khatoon' was Published by Sanjana Prakashan. Habba Khatoon, also known by the honorary title 'The Nightingale of Kashmir', was a Kashmiri poet and ascetic. She was the wife of Yousuf Shah Chak, the last Emperor of Kashmir.

'The 7 Sins of Being A Mother' book by Tahira Kashyap Khurrana

- Filmmaker-writer Tahira Kashyap Khurrana has announced her upcoming book about motherhood, titled "The 7 Sins of Being A Mother". This is her fifth book and the second she wrote amid the pandemic. Last year, the filmmaker had released 12 Commandments of Being A Woman, which she finished writing during the coronavirus-induced lockdown. The writer has also penned books like Cracking The Code: My Journey in Bollywood and Souled Out.

'The Nutmeg's Curse' is a new book of Amitav Ghosh

- Jnanpith Awardee and renowned author Amitav Ghosh's authored a book titled, 'The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis'. It is published by John Murray. The book talks about the history of the influence of colonialism on the world today, through the story of the nutmeg.
- In 'The Nutmeg's Curse', Ghosh discusses that the nutmeg's journey from its native Banda islands sheds light on a widespread colonial mindset of exploitation of human life and the environment, which is present even today. Some of Ghosh's other notable works include the Ibis trilogy and 'The Great Derangement' among others.

Bishnupada Sethi's new book 'Beyond Here and Other Poems' released

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released a book of poems 'Beyond Here and Other Poems' written by senior bureaucrat Bishnupada Sethi. It is a collection of 61 poems that are a reflection of a spectrum of experiences of life, perception of death and philosophical contemplation.

Noted writer Haraprasad Das has written the preface. The cover design of the 161-page book has been made by eminent artist Gajendra Sahu. Sethi, Principal Secretary in the Information and Public Relations department has written several poetry and other books including 'My World of Words' and 'Beyond Feelings'.

'Home in the World' Book: by Amartya Sen's memoir

- One of the world's leading public intellectuals of our time, Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has penned his memoir 'Home in the World'.

The book will be published in July by Penguin Random House. In this book, Sen shares how it was Rabindranath Tagore who gave him his name Amartya. He also reminisces the conversations at Calcutta's famous Coffee House and at Cambridge, and Marx's, Keynes' and Arrow's ideas all of which shaped his views.

Book '1232 km: The Long Journey Home' by Vinod Kapri

- A new book titled '1232 km: The Long Journey Home' by filmmaker Vinod Kapri chronicles the journey of seven migrant workers from Bihar, who journeyed back home on their bicycles and reached their destination after seven days. The book is published by Harper Collins. The nationwide lockdown in March 2020 forced thousands of migrant workers to return to their native villages by covering thousands of kilometres on foot.

Kapri accompanied these seven migrant workers — Ritesh, Ashish, Ram Babu, Sonu, Krishna, Sandeep and Mukesh — on their 1,232-km journey from Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh to Saharsa in Bihar. It is a story of courage as well as the desperation of seven men braving police lathis and insults, battling hunger and exhaustion to reach their home. According to the author, he was curious to know what makes labourers' cycle 1,232 kilometres without food or any help in such extreme circumstances. He wanted to see them up close.

IEFPA's 6 modules of short films titled "Hisab Ki Kitaab" launched

- Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Anurag Singh Thakur launched the six modules of short films of Investor Education & Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) titled "Hisab Ki Kitaab". These short films developed by Common Services Centers(CSC) eGov as a part of their training tool.
- The various modules highlight the importance of budget, saving, the importance of Insurance schemes, various social security schemes of the government etc. The modules also interestingly portray the consequences of a common man falling prey to the schemes and how they should protect themselves from Ponzi schemes.

Salman Rushdie's New book "Languages of Truth: Essays 2003-2020"

- A book titled "Languages of Truth: Essays 2003-2020" authored by Salman Rushdie. In his new book, Rushdie attempts to perform a defensive castling move.
- He suggests his work has been misunderstood and mistreated because the literary culture has turned from brio-filled imaginative writing toward the humbler delights of "autofiction," as exemplified by the work of Elena Ferrante and Karl Ove Knausgaard.

Indian cricket coach Ravi Shastri's Debut Book 'Stargazing: The Players in My Life'

- Cricket all-rounder, commentator and coach, Ravi Shastri is now making his publishing debut, as he has penned a book titled 'Stargazing: The Players in My Life'. The book is being published by HarperCollins India. It is been co-authored by Ayaz Memon. It is expected to be released on June 25, 2021. In the book, Shastri has written about some 60 extraordinary talents he has met from across the world who have inspired him.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Paisabazaar, SBM bank announced to launch Step Up credit card

- Paisabazaar.com, India's largest lending marketplace & Credit Score platform and SBM Bank India, the youngest universal Bank announced the launch of "Step Up Credit Card" – a credit-builder product designed for consumers with limited access to formal credit, due to ineligible credit score. It is the first product to be launched under Paisabazaar's neo-lending strategy.
- The Step Up Credit Card, built in partnership with SBM Bank India, is the first product to be launched under Paisabazaar's neo-lending strategy. A secured card provided against a fixed deposit (with SBM Bank India), Step Up Card helps consumers with damaged credit or those with no credit history to steadily build their Credit Score.

Ind-Ra revises India's GDP growth rate for FY22 at 9.6%

- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has projected the GDP growth rate of India for fiscal year FY22 (2021-22) at 9.6 per cent. Earlier this was estimated at 10.1 per cent by the rating agency. This rate is, however, contingent upon India vaccinating its entire adult population by December 31, 2021.

SBI Card partners with Fabindia

- SBI Card, the country's second-largest credit card issuer and Fabindia, a retail platform for a wide range of handcrafted products by the artisans of the country, have joined hands to launch an exclusive co-branded contactless credit card named "Fabindia SBI Card". The card is designed with curated benefits and privileges to offer a rewarding shopping experience to its premium customers and comes in two variants — Fabindia SBI Card SELECT and Fabindia SBI Card.
- The introduction of the new Fabindia SBI Card further bolsters our premium portfolio, reinforces our commitment to enable our customers to embrace digital payments and contribute to the country's digital economy.

SBI launched Aarogyam healthcare business loan for healthcare sector amid the pandemic

- The State Bank of India (SBI) has launched the Aarogyam healthcare business loan to provide enhanced support to the healthcare sector amid the pandemic. Under this new product, the

entire healthcare ecosystem such as hospitals, nursing homes, diagnostic centres, pathology labs, manufacturers, suppliers, importers, logistic firms engaged in critical healthcare supply can avail of loans up to Rs 100 crore (as per the geographic location) repayable in 10 years, the country's largest state-owned bank.

- The Aarogyam loan can be availed either as a term loan to support expansion or modernisation or as working capital facilities such as cash credit, bank guarantee/letter of credit.

In metro centres loans under Aarogyam can be availed up to Rs 100 crore, Tier I & Urban centres up to Rs 20 crore and in Tier II to Tier VI centres up to Rs 10 crore.

Kotak Mahindra Bank launched the new feature 'Pay Your Contact' service

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has announced the launch of 'Pay Your Contact' the new feature that enables its customers to send money or make payments to any of their contacts across all payment apps simply by the beneficiary's mobile number. The 'Pay Your Contact' service is available on the lender's mobile banking app and uses the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) platform.

The 'Pay Your Contact' feature on Kotak mobile banking app has made payments as easy and simple as can be. Kotak customers can now make their payments to a friend, household help, neighbourhood shop etc. just by knowing the beneficiary's mobile number.

SEBI reconstitutes Four-member Takeover Panel

- Markets regulator Security and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has reconstituted its four-member Takeover Panel. The Takeover Panel looks into the applications that seek exemption from the mandatory open offer that an acquirer needs to make to minority shareholders. SEBI has appointed N Venkatram MD and CEO, Deloitte India as the new member of this Takeover Panel. SEBI had first constituted this Takeover Panel in November 2007, under the chairmanship of former Bank of Baroda chairman K Kannan.

Four- Members Panel are:

- Chairman: Justice N. K. Sodhi (Former Chief Justice of High Courts of Karnataka & Kerala and Former Presiding Officer of the Securities Appellate Tribunal).
- Member: Darius Khambata (Former Advocate General, Maharashtra).
- Member: Thomas Mathew T (Former chairman of Life Insurance Corporation of India).
- Member: N Venkatram (MD and CEO, Deloitte India).

Centrum gets RBI's in-principle nod to take over PMC Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given "in-principle" approval to Centrum Financial Services Ltd (CFSL) to set up a small finance bank (SFB), which will take over the beleaguered Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative Bank (PMC Bank). It will get 120 days to commence operations. The amalgamation with PMC Bank is a separate process that would involve notification of the scheme by the government.
- The first year the partners would put in Rs 900 crore, which will be used for starting the business and acquiring PMC Bank. The second round of equity funding of Rs 900 crore will

happen in the following year.

The “in-principle” approval has been given to Centrum in accordance with the offer it made in response to the expression of interest (EoI) to take over PMC Bank. The consortium of Centrum and BharatPe had expressed an interest in taking over PMC Bank. According to reports, both Centrum and BharatPe will hold 50 per cent in the small finance bank and the assets and liabilities of the multistate cooperative bank will be transferred to it.

IndusInd Bank launched digital lending platform “IndusEasy Credit”

- IndusInd Bank announced the launch of ‘IndusEasy Credit’, a comprehensive digital lending platform that enables customers to meet their financial requirements from the comfort of their homes. With this, both existing, as well as non-IndusInd Bank customer, can instantly avail of personal loans or credit cards on a single platform in a completely paperless and digital manner.

A first of its kind proposition, ‘IndusEasyCredit’ offers a fully digital end to end process that leverages the power of India’s public digital infrastructure – ‘Indiastack’ to offer personal loans and credit cards in a paperless, presence less and cashless manner.

LIC CSL launched prepaid gift card in collaboration with IDBI Bank on RuPay platform

- LIC Cards Services (LIC CSL) has launched a contactless prepaid gift card, ‘Shagun’, in collaboration with IDBI Bank on the RuPay platform. The purpose of this card is to expand the gift card market with an intent to promote cashless ways of gifting and present a wide range of end-use choices and in a future foray into the market of e-gift cards. NPCI partnered with LIC CSL & IDBI Bank for the launch of the Shagun Gift Card on RuPay network.
- Shagun card, in the initial phase, will be available to LIC and its subsidiaries for official use. The card will be used to facilitate awards and special rewards during official conferences and functions.

The Shagun gift card offers customisation in the form of flexible loading of any amount ranging from Rs 500 to Rs 10,000. With this card, the customer can perform multiple transactions within the validity of 3 years.

ICICI Bank launched ‘ICICI STACK for Corporates’

- ICICI Bank has announced the launch of ‘ICICI STACK for Corporates’, a comprehensive set of digital banking solutions for corporates and their entire ecosystem including promoters, group companies, employees, dealers, vendors and all other stakeholders. The wide range of 360-degree solutions enables corporates to seamlessly meet all banking requirements of their ecosystem in an expeditious and frictionless manner.

With this launch, ICICI Bank aims to be the preferred banking partner for companies and their entire ecosystem. The environment in which corporate customers operate is becoming increasingly dynamic and competitive with accelerated digital adoption transforming every business. In this ever-changing environment, a banking partner, which can serve not only

the corporates but also the entire ecosystems where they operate, adds significant value to corporate customers.

RBI allows prepaid mobile recharges through Bharat Bill Payment System

- According to RBI, The scope of the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) will be expanded by August 31 this year by adding 'mobile prepaid recharges as a biller category. BBPS is an interoperable platform for recurring bill payments operated by the National Payments Corporation of India.
- In May, 213.59 million bill payment transactions were carried out through the BBPS channel. BBPS was started in 2014 as a platform for repetitive bill payments.

Federal Bank enlists Infosys for Oracle CX implementation

- Federal Bank has expanded its strategic collaboration with Oracle and Infosys, to offer an enhanced customer experience through Oracle CX (Customer Experience) platform. The collaboration will focus on creating a comprehensive integrated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution across marketing, sales, customer service, and social listening to strengthen Federal Bank's operations, and to deliver connected, data-driven, and intelligent customer experiences across all touchpoints. Federal Bank will launch a 360-degree view of the customer portfolio in a single application for its users, to achieve a 'Single Source of Truth'. These services will help improve productivity and customer satisfaction by using the financial, biographical, and demographical information of customers. Oracle will co-innovate by partnering with the broader ecosystem of Infosys.

Federal Bank partners with Infosys

- Federal Bank, to improve its marketing, sales and offer a better customer experience, has partnered with Infosys for Oracle CX adoption, a cloud-based tool to manage the relationship with customers.
- Federal Bank is an Indian commercial financial services institution headquartered in Kerala with generating revenue of more than \$1.5 billion. The bank is spanned over 1,400 branches working with the cooperation of 11,000 employees.
- Now the bank has decided to transform its service offering model, and partnership with Infosys for Oracle CX implementation is a step in this direction.
- Shalini Warriar, the Executive director and business head for retail, in collaboration with Infosys for Oracle CX adoption, said that it fits with the bank's value of using digital resources to build a human-like relationship with the customers.

India's retail inflation touches 6.3% in May 2021

- India's retail inflation shot up to a six-month high of 6.3 per cent in May, after easing to a three-month low of 4.23 per cent in April. Inflation, based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), has breached the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) target range for the first time after five

months. The RBI is mandated to maintain the crucial number at 4 per cent in the medium term, with a 2 percentage point margin on either side as part of its inflation target. National Statistical Office data for retail inflation showed food inflation shot up to 5% in May from 2% in April as prices of protein items such as meat, fish, eggs, oils and fats accelerated. The fuel bill also went up 11.6% as the government increased retail prices of petrol and diesel after state election results on 2 May. Services inflation jumped as costs of health, transport and personal care rose during the second wave of the pandemic.

IDFC FIRST Bank launches Customer COVID relief Ghar Ghar Ration Program

- IDFC FIRST Bank has announced the launch of 'Ghar Ghar Ration' Program, an employee-funded program for its low-income customers whose livelihoods are affected by COVID-19. The bank has also announced a comprehensive program for the families of employees who unfortunately lost their lives due to COVID-19, and a number of other social responsibility initiatives.
- "Ghar Ghar Ration" is a unique program where employees have contributed from their personal income to set up a Customer COVID Care Fund to provide relief to 50,000 COVID affected low-income IDFC FIRST Bank customers. Employees of the Bank contributed one day to one month's salary for the purpose.

BharatPe acquires loyalty platform PAYBACK India

- Merchant payments and financial services provider, BharatPe has acquired a multi-brand loyalty platform, PAYBACK India, to help its 6 million offline merchants roll out rewards and loyalty programmes for customers. The acquisition is expected to give an exit to American Express and ICICI Investments Strategic Fund, which hold 90% and 10% stake respectively in the entity. PAYBACK India will continue to function independently, after the acquisition. The deal is expected to be worth \$30 million, an individual aware of the discussions told Mint on condition of anonymity.

NITI Aayog recommends privatisation of Central Bank, Indian Overseas Bank

- NITI Aayog has recommended divesting government stake in the Central Bank of India and Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) as part of the privatisation initiative announced in the Union Budget. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her Budget speech, had announced privatising two public sector banks (PSBs) and one general insurance company in 2021-22. As per the new PSE (Public Sector Enterprise) policy for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', NITI Aayog is entrusted with the task to suggest names of PSUs in strategic sectors to be merged, privatised, or made subsidiaries of other PSUs.
- The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) and Department of Financial Services (DFS) will examine the proposal and discuss legislative changes needed for the privatisation of banks. The finalisation of privatisation and disinvestment of public sector enterprises is a multi-layered process. After a Core Group of Secretaries, headed by the Cabinet Secretary, clears the suggested names, the proposal will go to Alternative

Mechanism (AM) for its approval and eventually to the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister for a final nod.

RBI imposed penalty on BoI & PNB of Rs 6 crore

- The RBI has imposed a penalty aggregating to Rs 6 crores on Bank of India and Punjab National Bank for contravention of norms, including one related to “Frauds – Classification and Reporting”. A penalty of Rs 4 crores has been imposed on the Bank of India and Rs 2 crores on Punjab National Bank.

The bank had also conducted a review and submitted a Fraud Monitoring Report (FMR) dated January 1, 2019, pertaining to the detection of fraud in an account. In both cases, notices were issued to show cause as to why penalty should not be imposed on them for such violations of the directions.

Shaktikanta Das Addressed On RBI Monetary Policy 2021

- 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 sixth consecutive time, in its June 2021 policy review meeting held between June 2 to 4, 2021.
- The RBI’s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has decided to continue with an accommodative stance until necessary to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The next meeting of the MPC is scheduled from August 4 to 6, 2021.

Bharti AXA Life in bancassurance pact with Shivalik Small Finance Bank

- Private life insurer Bharti AXA Life Insurance has entered into a bancassurance partnership with Shivalik Small Finance Bank for the distribution of its life insurance products through the bank’s pan-India network of branches. This alliance is a part of the bank’s various measures towards financial inclusion and acceleration of wealth creation for its customers.
- Bharti AXA Life Insurance will offer its suite of life insurance products, including protection, health, savings and investment plans, to customers of Shivalik Small Finance Bank across its 31 branches and digital network across the country.
This alliance will enable over 4.5 lakh customers of Shivalik Bank to access the range of products offered by the company to provide financial security.

RBI cancelled the licence of Shivajirao Bhosale Sahakari Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the licence of Pune-based Shivajirao Bhosale Sahakari Bank. The bank ceases to carry on banking business, with effect from the close of business on May 31. The bank does not have adequate capital and earning prospects. As such, it does not comply with the provision of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- The RBI observed that the bank with its present financial position would be unable to pay its present depositors in full. The bank was placed under RBI Directions from the close of business on May 4, 2019.
With the cancellation of licence and commencement of liquidation proceedings, the process

of paying the depositors of the bank as per the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC). Act, 1961, will be set in motion. As per the data submitted by the bank, more than 98 per cent of the depositors will receive full amounts of their deposits from DICGC.

RBI imposed Rs 10 crore penalty on HDFC Bank for deficiency in its regulatory compliance

- The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a fine of Rs 10 crore on HDFC Bank for deficiencies in regulatory compliance found in the auto loan portfolio of the bank. As per the RBI, HDFC Bank has violated the provisions of section 6(2) and section 8 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

After receiving a complaint from a whistleblower, RBI conducted an examination in the marketing and sale of third-party non-financial products to the bank's auto loan customers and found that the bank was in contravention of regulatory directions. RBI has imposed the monetary penalty in the exercise of powers vested by the central bank under the provisions of Section 47A(1)(c) read with Section 46(4)(i) of the Banking Regulation Act.