NATIONAL

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched Defence India Startup Challenge- DISC 5.0
- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh launched Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) 5.0 under Innovations for Defence Excellence – Defence Innovation Organisation (iDEX-DIO) initiative, on August 19, 2021, in New Delhi. The Ministry of Defence has earmarked Rs 1,000 crore for domestic procurement through the iDEX initiative for the financial year 2021-2022. The Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence has approved budgetary support of Rs. 498.80 crore for iDEX for the next 5 years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- DISC is a platform wherein the Government, Services, think tanks, industry, startups and innovators can work together to help the defence & aerospace sectors reach full potential by creating a strong, modern & well-equipped military and equally capable & self-reliant defence industry.

Faridabad Smart City Limited turns to comic heroes Chacha Chaudhary and Sabu for help
- Faridabad Smart City Limited has roped in an unlikely collaborator to help promote its initiatives on social media – comic hero Chacha Chaudhary. The social media campaign’s objective will be to promote the steps taken by the agency. The initiative will involve excerpts of Talking Comics. Each social media post will depict Chacha Chaudhary and Sabu, his loyal sidekick, guiding and teaching people on effectively using the infrastructure put in place.
- The objective of the social media campaign would be to promote the steps the agency had taken, including the installation of CCTVs for surveillance, traffic rules, road safety, and waste management.
- The Centre has selected 100 cities to be developed as smart cities with each city getting Rs 100 crore per year on an average over a five-year period to complete the developments. Faridabad was selected to be part of the Smart City Mission in May 2016. Faridabad Smart City Limited was “incorporated” as a special purpose vehicle that September.

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated Centre for Research & Innovation in AI set up at IIT- Hyderabad
- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has virtually inaugurated the Centre for Research and Innovation in Artificial Intelligence set up at the Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H). He also inaugurated the first Academic Building of the Department of Materials Science & Metallurgical Engineering, High-Performance Computing Centre and High-Resolution Electron Microscopy Facility.
- The Centre for Research and Innovation in Artificial Intelligence in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA is the best example of international cooperation. The University has an agreement with Honeywell Technology Solutions for setting up the lab.
Delhi-Chandigarh Highway has become the first EV-friendly highway in India

- With a network of solar-based electric vehicle charging stations, the Delhi-Chandigarh Highway has become the country’s first EV-friendly highway in the country. The network of stations was set up by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) under the FAME-1 (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) & Electric Vehicles) scheme of the Ministry of Heavy Industries. Union Minister of Heavy Industries (MHI) Mahendra Nath Pandey remotely inaugurated the state-of-the-art charging station at Karna Lake Resort.
- The EV charging station at Karna resort is strategically located at the midpoint of the Delhi-Chandigarh highway. It is equipped to cater to all types of e-cars currently in the country.

CM Arvind Kejriwal will inaugurate country’s first smog tower on 23rd August 2021

- Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will inaugurate the country’s first smog tower on August 23, 2021, at Baba Kharak Singh Marg, Connaught Place. The smog tower will clean 1,000 cubic metres of air every second and reduce PM 2.5 and PM 10 levels in Delhi.
- The smog tower will work with full force after the monsoon season. The scientists of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee will accordingly assess the performance of the tower and present a monthly report.

Amazon Alexa launched the voice of the 78-year-old Bollywood star Amitabh Bachchan

- Amazon has launched the voice of the 78-year-old Bollywood star Amitabh Bachchan as a part of its efforts to amuse existing users and attract new consumers to use its voice assistant over Google Assistant and Apple’s Siri. With the new launch, the US tech giant has also brought its celebrity voice feature to India. The feature initially arrived in the US with the voice of American actor and producer Samuel L. Jackson in 2019.
- Amazon has made Amitabh Bachchan’s voice available on Alexa at an introductory price of Rs. 149 (MRP Rs. 299) for one year. Once the payment is confirmed, you will be able to start interacting with the actor’s voice. Amazon worked on enabling Bachchan’s voice on Alexa for the last few months. The experience is aimed to please his fans and attract new users to the voice assistant.

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

DRDO developed advanced chaff technology to protect IAF jets from enemy radar threats

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) have jointly developed an advanced chaff technology to safeguard fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF) from enemy radar threats. Defence Laboratory, Jodhpur, and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune, have developed the chaff cartridge meeting qualitative requirements of IAF. The Indian Air Force has started the process of induction of this technology after the completion of successful user trials.
- Chaff is primarily an electronic counter-measure technology used by militaries worldwide to protect high-value targets such as fighter jets or naval ships from radars and radio frequency (RF) guiding mechanisms of the enemy missiles. The chaff deployed in the air reflects as multiple
targets for the missile guidance systems, thus misleading the enemy radars or deflecting adversary missiles. Chaff is a critical defence technology used to protect fighter aircraft from hostile radar threats.

SUMMIT’S & MOU’s

ISRO: BRICS signed deal on cooperation in remote sensing satellite data sharing
- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) signed an agreement for cooperation in remote sensing satellite data sharing, according to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The pact inked on August 17 enables building a virtual constellation of specified remote sensing satellites of BRICS space agencies and their respective ground stations will receive the data.
- This will contribute in strengthening multilateral cooperation among BRICS space agencies in meeting the challenges faced by mankind, such as global climate change, major disasters and environmental protection. The agreement was signed under India’s BRICS Chairship.

BOOKS & AUTHOR

Book “OPERATION KHUKRI” authored Major General Rajpal Punia & Ms Damini Punia
- CDS General Bipin Rawat was presented a book “OPERATION KHUKRI” by authors Major General Rajpal Punia & Ms Damini Punia. The book highlights the Indian Army’s successful rescue mission in Sierra Leone as part of the United Nations. The year was 2000, Sierra Leone, in West Africa, had been ravaged by years of civil strife. With the intervention of the United Nations, two companies of the Indian Army were deployed in Kailahun as part of a United Nations peacekeeping mission.
- Operation Khukri was one of the Indian Army’s most successful international missions, and this book is a first-hand account by Major Rajpal Punia, who, after three months of impasse and failed diplomacy, orchestrated the operation, surviving the ambush of the RUF in prolonged jungle warfare twice, and returning with all 233 soldiers standing tall.

RANKING

Crypto Adoption Worldwide: India ranked second in terms of crypto adoption
- India has ranked second in terms of crypto adoption worldwide behind Vietnam, but ahead of countries such as the US, UK, and China, according to the 2021 Global Crypto Adoption Index by blockchain data platform Chainalysis. This comes even as worldwide crypto adoption grew by 880% between June 2020 and July 2021, according to the report.
- A report by US-based research platform Finder released this month corroborated that the top five countries in terms of crypto adoption were all from Asia.
- The company surveyed 47,000 users worldwide and 30% of those surveyed in India said they owned cryptocurrencies.
Current Affairs PDF- August 20, 2021

NATIONAL

Odisha: India’s first state to Provide Smart Health Cards

- Odisha is all set to launch India’s first ‘Smart Health Cards scheme’ covering its 3.5 crore people of 96 lakh families under the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana. The information for the same was provided by Odisha Chief Minister (CM) Naveen Patnaik while addressing the 75th Independence Day celebrations in Bhubaneswar. The objective behind Smart Health Cards is to provide hassle-free quality treatment at the best available health care facilities. These cards will work like debit cards for a certain amount.
- Through this scheme, Central Government health benefits can also be accessed.
- The beneficiaries of National and State Food Security Schemes, Annapurna and Antyodaya schemes will get this card and henceforth each family can avail treatment cost up to Rs 5 lakh per annum.

India launched “UNITE Aware” Platform in collaboration with UN

- India has launched a tech platform named “UNITE Aware”, in collaboration with the UN, for improving the safety and security of the UN peacekeepers. The platform was launched in the presence of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar at the UN headquarters. The launch of the UNITE AWARE platform came as India assumed the Presidency of the 15-nation UN Security Council for the month of August.
- India has contributed USD 1.64 million for UNITE Aware. UNITE Aware platform will provide terrain-related information to the United Nations military personnel (Blue Helmets) in the line of duty. India has developed the technology platform in partnership with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Operational Support.

All-women team of three armed forces summits Mount Manirang in Himachal Pradesh

- An ‘All Women Tri-Services Mountaineering Team’ successfully scaled Mt Manirang (21,625 ft) in Himachal Pradesh on August 15, 2021, and unfurled the national flag as a part of commemorative activities for ‘Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav’, to celebrate the 75 years of Independence.
- The 15-member expedition team was flagged off on August 01, 2021, from Air Force Station, New Delhi, by the Indian Air Force. The team was led by Wing Commander Bhavana Mehra of the Indian Air Force.

APPOINTMENT & RESIGNATION

Olympian PR Sreejesh is the become the brand ambassador of Kerala adventure tourism

- Olympian Parattu Raveendran Sreejesh (PR Sreejesh), goalkeeper and former captain of the Indian National Hockey team is set to be named as the brand ambassador of adventure tourism in Kerala.
- Sreejesh was a part of the Indian Hockey team that won the bronze medal at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic games. PR Sreejesh hails from Ernakulam, Kerala.
IMPORTANT DAYS

World Mosquito Day 2021 : 20th August
- World Mosquito Day is observed on 20 August annually to raise awareness about the causes of malaria and how it can be prevented. This day is observed to highlight the efforts of healthcare officials, NGOs, and others in fighting diseases caused by malaria. On World Mosquito Day every year, awareness is created around diseases caused by mosquitoes.
- This year amid the coronavirus pandemic, the theme of World Mosquito Day 2021 is “Reaching the zero-malaria target”.
- There are several different mosquitoes that act as vectors for different diseases. Aedes mosquitoes cause chikungunya, dengue fever, lymphatic filariasis, rift valley fever, yellow fever, and zika. Anopheles cause malaria, lymphatic filariasis (in Africa).

Sadbhavana Diwas 2021: 20th August
- Every year India observes Sadbhavana Diwas on August 20 to commemorate the birth anniversary of late erstwhile Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. This year on 20th August 2021, we are going to celebrate the 77th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The Indian National Congress instituted Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award in 1992, a year after his death.
- Every year this day is celebrated in the memory of the late Rajiv Gandhi who was the youngest Prime Minister of India at the age of 40 years. In lieu of paying tribute to his vision for India, on this occasion contributions to society betterments are made.
- Rajiv Gandhi became Prime Minister at an age of 40 years after the assassination of his mother Indira Gandhi and served from 1984-89.

Akshay Urja Diwas 2021: 20th August
- Akshay Urja Diwas (Renewable Energy Day) is observed every year on 20 August to raise awareness about the developments and adoption of renewable energy in India. The Akshay Urja Day was initiated by the Indian Ministry for New & Renewable Energy Sources in 2004. Energy such as Biogas, Solar Energy, Wind energy, hydroelectrical power is a few examples of Akshay Urja. The main motive of Akshya urja Diwas is to make people aware that they have to think about renewable energy (Akshya Urja) apart from traditional energy.
- Indian Akshay Urja Day was established in 2004 to support renewable energy development programs and promote its use instead of traditional sources of energy. The very first event relating to Akshay Urja Diwas was organized in New Delhi. In 2004, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has released a commemorative stamp, and 12,000 schoolchildren formed a human chain to promote renewable energy. The 20th of August wasn’t chosen at random to be the date of the observance. This day marks the birthday anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India.

BANKING AND ECONOMIC

Reserve Bank of India is putting in place a Platform for Regulated Entities for (PRISM)
- The Reserve Bank of India is putting in place a Platform for Regulated Entities for Integrated
Supervision and Monitoring (PRISM), a web-based end-to-end workflow automation system, to strengthen compliance by supervised entities (SEs). This is aimed at helping supervised entities to strengthen their internal defences and resilience and bringing focus on root cause analysis (RCA).

- PRISM will have various functionalities (inspection; compliance; incident functionality for cybersecurity; complaints; and returns functionalities), with built-in remediation workflows, time tracking, notifications and alerts, management information system (MIS) reports and dashboards.

Reserve Bank of India to introduce ‘Regulatory GAAR’ for round tripping

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come up with a draft rule with modifications in the existing regulation related to foreign investment to discourage round-tripping. The central bank is looking to tweak the existing regulations and has come up with draft rules around round-tripping. Some of the largest Indian companies, startups and multinationals with an India presence have put their outbound investment, fundraising and restructuring plans on hold as the RBI looks to introduce fresh regulations around “round-tripping.”
- According to the draft rule, any investment made outside India is an entity, in turn, invests in India will be treated as round-tripping if the purpose is to escape tax. This is as the same definition and rationale used by the tax department under General Anti Avoidance Rule (GAAR) which companies have been complaining is quite broad in its scope.

Current Affairs PDF- August 19, 2021

NATIONAL

Odisha government will sponsor Indian Hockey teams for 10 more years

- The Odisha government will sponsor the Indian Hockey teams for 10 more years after the current sponsorship ends in 2023, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced. The state government started sponsoring the national hockey teams in 2018. The teams have scripted history with their brilliant performance at the Tokyo Olympics,” the chief minister said, handing over a cash award of Rs 10 lakh to each player.
- However, the exact amount of sponsorship deals are yet to be revealed. In 2018, Odisha had signed a Rs 100 crore deal with Hockey India for sponsoring the men’s and women’s teams for 5 years after Sahara India withdrew after getting entangled in legal issues.

Jammu and Kashmir: Army organised a 400 Km “JAZBAA-E-TIRANGA”

- In Jammu and Kashmir, the Army organised a 400 Km “JAZBAA-E-TIRANGA” Relay Marathon. The event was flagged off by Major General Rajeev Puri, General Officer Commanding, Ace of Spades Division, who led the relay, closely followed by other military personnel.
- More than 300 troops took part, carrying the Indian Tricolour all along the Line of Control (LoC). The run inculcated the spirit of brotherhood, as each soldier carried the symbolic National Flag of comradeship across the Area of Responsibility (AOR), handing it over to other units which stand shoulder to shoulder in war.
Uttar Pradesh government will set up ATS training centre
- The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to set up a training centre for Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) commandos in Saharanpur’s Deoband. According to sources, the government has already allotted over 2,000 square meters of land for establishing the ATS training centre in Deoband.
- Deoband is on the Uttaranchal and Haryana border and it is an important place to help us increase our depth, presence and operation efficiency in western parts of the state.

APPOINMENT & RESIGNATION

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

Mirabai Chanu appointed as the brand ambassador of Amway India
- Direct selling FMCG firm Amway India has announced that it has appointed Olympian Saikhom Mirabai Chanu as the brand ambassador for Amway and its Nutrilite range of products. Chanu will spearhead the company’s campaigns focused on product ranges such as Nutrilite Daily, Omega and All Plant Protein among others.
- Chanu, a weightlifter, won the silver medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in the women’s 49kg category.

SUMMIT’S & MOU’s

Piyush Goyal chaired the fifth meeting of BRICS Industry Ministers
- Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has chaired the fifth meeting of BRICS Industry Ministers and called for expanding the horizon of the New Development Bank (NDB). India holds the Chairship of BRICS for 2021. This year, India chose the theme of ‘Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus’ for its chairship.
- The BRICS ministers called for the need to adopt emerging new technologies, recognising it as an important tool for modernisation and transformation of industry, and promotion of economic growth.

OBITUARY

Tamil actor & popular TV host Anandha Kannan passed away
- Tamil star and popular TV host Anandha Kannan passed away. He started his career with Vasantham TV in Singapore before moving to Chennai where he worked with Sun Music as a
video jockey.


**IMPORTANT DAYS**

**World Photography Day 2021: 19th August**
- World Photography Day is celebrated on 19 August every year to promote photography as a hobby and also inspire photographers around the globe to share a single photo with the rest of the world. The first official World Photo Day was observed on August 19, 2010.
- The origin of World Photo Day comes from the invention of the Daguerreotype, a photographic process developed by Frenchmen Louis Daguerre and Joseph Nicephore Niepce in 1837. It was on August 19, 1939 that the French government purchased the patent of Daguerreotype process and announced the invention as a gift “free to the world”.

**World Humanitarian Day 2021: 19th August**
- World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is observed every year on 19 August to pay tribute to humanitarian personnel and those workers who lost or risked their lives while doing humanitarian service. In 2021 we are celebrating the 12th WHD.
- The theme for 2021 WHD is #TheHumanRace: a global challenge for climate action in solidarity with people who need it the most.
- 19 August marks the day on which the then Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Iraq, Sérgio Vieira de Mello and 21 of his colleagues were killed in the bombing of the UN Headquarters in Baghdad. World Humanitarian Day was commemorated for the first time on 19 August 2009, after it was formally recognised by the United Nations General Assembly in 2009.

**BANKING AND ECONOMIC**

**SBI Life Insurance launched new-age term insurance policy “SBI Life eShield Next”**
- SBI Life Insurance announced the launch of a unique new age protection solution called ‘SBI Life eShield Next’, which ‘levels up’ the protection coverage as the insured achieves life’s major milestones. This means that the policy is neither linked to the stock market nor shares any profit or dividends with the policyholders.
- It is an individual, non-linked, non-participating, life insurance pure risk premium product and works by ‘levelling up’ the required insurance protection, through an increase in sum assured linked to the significant ‘level-up milestones in one’s life, like getting married, becoming a parent or buying a new house.

**Current Affairs PDF- August 18, 2021**

**INTERNATIONAL**

Zambia Presidential Election : Hakainde Hichilema won
- In Zambia, opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema, of the United Party for National Development, has won the 2021 general Presidential election of the country.
The 59-year-old Hichilema won with a landslide victory, winning 59.38% of the total vote. He will replace incumbent President Edgar Lungu of the Patriotic Front. Last year, Zambia, Africa’s second-biggest copper miner, produced a record output of the metal.

Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and his cabinet resigns due to losing a confidence vote in parliament

- The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Muhyiddin Yassin and his cabinet resigned after losing a confidence vote in parliament. The 74-year-old Muhyiddin came to power in March 2020. He will however stay on as a caretaker prime minister until a successor is named.
- The resignations plunged Malaysia even deeper into political turmoil while it contends with one of the world’s worst surges of the virus. The nation of about 32 million people has averaged more than 20,000 cases per day in the last 14 days, and just 33 per cent of the population is fully vaccinated. The total death toll from the pandemic in the country is at least 12,510.

Lionel Messi, a six-time winner of the Ballon d’Or for Europe’s best soccer player, signed a two-year contract with an option for a third year. Paris Saint-Germain Football Club, commonly referred to as Paris Saint-Germain or PSG.

Messi leaves Barcelona with 672 goals in 778 appearances, a record tally for one club. His trophy haul includes four Champions Leagues and 10 La Liga titles.

A 15-year-old young Indian Grandmaster Raunak Sadhwani has won the 19th Spilimbergo Open chess tournament in Italy. The fourth-seeded Sadhwani, who hails from Nagpur, remained
undefeated in the tournament, with seven points from nine rounds, in which claimed five wins and four draws.

- In the ninth and final round, Sadhwani and Italian GM Pier Luigi Basso finished level on seven points, but the Indian was declared the winner on the basis of a better tie-break score.

APPOINTMENT & RESIGNATION

Hockey star Vandana Katariya become ambassador
- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has announced that Indian women’s hockey team player Vandana Katariya will be the brand ambassador of the state’s Department of Women Empowerment and Child Development. The announcement came at a program organized to felicitate the recipients of awardees of the Tilu Rauteli Award and the Anganwadi Workers Award.
- Earlier, Dhami had announced a cash reward of Rs 25 lakh to Indian women’s hockey team player Vandana Katariya for her brilliant performance at the Tokyo Olympics.

OBITUARY

Creator of the Maki Kaji, Sudoku puzzle passed away
- Maki Kaji, the creator of puzzle Sudoku passed away at the age of 69 years due to bile duct cancer. He was known as the father of Sudoku and was from Japan. He was the president of Nikoli Co., Ltd., a Japanese puzzle manufacturer.
- Kaji established Japan’s first puzzle magazine, Puzzle Tsushin Nikoli, with pals in 1980. His most legendary creation, Sudoku, followed in 1983.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Puducherry celebrated: De Jure Transfer day
- Puducherry on 16th August celebrated its De Jure Transfer day. Speaker of the Puducherry Assembly, R. Selvam, paid floral tributes at the memorial in Kizhur, a remote hamlet in Puducherry, where the transfer of power took place on the same day in 1962. De Jure Transfer Day is the day it really got independence. The then Pondicherry was under French control well after 1947.
- The treaty of cession signed between the French and Indian governments was ratified by the French Parliament only on August 16, 1962. So on that day the “De-Jure” (The Legal Merger of the UT with the Indian Union) was effected. 178 representatives participated in the referendum in which 170 voted in favour of a merger with India and 8 against it.

BANKING AND ECONOMIC

Reserve Bank of India launched the Financial Inclusion Index
- The Reserve Bank of India has introduced the Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index), which is a measure of the extent of financial inclusion in India. FI-Index incorporates the inclusion details of banking, investments, insurance, postal and pension sector in India. This was among the announcements made in the first bimonthly monetary policy in April this year.
- The value of FI-Index will range between 0 to 100. Where 0 denotes complete financial exclusion while 100 denotes full financial inclusion.
Parameters of FI-Index: The FI-Index comprises of three parameters, namely- Access (35%), Usage (45%), and Quality (20%) with each of these consisting of various dimensions, which are computed based on a number of indicators. In total there are 97 indicators.

Current Affairs PDF- August 17, 2021

NATIONAL

75th Independence Day: Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar flagged off ‘Operation Blue Freedom’

- The Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr Virendra Kumar has flagged off a pioneering world record expedition named ‘Operation Blue Freedom’ from Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi on the occasion of 75th Independence Day. The Operation Blue Freedom expedition comprise of a team of people with disabilities from across the country to reach Siachen Glacier, to create a new World Record, for the largest team of people with disabilities reaching the world’s highest battlefield.
- The team of people with disabilities were trained by ‘Team CLAW’, a team of Armed Forces veterans. The expedition was undertaken till Kumar Post (Siachen Glacier). The event was organised by Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, a premier autonomous research body mandated to research and provide policy feed to empower marginalised communities and to bring in Socio Economic transformation in the society.

Prime Minister of India set target to become ‘energy independent’ by 2047

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set the target of becoming an ‘energy independent country by the year 2047, the year when India will celebrate the 100th year of Independence. For this, PM has announced a ‘Mission Circular Economy’ that will replace petroleum with other forms of energy to make India achieve self-reliance in energy production by 2047.
- Mission Circular Economy would include a mix of electric mobility, gas-based economy, doping ethanol in petrol and making the country a hub for hydrogen production.
- Modi government has decided to set up the National Hydrogen Mission to make India a new global hub and the exporter of green hydrogen.

75th Independence Day: Government announced ‘Prime Minister Gatishakti Scheme’

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a Rs 100 lakh crore Pradhan Mantri Gatishakti scheme while addressing the nation on the 75th Independence Day from Red Fort. The Pradhan Mantri Gatishakti scheme aims to adopt a holistic and integrated approach in infrastructure growth and create employment opportunities for the youth of the country. The government will soon announce the Master Plan for the scheme, to help boost the productivity of industries, and boost the economic growth of the country, besides creating job opportunities for hundreds of thousands of youths.
- Gati Shakti will be a national infrastructure master plan for our country that will lay the foundation of holistic infrastructure and will lead to an integrated and holistic pathway to our economy.
• The PM Gati Shakti scheme is aimed at breaking the silos between road, rail, air and waterways to reduce travel time, improving industrial productivity, making manufacturing globally competitive, facilitating future economic zones and creating employment.

Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel announced 4 new districts & 18 new tehsils in the state
• Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has announced the creation of four new districts and 18 new tehsils in the state. The four new districts are: Mohla Manpur, Sarangarh-Bilaigarh, Shakti, Manendragarh. With the creation of four new districts, the total number of administrative districts in the state have reached 32.
• Apart from this, a garden will be developed exclusively for women in every district headquarter and the municipal corporation of the state, which will be known as the “Minimata Udyan”. The park has been named after ‘Minimata’, the first woman MP from Chhattisgarh elected in 1952, who devoted her life toward the empowerment of women and the betterment of society.

75th Independence Day: 75 new “Vande Bharat” trains will connect all parts of India
• Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation on the occasion of 75th Independence Day and announced that 75 ‘Vande Bharat’ trains would connect different parts of the country in 75 weeks of the celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. The 75 Vande Bharat trains will connect every corner of the country, in 75 weeks of the ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’, which is being celebrated from March 12, 2021, upto August 15, 2023.
• Presently two Vande Bharat Express trains are operating in the country by the Indian Railways. The first Vande Bharat Express operates between Varanasi and New Delhi and the other Vande Bharat Express operates between Katra and New Delhi.

APPOINTMENT & RESIGNATION
Adi Godrej to step down from Godrej India board, will be replaced by Nadir Godrej
• Adi Godrej will step down as the chairman of Godrej Industries on October 01, 2021. He will be replaced by Nadir Godrej, his younger brother.
• Godrej Industries (GIL) is the holding company of the Godrej group. Presently Nadir Godrej is the Managing Director of Godrej Industries. However, Adi Godrej will continue to serve as the Chairman of Godrej Group.

OBITUARY
Former international defender Chinmoy Chatterjee passed away
• Eminent India-international footballer Chinmoy Chatterjee, who played for the three Maidan heavyweights in his prime in the 1970-80s, has passed away. He was a member of the Indian team at the 1978 Bangkok Asian Games where they finished fourth in the quarterfinal league.
• Chatterjee played for Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting, during his domestic career. He also represented Bengal in the Santosh Trophy four times, and became champions in three of them.

West Germany forward Legend Gerd Müller passed away
• Former West Germany forward and the Bayern Munich football legend, Gerd Muller has passed
away. At the international level, he represented West Germany, scoring 68 goals in 62 appearances, and at the club level, he played for Bayern Munich, with which he scored a record 365 goals in 427 Bundesliga games.

- He was nicknamed “Bomber der Nation” (“the nation’s Bomber”) or simply “Der Bomber”, for his scoring prowess.

BANKING AND ECONOMIC

HCL Foundation launched ‘My e-Haat’ portal to empower artisans

- HCL Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of HCL Technologies has launched an online portal, ‘My e-Haat’, to empower artisans and strengthen the value chain of the handicraft sector in the country. The platform will enable artisans and primary producers to conduct their business, by listing and showcasing their products directly to customers, thereby minimising the informal intermediaries and the long supply chains. Currently, more than 30 partners from eight states with over 600 products are listed on the portal.

- The My E-Haat initiative will be a one-of-a-kind model (A2C) where artisans will directly connect with the customer for years to come. This portal would help in bringing the talent of skilled craftsmen from across the country to the world. It will also increase their recognition, appreciation and remuneration.

Current Affairs PDF- August 16, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

WHO forms Advisory Group named “SAGO”

- World Health Organization (WHO) has created a new advisory group named, The International Scientific Advisory Group for Origins of Novel Pathogens, or SAGO. The function of SAGO will be to systematically study the emergence of future emerging pathogens with pandemic potential, and advise the development in this regard to WHO.

- WHO has made an open call for nominations to SAGO from the member countries, thus providing a transparent foundation for the new scientific advisory group. The group will also work towards finding the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

NATIONAL

Delhi AIIMS Becomes First Hospital To Have Fire Station Inside Hospital Premises

- The All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), Delhi, has become the first hospital in India to house a fire station inside the hospital premises, its Director Dr Randeep Guleria said on Sunday. Making the announcement at a function to mark the 75th Independence Day, he said that the AIIMS has joined hands with the Delhi Fire Service for the purpose.

- The fire station, meant for quick response in case of fire emergency, will have its infrastructure developed by the AIIMS, while the fire tender, equipment, and manpower will be managed by the DFS.
Bihar CM announces 11pc DA hike for govt employees, pensioners

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Sunday, August 15, 2021, announced the Dearness Allowance (DA) hike for state government employees and pensioners on Independence Day.
- While addressing the gathering at Patna’s Gandhi Maidan after the flag hoisting ceremony, CM Kumar said the Bihar government will hike DA by 11% to 28% for state government employees and pensioners from July 1, 2021, on the lines of the Centre’s announcement.
- The 7th Pay Commission announced earlier that all Central government employees would be receiving a 28 per cent hike in their DA beginning from July 2021.

Kolkata’s tram turns into a museum on freedom struggle

- Commemorating the 75th Independence Day, West Bengal’s Transport Department on Sunday launched a mobile museum on freedom struggle and partition of Bengal by turning two trams into galleries.
- This museum on wheels has been curated by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Trust in collaboration with the West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC).
- It will be on display at Esplanade in the heart of the city till December. It will move to other parts of the city from January 1.

Kaziranga becomes India’s first national park with satellite phones

- Kaziranga National Park (KNP) in Assam has become the first national park in India to be equipped with satellite phones. Assam Chief Secretary Jishnu Barua handed over 10 satellite phones to the forest personnel of the Kaziranga National Park. The satellite phones will boost the anti-poaching measures in the park. BSNL will be the service provider of these phones.
- The park which has been spread over a massive 430 sq km area and divided into six ranges in upper Assam, has certain areas with poor to no connectivity. The satellite phones, given to the officials of Kaziranga Parks, which draw signals from the satellites instead of mobile towers will ensure connectivity in most of the remote locations. The move will also boost anti-poaching measures undertaken by the park.

4 more sites in India added to Ramsar list

- Four more wetlands from India have been added to the list of Ramsar sites, giving it the status of ‘Wetland of International Importance’. With this, the total number of Ramsar sites in India have reached 46, covering a surface area of 1,083,322 hectares. The sites have been recognised as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. Two of these sites are in Haryana, while the other two are in Gujarat.
- Four sites are:
  - Thol, Gujarat
  - Wadhwana, Gujarat
  - Sultanpur, Haryana
  - Bhindawas, Haryana

Foreign Minister S Jaishankar begins 4-day visit to New York on Monday

- Foreign Minister S Jaishankar will begin a four-day visit to the United States from Monday to
attend a number of UN Security Council events, including a terrorism briefing to be held under the Indian presidency of the powerful body.

- Announcing the visit on Sunday, the Foreign Ministry said Jaishankar would also chair an open debate on peacekeeping at the UNSC.
- His visit to New York comes against the backdrop of the Taliban’s rapid attack on Afghanistan and the issue is expected to feature in his talks with UN officials.

SPORTS

Komalika Bari becomes new Under-21 Recurve world champion in Archery

- Archery, Komalika Bari became the new under-21 recurve world champion at the Youth World Championships in Wroclaw, Poland yesterday. India’s Junior recurve archers also bagged gold in the men’s and the mixed team event. In the U21 men’s recurve team final the Indian team of Dhiraj Bommadevara, Aditya Choudhary, and Parth Sushant Salunkhe clinched the gold medal in a very exciting fashion.
- Indian trio came from behind to clinch the 5-3 win against Spain. Parth Salunkhe later joined Komalika Bari in the mixed team event, to capture another gold for India. The duo produced a brilliant comeback against the Spanish duo to win 5-3 after being down 2-0 in the match. Earlier in the under-21 women’s team bronze medal match, the trio of Komalika Bari, Tanisha Verma, and Tisha Punia lost 1-5 against Ukraine in what was India’s first loss of the day.

RANKING

ARWU Rankings 2021: Calcutta University secures second position

- "on the momentous occasion of the 75th anniversary of country’s independence, we, the University of Calcutta fraternity, have yet another cause of celebration. Shanghai Ranking - Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), 2021 has adjudged the University of Calcutta as the best among all universities across India. Among all the Universities and Institutes in the country, the University of Calcutta is second only to the prestigious Indian Institute of Science. This success and international recognition should be seen as a result of the sustained efforts of brilliant members of faculty.
- As per the ARWU Ranking 2021, the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) stood on the number one rank while the University of Calcutta was on the second spot among all premier higher educational institutions in the country.

Current Affairs PDF- August 15, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani steps down, as the government surrendered to the Taliban forces

- Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani will shortly tender his resignation, as the government has surrendered to the Taliban forces, which entered Kabul and sought the unconditional surrender of the central government. Following this, a new interim government has been announced, which is likely to be headed by Ali Ahamd Jalali, a US-based academic.
• President Ashraf Ghani fled the country as the Islamist terrorists entered the city, he wanted to avoid bloodshed, while hundreds of Afghans desperate to leave flooded Kabul airport.
• In Washington, opponents of President Joe Biden’s decision to end America’s longest war, launched after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. American diplomats were flown by helicopter to the airport from their embassy in the fortified Wazir Akbar Khan district as Afghan forces, trained for years and equipped by the United States and others at a cost of billions of dollars, melted away.

NATIONAL

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment launched an online portal “TAPAS”
• Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has launched an online portal named TAPAS (Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services) to provide filmed lectures/courses and e-study material in the field of social defence. TAPAS is the initiative of the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The course can be taken up by anyone and is free of cost.

Presently there are 5 courses under TAPAS:
• Drug (Substance) Abuse Prevention,
• Geriatric/Elderly Care,
• Care and Management of Dementia,
• Transgender Issues and
• A comprehensive course on Social Defence Issues.

MoHUA launched brand and logo for urban Self-Help Group products ‘SonChiraiya’
• Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has launched ‘SonChiraiya’, a brand and logo for marketing of the urban Self-Help Group (SHG) products. To make urban SHG products popular, the ministry has signed MoUs with e-Commerce Portals like Amazon and Flipkart, with an underlying narrative of women empowerment. Due to this partnership, more than 2,000 products of nearly 5,000 SHG members have been onboarded on the e-commerce portals.
• This initiative is a significant step of increasing visibility and global access for the products made by urban SHG women. Under the initiative, a variety of professionally packaged and hand-crafted ethnic products will reach the doorsteps of customers worldwide.

India’s first Drone Forensic Lab and Research Center now in Kerala
• India’s first Drone Forensic Lab and Research Center has come up in Kerala. The Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan was inaugurating the State police department’s ‘Drone Forensic Laboratory’ at the Kerala State Police CyberDome. Cyberdome is a technological research and development centre of the Kerala Police Department.
• The centre will help in keeping a watch over unauthorized drones and also for the production of drones for the use of the police force. This lab-cum-research centre will look into both utility and threat aspects of a drone.
• The police have forayed strongly into the relatively new field of drone forensics. It had recently analysed a drone brought down by the Border Security Force (BSF) near the international border in Kathua district in Jammu and Kashmir and helped the local enforcement zero in on its
illegal operator.

Dr Jitendra Singh (Minister of Earth Sciences) has released India’s first Cattle Genomic Chip “IndiGau” released
- Dr Jitendra Singh has released India’s first cattle genomic chip ‘IndiGau’ for the conservation of pure varieties of indigenous cattle breeds like, Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal, Ongole etc.
- The chip has been developed by scientists of National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NAIB), Hyderabad, an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Department of Biotechnology. The chip will help in achieving the goal of conservation of our own breeds with better characters and help towards doubling farmers’ income by 2022.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
India’s Chandrayaan-2 orbiter detected water molecules on lunar surface in 2019
- India’s Chandrayaan-2 moon mission may have made a hard landing on the lunar surface in 2019, but the orbiter accompanying it has been providing useful information to scientists back on Earth. A research paper revealed that the Chandrayaan-2 orbiter confirmed the presence of water molecules (H2O) and hydroxyl (OH) on the surface of the moon. The findings were published in the journal Current Science.
- “The initial data analysis from IIRS clearly demonstrates the presence of widespread lunar hydration and unambiguous detection of OH and H2O signatures between 29 degrees north and 62 degrees north latitude. The discovery was made by the orbiter’s imaging infrared spectrometer (IIRS).

SUMMIT’S & MOU’s
Indian Bank signs MoU with Paralympic Committee of India (PCI)
- Public sector Indian Bank has signed an MoU with the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) as one of the banking partners of the Paralympic Games scheduled to commence from August 24 in Tokyo, Japan. The bank, through its year-long association with PCI, will provide financial assistance to paralympic athletes. The President of the Paralympic Committee of India is Deepa Malik.
- In a year-long association, the bank will provide financial assistance to Paralympic athletes to prepare for the coveted sporting events in the domestic arena as well as global platforms. Timely financial aid provided to these sportspersons will encourage them to focus their efforts on the game and win laurels for the country.

IMPORTANT DAYS
75th Indian Independence Day 2021
- India is celebrating the 75th Independence Day on 15th August 2021 to mark the country’s freedom from nearly two centuries of British colonial rule. India is marking its 75th Independence Day as “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav”. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is leading the celebrations from Red Fort in New Delhi and is addressing the nation from Red Fort in New Delhi. This is his eighth address as the prime minister.
- For the first time, just as the flag is unfurled by the PM, flower petals showered at the venue by
two Mi-17 1V helicopters of the Indian Air Force in Amrut formation. The Centre has invited 32 athletes — who have won medals at the Olympics and two officials of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) at the Red Fort.

- The Indian Independence movement began during World War I and was led by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. On August 15, 1947, India got its freedom, ending an almost 200-year British rule. India’s first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru raised the Indian national flag above the Lahori Gate of Red Fort in Delhi on August 15, 1947. It is a tradition that has since been followed by the incumbent Prime Minister, followed by an address to the country.

PM Modi declared August 14 as ‘Partition Horrors Remembrance Day’

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has declared that, August 14 will be observed as ‘Partition Horrors Remembrance Day’ or ‘Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas’, in memory of people’s struggles and sacrifices during the partition of the country in 1947.
- The day aims to inspire us to eliminate the poison of discrimination, animosity and ill-will, as well as strengthen unity, social harmony and human sensibilities. Pakistan celebrates August 14 as its Independence Day.