

Weekly Current Affairs PDF May 29 to May 23, 2021

Current Affairs PDF- May 29, 2021

NATIONAL

Assam's CM Himanta Sarma Appointed 'Guardian Ministers'

- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has appointed 'Guardian Ministers' to oversee the implementation of government policy decisions, administrative reforms, and other welfare schemes in all the 34 districts of the state.
- 13 'Guardian Ministers' have been appointed for all 34 districts in Assam, for balanced, speedy and sustainable developments of these districts. The assigned ministers will be responsible for the implementation of all centrally-sponsored schemes as well as the state's own priority programmes.

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh launched SeHAT OPD portal

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has launched the 'Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT) OPD portal, through video conferencing. The main motive of the portal is to provide telemedicine services to the serving Armed Forces personnel, veterans and their families.
- The portal can be accessed at <https://sehatopd.in/>, to avail the telemedicine services
- SeHAT OPD portal is the final version with advanced safety features.
- The trial version was launched in August 2020 and more than 6,500 medical consultations have already been carried on the beta version.

TRIFED and NITI AAYOG to partner to implement the Van Dhan Yojana

- TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India), Ministry of Tribal Affairs is set to partner with NITI Aayog for implementation of Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK) initiative under Van Dhan Yojna in 39 Tribal Aspirational districts identified by NITI Aayog. These include districts in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Telangana and Tripura.
- Van Dhan tribal start-ups or VDVK is a programme for value addition, branding & marketing of Minor Forest Produces by establishing Van Dhan Kendras to facilitate the creation of sustainable livelihoods for the forest-based tribes.
- Special focus will be on these aspirational districts, where the tribal population is more than 50%.

Aashritha : India's first woman flight test engineer

- Squadron Leader, Aashritha V Olety is the first and only woman in the IAF qualified for the role, and as a flight test engineer, she will be responsible for evaluating aircraft and airborne systems before their induction into the armed forces.
- Aashritha V Olety, a native of Karnataka, has graduated as part of the 43rd Flight Test Course.

CM of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan launched new Smart Kitchen Scheme

- Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan has announced a secretary-level committee will formulate guidelines and recommendations on implementation of the “Smart Kitchen Scheme” in state to fulfil commitments of the Left Democratic Front (LDF). It aims to account and reduce the workload of women’s domestic labour. Smart Kitchen Scheme will be launched by July 10, 2021.
- Under the scheme, women of state will be given loan to refurbish their kitchen. Loan will be provided with a low-interest rate in instalment schemes. Scheme seeks to reduce workload of women’s domestic labour.

SPORTS

Ashok Kumar will be the only Indian referee to officiate in wrestling in Tokyo Olympics

- Ashok Kumar will be the only referee from the country to officiate in wrestling matches of the Tokyo Olympic Games. He was named in the list of officials released by the United World Wrestling (UWW).
- Ashok, who will officiate in his second consecutive Olympics. He is a UWW referees’ educator as well.

OBITUARY

Author Alka Raghuvanshi Passed Away

- Author And Art Curator Alka Raghuvanshi passed away. She was India’s first trained art curator, having trained at the Goldsmiths College, London and the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford.
- She has curated and designed over 25 major exhibitions many of which travelled to other parts of the country and the world.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers 2021: 29 May

- The “International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers” is observed on May 29 annually. The day is celebrated to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism, dedication, and courage and to honour the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.
- The day was designated by United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 2002, and first celebrated in 2003. The 2021 Theme: “The road to a lasting peace: Leveraging the power of youth for peace and security.”

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

A new book “7 Lessons from Everest – Expedition Learnings from Life and Business” by Aditya Gupta

- Aditya Gupta, a Delhi-based entrepreneur and mountaineer aim to raise Rs 1 crore for COVID-19 relief from the sale proceeds of his recently released book “7 Lessons from Everest – Expedition Learnings from Life and Business”. The coffee-table book, with 350 stunning images spread over

250 pages, is written by Aditya Gupta.

- The book narrates the author's experience of scaling Mt Everest at the age of 50 in 2019 and shares the virtues of "preparation, passion, perseverance, mental toughness, and resilience". The proceeds from the book will be given to NGO Child Rights and You (CRY).

BANKING AND ECONOMY

ICICI Bank collaborated with NPCI to link its 'Pockets' digital wallet to the UPI

- ICICI Bank has announced the launch of a unique facility of linking a UPI (Unified Payments Interface) ID to its digital wallet 'Pockets', marking a departure from the current practice that demands such IDs be linked with a savings bank account. This initiative enables users to undertake small value everyday transactions directly from their 'Pockets' wallet. Further, customers who already have a UPI ID, will get a new ID when they log on to the 'Pockets' app.
- This initiative enables users to undertake small value everyday transactions directly from their 'Pockets' wallet using UPI in a safe and secure manner. It helps them to streamline the number of transactions being undertaken daily from their savings account and thus de-clutter their savings account statement of multiple entries. Further, it expands the convenient usage of UPI to young adults like college students, who may not have a savings account.

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INTERNATIONAL

First right-wing leader in 14 years in Ecuador

- Guillermo Lasso, a conservative, assumed the presidency of Ecuador and has become the first right-wing leader in 14 years in Ecuador. The 65-year-old former banker beat left-wing economist Andres Arauz in a second-round run-off last month and succeeds the hugely unpopular Lenin Moreno.
- Guillermo Alberto is a banker, businessman, writer and politician who recently became the 47th president of Ecuador. He is the first centre-right president in two decades.

Andy Jassy will be new CEO of Amazon's

- Andy Jassy will officially become the CEO of Amazon on July 5th, the company announced at a shareholder meeting. Amazon announced that Jassy, who is the current CEO of Amazon Web Services (AWS), would replace Jeff Bezos as CEO of the entire company in February.
- Bezos will become executive chair of Amazon's board. Jassy joined the company in the late '90s and was tasked with exploring what would become AWS around 2003.

NATIONAL

IFSCA constituted an expert committee on Investment Funds

- The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has constituted an expert committee on Investment Funds. The Committee has been formed under the Chairmanship of Nilesh Shah, Managing Director of Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Co. Ltd. It will holistically

review the global best practices and make recommendations to IFSCA on the roadmap for the fund's industry in the International Financial Service Centres (IFSCs).

- The other members of the Committee comprises of leaders from the entire Fund Management ecosystem including from areas such as technology, distribution, legal, compliance, and operations.

OBITUARY

Freedom fighter HS Doreswamy passed away due to C-19

- Freedom fighter H S Doreswamy, who recently recovered from Covid-19, passed away. He was born in Bengaluru on April 10, 1918, Harohalli Srinivasaiah Doreswamy, is known for his participation in the Quit India movement and Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan movement.
- He was also a familiar figure in civil society movements in Karnataka as he had campaigned to revive lakes in Bengaluru.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Action for Women's Health 2021: 28 May

- The International Day of Action for Women's Health (International Women's Health Day) is observed every year on May 28 since 1987 to raise awareness on the issues related to women's health and well being. Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network (LACWHN) and Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR) launched the day.
- Year after year, women, girls, advocates and allies have continued to take action and stand up for sexual and reproductive rights for what they are: an indivisible and inalienable part of our human rights.

World Hunger Day 2021: 28 May

- World Hunger Day is observed globally on 28 May every year. The objective of this day is to raise awareness about more than 820 million people living in chronic hunger worldwide. It is observed since 2011 to not only spread awareness about the malaise of chronic hunger but also to solve hunger and poverty through sustainable undertakings.
- The initiative recognizes the dire need to save nearly a quarter of a billion lives from malnourishment and chronic hunger. The need to provide outreach globally during the pandemic for the distribution of food is seen as paramount to save those who have been vulnerable even in pre-pandemic times.

25th to 31st May 2021: International Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories

- The United Nations is observing the International Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories from May 25 to 31, 2021. On December 06, 1999, the UN General Assembly called for the annual observance of the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories. In UN Charter, a Non-Self-Governing Territory is defined as a Territory "whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government."
- The observation aims to take effective measures to safeguard and guarantee the inalienable

rights of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to their natural resources, including land, and to establish and maintain control over the future development of those resources and requested the Administering Powers to take all necessary steps to protect the property rights of the peoples of those Territories. At present, there are 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories remaining.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Indian Scientist C.N.R. Rao Received 2020 International (ENI or Energy Frontier) Award

- Noted Indian scientist and Bharat Ratna Professor, C.N.R. Rao has been felicitated with the International Eni Award 2020 (also called the Energy Frontier award). The International Eni Award is considered to be the Nobel Prize in Energy Research. He has been conferred the prize for his work on metal oxides, carbon nanotubes and other materials and two-dimensional systems.
- Professor Rao will be presented the Eni Awards 2020 on 14 October 2021, during an official ceremony held at the Quirinal Palace in Rome. The Eni Award is awarded annually by the Italian oil and gas company Eni to encourage better use of energy sources and increased environmental research.

Amartya Sen conferred with the Spain's top award

- Indian economist and Nobel Laureate, Amartya Kumar Sen has been conferred with the '2021 Princess of Asturias Award' by Spain in the social sciences category. Princess of Asturias Awards is annual prizes awarded by the Princess of Asturias Foundation in Spain to individuals, entities or organizations from around the world who make notable achievements in the sciences, humanities, and public affairs.
- The 87-year-old Sen was selected from 41 candidates of 20 nationalities for "His research on famines and his theory of human development, welfare economics and the underlying mechanisms of poverty have contributed to the fight against injustice, inequality, disease and ignorance". The award comprises a cash prize of 50,000 Euros along with a Joan Miro sculpture representing and symbolising the award, a diploma and insignia.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Book "Sach Kahun Toh" is the autobiography of Neena Gupta

- Bollywood actor Neena Gupta is all set to launch her autobiography "Sach Kahun Toh", publisher Penguin Random House India. she wrote the book in 2020 during the lockdown. The book addresses issues like casting couch, film industry politics, and also talks about what it takes for a young actor to survive without a godfather or guide.
- From her time at the National School of Drama (NSD) to moving to Bombay (Mumbai) in the 80s and her single parenthood, the book will share Gupta's life story in the most "unapologetically honest" manner. "She details the big milestones in her life, her unconventional pregnancy and single parenthood, and successful second innings in Bollywood.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Equitas Small Finance Bank offers online process for NRI account opening

- Equitas Small Finance Bank has now become the first Small Finance Bank to offer its NRI customer segment the ease of account opening online. The company will also be the only one in the Small Finance Bank sector to have Virtual Relationship Managers based on time zones. The online process of account opening for NRIs can be done via smartphone or computer connected to the Internet.
- The applicants will have a span of 90 days to courier documents after account opening. With this pioneering move, Equitas Small Finance Bank is seamlessly increasing opportunities for its NRI account holders to manage their investments, deposits and the income earned in India.

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INTERNATIONAL

Cabinet approved a new Consulate General of India in Maldives

- Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the opening of a new Consulate General of India in Addu City, the Maldives in 2021. India and Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and commercial links steeped in antiquity. Maldives occupies an important place in the 'Neighbourhood First Policy' and the 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) vision of the Government of India.
- The opening of a Consulate General in Addu City will help augment India's diplomatic presence in the Maldives and make it commensurate with the existing and aspired level of engagement.

NATIONAL

Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare chaired 74th World Health Assembly

- Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Chairman of WHO Executive Board, Dr Harsh Vardhan, chaired the 74th World Health Assembly in virtual mode. According to Dr Harsh Vardhan, the executive board has asked for further efforts which can ensure fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines under COVAX Facility. Director-General of World Health Organisation, Dr Tedros, also participated in the event.
- Board recommended 74th World Health Assembly to consider the report on mental health preparedness and response for the Covid-19 pandemic. It further recommended endorsing updated comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan for 2013 to 2030 and encouraged WHO to work in collaboration with World Organisation for Animal Health and Food & Agriculture Organisation so that source of zoonotic virus can be identified.

SPORTS

Geneva Open tennis- Casper wins Men's Singles title

- Norway's Casper Ruud has won the ATP Geneva Open final with a 7-6 (8/6), 6-4 victory over Denis Shapovalov. Victory in Geneva means the Norwegian world number 21 is going to be among the top 16 seeds in Paris.

- A second career title lifted Ruud's record to 2-2 in finals, all at clay-court events. The 22-year-old Norwegian's previous title was at Buenos Aires last year.

Punjab Government finally announced that Mohali international hockey stadium renamed

- The Punjab Government finally announced to rename the Mohali International Hockey Stadium, after triple Olympian and Padma Shri Balbir Singh Sr. The stadium will now be known as Olympian Balbir Singh Senior International Hockey Stadium. The government also announced to start a scholarship scheme in the legend's name for meritorious hockey players of the state.
- Balbir Singh Sr played an important role in making the Indian hockey team a three-time Olympics champion. No one has been able to break his Olympics final record till date. He scored five goals in India's 6-1 victory over the Netherlands in the final of the 1952 Olympic Games. He also was the manager of the 1975 World Cup-winning Indian team. The Punjab Government had honoured the legendary player with the Maharaja Ranjit Singh Award in 2019.

OBITUARY

Ex-Formula One boss Max Mosley passed away at the age of 81

- Max Mosley, the former head of Formula One's governing body, has died at the age of 81 after suffering from cancer.
- The youngest son of Oswald Mosley, the leader of the British fascist movement in the 1930s. Mosley was a racing driver, team owner and lawyer before becoming president of the International Automobile Federation (FIA) in 1993.

U.S. Olympic sprinter Lee Evans passed away

- Lee Evans, the record-setting sprinter who wore a black beret in a sign of protest at the 1968 Olympics then went onto a life of humanitarian work in support of social justice.
- Evans became the first man to crack 44 seconds in the 400 meters, winning the gold medal at the Mexico City Games in 43.86.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Congo's new Prime Minister: Collinet Makosso

- The President of the Republic of Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso has appointed Anatole Collinet Makosso as the country's Prime Minister. He replaced Clement Mouamba, in-office since 2016. Before this appointment, Makosso was the education minister of the Central African country. He was also minister of youth and civic instruction from 2011 to 2016.
- Since 2016, he has held the position of Minister of Primary and Secondary Education in charge of literacy. Mr Collinet Makosso was the deputy campaign manager of candidate Sassou Nguesso during the last presidential election.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

India and Israel have inked a three-year joint work programme, till 2023

- India and Israel have inked a three-year joint work programme which will continue till 2023. A joint work programme was initiated with the aim of enhancing cooperation in agriculture. Under

the new work programme, 13 Centres of Excellence (CoEs) were set up to make Indian farmers aware of Israeli farm and water technologies.

- A model ecosystem in agriculture called Villages of Excellence (VoE) will also be created across eight states within 75 villages. The new programme will promote the increase in net income and enhance the livelihood of the individual farmer. India and Israel have completed four similar joint work programmes successfully.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

2021 Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards: SpiceHealth wins Gold Stevie Award 2021

- SpiceHealth, a healthcare company founded by the promoters of SpiceJet, has won the Gold Award at the 2021 Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards for 'Most Valuable Medical Innovation' under Covid19. At a time when Covid-19 was at an all-time excessive in India in November 2020, SpiceHealth, beneath the management of Avani Singh, disrupted the Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) testing house by providing checks in cell laboratories at ₹499, versus the then-present rate of ₹2,400 in Delhi and helped convey down Covid-19 testing price dramatically throughout the nation.
- The Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards are the one business awards program to recognise innovation within the workplace in all 29 nations of the Asia-Pacific area. The Stevie Awards are broadly thought about to be the world's premier business awards, conferring recognition for achievement in applications akin to The International Business Awards for 19 years.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

NPCI partnered with PayCore

- The National Payments Corp. of India (NPCI) has partnered with Turkey's global payment solutions company PayCore as one of the certified partners for RuPay SoftPOS to drive cashless payments across the country. RuPay SoftPOS enables merchants to accept payments securely from contactless cards, mobile wallets, and wearables just with their mobile phones.
- NPCI has authorized the SoftPOS solution developed by PayCore for RuPay. This solution can be integrated into bank or aggregator acquiring systems to enable acquiring of RuPay using mobile phones enabled with NFC capability or add-ons.
- Millions of merchants now can convert their near field communication-enabled (NFC) smartphones into a POS machine to accept contactless payments through RuPay SoftPOS.

Foreign direct investment jumps 19% to \$59.64 billion in 2020-21

- Foreign direct investments (FDI) into the country grew 19 per cent to USD 59.64 billion during 2020-21 on account of measures taken by the government on the fronts of policy reforms, investment facilitation and ease of doing business. Total FDI, including equity, re-invested earnings and capital, rose 10 per cent to the "highest ever" of USD 81.72 billion during 2020-21 as against USD 74.39 billion in 2019-20.
- In terms of top investor countries, Singapore is at the top with a 29 per cent share. It was followed by the US (23 per cent) and Mauritius (9 per cent) during the last fiscal. FDI equity inflow grew by 19 per cent in 2020-21 (USD 59.64 billion), compared to 2019-20 (USD 49.98

billion).

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INTERNATIONAL

International Monetary Fund proposed a \$50 billion global vaccination plan

- The International Monetary Fund has proposed a \$50 billion global vaccination plan that would cover at least 40 per cent of the global population by the end of 2021 and at least 60 per cent by the first half of 2022. The vaccination target requires additional upfront grants to Covax, donating surplus doses and free cross-border flows of raw materials and finished vaccines.
- With strong and coordinated action now and with little in terms of financing relative to the outsized benefits the world can durably exit this unprecedented health and economic crisis, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said in her address to the G20 Health Summit.

NATIONAL

CM of Uttarakhand Tirath Singh Rawat declared Vatsalya Yojana for children orphaned due to Corona

- Uttarakhand Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat has announced Chief Minister Vatsalya Yojana for orphaned children who have lost their parents due to C-19. Under the scheme, the State Government will make arrangements for their maintenance, education and training for employment up to the age of 21 years. The Chief Minister said that such orphaned children of the state will be given a maintenance allowance of 3000 rupees per month.
- The state government will make laws for the paternal property of these orphans in which no one will have the right to sell their paternal property until they are adults. This responsibility will be with the District Magistrate of the concerned district. The Chief Minister also said that the children whose parents have died due to C-19 will be given 5 per cent horizontal reservation in government jobs of the state government.

Maharashtra government launched "Mission Oxygen Self-Reliance" scheme

- Maharashtra government has launched the "Mission Oxygen Self-Reliance" scheme to meet the state's oxygen needs. Special incentives will be given to oxygen-producing industries under this scheme. At present, the state's oxygen generation capacity is 1300 MT per day. Units set up in Vidarbha, Marathwada, Dhule, Nandurbar, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg regions will be eligible for incentives up to 150 per cent of their eligible fixed capital investments and units set up in the rest of Maharashtra will be eligible for up to 100 per cent general incentives.
- The government will also give a refund on gross SGST, stamp duty, electricity duty and unit subsidy of power cost for five years and interest subsidy for MSME units with a fixed capital investment of up to Rs 50 crore. Only those applying before June 30 will get the benefits of this

policy. With these incentives, Maharashtra's healthcare system is expected to be strengthened by increasing manufacturing and storage for becoming an oxygen self-reliant state soon.

Haryana government launched 'Sanjeevani Pariyojana' to treat C-19 patients at home

- Haryana government has launched an anti-C-19 "Sanjeevani Pariyojana", which will provide supervised and quick medical care at home for people, with mild to moderate symptoms of C-19, residing in rural areas. This Pariyojana has been launched to extend medical care in rural areas where awareness regarding the second wave of C-19 and related treatment remains low. It is an important step of bringing medical care for the people who need it most and when they need it most.
- The scope of medical advice will be expanded beyond qualified doctors as it will mobilize 200 final year and pre-final year medical students and interns by connecting them to consultants and experts.

143 Khelo India centres to be opened in seven states

- The Sports Ministry has given its approval to open 143 Khelo India Centres across seven states in the country with a total budget estimate of Rs 14.30 crore. The states include Maharashtra, Mizoram, Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. These Khelo India Centres will be entrusted with one sports discipline each. The financial assistance will be used for remuneration of the past-champion athletes as coach, support staff, purchase of equipment, sports kits, consumables, participation in competition and events.
- The Khelo India Centres have been launched by the Sports Ministry in partnership with the State Governments to ensure the availability of grassroot-level sports infrastructure across the country. Thirty six Khelo India Centres will be opened in Maharashtra, 52 centres in Arunachal Pradesh, two centres in Mizoram, 31 centres in Karnataka, 16 centres in Manipur, four in Madhya Pradesh and two centres in Goa. In June last year, the Sports Ministry had planned to open up as many as one thousand new Khelo India Centres over a period of four years, with at least one centre in each district of the country. 217 Khelo India Centres had already been opened across several states.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NASA send its first mobile robot to search for water on the moon

- The United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration is planning to search for water and other resources on the moon in 2023. The US agency, as part of its Artemis program, is planning to send its first mobile robot to the Moon in late 2023 in search of ice and other resources on and below the lunar surface. The Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover, or VIPER will collect data that would help NASA map resources at the lunar South Pole that could one day be harvested for long-term human exploration at the Moon.
- The data received from VIPER has the potential to aid our scientists in determining precise

locations and concentrations of ice on the Moon and will help us evaluate the environment and potential resources at the lunar south pole in preparation for Artemis astronauts.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Jagjit Pavadia elected President of International Narcotics Control Board

- Jagjit Pavadia, former Narcotics Commissioner of India and a retired officer of the Indian Revenue Service (Customs), has been elected president of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). She is the first Indian to be heading the Vienna-based organization and the second woman to hold this office.
- The INCB is a quasi-judicial body responsible for the implementation of the United Nations international drug control convention. It monitors the compliance of UN member states with the three international drug control conventions and the functioning of the international drug control system. The INCB also helps governments in access to controlled drugs during emergency situations.

Anvee Bhutani Elected Union President of Oxford India Society

- An Indian-origin Human Sciences student from Magdalen College at the University of Oxford has been declared the winner at the end of a Student Union (SU) byelection.
- Anvee Bhutani, Co-Chair Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality (CRAE) at Oxford SU and President of the Oxford India Society, was in the fray for the by-election for the 2021-22 academic years, which attracted a record turnout.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Indian Commonwealth Day 2021: 24th May

- Commonwealth Day is celebrated on the second Monday in the month of March every year. However, in India, another Commonwealth Day is also celebrated on May 24. Also known as Empire Day, Commonwealth Day commemorates the formation of the British Empire in India and other colonies of Britain.
- This year the theme for Commonwealth Day is: Delivering a Common Future. The aim of this theme is to highlight how the 54 Commonwealth countries are innovating, connecting and transforming to help achieve essential goals like tackling climate change, promoting good governance, achieving gender equality.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

Mahindra rural housing finance ties up with India Post Payments Bank

- Mahindra Rural customers can now repay loans at over 136,000 post offices. India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) and Mahindra Rural Housing Finance Limited (MRHFL), a subsidiary of Mahindra and Mahindra Financial Ltd has announced on Monday (May 24, 2021) a strategic partnership for cash management solution. As part of the tie-up, IPPB will be offering cash management and collection services to MRHFL through its access points and postal service

providers.

- The tie-up for cash management solution is a significant partnership in the financial services sector, and is aimed at customer inclusivity by both the partners. IPPB's large national network combined with its simple, scalable and replicable technology framework has facilitated the deployment of cash management solution to meet the requirements of MRHFL.

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INTERNATIONAL

UK launched plans for global pandemic radar to detect Covid-19 variants

- The United Kingdom will develop an advanced international pathogen surveillance network to identify Covid-19 variants and emerging diseases. This Global Pandemic Radar will ensure the early detection of new variants and emerging pathogens, so vaccines and treatments needed to stop them can be rapidly developed. Prime minister Boris Johnson announced the plans, ahead of the Global Health Summit hosted by Italy and the European Union (EU).
- The radar is expected to be fully up and running with a network of surveillance hubs before the end of 2021, with the aim of significantly improving global health security going into next year.
- WHO will lead an implementation group, supported by global health charity the Wellcome Trust, to launch the new international partnership to identify, track and share data on new coronavirus variants and monitor vaccine resistance in populations.

NATIONAL

Bloomberg Billionaire Index: Asia's richest and second richest persons Indians

- Billionaire Gautam Adani has edged past Chinese tycoon Zhong Shanshan to become the second-richest Asian, according to the Bloomberg Billionaire Index. China's Zhong was the richest Asian till February when he lost the crown to Mukesh Ambani, India's richest person and chairman of Reliance Industries Ltd.
- However, while Ambani lost \$175.5 million this year, Adani's wealth surged by \$32.7 billion to touch \$66.5 billion, against Zhong's \$63.6 billion. Ambani's total wealth now stands at \$76.5 billion, making him the 13th richest in the world, followed by Adani at 14th.

Cyclone Yaas to hit West Bengal, Odisha

- A category 5 cyclonic storm has been forecasted to make its landfall along the coastline of West Bengal and Odisha between May 26-27. Once formed, the cyclone will be named 'Yaas'. Yaas will be as deadly as Amphan which was also formed in the Bay of Bengal in May last year. Yaas, named by Oman as such, refers to a Jasmine-like tree that has a good fragrance.
- A rotational list of the names of cyclones is maintained by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), with the names specific for each tropical zone. If a cyclone is especially deadly then its name is never used and is replaced by another name. The list has a total of 169 names at present which will be used on a rotational basis.

SPORTS

Max Verstappen won the Monaco Grand Prix

- Red Bull's Max Verstappen has won the Monaco Grand Prix for the first time to take the Formula One championship lead from Lewis Hamilton. Ferrari's Carlos Sainz Jr. finished second, while McLaren, L. Norris came in a disappointing third place.
- Verstappen's second win this season and 12th of his career moved the Red Bull driver four points ahead of Hamilton overall. The seven-time world champion finished seventh on a bad day for the usually ultra-reliable Mercedes team.

OBITUARY

China's scientist Yuan Longping passed away at the age of 91

- Chinese scientist Yuan Longping, renowned for developing a hybrid rice strain that vastly improved the grain output in the country, passed away at the age of 91.
- Yuan succeeded in cultivating a high-yield hybrid rice strain in 1973, which was later grown on a large scale in China and other countries to substantially raise output.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Missing Children's Day 2021: 25 May

- International Missing Children's Day is observed globally on 25th May every year. This day is observed for missing children who have found their way home, remember those that are victims of crime, and continue efforts to seek out those that are still missing. 25 May is now widely referred to as Missing Children's Day, with the forget-me-not flower as its emblem.
- The day was proclaimed in 1983, by U.S. President Ronald Reagan. In 2001, 25 May was the first formally recognized as International Missing Children's Day (IMCD), to a joint effort on the part of the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC), Missing Children Europe and therefore the European Commission.

World Thyroid Day 2021: 25 May

- World Thyroid Day is observed globally on 25 May every year. The main purpose of the WTD is to aware of the importance of Thyroid and the prevention and treatment of thyroid diseases. This day is established in 2008 as a part of the campaign led by the European Thyroid Association (ETA) and the American Thyroid Association (ATA) followed by the Latin American Thyroid Society (LATS) and Asia Oceania Thyroid Association (AOTA) to commemorate the patients with Thyroid diseases and doctors and physicians who treat them.
- The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland in the throat that produces T3 (Thyroxine) and T4 (Triiodothyronine) and maintained by the Thyroid-stimulating hormone(TSH). It regulates the metabolism of the body and abnormalities in this may cause dysfunctioning body systems.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Book 'India and Asian Geopolitics: The Past, Present' is authored by S. Menon

- A book has titled 'India and Asian Geopolitics: The Past, Present' is authored by Shivshankar Menon. He was the Prime Minister's National Security Adviser and Foreign Secretary, is exploring

these phases in their historical context to tell the story of how India weathered the many geopolitical storms of the past in his latest book.

- Menon has taken a different approach to history. He underscores the seriousness of China taking Tibet in 1950, which, according to him, was a pivotal moment in India-China relations, but challenges the argument that India failed to stop the Chinese invasion.

Book “Nehru, Tibet and China” authored by Avtar Singh Bhasin

- A book has titled “Nehru, Tibet and China” authored by Avtar Singh Bhasin. The book based on years of meticulous archival research, this book in fascinating detail, analyses the events from 1949 to the Indo-China war in 1962 and its aftermath to explore the answers to these burning questions.
- On 1 October 1949, the People’s Republic of China came into being and changed forever the course of Asian history. Power moved from the hands of the nationalist Kuomintang government to the Communist Party of China headed by Mao Tse Tung. All of a sudden, it was not only an assertive China that India had to deal with but also an increasingly complex situation in Tibet which was reeling under pressure from China.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Kotak Mahindra Bank become first bank to Issue FPI license to AIF under GIFT

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has issued the first-ever foreign portfolio investor (FPI) licence to the GIFT IFSC alternative investment fund (AIF) of True Beacon Global. This is the first FPI licence issued to an AIF incorporated in GIFT IFSC by any custodian bank or designated depository participant (DDP) in the country.
- AIF is an important business vertical at GIFT IFSC and offers huge benefits and a competitive edge for setting up a fund in IFSC at GIFT City. In partnership with Kotak Mahindra Bank, True Beacon launched its first AIF in GIFT-City with Price water house Coopers (PWC) as consultants.
- Foreign Portfolio Investor: It means the investments made by investors in financial assets, such as stocks and bonds of entities located in another country.

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NATIONAL

CBDT extended the due date for filing income tax returns for assessment year 2021-22

- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has extended the due date for filing income tax returns for assessment year (AY) 2021-22, for individuals, by two months, to September 30, 2021. Earlier the deadline was July 31, 2021.
- The decision to extend timelines for compliances under the Income-tax Act 1961 has been taken to provide relief to taxpayers due to the C-19 pandemic. The government has also extended the due date of Income Tax Returns filing for companies for Assessment Year 2021-2022 from October 31 to November 30, 2021.

SPORTS

Coco Gauff wins Emilia-Romagna Open in Parma

- American 17-year-old Coco Gauff clinched her second WTA title by beating Wang Qiang 6-1 6-3 in the final of the Emilia-Romagna Open in Parma.
- Third seed Gauff - ranked a career-high 30th in the world - needed just one hour 14 minutes to overcome Wang - a player 12 years her senior.
- Gauff saved three break points at 5-1 before sealing the first set.
- She then broke Wang in the fifth game of the second set to cruise to her first clay-court title on the WTA tour.
- The teenager's victory comes 19 months after she broke through for her maiden title as a 15-year-old, beating 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko to claim the Linz Open crown.

Tennis player Ruud wins Geneva Open title

- Third seed Casper Ruud claimed his second career title on the ATP Tour after beating Denis Shapovalov 7-6(6) 6-4 in the final of the claycourt Geneva Open on Saturday.
- Norwegian Ruud did not concede a single break point to the Canadian second seed to prevail in the battle of the 22-year-olds and add to the Argentina Open title he won last year.

OBITUARY

OP Bhardwaj, Indian boxing first Dronacharya awardee passed away

- Om Prakash Bhardwaj, boxing's first Dronacharya Awardee coach who passed away on Friday.
- From a tour to Russia in the 1970s, Bhardwaj brought one with him to Patiala and using just one finger to type his letters, he routinely sparred with the federation over the facilities provided to the boxers. "Frequently, his letters used to land at the federation office and he wrote whenever he desired," says former secretary of the erstwhile Indian Amateur Boxing Federation, Ashok Gangopadhyay. "His list of demands was long but it was always in the best interest of the boxers."

Former Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission of India, Srikumar Banerjee Passed Away

- The former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission of India, Dr. Srikumar Banerjee, has passed away. He retired as Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy in 2012. He had also served as the Director of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) for six years till 2010.
- Dr Banerjee received the Padma Shri in 2005 and the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award in 1989 for his exceptional service in the field of science, especially in the areas of atomic energy and metallurgy.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

RBI appointed Rajesh bansal as CEO of its Innovation Hub

- The Reserve Bank of India has appointed Rajesh Bansal, an expert in electronic cash transfers and digital financial services, as the Chief Executive Officer of the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub with effect from May 17.

- Bansal has over twenty five years of experience in designing technology-led population-scale payment products, electronic cash transfers, digital financial services and digital IDs to enable inclusive development in India and multiple Asian and African markets.

Narinder Batra re-elected as FIH President for second term

- Narinder Batra has been re-elected as the President of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) for the second consecutive term. He was elected during the virtual 47th Congress of FIH, where he beat Marc Coudron, Chief of Belgium Hockey Federation, by just two votes. He will hold the office until 2024 because the FIH has reduced the term from four to three years.
- The veteran Indian sports administrator is the only Asian to be appointed to the top post in the world body's 92-year-old history. He is also the President of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and a Member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Himanta Biswa Sarma elected to BWF Council

- The Badminton Association of India (BAI) President Himanta Biswa Sarma has been elected as a Member of the c for the period 2021-25.
- Sarma was elected among 31 contestants to the 20-member BWF Council on May 22, 2021, at the virtual AGM and Council election of BWF, where he got 236 votes in favour. He is also the Vice President of Badminton Asia and the Chief Minister of Assam.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Turtle Day celebrated 2021: 23 May

- The World Turtle Day is observed on May 23 every year by American Tortoise Rescue, a nonprofit organization. The day is celebrated to raise awareness among people to protect turtles and tortoises and their disappearing habitats around the world.
- The day is being celebrated since 2000 by American Tortoise Rescue, a nonprofit organization established in 1990 for the protection of all species of tortoise and turtle. The theme of 2021 World Turtle Day is "Turtles Rock!".

BANKING AND ECONOMY

RBI increased the limit for Full-KYC PPIs to Rs 2 lakh from Rs 1 lakh

- The Reserve Bank of India has increased the maximum amount outstanding in respect of full-KYC PPIs (KYC-compliant PPIs) from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh. Apart from this, The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated that all prepaid payment instruments (PPIs) or mobile wallets such as Paytm, PhonePe and Mobikwik are fully KYC-compliant be made interoperable by March 31, 2022.
- The PPI issuers will have to provide interoperability through authorised card networks (for PPIs in the form of cards) and UPI (for PPIs in the form of electronic wallets). Interoperability shall be mandatory on the acceptance side as well. PPIs for Mass Transit Systems (PPI-MTS) shall remain exempted from interoperability. It will be optional for Gift PPI issuers to have the option of interoperability.

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NATIONAL

Bihar govt launched 'HIT C-19 App' to ensure regular monitoring

- Bihar government has launched 'HIT C-19 App' to ensure regular monitoring and tracking of those C-19 patients, who are in home isolation across the state. HIT stands for home isolation tracks.
- Health workers will visit the patients at home every day and feed data in the app after measuring their temperature and oxygen level. These data will be monitored at the district level. If the oxygen level is below 94, the patient will be shifted to the nearby dedicated C-19 health centres for proper treatment.

DRDO developed C-19 antibody detection kit 'DIPCOVAN'

- India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed a C-19 antibody detection kit. The DIPCOVAN kit can detect both spikes as well as nucleocapsid proteins of Coronavirus with a high sensitivity of 97%. It has been approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research and has been developed by the Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences lab of DRDO in association with Delhi's Vanguard Diagnostics Pvt Ltd.
- DIPCOVAN is intended for the qualitative detection of IgG antibodies in human serum or plasma, targeting SARS-CoV-2 related antigens. It offers a significantly faster turnaround time of just 75 minutes to conduct the test without any cross-reactivity with other diseases. The kit has a shelf life of 18 months.

SPORTS

Barcelona Women win Women's Champions League trophy

- Barcelona Women beat Chelsea Women to win the Women's Champions League trophy. Chelsea conceded four goals in the first 36 minutes as Barcelona blew them away to win their first Women's Champions League in Gothenburg.
- Barcelona is the first Spanish side to win the Women's Champions League. Barcelona becomes the first club to win both the men's and women's Champions League, and this was the biggest ever winning margin in a women's final.

OBITUARY

Veteran Music Director Laxman passed away

- Renowned music director "Laxman" of the famous duo composers "Raam-Laxman", has passed away due to a heart attack. His real name was Vijay Patil, but was better known as Raamlaxman and was most famous for his work with Rajshri Productions of Hindi films.
- Laxman composed music for several of their hit films like Agent Vinod (1977), Maine Pyar Kiya (1989), Hum Aapke Hain Koun..! (1994), Hum Saath Saath Hain (1999). Raamlaxman has worked in almost 75 films in Hindi, Marathi and Bhojpuri.

Veteran Environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna passed away

- Well-known environmentalist and Gandhian, Sunderlal Bahuguna has passed away. He was 94. A pioneer in environmental protection, Mr Bahuguna led the charge against the construction of big dams in the Himalayas in the 1980s. He was fervently opposed to the construction of the Tehri dam.
- Bahuguna, who lived for decades in his Silyara ashram in Tehri Garhwal, inspired many young people in his passion for the environment. His ashram was open to young people, with whom he communicated with ease.
- Bahuguna, along with local women, founded the Chipko movement in the Seventies to prevent the felling of trees in the ecologically sensitive zones. The movement's success led to the enactment of a law to ban the felling of trees in ecologically sensitive forest lands. He also coined the Chipko slogan: 'ecology is the permanent economy.'

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Goalkeeper Sreejesh re-appointed FIH Athletes' Committee member

- Star India hockey team goalkeeper PR Sreejesh was re-appointed as a member of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Athletes' Committee during the virtual meeting of the world body's Executive Board. He has been a member of the panel since 2017. The experienced Sreejesh, who has led the Indian team in the past, was one of the four new members appointed by the EB which met two days before the 47th FIH Congress, which will also be held online.
- The EB confirmed the appointment of four new members for the Athletes' Committee. Sreejesh Parattu (IND), Marlena Rybacha (POL), Mohamed Mea (RSA) and Matt Swann (AUS) are now joining the Committee. Steve Horgan (USA), the new chair of the FIH Rules Committee, succeeding David Collier.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day to End Obstetric Fistula 2021 : 23 May

- Every year, United Nations (UN) International Day to End Obstetric Fistula is marked on 23rd May since 2013 to promote action towards treating and preventing obstetric fistula, a condition that affects many girls and women during childbirth in developing countries. The day is being observed to significantly raise awareness and intensify actions towards ending obstetric fistula, as well as urging post-surgery follow-up and tracking of fistula patients. Obstetric fistula is one of the most serious and tragic injuries that can occur during childbirth.
- The theme 2021: "Women's rights are human rights! End fistula now!".
- In 2003 the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and its partners launched the global Campaign to End Fistula, a collaborative initiative to prevent fistula and restore the health of those affected by the condition. The day was officially recognised in 2012.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Hockey India wins Etienne Glichitch award 2021

- Hockey India has won the prestigious Etienne Glichitch Award in recognition of its contribution to the growth and development of the sport in the country.

- The awards were announced by the game's governing body FIH during the Hockey Invites virtual conference. It was part of its 47th FIH Congress which concluded with the FIH Honorary Awards.
- "Hockey India was announced as the winners of the Etienne Glichitch Award in recognition of its remarkable contribution to the growth and development of Hockey," FIH said in a release on Friday.
- The award gives recognition to numerous individuals, teams and organizations for their outstanding contributions to the sport of hockey.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

IDBI Bank launched digital loan processing system

- IDBI Bank announced the launch of its fully digitized loan processing system, offering over 50 products to MSME and the agriculture sector. The Loan Processing System (LPS) for MSME and Agri products seamlessly integrate with data fintech, bureau validations, document storage, account management and customer notifications among others.
- These features of the fully digitised and automated loan processing system are further aimed at providing a superior tech-enabled banking experience to the bank's MSME & Agri customers. The platform is designed to incorporate knock-off criteria & credit policy parameters for superior underwriting standards.