

TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM

Current Affairs - April 2021

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GOLD MEDAL
ALFIYA PATHAN (81 KG)



GOLD MEDAL
VINKA (60 KG)



GOLD MEDAL
SANAMACHA (75 KG)



GOLD MEDAL
ARUNDHATI (69 KG)



GOLD MEDAL
GITIKA (48 KG)



GOLD MEDAL
BABY CHANU (51 KG)



GOLD MEDAL
POONAM (57 KG)



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TNPSC BITS

- ❖ HDFC Bank has adjudged the 'India's Best Bank for SMEs' at the Asiamoney Best Bank Awards 2021.
 - Asiamoney's award decisions were made by a team of senior journalists.
- ❖ President Joe Biden has invited 40 world leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to a US-hosted virtual summit on climate next month.
 - This is to underscore the urgency and the economic benefits of stronger climate action.
- ❖ For the first time, the Indian Navy will be part of a French naval exercise known as 'La Perouse' in the Bay of Bengal.
 - The other Quad nations namely the US, Japan and Australia will also participate.
- ❖ The Union Minister of State for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Mansukh Mandaviya flagged off the cruise service from Hazira Port of Surat to Diu.
 - This cruise service is first-of-its-kind.
- ❖ Subhash Kumar has assumed the additional charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on April 01, 2021.
 - Kumar succeeds incumbent CMD, Shashi Shanker, who was superannuated on March 31, 2021.
- ❖ The International Carrot Day, founded in 2003, is celebrated every year on April 4th.
 - It is observed to spread knowledge about the carrot and its good attributes around the world.
- ❖ The UN General Assembly declared April 5 as the International Day of Conscience.
 - The International Day of Conscience is aimed at promoting peace and love throughout the world.
- ❖ Supplementing the efforts of Election Commission, Chennai Customs launched 'Operation Blue Eagle'.
 - This operation is to foil the attempts of gangs from smuggling in cash and valuables to lure voters in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The International Pillow fight day is a worldwide event held in many cities.
 - It takes place on the first Saturday in April.
- ❖ In August 2013, the UN General Assembly made the decision to proclaim 6 April as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.



- UNESCO believes that this sport is a powerful vehicle for social inclusion, gender equality and youth empowerment.
- ❖ On 7 April, UNESCO commemorates the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.
 - The date marks the beginning of the genocide perpetrated against members of the Tutsi minority by the Hutu extremist-led government.
- ❖ The senior-most Supreme Court judge Justice Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana has been appointed as the next Chief Justice of India (CJI).
 - Justice Ramana would succeed incumbent CJI Sharad Arvind Bobde to take over as the 48th CJI on April 24th.
- ❖ Former Union Environment Minister and an MLA from Wankaner in Gujarat, Digvijaysingh Zala has passed away.
 - The veteran Congress leader became the first Environment Minister of India under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi from 1982 to 1984.
- ❖ On April 05, 2021, Northern Railways completed the construction of the arch closure of the Chenab Bridge, the world's highest railway bridge.
 - The 1.3-kilometre-long bridge sits at a height of 359 metres above the bed of the Chenab River in the Jammu & Kashmir state.
- ❖ The Barakah nuclear power plant in the Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirate) is the first nuclear power station in the Arab world.
 - It had begun its commercial operations recently.
- ❖ Guneet Monga is to be conferred with honour of the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (Chevalier Award).
 - It is the second-highest civilian French honour and has earlier been awarded to big Hollywood names like Meryl Streep, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Bruce Willis.
- ❖ The United Arab Emirates named the next two astronauts in its space programme including the country's first female astronaut.
 - Noura al-Matroushi is the UAE's first female astronaut.
- ❖ Advanced Antiquities Management System was introduced by the Goa government recently.
 - It was the first such system in the country for storage of antiquities.
- ❖ The Actor Sonu Sood was made brand ambassador for Punjab's COVID vaccination programme.



- ❖ The Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal launched the e-SANTA platform for marine products.
 - This platform will provide more opportunities, freedom, and options to the fish and aqua farmers.
- ❖ Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have launched the construction of an international centre for trade and economic cooperation called “Central Asia”.
- ❖ Bhutan has recently completed the vaccinating 93% of its adult population in the world.
 - Bhutan received AstraZeneca vaccine from India.
- ❖ Chandigarh’s recently released first-of-its-kind draft cycling policy.
 - It is for the first time that a city has drafted a cycling policy in India.
- ❖ The World Bank and International Monetary Fund have launched a platform to advise the poor countries on funding for conservation and climate activities.
 - Both the financial organizations will use the platform to factor climate change into negotiations about reducing debt burdens of poor countries.
- ❖ The Porsche has joined with Siemens Energy to produce eFuel by 2022 in a project called Haru Oni project at Chile.
 - Electro Fuel are the emerging class of carbon neutral fuels and the complex hydrocarbon.
- ❖ Udhampur of Jammu and Kashmir bags top position at National level for successfully implementing Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) during 2020-21.
 - The PMGSY is a programme launched by the Ministry of Rural Development to provide good all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages as part of a poverty reduction strategy.
- ❖ The Indian space agency, ISRO has signed an agreement with the space agency of France CNES for cooperation in its first human space mission, Gaganyaan.
 - CNES will train Indian flight physicians and CAPCOM mission control teams at French facilities.
- ❖ The first meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) was held recently.
 - It was constituted by the ‘Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade’ (DPIIT).
- ❖ The United Nations Secretary General has called for the first ever UN Food Systems Summit to be held in September 2021.



- India will hold National Dialogue on UN Food Systems Summit 2021.
- ❖ The International Monetary Fund recently released the Regional Economic Outlook for Sub Saharan Africa.
 - According to the report the Sub-Saharan region is to witness the world's slowest growth in 2021.
- ❖ The National Investigation Agency recently organised a virtual event with BRICS countries on "Misuse of Internet by terrorists".
 - India hosted the seminar as it is holding the BRICS chair for the year 2021.
- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated King Abdullah II and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the state.
- ❖ The United Arab Emirates (UAE) will send the rover Rashid to the Moon in 2024.
- ❖ The SBI Funds Management has become the first mutual fund in India to cross the Rs. 5 lakh crore average assets under management (AAUM) mark.
 - It is a joint venture between India's largest lender, State Bank of India, and Europe's largest asset manager, Amundi.
- ❖ MANAS App is a well-being App that stands for Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System.
 - It is endorsed as a national program by the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC).
- ❖ The Film Director Roberto Benigni will be receiving the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 78th Venice International Film Festival.
- ❖ Turkey has banned the use of Crypto currencies and crypto assets for purchases.
 - The ban followed actions of Morocco in banning the currency. This is expected to be implemented in India as well.
- ❖ The Madras High court recently pronounced that the Right to Privacy of a deceased person cannot be inherited.
- ❖ The Central Government has decided to open up COVID-19 vaccination for all above the age of 18 years from May 1, 2021.
- ❖ Israel recently announced its Plan to reduce 80% of Greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 as compared to that of 2015.
 - The plan aims to shut down all coal-fired power plants by 2025.
- ❖ The Madras High Court cleared the decks for the former Chief Secretary Girija Vaidyanathan to assume office as an Expert Member of National Green Tribunal (NGT)'s Southern Bench.



- ❖ The 8th Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Special Forces Exercise “Khanjar” was inaugurated at Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan.
 - It focusses on high-altitude warfare, mountain warfare and counter-extremism exercises.
- ❖ The two biggest polluters of the world China and US have agreed to work together in tackling climate change issues.
 - They will work together to uphold Paris Agreement.
- ❖ Bengaluru-based e-commerce company and Walmart-backed Flipkart announced its plan to acquire Cleartrip for \$40 million.
- ❖ Soliha Shabir from Srinagar added her name in "India's World Records".
 - She is the youngest and first author in Jammu and Kashmir "who has recreated the life of Habba Khatoons poetry (Zoon Book)."
- ❖ The UK Government approves extradition of fugitive economic offender Nirav Modi.
 - He has been accused of fraud worth over Rs 14000 crores in the Punjab National Bank (PNB), which is India's biggest scam so far.
- ❖ A book titled ‘Believe – What Life and Cricket Taught Me’, Suresh Raina’s autobiography, is set to be released.
 - The book is co-authored by Raina and the sports author Bharat Sundaresan.
- ❖ Mirabai Chanu set a new World Record in the women’s 49kg at Asian Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent.
 - She won the bronze medal at the event.
- ❖ The United States space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has picked Elon Musk’s SpaceX for its Artemis programme.
 - It is to develop the first commercial lander and take the next two US astronauts to the moon by 2024.
- ❖ The Indian Railways will run ‘Oxygen Express’ trains transporting liquid medical oxygen and oxygen cylinders across the country via green corridors to meet growing demand from states.
 - Green corridors are being created to ensure fast movement of these trains.
- ❖ The Tourism and Culture Minister Prahalad Singh Patel inaugurated the first-ever online exhibition on Ramayana, the epic by Maharishi Valmiki.
 - The exhibition will be showcasing 49 miniature paintings collections of the National Museum in New Delhi.



- ❖ The Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited will be establishing four oxygen plants in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Odisha.
 - The medical oxygen plant will be set up at Phulpur (Uttar Pradesh), Kalol (Gujarat), and Paradeep (Odisha).
- ❖ The first 'Oxygen Express' departed from Navi Mumbai to ferry liquid oxygen for Maharashtra from the Vishakhapatnam steel plant in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ NASA's Mars helicopter 'Ingenuity' successfully became the first aircraft to take a powered flight on Mars.
 - Ingenuity, the Mars Helicopter is a solar-powered helicopter placed on Mars to test powered controlled flight on another planet.
- ❖ World Lab Animal Day or World Day for Laboratory Animals, is observed every year on 24th April (April 20 to 26 - Lab Animal Week).
 - The day was instituted in 1979 by the National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS), as an "international day of commemoration" for animals in laboratories.
- ❖ India will airlift 23 oxygen generation plants and containers from Germany.
 - The Armed Forces Medical Service (AFMS) has decided to import oxygen generation plants and containers from Germany to cater to the shortage.
- ❖ International Sculpture Day (ISDay) is a worldwide celebration event aimed at advancing the creation and understanding of sculpture and its unique, vital contribution to society.
 - It is organized by International Sculpture Center on the last Saturday of April every year (April 24 in 2021).
- ❖ The opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021 was held in Boao, south China's Hainan Province.
 - The theme of the conference is "A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation".
- ❖ Accenture India's chairperson, Rekha M Menon has been appointed as chairperson of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM).
 - She becomes the first woman to take the top role in the software lobby group's 30-year history.
- ❖ World Immunization Week 2021 (April 24th-30th) will show how vaccination helps to improve the health of everyone, everywhere throughout life.
 - The theme is 'Vaccines bring us closer'.



- ❖ LG of South Korea has confirmed that it is closing down its mobile phone business.
 - The company's mobile phone unit has been a loss-making affair for about six years.
- ❖ The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare recently reported that as many as 116 districts in India have reported zero malaria cases in 2020.
 - In 2020, India had reduced the disease burden of Malaria by 84.5%. And also, it has reduced the deaths due to Malaria by 83.6%.
- ❖ A Glacier burst occurred in Sumna, Neeti Valley located in Chamoli district in India-China border.
 - In India, China, Nepal and Bhutan, the glaciers have been losing the equivalent of more than a vertical foot and half of ice each year since 2000.
- ❖ The US Senate recently passed a bill to help combat the rise of hate crimes against the Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans.
 - Of all the states, California is facing a greater number of hate crimes.
- ❖ South Africa's second-largest lender FirstRand Bank exited India after 12 years.
 - FirstRand became the second global bank to exit India after Citigroup.
- ❖ The Indian Navy has joined the rescue operation for an Indonesian submarine KRI Nanggala-402.
 - Indonesia's its 44-year-old submarine, KRI Nanggala-402, went missing while conducting a torpedo drill north of the island of Bali.
- ❖ The CBNAAT COVID-19 test is alternate Cartridge-based nucleic acid amplification test (CBNAAT).
 - It is reportedly quicker and the machines for the test are also easily available across the country.
- ❖ ZyCoV-D is the India's first indigenously developed DNA plasmid-based vaccine.
 - It was developed by Zydus Cadila Healthcare and approved by the Drugs Controller General of India.
- ❖ The 19th edition of the Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise 'Varuna-2021' has started in the Arabian Sea.
 - The two navies will endeavour to enhance their warfighting skills in order to demonstrate their ability as an integrated force to promote security, peace and stability in the maritime domain.



TAMIL NADU

Overseas workers from TN

- ❖ One in every 10 individuals who went to work overseas from India in the past five years was from Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The state sent the second highest number of workers abroad during this period.
- ❖ Kerala had the highest number of workers going abroad.
- ❖ 13.1 lakh people from Tamil Nadu went abroad for work between January 2016 and March 18, 2021.
- ❖ During the same period, 1.9 million people from Kerala travelled abroad for work.
- ❖ Out of the total 1.3 crore job seekers from across the country in the past five years, Kerala and Tamil Nadu accounted for nearly 24%.
- ❖ About 12.6 lakh people flew from Uttar Pradesh for work.
- ❖ The data was provided by Union minister of state for external affairs V Muraleedharan in the Lok Sabha.

Note

- ❖ 4.7 lakh people returned to Tamil Nadu under the Vande Bharat Mission.
- ❖ The mission was aimed at repatriation of stranded and distressed Indian nationals across the globe during the pandemic.

CEPI

- ❖ Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI) is a rational number to characterise the quality of the environment at a given location following the algorithm of source, pathway and receptor.
- ❖ An increase in CEPI score denotes adverse effects on the receiving environment.
- ❖ A Delhi-based think-tank Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) did an assessment of Tamil Nadu's CEPI scores.
- ❖ Groundwater is becoming more polluted in Tamil Nadu's industrial areas.
- ❖ Vellore is the state's most polluted district in terms of river pollution.
- ❖ According to the CEPI water score 2018, five industrial clusters in Tamil Nadu were found to have a water score of more than 50.
- ❖ Of these,
 - Vellore-North Arcot, Manali and Tirupur were 'critically polluted areas' - CEPI individual score of 60 and above.

- Cuddalore and Coimbatore were 'severely polluted areas' - CEPI individual score between 50 and 60.
- ❖ Most serious pollution threat to groundwater was from calcium, chloride and iron that are associated with sewage and pollution from tanneries.

Solar-powered poultry incubator

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, in association with Panimalar Engineering College, recently developed a solar-power backed poultry incubator.
- ❖ This is designed for rural and small-scale poultry farmers.
- ❖ This over comes the disadvantage of electric incubators, which affects hatchability due to power shortage or frequent suspension of supply.

Marappa Gounder

- ❖ Marappa Gounder was born in 1916 in Karupparayanpalayam in Coimbatore district.
- ❖ He has been a regular voter since 1952.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu elected its first ever government in 1952, when it was Madras State.
- ❖ The Indian National Congress won the election.
- ❖ C Rajagopalachari (1952-1954) and K Kamaraj (1954-1957) were the Chief Ministers of the state in that term.



16th Tamilnadu assembly election

- ❖ Tamilnadu registered 72.78 percentage of polling in the recent 16th Assembly election.

- ❖ Karur topped the districts with a high turnout of 83.92%.
- ❖ It is followed by Ariyalur (82.47%) and Dharmapuri (82.35%).
- ❖ Chennai recorded the least polling in the state with 59.06% voter turnout.



New Member for NGT

- ❖ The Former Tamil Nadu chief secretary Girija Vaidyanathan has been appointed as an expert member of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Southern Zone in Chennai.
- ❖ The serving expert member in the Southern Bench Saibal Dasgupta has been sent to Eastern Zonal Bench in Kolkata.
- ❖ They were appointed by the principal bench of the NGT in New Delhi
- ❖ The Appointments Cabinet Committee of the Union Government approved this appointment.
- ❖ However, the Madras High Court ordered an interim stay on this appointment.
- ❖ The Court observed that she did possess administrative experience, but not five years of experience in dealing with environmental issues.
- ❖ The NGT Act prescribes a minimum of administrative experience of 15 years including five years in dealing with environmental matters in the Central or a State government.
- ❖ Poovulagin Nanbargal, an NGO fighting on issues related to environment headed by Sundarrajan, approached the High Court in this regard.


NGT

- ❖ The National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 is an Act of the Parliament of India.

- ❖ It enables the creation of a special tribunal to handle the expeditious disposal of the cases pertaining to environmental issues.
- ❖ It draws inspiration from India's constitutional provision (Article 21 Protection of life and personal liberty).
- ❖ The Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice.
- ❖ The Principal Bench of the NGT is in New Delhi.
- ❖ It has regional benches in Pune (West), Bhopal (Central), Chennai (South) and Kolkata (East).
- ❖ The Chairperson of the NGT is a retired Judge of the Supreme Court.
- ❖ Each bench of the NGT will comprise at least one Judicial Member and one Expert Member.

E-taxi

- ❖ The IIT-Madras incubated start-up has designed an electric flying taxi for urban commute.
- ❖ This can carry people to their destination
 - 10 times faster,
 - safer,
 - economical,
 - noise free and
 - eco-friendly.

<p>How the electric taxi designed by IIT-M incubated 'The ePlane Company' will function</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It can travel 10 times faster than normal taxis, but they are safe , economical, eco-friendly and quiet ➤ It may cost 1.5 to 2 times more than a normal taxi initially but the cost will come down as it becomes more popular ➤ The taxi will be a two-seater with a total payload capacity of 200kg and will operate with fixed wings and rotors ➤ The battery powered taxi will fly at an altitude of 0.5km to 2km at around 200km per hour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The electric flying taxis with land and take off vertically for urban commute ➤ It aims at minimising traffic and the amount of time spent on commute 	

- ❖ The battery powered taxi will have a capacity of 200kg payload.
- ❖ It can to accommodate two passengers
- ❖ The final prototype is expected to be ready in early 2022.

Rare stoneware (Seed crusher) near Uttiramerur

- ❖ A rare stone has been found in Vinnamangalam village near Uttiramerur in Kanchipuram district.
- ❖ Buried in the soil, it dates back to the 15th century.
- ❖ Line 3 had inscriptions on it.



T.N. sets record in job guarantee scheme

- ❖ Tamil Nadu has created a record in the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in the just-concluded financial year (2020-21).
- ❖ After four years, the number of person days generated in the State crossed the 30-crore-mark.
- ❖ It stood at 33.4 crore person days.
- ❖ For 2020-21, the Centre had fixed a target of 27 crore person days for the State.
- ❖ Later, it revised the target to 32 crore person days.
- ❖ Salem was one of those districts that exceeded the target of person days last year, generating about 1.24 crore person days against the approved 1.12 crore person days.
- ❖ Kancheepuram's performance was said to be impressive in natural resources management, water conservation and plantation.



Terracotta dice at keezhadi

- ❖ A six-faced terracotta die and farming implements made of granite have been unearthed during the seventh phase of excavation at Keezhadi.



- ❖ During this phase, excavations are being carried out in three trenches at Keezhadi, three at Konthagai and one at Agaram.
- ❖ The Black and red-coloured potsherds and portions of farming implements, such as a plow made of granite, were also unearthed here.
- ❖ The use of die made of two different materials indicates that various strata of society existed (the rich used ivory die and the poor used terracotta) and shows that the civilization had enriched arithmetic knowledge.

Champions of Change Award 2020 - MK Stalin

- ❖ MK Stalin, Leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, was awarded the 'Champions of Change Award - 2020'.
- ❖ The award was presented on behalf of the Interactive Forum on Indian Economy.
- ❖ It was given at a ceremony held at the Taj Resort & Convention Centre, Goa.
- ❖ The award is given for his social welfare programs.

Arjun Kalyan becomes 68th Indian Grandmaster

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



NATIONAL

Jal Jeevan Mission - new milestone



- ❖ Jal Jeevan Mission has achieved a new milestone of providing over 4 Crore rural households with tap water supply.
- ❖ The mission was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15th August, 2019.
- ❖ It was aimed to provide tap water supply to every rural home by 2024.
- ❖ Goa has become the first State in the country to provide 100 per cent tap water supply.
- ❖ It is followed by Telangana and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Purple Revolution

- ❖ The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu announced phase 2 of purple revolution under Aroma Mission.
- ❖ This is announced after the success of the phase 1 in Doda, Jammu.
- ❖ Under the purple revolution, the farmers in Doda district had their incomes quadrupled after shifting from maize to lavender cultivation.

- ❖ First-time farmers were given free lavender saplings.
- ❖ Those who have cultivated lavender before were charged Rs. 5-6 per sapling.
- ❖ The farmers will get help from IIIM-Jammu to sell their produce.
- ❖ Farmers could reach the four distillation units set up by CSIR-IIIM Jammu in Doda for extraction of lavender oil.
- ❖ At present, large-scale lavender cultivation is limited to J&K.
- ❖ The Governments in Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are also encouraging their farmers to take up lavender.

Purple Economy

- ❖ Lavender oil sells for at least Rs 10,000 per litre.
- ❖ Lavender water can be separated from lavender oil.
- ❖ It is used to make incense sticks.
- ❖ Hydrosol is formed after distillation from the flowers.
- ❖ It is used to make soaps and room fresheners.

Note

- ❖ In 2016, the Centre launched Aroma Mission to boost cultivation of plants for essential oils which have aromatic medicinal properties.



ULPIN

- ❖ The Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) scheme has been launched in 10 States this year.
- ❖ It will be rolled out across the country by March 2022.

- ❖ This plan has been laid out in a parliamentary standing committee report submitted to the Lok Sabha, as part of the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP) which began in 2008.



- ❖ Under the scheme, a 14-digit identification number will be issued to every plot of land in the country.
- ❖ It is being described as “Aadhaar for land”.
- ❖ It is a number that would uniquely identify every surveyed parcel of land and prevent land fraud, especially in rural India,
- ❖ In Rural India, land records are outdated and disputed.
- ❖ The identification will be based on the longitude and latitude of the land parcel.
- ❖ It is dependent on detailed surveys and geo-referenced cadastral maps.

Benefits

- ❖ The single source of information can authenticate the ownership.
- ❖ In turn it can end the dubious ownership.
- ❖ It will help identify the government lands easily.
- ❖ It can protect land from shabby land transaction.

Investment Opportunities in India's Healthcare Sector

- ❖ NITI Aayog released the report 'Investment Opportunities in India's Healthcare Sector'.
- ❖ The report outlines the range of investment opportunities in various segments of India's healthcare sector, including hospitals, medical devices and equipment, health insurance, telemedicine, home healthcare and medical value travel.
- ❖ India's healthcare industry has been growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate of around 22% since 2016.
- ❖ At this rate, it is expected to reach USD 372 billion in 2022.



AIM-PRIME

- ❖ Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog launched the AIM-PRIME (Program for Researchers on Innovations, Market-Readiness & Entrepreneurship) initiative.
- ❖ This initiative is to promote and support science-based deep-tech start-ups & ventures across India.
- ❖ In this regard, AIM has joined hands with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) to launch this nationwide program.
- ❖ That will be implemented by Venture Center - a non-profit technology business incubator.
- ❖ The first cohort of the program is open to technology developers (early-stage deep tech start-ups, and scientists/ engineers/ clinicians) with strong science-based deep tech business ideas.
- ❖ The benefits of this program are aimed at addressing specific issues through training and guidance over a period of 12 months.

Forest Governance by Indigenous and Tribal Peoples report

- ❖ A new report titled Forest Governance by Indigenous and Tribal Peoples has been released recently.
- ❖ It is released by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC).
- ❖ The deforestation rates in the Caribbean and Latin America are lower in Indigenous and Tribal territories.
- ❖ The new report highlights that Indigenous and Tribal Peoples have generally been much better guardians of their forests in comparison to those responsible for the region's other forests.
- ❖ It should be noted that around 45% (half) of the intact forests in the Amazon Basin are present in indigenous territories.
- ❖ The area of intact forest decreased by only 4.9% between the years 2000 and 2016 in the region's indigenous areas.
- ❖ However, in the non-indigenous areas, the decline was 11.2%.



Military farms

- ❖ The Indian Army has closed its Military farms on March 31 after 132 years of its service.
- ❖ Military farms are the farms that were formed with an aim to supply hygienic cow milk to troops in garrisons across British India.

Key Points

- ❖ The workers of the farms have been redeployed within the Ministry to continue providing service to the organization.
- ❖ In the year 2012, the Quarter Master General branch had recommended their closure.
- ❖ After this, again in December 2016, Lt. Gen. DB Shekatkar (retired) committee also suggested the shutdown of farms.



- ❖ The first military farm was formed on February 1, 1889 at Allahabad.
- ❖ After independence, the farms increased with 30,000 heads of cattle in 130 farms all over India.
- ❖ In the 1990s, these farms were even established in Leh and Kargil.
- ❖ The farms were required as cantonments were located at a distance from urban areas.
- ❖ Now with urban expansion, cantonments have also come within towns and cities.
- ❖ Therefore, the milk procurement is being increasingly done from the open market.
- ❖ Various allegations of corruption surrounding the farms noticed over the years was also one of the reasons contributing to the shutdown of the farms.
- ❖ These farms provided yeoman service during the 1971 war, supplying milk at the Western and Eastern war fronts as well as during the Kargil operations to the Northern Command.

OCI Guidelines

- ❖ The government has notified a consolidated list of rights and restrictions of the Overseas Citizens of India (OCI).
- ❖ Previously, these rights have been notified in 2005, 2007 and 2009.
- ❖ People of Indian origin (PIO) and Indian diaspora having overseas citizens of India (OCI) card are not required to carry their old passports, along with the new passport and OCI card, for travel to India.
- ❖ As per the current OCI guidelines (in force since 2005), an OCI card is to be re-issued each time a new passport is acquired by the cardholder up to the age of 20 years or after completing 50 years of age.
- ❖ Now, the Indian government has decided to grant extension of time till December 31, 2021, to get the OCI cards re-issued.

Anandam

- ❖ The Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' inaugurated "Anandam: The Center for Happiness" in Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jammu.
- ❖ Anandam: The Centre for happiness aligns with the National Education Policy 2020 that aims to transform India's education system by 2021.
- ❖ The Prime activities envisaged under the concept of 'Anandam: The Center for Happiness' will be divided into five broad categories, namely

- Counselling,
- Holistic wellness,
- Elective courses on Happiness Development,
- Research and Leadership &
- Faculty Development.

Indian Railway Electrification: New record

- ❖ The Indian Railways has achieved the highest ever electrification of sections during 2020-21.
- ❖ It has covered 6,015 kilo metres of electrification in a single year.
- ❖ This is 37% higher than that achieved in 2019-20.



Women and Men in India report

- ❖ The National Statistical Office operating under Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) recently released 'the Women and Men in India report'.



- ❖ The report consolidates the crucial socio-economic indicators that portray gender situation in the country.

Population Statistics

- ❖ The projected population of India in 2021 is 136.13 crores.
- ❖ Sex ratio has increased from 933 in 2001 to 943 in 2011.
- ❖ Delhi recorded the highest increase in sex ratio, followed by Chandigarh, Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ On the other hand, Daman and Diu had the highest decline in sex ratio.

Health Statistics

- ❖ The Age Specific Fertility Rate for the females, belonging to the age group 25-29 years, was the highest at 146.4.
- ❖ The Infant Mortality Rate decreased from 39 in 2014 to 32 in 2018.
- ❖ The Maternal Mortality Rate decreased from 212 in 2007-09 to 113 in 2016-18.
- ❖ The Total Fertility Rate of rural India was 2.3 in 2018.
- ❖ It was 1.7 in urban areas in 2018.
- ❖ The Adolescent Fertility Rate declined from 13 in 2017 to 12.2 in 2018.
- ❖ According to National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), almost 100% institutional delivery was observed in the states of Goa, Kerala, Lakshadweep.
- ❖ The HIV incidence per 1000 people decreased from 0.07 in 2017 to 0.05 in 2019.

Education

- ❖ The literacy rate of India increased from 73 in 2011 to 77.7 in 2017.
- ❖ The Gender gap in literacy rates was the highest in Rajasthan, Bihar, UP.
- ❖ Only 8.3% of females of age 15 years had completed graduation.
- ❖ On the other hand, 12.8% of males of the same age had completed graduation.
- ❖ 8% of female students were pursuing education up to tenth standard.

Participation in Economy

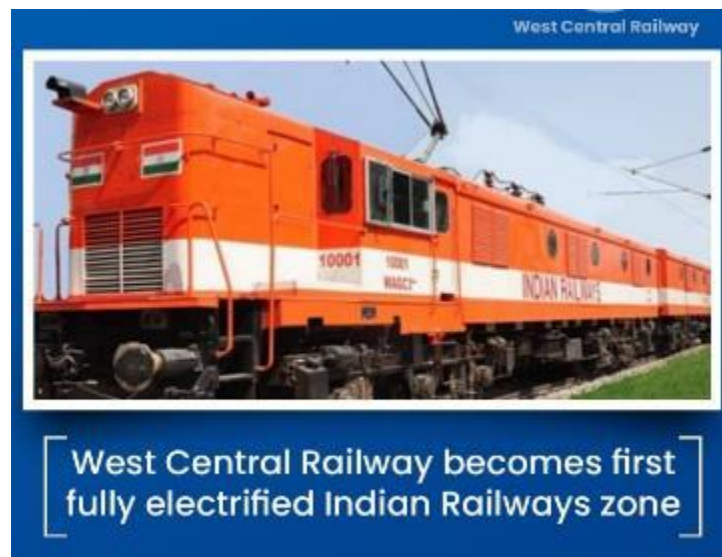
- ❖ According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey, 2018-19, the worker population ratio in rural sector was 52.1 for males and 19 for females.
- ❖ In urban areas, it was 52.7 for males and 14.5 for females.
- ❖ The average wage per hour earned by female population in the age group of 15 years was highest in Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Rs 147 per hour).
- ❖ The lowest was in Daman and Diu, Odisha.
- ❖ The average wage per hour earned by male population in the age group of 15 years was the highest in Lakshadweep (Rs 121 per hour).

Participation in Decision Making

- ❖ The representation of women in the Central Council of Ministers is 9.26% in 2020.
- ❖ In 2019 Lok Sabha election, there were 437.8 million women electors.
- ❖ This is higher as compared to that of the 2014 election (397 million).
- ❖ Highest women participation in the Panchayati Raj institutions was observed in the states of Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh.

Fully electrified railway zone

- ❖ West Central Railways has become the first fully electrified railway zone in the country.
- ❖ The zonal railway now boasts a 3012 Route Km electrified network.
- ❖ Electrification of this railway section will provide various benefits such as
 - saving fuel,
 - reduction in travel time,
 - environmental protection.



Sankalp se Siddhi

- ❖ Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (TRIFED) has launched Sankalp Se Siddhi – Village & Digital Connect Drive.
- ❖ It is a 100-day drive started on the 1st of April.
- ❖ The main aim of this drive is to activate the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras.

National Register for Driving License

- ❖ The Ministry of Road Transport recently announced that the National Register for Driving Licenses is to be created.
- ❖ This is being done to remove duplication of driving licenses in the country.
- ❖ Most of the states are already on the SARATHI portal of National Informatics Centre.
- ❖ These states have been instructed to migrate to the newly created national register.

National Policy for Rare Diseases:

- ❖ Recently, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has approved the National Rare Disease Policy 2021.
- ❖ The policy aims
 - To increase focus on indigenous research and local production of medicines.
 - To lower the cost of treatment of rare diseases.
 - To screen and detect rare diseases early at early stages, which will in turn help in their prevention.

RARE DISEASE FACTS

Learn more at rarediseases.org

NORD[®] RARE INSIGHTS[™]

RARE DISEASE: Any disease, disorder, illness or condition affecting fewer than **200,000** people in the United States is considered rare.¹

Most rare diseases are **genetic** or have a genetic component.¹

MORE THAN 90% of rare diseases are **without** an FDA-approved treatment.²

For many rare diseases, signs may be observed at birth or in childhood.³

MANY RARE DISEASES result in premature deaths of infants and young children, or are fatal in early childhood.⁴

There are approximately

7,000
RARE DISEASES²

It's estimated that

25-30
MILLION AMERICANS
(almost **1 in 10**) have rare diseases.⁷



There are more than **500** types of **rare cancers**.⁶

ALL PEDIATRIC
CANCERS are rare.⁵



- ❖ The screening is to be supported by the Nidhan Kendras set up by Department of Biotechnology.

- ❖ Around eight health facilities are to be designated as Centres of Excellence of rare diseases.
- ❖ These centres are to be provided with a one-time financial support of Rs 5 crores.
- ❖ The Government of India has announced a financial support of Rs 20 lakhs under the Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi for treatment of rare diseases.
- ❖ This financial assistance is to be extended to 40% of the population.
- ❖ It is to be noted that, generally Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi is allocated only to Below Poverty Line people.
- ❖ The rare diseases recorded in India are
 - primary immunodeficiency disorder,
 - Cystic Fibrosis,
 - Pompe disease,
 - Gaucher's disease,
 - fabry disease,
 - maple syrup urine disease, etc.

Note

- ❖ February 28 is observed as Rare Disease Day every year.

International Virtual Election Visitors Programme 2021



- ❖ The Election Commission of India hosted the 'International Virtual Election Visitors Program' 2021.
- ❖ This is during the assembly elections held in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.
- ❖ Under this, the facility of virtual viewing of polling stations was made available to the delegates to provide information related to familiarization with the electoral

process, polling station arrangements, facilitation of Persons with Disabilities and senior citizens etc.

- ❖ Its objective is to conduct free, fair, transparent, better and safer elections in the time of pandemics.
- ❖ Over 106 delegates from over 26 countries across the world including Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan and 3 international organizations were included in this program.

Integrated Health Information Platform

- ❖ The Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan recently launched the Integrated Health Information Platform.
- ❖ According to the health ministry, India is the first country to adopt such an advanced surveillance system.
- ❖ The Integrated Health Information Platform is to operate under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme.
- ❖ The Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme operates under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- ❖ The platform aims to strengthen the disease surveillance in the country.
- ❖ This is to be achieved by establishing a decentralised state-based surveillance system for epidemic prone diseases.
- ❖ The key features of the platform are real time data reporting through use of mobile applications, geo-tagging of health facilities, etc.
- ❖ The platform aims to provide better care and maintain confidential health data.
- ❖ The platform will hold information about prevalence of disease in different districts of the country.
- ❖ The information is to be collected through ASHA workers and ANMs.
- ❖ The Integrated Health Information Platform was launched in 2004.
- ❖ The programme is assisted by the World Bank.
- ❖ The main objective of the programme is to detect and respond to disease outbreaks quickly.

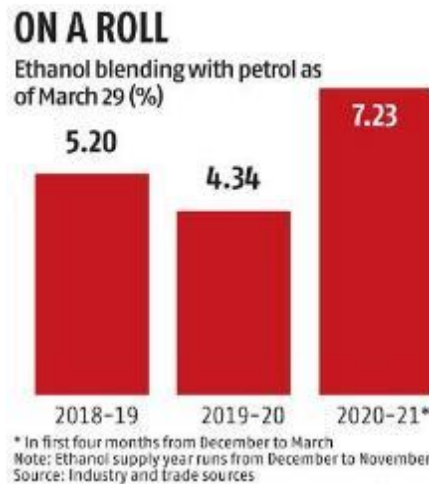
New record in ethanol blend with petrol

- ❖ In the first four months of ethanol supply year 2020-21, India has reached more than 7.2%.
- ❖ This is the first time India has reached this level.

- ❖ This puts the country right on its course of achieving the target of 10% blending by 2022.

Ethanol Blended Programme

- ❖ It was launched in 2003.
- ❖ The Oil Marketing Companies are advised to acquire ethanol on the following priority order under the programme,
 - Sugarcane
 - B-Heavy molasses
 - C-Heavy molasses
 - Damaged food grains.



India H2 Alliance

- ❖ The Global energy and industrial majors have joined together to form a new coalition called the India H2 Alliance.
- ❖ The initiative to form the alliance was begun by the Reliance industries and Chart Industries.
- ❖ The India H2 Alliance, IH2A, mainly focuses on commercialising hydrogen technologies.
- ❖ It will work towards boosting the hydrogen economy and supply chain in India.

Main objectives

- ❖ To build hydrogen economy and supply chain in India.
- ❖ To help develop blue and green hydrogen production and storage.
- ❖ To build hydrogen-use industrial clusters and
- ❖ To increase hydrogen-powered fuel cells-based transport.

PLI Scheme

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approves Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for White Goods (Air Conditioners and LED Lights).
- ❖ The scheme is expected to attract global investments, generate large scale employment opportunities and enhance exports substantially.
- ❖ The PLI Scheme for White Goods shall extend an incentive of 4% to 6% on incremental sales of goods manufactured in India for a period of five years to companies engaged in manufacturing of Air Conditioners and LED Lights.



Anamaya initiative

- ❖ The Union Health and Family Welfare Minister recently launched the Tribal Health Collaborative called “Anamaya”.
- ❖ It was launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- ❖ The initiative will also be supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Piramal Foundation.
- ❖ The main objective of the initiative is to enhance health and nutrition eco-system of tribal communities in India.



Abolition of Film Certificate Appellate Tribunal

- ❖ The Government of India by an ordinance has abolished the Film Certificate Appellate Tribunal (FCAT).
- ❖ The Tribunals Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2021, amends the Cinematograph Act, 1952.
- ❖ It amends the act by omitting some sections and replacing the word “Tribunal” with “High Court” in other sections.
- ❖ The abolition of FCAT means filmmakers will now have to approach the High Court whenever they want to challenge a CBFC (CBFC - Central Board of Film Certification) certification, or lack of it.

SUPACE in Supreme Court

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India has launched its Artificial Intelligence portal “SUPACE” (Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Courts Efficiency).
- ❖ Through this portal, the SC intends to leverage machine learning to deal with the vast amounts of data received at the time of filing of cases.

Artificial Intelligence Committee

- ❖ Justice L Nageshwara Rao, is the chairman of the SC’s Artificial Intelligence Committee.
- ❖ Chief Justice of India (CJI) SA Bobde was the first-ever chairman of the Artificial Intelligence Committee.
- ❖ CJI Bobde took oath as the Chief Justice in 2019.

Hindi Translation of Odisha Itihaas

- ❖ The Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently released the Hindi translation of “Odisha Itihaas”.
- ❖ The book is available in Odia and English so far.
- ❖ It was translated to Hindi by Shankarlal Purohit.

Odisha Itihaas

- ❖ The book was written by Utkal Keshari Dr Harekrushna Mahatab.
- ❖ He wrote the book Odisha Itihaas in Ahmednagar Fort Jail.
- ❖ He was imprisoned here for two years between 1942 and 1945.
- ❖ Harekrushna Mahatab was the first Chief Minister of Odisha.
- ❖ He was popularly known as Utkal Keshari.



SARTHAQ

- ❖ Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched a National Education Policy (NEP) Implementation Plan for School Education called 'Students' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement through Quality Education (SARTHAQ)'.
- ❖ It will help in achieving goals & objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- ❖ SARTHAQ has been developed by the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education.
- ❖ It has been released as part of celebrations leading to 'AmritMahotsav' on 75 years of Indian Independence.
- ❖ It is the Plan of Action of NEP 2020 and outlines an implementation plan for the next 10 years.
- ❖ Ramesh Pokhriyal also chaired a high level meeting on implementation of NEP 2020 in New Delhi.

Right to Religion

- ❖ In a recent case, the Supreme Court has said people are free to choose their religion.
- ❖ People have a right under the Constitution to profess, practise and propagate religion (Article 25).
- ❖ Religious faith is a part of the fundamental right to privacy.
- ❖ The Constitution Bench judgment has already upheld inviolability of the right to privacy, equating it with the rights to life, of dignity and liberty.

Tika Utsav

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently appealed to the Chief Ministers of the States to organise "Tika Utsav".
- ❖ Tika Utsav is a vaccine festival.
- ❖ It is to be held between April 11, 2021, and April 14, 2021.
- ❖ The main objective of the festival is to vaccinate as many people as possible.
- ❖ It will also focus on zero wastage of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- ❖ COVAXIN and COVISHIELD are the two major COVID-19 vaccines that are currently administered in India.



AICTE Lilavati Awards 2020

- ❖ Six higher education institutions have been awarded the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) Lilavati Awards 2020.
- ❖ It is based on the theme 'women empowerment'.
- ❖ The award has been named after the 12th century book called “Lilavati”.
- ❖ The book was written by the mathematician Bhaskara II.
- ❖ Lilavati was the daughter of Indian Mathematician Bhaskara II.

Winners

- ❖ The SWEAT (Sona Women Entrepreneurship and Training) from Sona College of Technology, Tamil Nadu won the contest in the 'Women Entrepreneurship' sub-theme.
- ❖ The runner-up award was given to Bharatiya Vidyapeeth, under the 'Digital Literacy' sub-theme.
- ❖ Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development Pune won the award under the sub-theme 'Literacy'.
- ❖ Also, the WIT Women Health Coalition from Walchand Institute of Technology, Maharashtra, won the award under the 'Women's Health' sub-theme.
- ❖ Apart from these, Ms Radiant Seetha from Thiagarajar Polytechnic College won the contest in the 'Legal Awareness' whereas Ms Paritrana from St. Joseph's College of Engineering, Tamil Nadu won the award for the 'Self Defense.'



Sushil Chandra

- ❖ The incumbent Election Commissioner (EC) Sushil Chandra has been named to become the next Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India.
- ❖ He was appointed by President Ram Nath Kovind as the 24th CEC.
- ❖ He will replace incumbent CEC Sunil Arora.
- ❖ The Election Commission of India consists of three members, namely Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.
- ❖ He is the second Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer to head the Election Commission.
- ❖ S Krishnamurthy was the first IRS officer to be appointed to that position.
- ❖ He oversaw the 2004 Lok Sabha elections' conduct as the 13th CEC.

Sputnik V

- ❖ The Drugs Controller General of India has approved emergency use authorisation of the Russian Vaccine, Sputnik V.
- ❖ It has now become the third vaccine to get emergency use authorisation from the drug regulator after Covishield and Covaxin.
- ❖ It was discussed in the meeting of the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19 (NEGVAC).
- ❖ It was chaired by VK Paul, Member (Health), Niti Aayog.
- ❖ Sputnik Vaccine was developed by Russia in the last year.
- ❖ India is the most populated country to register the Russian vaccine.
- ❖ India has now become the 60th country to approve Sputnik V.
- ❖ India is also the leading production hub for Sputnik V.
- ❖ The Hyderabad based Indian pharma company Dr Reddy's Lab has also inked an agreement with Russia for the supply of this vaccine in India.
- ❖ Russia is the first country in the world to register a vaccine against Coronavirus (August 2020).

Raisina Dialogue 2021

- ❖ The Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the 6th edition of the Raisina Dialogue.
- ❖ It was attended by the Prime Minister of Denmark Mette Frederiksen and the President of Rwanda Paul Kagame in a virtual mode.
- ❖ It was also attended by the Prime Minister of Australia Scott Morrison.

- ❖ The Dialogue is India's flagship conference on geoeconomics and geopolitics.
- ❖ It is held annually since 2016.
- ❖ It is jointly organised by the External Affairs Ministry and Observer Research Foundation.

Covid Hit Nation

- ❖ India on April 12, 2021 became the second-worst hit nation in the world by the COVID-19 pandemic, surpassing Brazil.
- ❖ India now only stands behind the United States that has the highest number of COVID-19 cases in the world.
- ❖ Maharashtra is the worst-hit state in the country.

Kumbh Mela 2021



- ❖ The Haridwar Kumbh Mela was held on the banks of the Ganga in Haridwar in Uttarakhand.
- ❖ It is celebrated in a cycle of approximately 12 years.
- ❖ It is held at four river-bank pilgrimage sites - the Prayagraj/Allahabad of Uttar Pradesh (Ganges-Yamuna Sarasvati rivers confluence), Haridwar of Uttarakhand (Ganges), Nashik of Maharashtra (Godavari), and Ujjain of Madhya Pradesh (Shipra).

Poshan Gyan

- ❖ It is a national digital repository on health and nutrition.
- ❖ It was launched by NITI Aayog, in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University.

HGCO19

- ❖ An additional government funding has been received by India's mRNA-based Covid-19 vaccine candidate-HGCO19 for its clinical studies.
- ❖ This funding has been awarded under the 'Mission Covid Suraksha'.
- ❖ It has been developed by Pune-based biotechnology company Gennova Biopharmaceuticals in collaboration with HDT Biotech Corporation, USA.



Hallmarking Norms



- ❖ The Government aims to implement mandatory hallmarking of gold artefacts and jewellery from June 1, 2021.
- ❖ Currently, Gold Hallmarking is voluntary in the country.
- ❖ Gold Hallmarking is providing purity certification to the gold jewellery and artefacts.
- ❖ Only three grades of jewelleries will now be hall marked under the new regulations.



- ❖ They are 14-carat, 18-carat and 22-carat.
- ❖ Earlier, ten grades of gold jewelleries were hall marked.
- ❖ The new Gold Hallmark will contain four marks.
- ❖ They are purity in carat, BIS mark, assay centre's name and the identification mark of the jeweller.
- ❖ The Bureau of Indian standards Act, 2016 made gold hallmarking mandatory in India.

Hafkine Institute

- ❖ The Government of India recently approved the transfer of technology from Bharat Biotech to Hafkine Institute.
- ❖ The central government has given Maharashtra one year to carry out the production of the vaccine in the Haffkine Institute.
- ❖ It is one of the oldest biomedical research institutes of India.
- ❖ It was established in 1899 by Dr Waldermar Mordecai Haffkine.
- ❖ The institute is located in Sans Pareil.
- ❖ Sans Pareil was the official residence of Governor of Bombay.
- ❖ It is now affiliated to University of Mumbai.

Tribunals Reforms (Rationalization and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2021

- ❖ It was prepared by the Ministry of Law and Justice.
- ❖ The President of India has promulgated this ordinance.
- ❖ It dissolves certain existing appellate bodies and transfers their functions (such as adjudication of appeals) to other existing judicial bodies
- ❖ It seeks to empower the Central Government to make rules for qualifications, appointment, term of office, salaries and allowances, resignation, removal and other terms and conditions of service of Members of Tribunals.
- ❖ It provides that the Chairperson and Members of the Tribunals will be appointed by the Central Government on the recommendation of a Search-cum-Selection Committee.
- ❖ It also provides the composition of the Committee, to be headed by the Chief Justice of India or a Judge of Supreme Court nominated by him.
- ❖ Tenure: Chairperson of a Tribunal shall hold office for a term of 4 years or till he attains the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier.

- ❖ Other Members of a Tribunal shall hold office for a term of 4 years or till he attains the age of 67 years, whichever is earlier.
- ❖ The Ordinance omits following Tribunals/ Appellate Authorities from the purview of Finance Act, 2017
 - Airport Appellate Tribunal established under the Airport Authority of India Act, 1994.
 - Appellate Board established under the Trade Marks Act, 1999.
 - Authority for Advance Ruling established under the Income Tax Act, 1961.
 - Film Certification Appellate Tribunal established under the Cinematograph Act, 1952.

Transfer of functions of key appellate bodies as proposed under the Ordinance		
Acts	Appellate body	Proposed entity
The Cinematograph Act, 1952	Appellate Tribunal	High Court
The Trade Marks Act, 1999	Appellate Board	High Court
The Copyright Act, 1957	Appellate Board	Commercial Court or the Commercial Division of a High Court*
The Customs Act, 1962	Authority for Advance Rulings	High Court
The Patents Act, 1970	Appellate Board	High Court
The Airports Authority of India Act, 1994	Airport Appellate Tribunal	Central government, for disputes arising from the disposal of properties left on airport premises by unauthorised occupants. High Court, for appeals against orders of an eviction officer.

- ❖ In some of the tribunals the public at large is not litigant.
- ❖ By the Finance Act, 2017, seven tribunals were abolished or merged based on functional similarity and their total number was reduced to 19 from 26.

Tribunals

- ❖ Tribunal is a quasi-judicial institution.
- ❖ It is set up to deal with problems such as resolving administrative or tax-related disputes.
- ❖ They were not originally a part of the Constitution.
- ❖ The 42nd Amendment Act introduced these provisions in accordance with the recommendations of the Swaran Singh Committee.
- ❖ The Amendment introduced Part XIV-A to the Constitution, which deals with 'Tribunals' and contains two articles 323A and 323B.

India Energy Dashboards

- ❖ The Niti Aayog recently launched the India Energy Dashboards Version 2.0.
- ❖ It will provide single window access to the data related to utilisation, pricing, production, distribution of energy in the country.
- ❖ It will also provide data from schemes such as Saubhagya, PRAAPTI, UJALA and Vidyut PRAVAH.
- ❖ It will provide data from Central Electricity Authority, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and from Coal Controller's Organisation.
- ❖ The India Energy Dashboard Version 1.0 was launched in 2017.



Gyanvapi Mosque Dispute

- ❖ A civil court in Uttar Pradesh asked the Archaeological Survey of India to conduct a survey at the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi to determine whether it was built over a Kashi Vishwanath temple.
- ❖ The order was passed after a suit claimed that the mosque was built at the site after a temple was demolished in 1669 by Aurangzeb.



- ❖ The difference between this dispute and the Babri Masjid dispute is that the Babri dispute is related with the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.

Rural Health Statistics Report 2019/20

- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare recently released the Rural Health Statistics Report.
- ❖ According to the report, there is an overall shortage of specialist doctors at the Community Health Centres.
- ❖ There is an overall shortfall of 76.1% specialist doctors at the Community Health Centres in rural areas.

Transport 4 All (T4All) Challenge

- ❖ It was launched by the Housing & Urban Affairs Ministry in collaboration with Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP).
- ❖ The Challenge aims to bring together cities, citizen groups, and start-ups to develop solutions that improve public transport to better serve the needs of all citizens.
- ❖ All the Smart Cities, capitals of states and union territories (UTs), and all cities with a population of over 5 lakhs are eligible for the Challenge.

Gender Samvaad

- ❖ Gender Samvaad is a joint attempt between the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) and the Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE).
- ❖ It aims to create a common platform to share experiences emerging from this effort.
- ❖ The attempt is to generate greater awareness on gender related interventions under DAY-NRLM.

EatSmart Cities Challenge

- ❖ It was launched by the Housing & Urban Affairs Ministry.
- ❖ The Challenge is envisioned as a competition among cities to recognize their efforts in adopting and scaling up various initiatives under Eat Right India.
- ❖ The challenge is open to all Smart Cities, capital cities of States/UTs, and cities with a population of more than 5 lakh.



India elected to three bodies of the UN

- ❖ India was recently elected to the three bodies of the United Nations which operates under United Nations Economic and Social Council.
- ❖ They were the,
 - Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ),
 - Executive Board of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and
 - Executive Board of the World Food Programme (WFP).
- ❖ India was elected to all these three bodies by acclamation.
- ❖ Electing a member country through acclamation does not use a ballot.
- ❖ However, other member countries were elected through secret ballot to these bodies.

Election by Acclamation:

- ❖ When a member with clean slate is presented for an election in the United Nations, the vote takes place through acclamation.
- ❖ Clean Slate means there is no history of evidence of any problems or broken rules.

External Auditor of OPCW

- ❖ India's Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Girish Chandra Murmu has been appointed as External Auditor of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for a three-year term starting 2021.
- ❖ The appointment was made during an election process held at the OPCW Conference of State Parties held on April 21, 2021.
- ❖ India was also selected as a member of the Executive council of the OPCW representing the Asia group for another 2-year term.

- ❖ OPCW is an intergovernmental organisation and Implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention.
- ❖ That entered into force on 29th April 1997.

Cabinet approves Subsidy for Urea

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs recently approved subsidy for Urea that are to be produced by TFL.
- ❖ TFL is a state-run fertilizer plant.
- ❖ It is Talcher Fertilizer Plant.
- ❖ The TFL is to commission a new fertilizer plant in Odisha.
- ❖ This plant will produce urea through coal gasification.
- ❖ The Government of India is to provide subsidy to establish the plant.
- ❖ It will be the only plant in India to produce nitrogenous soil nutrient through coal gasification process.
- ❖ Talcher Fertilizers is a joint venture of Fertilizer Corporation of India, Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers, GAIL and Coal India.
- ❖ The tender to construct the TFL project has been provided to China-based Wuhan Engineering.

The estimated project cost of the Talcher Fertilizers Limited (TFL) Urea project, first of its kind project in India, is ₹13,277.21 crore

The project will improve availability of fertilizer to farmers & save transport subsidy for supply of urea in eastern part of the country

Will assist in reducing Urea imports to the tune of 12.7 LMT per annum leading to savings in foreign exchange

Crude oil output of India drops

- ❖ The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas recently released its data for the fiscal year 2020-21.
- ❖ According to the data, crude oil production of India fell to 30.5 million tonnes.



- ❖ It was 32.17 million tonnes in 2019-20.

Crude oil production

- ❖ The crude oil production of India fell by 5% in 2020-21 as compared to the previous year.
- ❖ The Oil and Natural Gas Corporation produced 2% less oil in 2020-21 as compared to 2019-20.
- ❖ In 2020-21, the oil produced by ONGC was 20.2 million tonnes.
- ❖ The Oil India Limited produced 5.4% less oil.

Natural Gas production

- ❖ The Natural Gas production in the year 2020-21 was at 28.67 billion cubic metres.
- ❖ This was 8% less than the output in 2019-20.
- ❖ However, in March 2021, the overall natural gas output of the country began to increase as the Reliance industries started their output from KG basin fields.
- ❖ The Reliance began producing Natural Gas in the KG basins in December 2020.
- ❖ It is now producing gas at the rate of 1.3 million cubic metres per day.

WEF's Global Energy Transition Index

- ❖ The index measures 115 countries' readiness to shift to stable, efficient, accessible, and inclusive energy systems.
- ❖ It is measured based on three dimensions,
 - ❖ economic development and growth, sustainability, and energy protection and access indicators.
- ❖ India with a score of 53 has been ranked 87th (out of 115 countries) in the Global Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2021.
- ❖ This was released by World Economic Forum (WEF) in its report 'Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2021' edition.
- ❖ The index was topped by Sweden, Norway & Denmark.
- ❖ The report has been prepared by WEF in partnership with Accenture.
- ❖ The 2021 edition of the report marks the 10th anniversary of the ETI.
- ❖ In the Asian Region, Malaysia came at the top in the Index (out of 13), while India finished at 9th position.

E - Property Cards

- ❖ The Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the distribution of E-Property Cards under the Svamitva Scheme.
- ❖ The cards were distributed on the side-lines of National Panchayati Raj Day celebrations.
- ❖ The Svamitva Scheme was launched in 2020 on National Panchayati Raj day.
- ❖ Svamitva is Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas.
- ❖ The scheme aims to provide integrated property validation solution for rural India.
- ❖ Under the scheme, the mapping is to be done in a phase-wise manner between 2020 and 2024.
- ❖ The scheme will map the land parcels using drone technology.
- ❖ Also, Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS) will be used for demarcation.
- ❖ The scheme is currently applicable only in the states of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

Objectives of the scheme

- ❖ It is to provide financial Stability to people in rural areas as land can be used as an asset to get a loan.
- ❖ It is to create accurate land records.
- ❖ This will help in better rural planning.
- ❖ It will help to support the Gram Panchayat Development Plan.
- ❖ It will help solve property related disputes in rural areas.

PM Launches Distribution
of e-Property Cards under

SVAMITVA SCHEME



Under the scheme, entire village properties
are surveyed by drone & e-Property Cards
are distributed to the owners



Scheme to cover around 6.62 Lakh villages
of India during 2021-2025



4.09 Lakh Property Owners given their
e-Property Cards in 5000+ villages



27% increase in the export of processed food products

- ❖ The exports of processed food products during April-February 2020-21 grew by 26.51%.
- ❖ Their exports amounted to Rs 43,798 crores during this period.
- ❖ The export of processed vegetables and alcoholic beverages increased by 40% in 2020-21.
- ❖ According to APEDA, the exports of processed food products is to continue in 2021-22.
- ❖ This is mainly because the demand for processed fruits and vegetables, pulses are increasing in markets such as middle east, US, UK.

Global Energy Review report

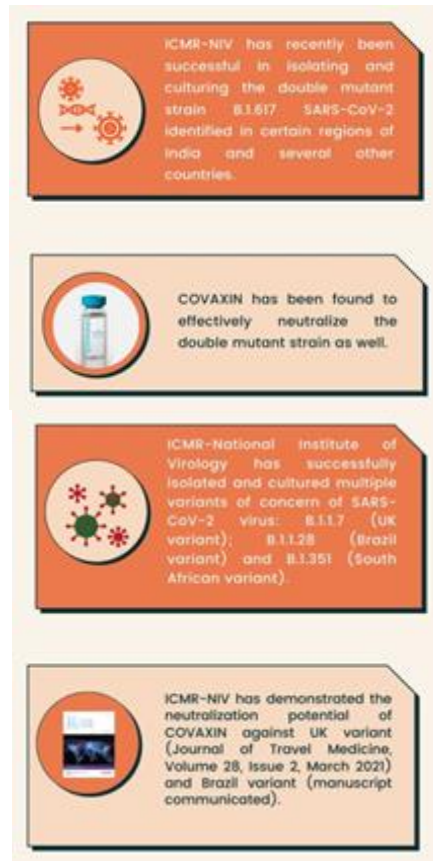
- ❖ The International Energy Agency recently released the Global Energy Review report.

In India

- ❖ According to the report, the Carbon Dioxide emissions in India is to be 1.4% higher than the levels recorded in 2019.
- ❖ The coal-fired power generation is to increase by three times higher than the increase in generation from the renewables.
- ❖ The coal demand is expected to increase by 9%.
- ❖ India has pledged to reduce the emission intensity of its GDP by 33% to 35% under Paris Agreement.
- ❖ Currently, the carbon dioxide emissions of India is 60% below the global average.

COVAXIN neutralizes double Mutant Strain

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research recently announced that COVAXIN neutralises the Double Mutant Strain of COVID-19.
- ❖ The National Institute of Virology recently demonstrated the neutralisation potential of COVAXIN against the Brazil variant and UK variant.
- ❖ The B.1.617 is a recently spreading double mutant variant of COVID-19.
- ❖ It carries the mutations of E484Q and also the mutations of L452R.



COVISHIELD protects against Double Mutant

- ❖ The Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology recently announced that COVISHIELD vaccine protects against B.1.617 variant.
- ❖ It is also called the double mutant strain.
- ❖ The vaccines were tested against the double mutant variety using the Vitro Neutralisation assay.
- ❖ Vitro Neutralisation assay is used to detect if an antibody is capable of preventing virus replication.

RESPOND programme

- ❖ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has announced that it will support eight joint research projects mooted by the Space Technology Cell (STC), IIT-Delhi.
- ❖ The ISRO has extended support to the projects under its RESPOND programme.
- ❖ ISRO started the RESPOND (Research Sponsored) programme in the 1970s.

COVIRAP

- ❖ IIT Kharagpur (Kgp) has successfully commercialized its flagship healthcare product - COVIRAP.
- ❖ This novel diagnostic technology will be useful for infectious diseases including COVID-19 and beyond.
- ❖ The COVID-19 diagnostic test can be conducted directly from human swab samples in the portable device.



Gender bias and inclusion in advertising in India

- ❖ It is a study released recently by UNICEF and the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media.
- ❖ The research measures over 1,000 television and YouTube advertisements aired across India in 2019.
- ❖ Female representation in Indian ads is still marginalised by colourism, hyper sexualisation, and without careers or aspirations outside of the home.
- ❖ Misrepresentation and harmful stereotypes of women in advertising have a significant impact on women and young girls.

CCSCH - 5th session

- ❖ The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) inaugurated the fifth session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH).
- ❖ CCSCH was established under Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).
- ❖ CCSCH was established to develop and expand worldwide standards for spices and culinary herbs.
- ❖ It was formed in 2013 with India as the Host and Spices Board India serving as the secretariat of Committee.



Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)

- ❖ It was set up in 1963.
- ❖ It is an intergovernmental body established jointly by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana

- ❖ The GOI recently announced that it will provide five kilo grams of free food grains under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana till June 2021.
- ❖ The free food grains are being provided to around eighty crore beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act, 2013.
- ❖ PMGKAY was launched in March 2020 by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

Mustard cultivation

- ❖ The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare recently announced that it is to bring nine million tonnes of land under mustard cultivation.
- ❖ This will increase mustard production to 17 million tonnes by 2025-26.
- ❖ Currently, Rajasthan, the highest mustard producing state in the country produces 40.82% of total mustards in India.

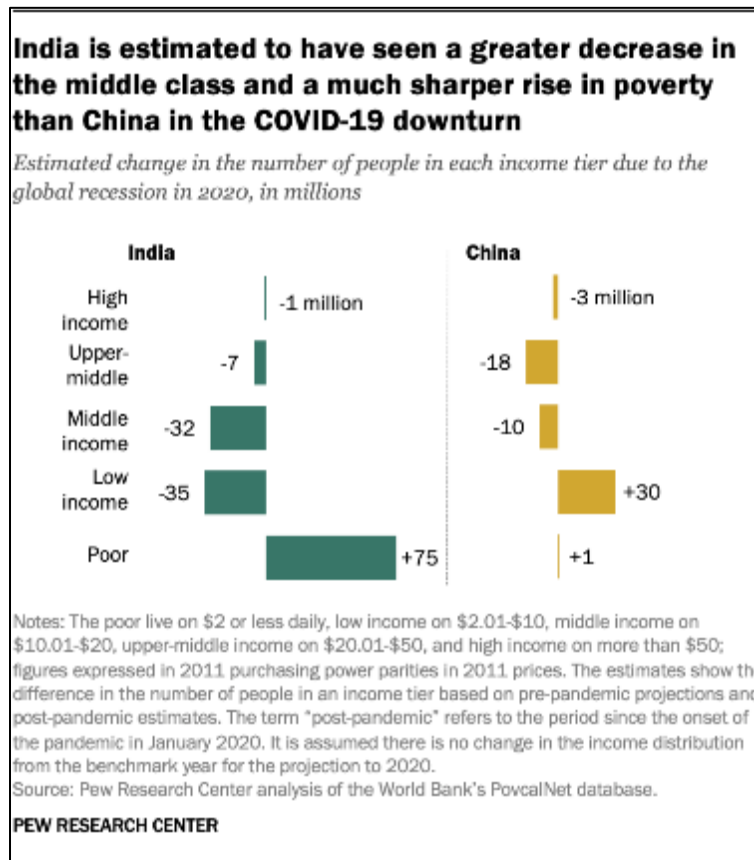
INTERNATIONAL

Strategic cooperation pact

- ❖ Iran and China have signed a 25-year cooperation agreement to boost their bilateral relationship to the "level of strategic partnership".
- ❖ The deal focuses on boosting private-sector collaboration and Iran's role in China's Belt and Road Initiative.
- ❖ This comes as Iran continues to be under US sanctions.
- ❖ USA had extensively curtailed its economic activities.
- ❖ The deal was signed between Wang of China and his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif.

Study by Pew Research Centre

- ❖ According to the US-based Pew Research Centre, the number of Indians in the middle class, or those earning between \$10 and \$20 a day, shrunk by about 32 million.
- ❖ The numbers of those in the middle class has shrunk to 66 million from a pre-pandemic estimate of 99 million.
- ❖ The Pew Centre estimated the number of poor people, with incomes of \$2 or less each day, has gone up by 75 million.



9th Ministerial Conference of Heart of Asia

- ❖ Recently, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar reached Tajikistan's capital to attend the 9th Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process (HoA-IP) ministerial conference on Afghanistan.
- ❖ This conference is a part of the Istanbul Process.
- ❖ The conference was held in Dushanbe.



2020 Human Rights Report

- ❖ It is released by the U.S. State Department.
- ❖ The report contains a country-wise discussion of the state of human rights.
- ❖ It is submitted each year to the U.S. Congress.

Key findings

- ❖ The harassment and detention of journalists critical of the Indian government in their reporting and on social media has continued although the government generally respected the freedom of expression.
- ❖ The Government's requests for user data from Internet companies had increased "dramatically."
- ❖ The government made 49,382 user data requests in 2019 from Facebook, a 32% increase from 2018.
- ❖ Over the same period, Google requests increased by 69%, while Twitter requests saw a 68% increase.

VAJRA PRAHAR 2021

- ❖ Recently, Special Forces of India and the USA conducted the joint military exercise 'VAJRA PRAHAR 2021'.
- ❖ It took place in Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ Aim of this exercise is to share the best practices and experiences in areas such as joint mission planning and operational tactics as also to improve interoperability between the Special Forces of both nations.
- ❖ The joint exercise by the Special Forces of both the countries is conducted alternatively between India and the United States.
- ❖ Special Forces are the units of a country's armed forces that undertake covert, counterterrorist, and other specialized operations.
- ❖ This is the 11th edition of the exercise conducted at Special Forces Training School located at Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The 10th edition of VAJRA PRAHAR was held in 2019 at Seattle, USA.

First Indo-Korean Park

- ❖ India's First Indo-Korean Friendship Park was jointly inaugurated at Delhi Cantonment by Union minister Rajnath Singh and Minister of National Defence, Republic of Korea Mr Suh Wook.



- ❖ The park has been developed in joint consultation with the Ministry of Defence, the Government of India, the Indian Army, the Delhi Cantonment Board, the Embassy of Korea and the Korean War Veterans Association of India.
- ❖ This park will also act as a monument to India's contributions as part of 21 countries that participated in the Korean war 1950-53.

Carnivac-Cov

- ❖ The first animal vaccine against the novel coronavirus in the world has been registered in Russia.
- ❖ It was announced by Rosselkhoznadzor, the country's agriculture safety organization.
- ❖ The vaccine has been named as Carnivac-Cov.

SHANTIR OGROSHENA 2021

- ❖ A multinational Military Exercise named 'SHANTIR OGROSHENA' 2021 (Front Runner of the Peace) is scheduled to be held in Bangladesh from April 04 to 12, 2021.
- ❖ The theme of the exercise is "Robust Peace Keeping Operations".
- ❖ The exercise is being held to commemorate
 - The birth centenary of Bangladesh 'Father of the Nation' Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
 - Mark glorious 50 years of liberation of the country.

World Immunisation & Logistics Summit 2021

- ❖ HOPE Consortium's first ever World Immunisation & Logistics Summit 2021 held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.
- ❖ Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare of India virtually participated in this summit.
- ❖ The discussion was on 'Focus on Asia: Vaccine production and distribution across Asia'.
- ❖ Dr. Harsh Vardhan highlighted India's vaccine administration program and the development of two vaccines in India such as Covishield and Covaxin.
- ❖ He also notified on the recent decision to allow all citizens on or above 45 years for vaccination from 1st April 2021.



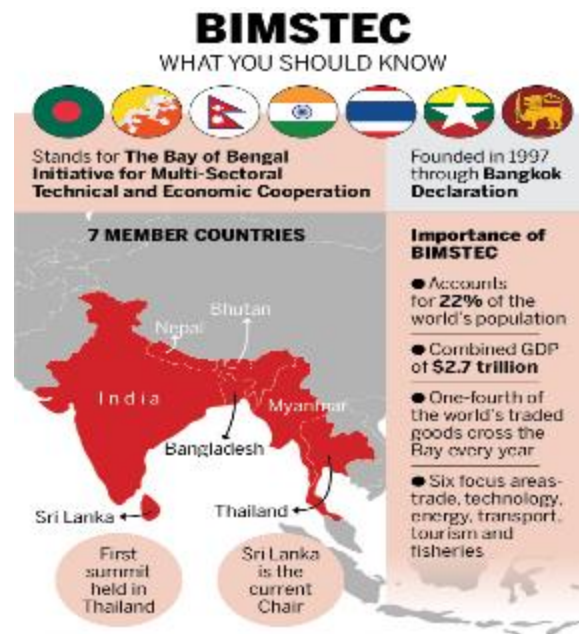
- ❖ HOPE Consortium is a UAE based public-private partnership with industry leading partners.
- ❖ The Consortium is committed to work together for global vaccination distribution.

The World in 2030: Public Survey Report

- ❖ It was recently published by UNESCO.
- ❖ The report was published by the organisation based on the survey held between May 2020 and September 2020.
- ❖ The survey collected responses from more than 15,000 people from all over the world.
- ❖ According to the report, the four biggest challenges to peaceful societies of 2030 are
 - Climate Change,
 - Violence and Conflict,
 - Loss of Biodiversity and discrimination and inequality,
 - water and housing, lack of food.
- ❖ According to the participants, education is the only crucial solution to many difficulties to be faced in 2030.
- ❖ However, the North Americans (US, Canada) believe in science and not in education.
- ❖ Apart from education, the only other solution is international cooperation.

17th BIMSTEC Ministerial meet

- ❖ Recently, the External Affairs Minister of India participated in the 17th Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Ministerial Meeting.
- ❖ The meeting, chaired by Sri Lanka, was held in virtual mode.
- ❖ BIMSTEC comprises seven countries.
- ❖ Five of these seven countries - India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Bangladesh - are from South Asia.
- ❖ The remaining two, Thailand and Myanmar, are from Southeast Asia.



ARWU Ranking 2020

Academic Ranking of World Universities 2020

Top 1000 Methodology Statistics			
World Rank	Institution*	By location India	National/Regional Rank
501-600	Indian Institute of Science		1
601-700	Indian Institute of Technology Madras		2-4
601-700	University of Calcutta		2-4
601-700	University of Delhi		2-4
701-800	Indian Institute of Technology Delhi		5-7
701-800	Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur		5-7
701-800	Jawaharlal Nehru University		5-7
801-900	Aligarh Muslim University		8-9
801-900	Vellore Institute of Technology		8-9
901-1000	All India Institute of Medical Sciences		10-15
901-1000	Anna University		10-15
901-1000	Bharathiar University		10-15
901-1000	Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur		10-15
901-1000	Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee		10-15
901-1000	Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs)		10-15



- ❖ 15 Indian universities have made it to the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) 2020.
- ❖ This is also known as Shanghai Ranking.
- ❖ All the Indian institutes participated in this were placed in the category of 501-600.

About ARWU

- ❖ The ARWU ranking is prepared by the Shanghai Ranking consultancy.
- ❖ It is an independent organisation that is dedicated to research on higher education, intelligence and consultation.
- ❖ The consultancy has been publishing the Academic Ranking of World Universities since 2009.

H-1B visa ban die out

- ❖ US President Joe Biden has not issued any notification to extend the ban on H-1B visa.
- ❖ The ban was brought in by the Trump administration last year.
- ❖ The ban expired on March 31.
- ❖ The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa.
- ❖ It allows US companies to employ foreign workers that require theoretical or technical expertise.

E9 initiative

- ❖ The Minister for Education (India) addressed the consultation meeting of Education Ministers of E9 countries.
- ❖ The meeting was on E9 initiative: Scaling up digital learning to accelerate progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 – Quality Education.
- ❖ Spearheaded by the United Nations (UN), the E9 Partnership was first established in 1993.
- ❖ E9 Countries include Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan.
- ❖ The initiative aims to advance the Sustainable Development Goal 4 agenda.
- ❖ It is done by driving rapid change in education systems in three of the 2020 Global Education Meeting priorities, namely,
 - Support to teachers;

- Investment in skills; and
- Narrowing of the digital divide.

Mega free trade agreement



- ❖ Singapore ratified the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement.
- ❖ It is the world's largest free trade agreement, led by China.
- ❖ In doing so, Singapore became the first among 15 participating countries to ratify RCEP.
- ❖ The RCEP must first be ratified by at least six ASEAN and three non-ASEAN member states to come into effect.
- ❖ Once implemented, RCEP would be the world's largest free trade agreement, covering around one-third of the world's population and about 30% of the world's economy.
- ❖ RCEP is a multi-nation trade pact, comprising 10 ASEAN economies as well as Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea.
- ❖ The RCEP was signed in November 2020.
- ❖ India had opted out of it in 2019.

Little Guru

- ❖ A Sanskrit learning app 'Little Guru' has launched in Bangladesh by the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC) of the High Commission of India.
- ❖ This Sanskrit learning app is part of the campaign being run by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR).
- ❖ It is world's first Gamified Sanskrit learning application.
- ❖ This App aims to promote the Sanskrit language among students, religious scholars, Indologists and historians across the world.



Air Bubble Agreement

- ❖ The Indian government has finalized an air bubble agreement with Sri Lanka.
- ❖ It will allow all eligible passengers to travel between the two countries.
- ❖ India has finalized an air bubble agreement with Sri Lanka, making it the 6th such arrangement in (the) SAARC region & the 28th in total.
- ❖ A bilateral air bubble is a mechanism to resume flights between two nations with preconditions during the pandemic.

Global Food Policy Report 2021

- ❖ It is published by the International Food Policy Research Institute.
- ❖ This year it was based on the theme "Transforming Food Systems After COVID-19".
- ❖ Around 95 million people, mostly in Africa are living in extreme poverty.



Withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan

- ❖ US President Biden recently announced that America is to withdraw all its troops from Afghanistan.
- ❖ The new deadline announced by US coincides with the twentieth anniversary of 09/11 attacks.
- ❖ In February 2020, US and its NATO allies signed a deal to withdraw all troops in fourteen months.

Inclusive Internet Index 2021

- ❖ The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), in partnership with Facebook, has released the Inclusive Internet Index 2021.
- ❖ India has been ranked at 49th spot globally.
- ❖ It shares its rank with Thailand.
- ❖ The Inclusive Internet Index is commissioned by Facebook and developed by The Economist Intelligence Unit.
- ❖ Top 5 Countries
 - Sweden,
 - United States,
 - Spain,
 - Australia,
 - Hong Kong.

Overall rankings	
1 st	Sweden
2 nd	United States
3 rd	Spain
4 th	Australia
5 th	Hong Kong

S-400 Triumf SA-21 Growler

- ❖ The Russian Government has agreed to deliver set of S-400 Triumf SA-21 Growler Air Defence System to India.
- ❖ It is a long-range surface-to-air missile system.

- ❖ China was the first country to buy the defence system.
- ❖ Following China, the other countries such as Saudi Arabia, India, Turkey and Belarus have now acquired the system.

My Body is My Own – report

- ❖ Recently, The United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) Flagship State of World Population Report 2021 titled 'My Body is My Own' was launched.
- ❖ This is the first time a United Nations report has focused on bodily autonomy.
- ❖ Nearly half the women from 57 developing countries do not have the right to make decisions regarding their bodies.
- ❖ It also includes using contraception, seeking healthcare or even on their sexuality.
- ❖ Only 75% of countries legally ensure full and equal access to contraception.



3000-year-Old City

- ❖ Egypt found 3,000-Year-Old "Lost" City near its Luxor region.
- ❖ It is located on the West bank of the Nile River.
- ❖ It was connected with the god Aton and King Amenhotep III.
- ❖ It is the "largest" ancient city ever found in Egypt, dating to a golden age of the pharaohs 3,000 years ago.
- ❖ Formally named as Aten, the city is more commonly dubbed the 'Lost Golden City'.



Freedom of Navigation Operation

- ❖ The US Navy recently conducted Freedom of Navigation Operation in the Indian Ocean Region near Lakshadweep.
- ❖ During the operation, the US warship entered the Exclusive Economic Zone of India without seeking prior consent from India.
- ❖ According to the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), countries cannot prevent ships from using Exclusive Economic Zone.
- ❖ However, according to Indian laws, any foreign military must inform before conducting any activity in the Exclusive Economic Zone of India.
- ❖ India, being a developing nation, is yet to explore its EEZ to the fullest.



Currency Monitoring List

- ❖ The U.S. Treasury has released this report.
- ❖ The April 2021 edition of the semi-annual report is the first from the Biden administration.
- ❖ It reviews currency practices of the U.S.'s 20 biggest trading partners.

- ❖ According to the US, currency manipulation is deliberately influencing the exchange rate between one's currency and US dollar.
- ❖ This is being done to gain unfair competitive advantage in international trade.
- ❖ India is one of the 11 countries on the 'Monitoring List' with regard to their currency practices.
- ❖ India's trade surplus with the US was 24 billion USD in 2020.
- ❖ The other 10 countries on the list with India are China, Japan, Korea, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Mexico.
- ❖ This time, the US has removed China from its list of manipulators.
- ❖ However, Taiwan has been placed in the watch list.

Henley Passport Index



- ❖ It releases list which measures the world's most travel-friendly passports.
- ❖ India stands at number 84 on the list, as the Indian citizens can visit Visa-Free or Visa-on-Arrival in over 58 places.
- ❖ Japan, Singapore and Germany, South Korea stand in Top 3 respectively.

World Press Freedom Index 2021

- ❖ The Reporters Without Borders, a not-for-profit body recently published this.
- ❖ It ranked 180 countries.
- ❖ India was ranked 142 in the index.
- ❖ India was at the same position in 2020 as well.
- ❖ Norway topped the index followed by Finland and Denmark.
- ❖ The index was topped by Norway in 2020 as well.

- ❖ Eritrea received the last rank in the index.
- ❖ China ranked 177th out of 180 countries.
- ❖ North Korea was at rank 179 and Turkmenistan was at rank 178.
- ❖ The report classified India under “BAD” category along with Brazil, Russia and Mexico.
- ❖ The report has named India as one of the world’s most dangerous countries for journalists.

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

FOR PRESS FREEDOM

Global Review of Death Penalty

- ❖ The Amnesty International recently released the global Review of Death Penalty.
- ❖ Around 483 executions were recorded in eighteen countries according to the report published by Amnesty International.
- ❖ In 2019, the number of executions recorded were 657.
- ❖ The number of executions has grown by 26% in 2020 as compared to 2019.
- ❖ The maximum number of executions happened in China, Iran, Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia in that order.
- ❖ Around sixteen women have been executed among the 483.
- ❖ They were from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Oman.
- ❖ The countries such as India, Qatar, Oman and Taiwan have resumed executions.
- ❖ The executions in Iraq have halved from hundred in 2019 to 45 in 2020.
- ❖ The executions in Saudi Arabia have decreased by 85%.
- ❖ The countries used beheading, hanging, electrocution, shooting and lethal injection as methods of execution.
- ❖ Iran executed three people for crimes that were committed by them when they were below 18 years old.
- ❖ China, Iran and Saudi Arabia executed at least 30 people for crimes related to drugs.

- ❖ The Asia-Pacific countries that carried out executions in 2020 were India, China, Bangladesh, North Korea, Vietnam and Taiwan.
- ❖ Pakistan, Singapore and Japan did not report any executions.
- ❖ China was the leading executioner in the world.
- ❖ However, the exact number of executions being carried out in China is unknown.

METHODS OF EXECUTIONS IN 2020 ⁷								
BEHEADING	Saudi Arabia							
ELECTROCUTION	USA							
HANGING	Bangladesh	Botswana	Egypt	India	Iran	Iraq	South Sudan	Syria
LETHAL INJECTION	China	USA	Viet Nam					
SHOOTING	China	Iran	North Korea	Oman	Qatar	Somalia	Taiwan	Yemen

Note:

- ❖ Chad has abolished death penalty for all crimes.
- ❖ Colorado has become the twenty second state in the United States to abolish death penalty.

Australia-India Indo Pacific Oceans Initiative

- ❖ Australia has announced a grant of Rs 81.2 million (AUD 1.4 million) under the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).
- ❖ IPOI was proposed by Indian Prime Minister Modi at the East Asia Summit in November 2019.
- ❖ The Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative's objective is to strengthen maritime boundaries.

About the partnership

- ❖ The initiative will help to support a free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific.
- ❖ The Australia-India Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative Partnership forms the core of this "shared vision" of both countries.
- ❖ To apply for the grant, the company or organization should be located in either India or Australia and have partners in either of the two countries.

India as 'Country of Particular Concern'

- ❖ A US government organisation that monitors international religious freedom has recommended that India be designated as a “country of particular concern” for the second consecutive year.
- ❖ Other new recommendations for the CPC list in the Commission’s 2021 were Russia, Syria and Vietnam.
- ❖ Countries already on the CPCs list and recommended by USCIRF for re-designation were Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.
- ❖ Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Turkey and Uzbekistan were recommended for a ‘Special Watch List’, along with Cuba and Nicaragua, both of which were already on the list for 2019.



Nimbus Project

- ❖ The Government of Israel has chosen Google and Amazon Web Services to provide cloud services for its military and Public Sector Units.
- ❖ The project is to be implemented in four phases and has been named the “Nimbus” project.
- ❖ The Nimbus Project is to be implemented at an estimated cost of 1 billion USD.
- ❖ It will establish cloud sites in Israel.
- ❖ These sites will keep the information within the borders of Israel under strict security guidelines.



Idriss Déby

- ❖ Chad's President Idriss Déby, who was one of Africa's longest-serving leaders, died on April 20, 2021.
- ❖ He died due to the injuries he sustained following clashes with rebels in the north of the country.
- ❖ He was 68.
- ❖ Déby was the winner of the Presidential Elections conducted on April 11th.
- ❖ This would have been his sixth term in office.
- ❖ Idriss Déby had spent more than three decades in power in Chad.

Australia and China's Belt and Road deal

- ❖ The Australian Government recently announced that it has cancelled deals on Belt and Road initiative over national interest.
- ❖ In 2018, the Victorian State Government had signed two agreements with China.
- ❖ An agreement was signed to promote infrastructure development initiative in the state.
- ❖ The second agreement was signed in 2019 that aimed to bring in Chinese investments in the state.
- ❖ Both these agreements were signed under the Belt and Road Initiative of China.
- ❖ The Australian Government recently cancelled both these agreements.

Note

- ❖ In December 2020, the Australian Government introduced the Australia Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangement) Act.
- ❖ The law allows Australian Government to cancel any agreements signed between a foreign country and the state authorities.
- ❖ This shall be done if the actions of the agreement threatened national interest.

State of Emergency in Ethiopia

- ❖ Ethiopia recently declared Emergency in the southern part of Amhara region as violence broke out in various parts.
- ❖ The violence in the region began after an ethnic Oromo Imam was shot dead outside a mosque.
- ❖ This increased the clashes between the Ethnic Oromo civilians and the Amhara Security forces.



Impact Rankings 2021 - 3rd edition

- ❖ The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings are the only global performance tables that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- ❖ Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Tamil Nadu became the only Indian University to make it to the list of World's Top 100 Educational Institutions for sustainability (81st rank).
- ❖ Other two Indian Universities namely Karnataka-based JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research and Punjab-based Lovely Professional University were ranked in the list with a place in the 100-200 grouping.
- ❖ At the global level, University of Manchester (UK), University of Sydney (Australia) & RMIT University (Australia) grabbed the top 3 places.
- ❖ Russia is the most represented Country in the rankings with 75 institutions, followed by Japan with 73.

ECONOMY

Major financial changes

- ❖ Major financial changes for FY22 from April 1, 2021 are given below.

New Wage Rule

- ❖ As per the new compensation rules, the allowance component cannot exceed 50 percent of the total salary or compensation.
- ❖ This means that the basic salary has to be 50 percent.
- ❖ To comply with this rule, the employers will be required to increase the basic pay component of salaries.
- ❖ That will result in a proportional rise in gratuity payments and employees' contribution to the provident fund.

New EPF tax rules

- ❖ Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced during the 2021 Budget presentation that interest on employee contributions to the provident fund of over Rs 2.5 lakh per annum would be taxed, starting from April 1st.
- ❖ There would be tax exemption for PF up to Rs 2.5 lakh.
- ❖ The interest received from employee's provident fund (EPF) is exempt from tax under the existing tax provisions.



- ❖ However, from April 1st the interest earned on the EPF contributions (only employee contribution) above Rs 2.5 lakh a year will now be taxable.

Public sector bank mergers

- ❖ The account holders of seven public sector banks will need to get their passbook and cheque book updated as they will become non-functional from April 1, 2021.
- ❖ The banks include Vijaya Bank, Dena Bank, Corporation Bank, Allahabad Bank, Andhra Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India.
- ❖ This is because these seven public sector banks are scheduled to merge with various other banks effective from April 1st.
- ❖ They banks being merged are,
 - Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank have been merged with Bank of Baroda.
 - Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India have been merged with Punjab National Bank (PNB).
 - Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank have been merged with Union Bank of India and
 - The Allahabad Bank has been merged with the Indian Bank.

Banks to cancel auto-debit facility

- ❖ Banks will be cancelling all auto-debit payments for DTH, mobile phone, broadband, electricity, water and other utilities bill starting from April 1st due to RBI's new guidelines.

Capital infusion in 4 PSBs

- ❖ The Central Government has announced to infuse Rs 14,500 crore in four state-owned lenders in 2020-21 by issuing non-interest-bearing bonds to the banks.
- ❖ The four state-owned lenders are
 - Central Bank of India,
 - Indian Overseas Bank,
 - Bank of India and
 - UCO Bank.
- ❖ This infusion will complete the government's total capital infusion of Rs 20,000 crore in public sector banks for the current financial year 2020-21.
- ❖ Earlier in December 2020, it infused Rs 5,500 crore in Punjab and Sind Bank.

(Ref. F. No.4(17)-B(W&M)/2020 dated March 30, 2021)

Name of the Public Sector Banks and Allocation of Securities (i) Non-interest bearing (Non-transferable) Special Gol Security, 2031; (ii) Non-interest bearing (Non-transferable) Special Gol Security 2032; (iii) Non-interest bearing (Non-transferable) Special Gol Security 2033; (iv) Non-interest bearing (Non-transferable) Special Gol Security 2034; (v) Non-interest bearing (Non-transferable) Special Gol Security 2035; and (vi) Non-interest bearing (Non-transferable) Special Gol Security 2036, is as under:

Sl. No.	Name of Eligible Bank	Maturing in Year (₹ crore)						(₹ crore) Amount Allocated
		2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	
1	Central Bank of India	800	800	800	800	800	800	4800
2	Indian Overseas Bank	685	683	683	683	683	683	4100
3	Bank of India	500	500	500	500	500	500	3000
4	UCO Bank	435	433	433	433	433	433	2600
	Total	2420	2416	2416	2416	2416	2416	14,500

By Order of the President of India,
RAJAT KUMAR MISHRA, Addl. Secy.

Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam – BSE

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

India leads in Digital Payments

- ❖ The UK based payments system company ACI recently released a report on digital payments.
- ❖ According to this report, India has the highest number of real-time online transactions in 2020.
- ❖ The Digital payment market of India is led by Paytm, PhonePe, BharatPe, Pine Labs, etc.

- ❖ The UPI (Unified Payment Interface) transaction increased by 18.7% in March 2021 as compared to February 2021.
- ❖ In February 2021, the UPI transaction was Rs 4.25 lakh crores.
- ❖ And in March 2021, it was Rs 5.05 lakh crores.
- ❖ India was ahead of China, US, South Korea, UK, Thailand in number of online transactions.
- ❖ According to this report, the share of electronic transactions in India will exceed 50% by 2024.

Small Savings Schemes

- ❖ The National Savings Institute operating under the Ministry of Finance recently announced that West Bengal is the top contributor to the Small Savings Scheme in the country.
- ❖ The state contributes 15% of the total corpus.
- ❖ It has so far collected Rs 90,000 crores under the Small Savings Scheme.
- ❖ West Bengal was followed by Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The state of Uttar Pradesh has collected Rs 69,660 crores.
- ❖ Maharashtra was ranked third.
- ❖ The state of Maharashtra contributed 10.57%, which is Rs 63,026 crores.
- ❖ Gujarat was ranked fourth.
- ❖ Gujarat contributed 8.16%, that is Rs 48,645 crores.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu ranked fifth contributing 4.8%, which is Rs 28,598.

Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2021 report



- ❖ A report 'Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2021: Towards post-Covid-19 resilient economies' has been released recently.

- ❖ The report is released by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).
- ❖ According to the report, India is estimated to record an economic growth of 7% in 2021-22,
- ❖ The previous fiscal witnessed a contraction of 7.7% on account of the pandemic's impact on normal business activity.

UNESCAP

- ❖ The UNESCAP is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region.
- ❖ It has 53 Member States and 9 Associate Members from Asia-Pacific Region including India.

Forbes' Annual Billionaire list



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

RANK	NAME	NET WORTH	AGE	COUNTRY / TERRITORY
1.	Jeff Bezos	\$177 B ▲	57	United States
2.	Elon Musk	\$151 B ▲	49	United States
3.	Bernard Arnault & family	\$150 B ▲	72	France
4.	Bill Gates	\$124 B ▲	65	United States
5.	Mark Zuckerberg	\$97 B ▲	36	United States
6.	Warren Buffett	\$96 B ▲	90	United States
7.	Larry Ellison	\$93 B ▲	76	United States
8.	Larry Page	\$91.6 B ▲	48	United States
9.	Sergey Brin	\$89 B ▲	47	United States
10.	Mukesh Ambani	\$84.5 B ▲	63	India

World Economic Outlook

IN THE FAST LANE

Growth forecast, in %

	2020	2021	2022
India	-8	12.5	6.9
China	2.3	8.4	5.6
US	-3.5	6.4	3.5
World	-3.3	6	4.4

CONCERNS FOR EMERGING ECONOMIES

Slower labour force growth

Covid-19 protection

unavailable for most of the population in 2021

Frequent need for lockdowns, containment measures

Protectionist tendencies over tech emerging

Pharma protectionism to impede global vaccine supply





- ❖ The IMF has raised India's growth projection to 12.5 per cent for FY22 in its fresh outlook.
- ❖ This puts the country on top in terms of GDP growth.
- ❖ The 12.5 per cent growth projection is the highest even among the advanced economies.

RXIL

- ❖ RXIL is Receivables Exchange of India.
- ❖ Recently RXIL has become the first TReDS platform to cross monthly throughput of Rs 1000 crores.
- ❖ The transaction volume in the platform grew from Rs 69 crores in April 2020 to Rs 1,105 crores in March 2021.
- ❖ This shows economic recovery in the country.
- ❖ Also, it shows that the MSME sector that was badly hit during COVID-19 is getting revived.

Note

- ❖ RXIL was incorporated in 2016.
- ❖ It is a joint venture between Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and National Stock Exchange of India Limited.
- ❖ It operates TReDS.

TReDS

- ❖ TReDS is an electronic platform that facilitates financing of MSMEs through multiple financiers.
- ❖ The main three participants in the TreDS are,
 - MSMEs (sellers),
 - financiers and
 - Corporate entities (buyers).
- ❖ According to RBI, only MSMEs can participate as sellers in TReDS.

Madhu Kranti portal and Honey Corners

- ❖ The Union Agricultural Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched the Madhukranti portal and Honey Corners of NAFED to promote the Honey Mission in India.
- ❖ The Madhukranti portal is an initiative of National Bee Board.

- ❖ It is operated under the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission.

Madhukranti portal

- ❖ The portal has been developed to achieve the traceability source of honey and bee hive products on the digital platform.
- ❖ Also, the platform will help in checking the quality and source of adulteration of honey
- ❖ The portal will hold the database of all the stakeholders involved in honey production, marketing chains, hive production and sales.

Honey Corners

- ❖ The Honey Corners are special spaces for the sale of honey.
- ❖ It is operated by NAFED.

NAFED

- ❖ NAFED is National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation.
- ❖ NAFED has developed 14-15 honey corners.
- ❖ More honey corners are to be developed in most of the upcoming major 200 NAFED stores.
- ❖ This will promote market support for honey.

Note

- ❖ Indian Bank is the technical and banking partner for the development of digital platform.
- ❖ The bank has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Bee Board to implement the platform.

Integrated Health Information system

- ❖ Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan virtually launched the Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP).
- ❖ It is an advanced version of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP)
- ❖ With the launch, India became the 1st Country in the World to adopt an Advanced Digital Disease Surveillance System.
- ❖ It is also the World's biggest online disease surveillance platform (in terms of Geographical coverage, number of diseases covered & quantum of data generated).
- ❖ National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), World Health Organization (WHO) were associated with the development of the platform.



- ❖ The platform is in sync with the National Digital Health Mission and will help in achieving the dream of 'Atma Nirbhar Swasth Bharat'.
- ❖ IHIP is capable of tracking 33 diseases & provides real-time data in digital mode.

Recent RBI announcements

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to allow payment system operators to take direct membership of Centralised Payment Systems (CPS), such as RTGS and NEFT.
- ❖ In a major move in the online payment segments.
- ❖ The RBI noted that over the last few years, the role of non-bank entities in payment space such as prepaid payment instrument (PPI) issuers, card networks, white label ATM (WLA) operators, Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) platforms, has grown in importance and volume.

Financial Inclusion Index

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has announced that it will periodically publish a "Financial Inclusion Index" (FI Index) annually in July.
- ❖ This is for the financial year ending previous March.
- ❖ To measure the extent of financial inclusion in the country, the Reserve Bank proposes to construct and publish a Financial Inclusion Index (FI Index) based on multiple parameters.

RBI increases WMA limits

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has increased the limit for Way and Means Advances (WMA) for the State Governments/UTs from Rs. 32,225 crores (fixed in February 2016) to Rs. 47,010 crores based on the recommendation of a committee headed by Shri Sudhir Shrivastava. This represents an increase of about 46%.
- ❖ RBI has extended the enhanced interim WMA limit of ₹ 51,560 crores for a further period of six months i.e., from April 1, 2021, up to September 30, 2021.

Solidarity Tax on Pandemic Winners

- ❖ The International Monetary Fund recently announced Solidarity Tax on Pandemic Winners.
- ❖ That is, the companies that prospered during COVID-19 crisis should pay additional tax to show solidarity towards those hit hardest by the pandemic.



- ❖ It is a temporary tax.
- ❖ It shall be imposed to reduce social inequalities that increased during the recent health crisis.
- ❖ The solidarity tax was introduced in Germany in 1991 after the East and West Germany were joined together.

Consumer Confidence Survey

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India recently released the report of Consumer Confidence Survey.
- ❖ The survey was conducted in major cities of the country over 5,000 respondents.
- ❖ The Survey measures consumer perception on five economic variables such as
 - employment,
 - economic situation,
 - price level,
 - spending and
 - income.
- ❖ The Consumer Confidence Survey has two main indices namely current situation index and future expectations index.

Key findings

- ❖ The Consumer Confidence Index declined from 55.5 points in January 2021 to 53.1 points in March 2021.
- ❖ The Future Expectations dipped from 117.1 in January 2021 to 108.8 in March 2021.
- ❖ When the index measure is above 100, it signals optimism and while it is below 100, it represents pessimism.

G-sec acquisition programme

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India recently announced a Government Security Acquisition Programme, GSAP 1.0.
- ❖ Under the programme, the central bank will purchase government bonds of worth Rs 1 trillion (or one lakh crores of rupees).
- ❖ The first purchase of Rs 25,000 crore is to be made on April 15, 2021.
- ❖ The GSAP 1.0 will provide more comfort to the bond market.
- ❖ As the borrowing of the Government increased this year, RBI has to ensure there is no disruption in the Indian market.



Aahaar Kranti

- ❖ This mission aims to spread the message of the need for a nutritionally balanced diet.
- ❖ It also aims to understand the importance of accessibility to all local fruits and vegetables.
- ❖ It was launched by Vijnana Bharati (Vibha) and Global Indian Scientists' and Technocrats' Forum (GIST).
- ❖ Its Motto is 'Good Diet-Good Cognition'.
- ❖ It is designed to address the peculiar problem being faced by India and the world called 'hunger and diseases in abundance'.
- ❖ The United Nations has also declared 2021 as the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables.
- ❖ The UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 emphasizes "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages."

Maximum balance for payment banks

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India enhanced the limit of maximum end of day balance for the payment banks.
- ❖ It is from Rs. 1 lakh per individual to Rs. 2 lakhs.

Payments banks

- ❖ It is an Indian new model of banks conceptualised by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- ❖ It is like any other bank, but operating on a smaller or restricted scale (Airtel Payments Bank, India Post Payments Bank, etc.).
- ❖ These banks cannot issue loans and credit cards.
- ❖ Both current account and savings accounts can be operated by such banks.
- ❖ Payments banks can issue ATM cards or debit cards and provide online or mobile banking.
- ❖ Bharti Airtel set up India's first payments bank.

Special Refinance Facility 2021

- ❖ The National Housing Bank recently launched the "Special Refinance Facility", 2021.
- ❖ Rs 10,00 crores has been allocated to this facility.



- ❖ The main objective of the facility is to provide short term refinance support to the housing finance companies and other eligible Primary Lending Institutions.

Special Drawing Rights

- ❖ The G20 Finance Ministers recently nodded to the International Monetary Fund to provide fresh Special Drawing Rights to its member countries.
- ❖ The IMF has been permitted to provide SDR of worth 650 million USD to the member countries.

Special Drawing Rights

- ❖ It is an international reserve asset.
- ❖ It was created by the IMF in 1969 to supplement the official reserves of its member countries.
- ❖ The value of Special Drawing Rights is based on five currencies of the world.
- ❖ They are US dollars, Japanese Yen, Chinese Renminbi, British pound sterling and Euro.
- ❖ The value of SDR is calculated every day.
- ❖ The voting power of a member country in IMF is based on the quota that is measured in terms of SDR.
- ❖ It is primarily based on the economic position of a country.

103rd Meeting of the Plenary Development Committee

- ❖ Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman participated in this meeting from India.
- ❖ She represented India, Bangladesh, Bhutan & Srilanka in this meeting.
- ❖ She shared the information that the Government has announced Atma Nirbhar Packages of Rs 27.1 trillion, amounting to more than 13% of the GDP.

Petroleum consumption in India

- ❖ The Ministry of Petroleum recently released a report on petroleum consumption of India.
- ❖ According to the report, fuel consumption of the country reduced by 9.1% in the year 2020-21 as compared to that of the previous year.
- ❖ This is the first time the petroleum consumption contracted to the highest since 1998-99.



India's Debt Ratio

- ❖ The International Monetary Fund recently announced that the debt to GDP ratio of India increased from 74% to 90% due to COVID-19 crisis.
- ❖ This is to increase to 99% in 2021.
- ❖ The international financial organisation has also stated that this is to reduce to 80% after economic recovery.
- ❖ The Debt to GDP ratio is the ratio between the debt of the Government measured in the units of its currency to the GDP measured in the same unit.
- ❖ When the Debt to GDP ratio is low, it means that the country produces and sells goods and services that are sufficient to pay back debts without incurring further debts.
- ❖ The Debt to GDP ratio of India has remained 70% since 1991.
- ❖ The Public Debt in India is the total liability of the Union Government that must be paid from the Consolidated Fund of India.

Sudarshan Sen Committee

- ❖ The RBI has set up a committee headed by Sudarshan Sen to undertake a comprehensive review of the working of asset reconstruction companies (ARCs) in the financial sector ecosystem and recommend suitable measures for enabling them to meet the growing requirements.
- ❖ ARC is a specialized financial institution that buys the Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) from banks and financial institutions
- ❖ The asset reconstruction companies or ARCs are registered under the RBI.

Startup India Seed Fund Scheme

- ❖ It aims to provide financial assistance to start-ups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry, and commercialization.
- ❖ It was announced in the 'Prarambh: StartupIndia International Summit' that marks the five-year anniversary of the Startup India initiative.
- ❖ The SISFS will Secure seed funding, inspire innovation, support transformative ideas, facilitate implementation, and Start start-up revolution.
- ❖ The government has approved Rs. 945 Crore corpus for the fund, which will be divided over the next 4 years.
- ❖ The scheme is expected to support an estimated 3,600 startups through 300 incubators.
- ❖ Nodal Department: Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.

Prevention of Marine Litter

- ❖ It was signed between Republic of India and Federal Republic of Germany in 2019.
- ❖ It will help India achieve the goal of phasing out single use plastics by 2022
- ❖ India and Germany recently signed agreement on 'Cities combating plastic entering the marine environment'.
- ❖ Marine litter threatens ecosystems and adversely affects fishery and tourism industries around the globe.
- ❖ It affects public health with increased concerns about micro-plastic and risk of particles entering the food chain.
- ❖ The project is to be implemented mainly in the states of Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ It will mainly support cities such as Port Blair, Kochi and Kanpur.
- ❖ India is the twelfth largest source of marine litter in the world.
- ❖ By 2025, it is expected to become the fifth largest source of marine litter.
- ❖ It is estimated that 15-20% of all plastics are entering oceans via riverine ecosystems of which 90% are contributed by 10 of the world's most polluting rivers.
- ❖ Two of these river systems are located in India, namely Ganga and Brahmaputra.

Mega Food Park

- ❖ Italy recently launched the first "Mega Food Park" at Fanidhar in the Mehsana district of Gujarat.
- ❖ It is the first Italian-Indian Food Park project launched in the country.
- ❖ The Mega Food Park is a scheme implemented by the Ministry of Food Processing.
- ❖ The main aim of the scheme is to establish direct linkage from farms to processing and consumer markets.

Tax collections for FY 21

- ❖ The Ministry of Finance recently released the tax collection figures for the financial year 2020-21.
- ❖ According to the ministry, the direct tax collections for the financial year 2020-21 are Rs 9.45 lakh crores.
- ❖ The Direct Tax Collections include Personal Income Tax collections and Corporation Tax collections.
- ❖ The Personal Income Tax collected for the year 2020-21 was Rs 4.88 lakh crores.

- ❖ The Corporation Tax (or Corporate Tax) collected for the year 2020-21 was Rs 4.57 lakh crores.
- ❖ The Gross Collection of Direct Tax for the year 2020-21 was Rs 12.06 lakh crores.
- ❖ The tax collections in the fiscal year 2021 exceeded the revised target by 5%.
- ❖ The tax collected in 2021 was 10% lower than the direct tax collected in the previous year.
- ❖ In the Union Budget 2020-21, the Government of India predicted that Rs 13.19 lakh crores will be collected from direct taxes.
- ❖ However, this was before the inception of COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ After the pandemic, the estimate was reduced to Rs 9.05 lakh crores.

Foreign Portfolio Investments in India

- ❖ In 2021, India has emerged as the largest recipient of Foreign Portfolio Investments (FPI).
- ❖ The net FPI inflow for the fiscal year 2020-21 was Rs 2.74 lakh crores.
- ❖ The Foreign Portfolio Investment refers to the purchase of securities and assets by investors from other country.
- ❖ Foreign Direct Investment is the investment made by an individual or a firm (located in one country) in a business (located in another country).
- ❖ Portfolio Investment is seen as a short term move and direct investment is seen as a long-term move.

Ace Money Neobank

- ❖ Aceware FinTech Services launched Kerala's first neobank called Ace Money Neobank.
- ❖ It has joined in partnership with YES Bank and ICICI Bank for this.
- ❖ Aceware is a Kerala-based fintech services company.
- ❖ The services of Ace Money Neobank are available at all the panchayats in Kerala.

Neobanks

- ❖ It is a kind of digital bank, entirely online instead of being present physically at a specific location.
- ❖ Chqbook (Chqbook.com) - India's first Neobank for small business owners like kiranas, merchants, chemists, and others running proprietorships.
- ❖ FamPay - India's first Neobank for teenagers.
- ❖ Finin - India's first full-fledged consumer neobank.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Undersea cables

- ❖ Facebook had planned two new undersea cables to connect Singapore, Indonesia and North America.
- ❖ The project is done with collaboration of Google and regional telecommunication companies.
- ❖ This is to boost internet connection capacity between the regions.
- ❖ Named Echo and Bifrost, these will be the first two cables to go through a new diverse route crossing the Java Sea.

CIISCO algorithm

- ❖ Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) Identification in Inner Solar Corona (CIISCO) algorithm will be used in India's first solar mission, Aditya-L1.
- ❖ CIISCO was developed by the Aryabhata Research Institute of observational sciences (ARIES) and Royal Observatory of Belgium.
- ❖ This new algorithm will be used to detect and track the accelerating Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) in the lower corona of the Sun.

Coronal Mass Ejections

- ❖ Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) that comes from the Sun are huge bubbles of gas threaded with magnetic field lines.
- ❖ They cause various disturbances to the space environment, and cause geomagnetic storms, satellite failures, and power outages.

LHC

- ❖ Physicists at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in Switzerland might have discovered a brand-new force of nature.
- ❖ LHC is the world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator.
- ❖ It is present in the European Council for Nuclear Research's (CERN's) accelerator complex.
- ❖ It was first started up on 10 September 2008.
- ❖ It has a 27-kilometre ring of superconducting magnets with a number of accelerating structures to boost the energy of the particles along the way.
- ❖ It is designed to produce proton-proton collision.

- ❖ Inside the accelerator, two high-energy particle beams travel at close to the speed of light before they are made to collide.
- ❖ The beams travel in opposite directions in two separate beam pipes kept at ultrahigh vacuum.
- ❖ They are guided around the accelerator ring by a strong magnetic field maintained by superconducting electromagnets.



Baikal-GVD

- ❖ The Russian scientists recently launched one of the world's biggest underwater neutrino telescopes called the Baikal-GVD (Gigaton Volume Detector) in the waters of Lake Baikal.
- ❖ Lake Baikal is the world's deepest lake situated in Siberia.
- ❖ It is one of the three largest neutrino detectors in the world.
- ❖ Other two are
 - IceCube at the South Pole and
 - ANTARES in the Mediterranean Sea.
- ❖ The telescope seeks to study in detail the elusive fundamental particles called neutrinos and to possibly determine their sources.

Touch-sensitive watch for the visually impaired

- ❖ This will be useful for the visually impaired people to sense time accurately.
- ❖ The watch was developed by prof Siddhartha Panda and Vishwaraj Srivastava of IIT Kanpur.

About the watch

- ❖ The user has to touch and scan the touch-sensitive watch's hour indicators.
- ❖ With the help of different vibration patterns, the watch communicates back the time information that is easily perceived by the user.
- ❖ This way, the person is able to read the time.

Plant-Insect Gene Transfer



- ❖ The Chinese scientists have recently identified the transfer of genes from plants to insects.
- ❖ Usually transfer of genes happen among the same family.
- ❖ Here the insect called whiteflies has incorporated a portion of DNA from plants into their genome.
- ❖ The incorporated gene found was BtPMT1.
- ❖ The whiteflies use this gene to neutralise the toxic compounds produced by the plants against them.

Note

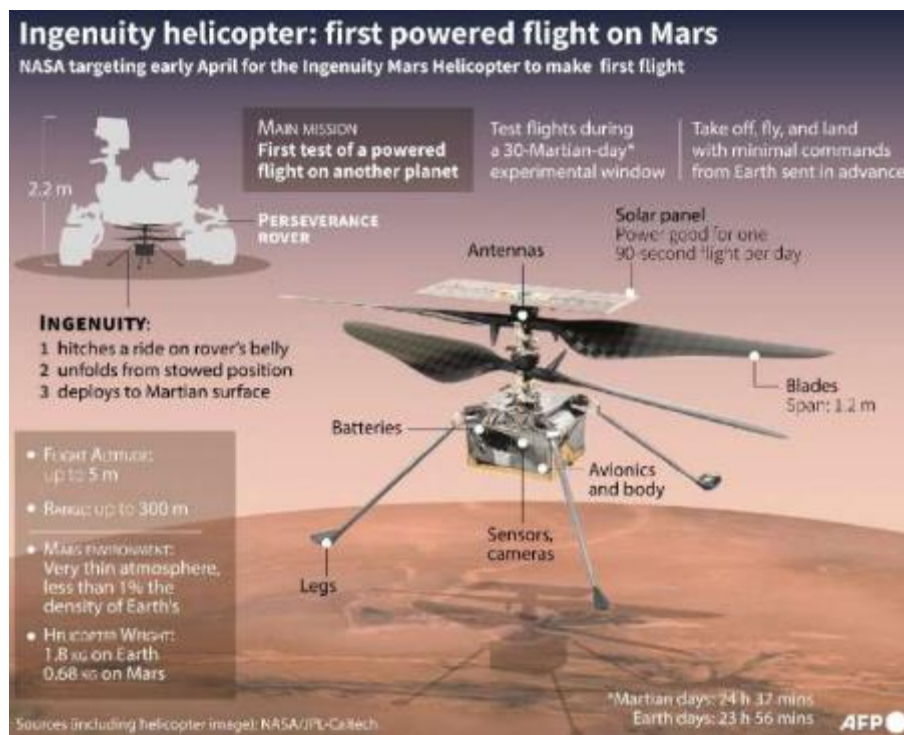
- ❖ The transfer of gene from one family to another is referred to as horizontal gene transfer.

Quakes in Mars

- ❖ Nasa's InSight lander has recorded over 500 quakes to date on Mars since November 2018.
- ❖ The two recent quakes of magnitude 3.3 and 3.1.
- ❖ They originated in a region called Cerberus Fossae.
- ❖ These findings support the idea that the planet is seismically active.

Ingenuity Helicopter

- ❖ NASA's Ingenuity mini-helicopter has been dropped on the surface of Mars.
- ❖ The ultra-light aircraft had been fixed to the Perseverance rover, which touched down on the Red Planet on February 18.
- ❖ Ingenuity will be attempting to fly in an atmosphere that is one percent the density of Earth's atmosphere.
- ❖ This will make it lift harder, but will be assisted by gravity that is one-third of our planet's.
- ❖ Ingenuity will be taking high-resolution photography as it flies.



Wolf-Rayet stars

- ❖ Indian astronomers have tracked a rare supernova explosion.
- ❖ They have traced it to one of the hottest sets of stars called Wolf-Rayet stars or WR stars.
- ❖ Supernovae are powerful and luminous stellar explosions in the Universe releasing a monstrous amount of energy.
- ❖ Long-term monitoring of these transients opens the door to understand the nature of the exploding star as well as the explosion properties.
- ❖ It can also help enumerate the number of massive stars.



Rapid diagnosis of dengue

- ❖ Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi have developed a handheld Surface Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy (SERS)-based platform.
- ❖ This is helpful in early diagnosis of dengue.
- ❖ It also gives dengue test results within one hour (rapid diagnosis).
- ❖ The early diagnosis of dengue is the key to prevent deterioration of a patient's health.
- ❖ The research work was funded by IMPRINT India programme of the Ministry of Education.

Gamma-ray emitting galaxy

- ❖ The Indian researchers discovered a rare and farthest gamma-ray emitting galaxy.
- ❖ This newly found galaxy was named as NLS1 (Narrow-Line Seyfert 1) galaxy.
- ❖ These galaxies are classified as AGN or Active Galactic Nuclei.
- ❖ Compared to normal galaxies, these active galaxies can emit up to thousands of times of energy.
- ❖ The emissions of active galaxies are non-stellar (non-thermal) that are observed in the form of microwave, radio, infrared, optical, X-ray, ultra-violet, and gamma-ray wavebands.
- ❖ One of the largest ground-based telescopes in the world Subaru Telescope located in Hawaii in US, was used for this.
- ❖ It was formed when the Universe was only about 4.7 billion years old.
- ❖ The current age of the Universe is 13.8 billion years.
- ❖ The Scientists from the Aryabhata Research Institute of observational sciencES (ARIES), Nainital have found this.
- ❖ It is an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India.

Redshift

- ❖ Since Edwin Hubble in 1929 announced that the Universe is expanding, it was noted that the galaxies are moving away from us.
- ❖ The light, in form of wavelengths, from these receding galaxies is measured as redshift.
- ❖ This means farther the galaxies, the redder wavelengths of light and a larger redshift value.
- ❖ Such galaxies are classified as redshifted galaxies.

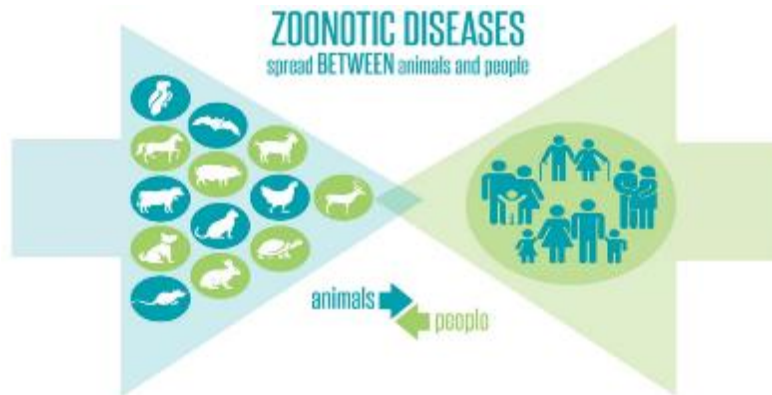
Odyssey

- ❖ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the US recently released the image of Mars to mark the 20th anniversary of Odyssey.
- ❖ The image depicted Dunes in Mars.
- ❖ Odyssey is the longest lasting spacecraft in Mars till date.
- ❖ It was launched on April 7, 2001.
- ❖ It arrived at Mars on October 24, 2001.

Remdesivir drug

- ❖ The Government of India prohibits the exports of Remdesivir drug.
- ❖ Remdesivir has been considered a key anti-viral drug in the fight against Coronavirus.
- ❖ It was created in 2014 to treat Ebola.
- ❖ Later it was used to treat SARS and MERS.

WHO Guidelines on Zoonosis



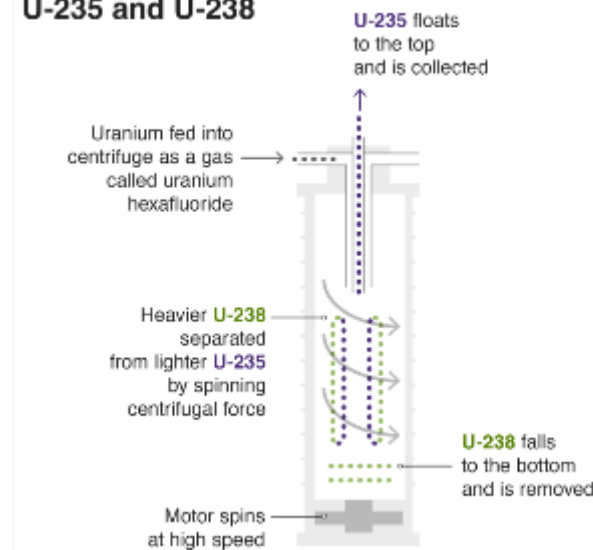
- ❖ The World Health Organisation, United Nations Environment Programme and the World Organisation for Animal Health laid down fresh guidelines.
- ❖ It aims to reduce the risk of transmission of zoonotic pathogens to humans in food production.
- ❖ Zoonosis is an infectious disease that transfers from non-human animals to humans.
- ❖ These pathogens may be viral, bacterial or parasitic.
- ❖ They spread to humans through direct contact, water, food and environment.

Artemis Programme

- ❖ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration programme (NASA) will land the first person of colour on the moon as a part of its Artemis Programme.
- ❖ In addition, NASA will also land first woman on the moon under the programme.
- ❖ Artemis Programme is an international human space flight programme
- ❖ The main objective of the programme is to launch a manned mission to the south pole region of the moon by 2024.

Iran Nuclear Program

How a centrifuge separates uranium atoms, U-235 and U-238



- ❖ Iran recently launched Advanced Nuclear Centrifuges at the Natanz Nuclear Plant to mark its National Nuclear Technology Day.
- ❖ Iran has started enriching its uranium supply to 60 percent purity.
- ❖ Iran has ever come to this level for the first time.
- ❖ It is the closest level needed for a weapon.
- ❖ Under the Joint comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the 2015 Nuclear Agreement, Iran is restricted to use only certain number of Uranium enrichment centrifuges.
- ❖ However, in May 2018, the US Government under Donald Trump abandoned the agreement and reimposed sanctions on Iran.
- ❖ The current US Government under Joe Biden has pledged to return to JCPOA.



Centrifuge

- ❖ It is used to separate particles suspended in a medium.
- ❖ In a Nuclear Centrifuge, Uranium-235 is separated from Uranium-238.
- ❖ The Nuclear Fuel used in nuclear reactor must have higher concentration of Uranium-235 isotope than that of its natural form, that is, Uranium-238.
- ❖ The Uranium-235 is more radioactive than Uranium-238.

NanoSniffer

- ❖ The Union Education Minister recently launched the world's first Microsensor based Explosive Trace Detector called the "NanoSniffer".
- ❖ It was developed by an IIT Bombay incubated startup called NanoSniff Technologies.
- ❖ The NanoSniffer can detect explosives in less than ten seconds.
- ❖ It can detect all class of military, homemade and conventional explosives.
- ❖ It can detect even nano gram quantities of explosives.
- ❖ The Explosive Trace Detection is the technology used to detect explosives of small magnitude.
- ❖ The three main characteristics of Explosive Trace Detection are sensitivity, light weight, and size.

'Whitest ever' paint

- ❖ US engineers have created the whitest ever paint.
- ❖ The ultra-white paint is made up of barium sulphate.
- ❖ That makes it whiter.
- ❖ It can also cool surfaces 8 degrees Fahrenheit below their surroundings under strong sunlight during noon hours.
- ❖ The paint can keep surfaces 19 degrees Fahrenheit cooler than their ambient surroundings at night.
- ❖ This paint may be the closest equivalent to the blackest black paint called "Vantablack".
- ❖ That is able to absorb up to 99.9 per cent of visible light.



SpO2 oxygen system

- ❖ Defence Research and Development Organisation has developed a SpO2-based supplemental oxygen delivery system for soldiers serving in extremely high-altitude areas & COVID-19 patients.
- ❖ This automatic system delivers supplemental oxygen based on the SpO2 (blood oxygen saturation) levels & prevents the person from sinking into a state of hypoxia, which is fatal in most cases.
- ❖ Hypoxia is a condition in which the amount of oxygen reaching the tissues is inadequate to fulfil all the energy requirements of the body.

Luna Space Mission

- ❖ The Russian Space Agency 'Roscosmos' is to launch its spacecraft 'Luna 25' on October 2021, towards the icy South pole of the Moon.
- ❖ The last spacecraft 'Luna 24' was launched in August 1976 by the Soviet Union.
- ❖ They are taking up the project to study the water beneath the surface at the South pole of the Moon.

Russia's own space station

- ❖ Russia is ready to start building its own space station with the aim of launching it into orbit by 2030.
- ❖ Russia is considering withdrawing from the International Space Station programme.
- ❖ After the first successful mission of U.S. company Space X, Russia lost its monopoly for manned flights to the ISS last year.

International Space Station

- ❖ It is launched in 1998.
- ❖ It involves Russia, the United States, Canada, Japan, and the European Space Agency.
- ❖ ISS is a modular space station (habitable artificial satellite) in low Earth orbit.
- ❖ The ISS serves as space environment research laboratory in which scientific experiments are conducted in astrobiology, astronomy, meteorology, physics, and other fields.
- ❖ The ISS circles the Earth in roughly 93 minutes, completing 15.5 orbits per day.



Cosmic Rose

- ❖ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) recently shared an image of “Cosmic Rose”.
- ❖ Cosmic Rose is an image captured by Hubble Space Telescope of NASA.
- ❖ The image featured interacting galaxies Arp 273.



Arp 273

- ❖ It lies in the Andromeda constellation.
- ❖ It is 300 million light years away from the earth.
- ❖ It is a combination of spiral galaxy UGC 1810 and UGC 1813.
- ❖ UGC 1810 is five times heavier than UGS 1813.
- ❖ The UGC 1810 has a disc that is tidally distorted into a rose like shape.
- ❖ The distortion is mainly due to the gravitational pull of UGC 1813 that lies beneath.
- ❖ This has been captured by Hubble Space Telescope.

Virafin

- ❖ The Drug Controller General of India recently provided “Restricted Emergency Use Approval” for the use of “Virafin”.
- ❖ Virafin is used to treat Hepatitis B and C.
- ❖ Now it is to be used to treat moderate COVID-19 infections.
- ❖ A single dose of Virafin during the early stage of infection, will help COVID-19 patients recover faster.
- ❖ It will help to reduce the need for oxygen support.
- ❖ Virafin improves recovery time in moderate cases of COVID-19.
- ❖ According to Zydus 91.15% of adult patients treated with Virafin tested negative using RT-PCR in seven days.
- ❖ Zydus is also working on COVID-19 Vaccine ZyCoV-D.

Unicorn Black Hole

- ❖ Scientists have discovered the smallest-known black hole in the Milky Way galaxy.
- ❖ It is the closest to our solar system.
- ❖ They named it 'the Unicorn.'



MOXIE

- ❖ The Perseverance rover of Mars 2020 Mission of NASA recently converted carbon dioxide into oxygen.
- ❖ This is the first time this has been achieved in another planet.
- ❖ This was achieved by MOXIE (Mars Oxygen In-Situ Resource Utilization Experiment), an instrument placed in the front side of the rover.



- ❖ MOXIE is also called “Mechanical Tree”.
- ❖ This is because; it uses electricity and chemistry to split carbon molecules into carbon and oxygen.
- ❖ It produces carbon monoxide as a by-product.

SHIELDS Mission

- ❖ NASA recently launched the SHIELDS Mission from the White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico.
- ❖ The Mission is to study light from interstellar particles in the heliosphere.
- ❖ SHIELDS is Spatial Heterodyne Interferometric Emission Line Dynamics Spectrometer.
- ❖ It will fly to a height of 300 kilo metres.
- ❖ At this height SHIELDS can see light from particles beyond the solar system.

ENVIRONMENT

Whale Shark

- ❖ A whale shark was rescued by fishers in Odisha coast.
- ❖ It is very important for marine megafauna like turtles, whales and sharks.
- ❖ The dotted whale shark is the largest fish in the ocean.
- ❖ It is often called ‘Gentle Giant’ in fishing parlance.
- ❖ It is a ‘filter feeder shark’.
- ❖ It means it does not eat meat like other sharks.
- ❖ They filter sea water and feed on tiny planktons.
- ❖ The largest whale shark aggregation in India is along the Gujarat coasts.
- ❖ On the Bay of Bengal coast, the only aggregation is in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ Whale sharks are found in all the tropical oceans of the world.

Mount Merapi volcano erupts

- ❖ Indonesia's most volatile volcano erupted again.
- ❖ It released plumes of ash high into air.
- ❖ It sent streams of lava and debris down its slopes.
- ❖ The 2,968-metre-high volcano is on densely populated Java island near ancient city of Yogyakarta.
- ❖ It is the most active of dozens of Indonesian volcanoes.
- ❖ It has repeatedly erupted recently.

Mahendragiri Biosphere Reserve

- ❖ Odisha government has proposed a second biosphere reserve in the southern part of that state at Mahendragiri.
- ❖ Similipal Biosphere Reserve is Odisha's first such reserve.
- ❖ That was notified in 1996.
- ❖ The area of the proposed Mahendragiri Biosphere Reserve is spread over Gajapati and Ganjam districts in the Eastern Ghats.
- ❖ Mahendragiri hill ecosystem acts as a transitional zone between the flora and fauna of southern India and the Himalayas.
- ❖ Mahendragiri is inhabited by the Soura people, a particularly vulnerable tribal group as well as the Kandha tribe.
- ❖ According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, Twenty-nine of the 41 species of threatened medicinal plants found in Odisha are found in the biosphere reserve area.

New Butterfly species in Western Ghats



- ❖ This is the first time that a butterfly species was discovered by an all-Indian research team from the Western Ghats.

- ❖ A new taxon of Lycaenid butterfly has been discovered by researchers in the Western Ghats.
- ❖ The taxon belongs to Nacaduba genus.
- ❖ The name of the butterfly species was suggested as Ramaswami's Six Line blue and 'Ceylon Varayanneeli'.

Culex Mosquito

- ❖ With the change in season and rise in temperature, culex or common house mosquitoes have made reappearance across Delhi.
- ❖ Unlike Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, which spread dengue and chikungunya and breed in clean water, culex mosquitoes breed in unclean stagnant water.
- ❖ Culex mosquitoes are known as carriers or vectors of diseases such as Japanese encephalitis, West Nile Virus and Lymphatic filariasis.
- ❖ They bite by detecting body heat and carbon dioxide that humans exhale.

Biodiversity Heritage Site at Maharashtra

- ❖ The Maharashtra government has declared an area at Amboli in Western ghats in Sindhudurg district, as a biodiversity heritage site.
- ❖ Rare freshwater fish species was discovered here.
- ❖ Tejas Thackeray and his team had discovered the new freshwater fish species named Schistura Hiranyakeshi.
- ❖ Tejas Thackeray is the son of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.
- ❖ The fishes were found near Amboli in Sawantwadi tehsil of Sindhudurg district.
- ❖ Schistura is a small and colourful fish that lives in water and streams in an abundance of oxygen.
- ❖ Earlier, the State government had declared the
 - Glory of Allapalli in Gadchiroli district,
 - LandorKhor Park in Jalgaon,
 - GaneshKhind in Pune,
 - Myristica swamp vegetation in Sindhudurg district as biodiversity heritage sites.

A GREEN LEGACY

A look at the declared and proposed biodiversity heritage sites in the state

GLORY OF ALLAPALLI,
Gadchiroli

Status: Declared (2014)

Area: 6 hectares

Reason: It is being preserved as natural forest having biological and historical value



VELAS BEACH, Ratnagiri district

Status: Proposed (2017)

Area: 0.98 hectares (2.44 acres)

Reason: The area has been officially declared as turtle nesting site along the west coast. Velas saw 750 Olive Ridley turtle hatchlings in 2017



PHOTOS: STATE FOREST DEPARTMENT

ANJARLE BEACH, Ratnagiri district
(in pic above)

Status: Proposed (2017)

Area: 0.74 hectare

Reason: Another turtle nesting site that saw 400 Olive Ridley turtle hatchlings across six nesting sites in

2017. Anjarle has a number of species of birds, marine mammals, coastal invertebrates and mangroves.

GANESHKIND GARDEN, on the campus of National Agricultural Research project of the Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Pune

Status: Proposed (2017)

Area: 58.67 hectares

Reason: This botanical garden was formally started in 1873 by GM Woodrow of the East India Company. History has it that the Peshwas planted the first mango tree (hapus), which still exists, at this garden.

LANDORKHORI RESERVE

FOREST, around Chhatrapati

Shivaji Park in Jalgaon

Status: Proposed (2018)

Area: 266 hectares

Reason: It is a reserved forest with 190 species of birds and 24 species of mammals

WARDHAM IN SIRONCHA,

Gadchiroli

Status: Proposed (2018)

Area: 8 hectares

Reason: Home to at least 150-million-year-old fossils

(Source: Maharashtra state biodiversity board)

Protected wetlands

- ❖ Dal Lake in Srinagar along with five other famous lakes in Jammu and Kashmir would be declared protected wetlands.
- ❖ Wular, Dal, Nigeen lakes in the Kashmir region and Sanasar, Manasbal and Purmandal lakes in the Jammu region are declared as protected wetlands.
- ❖ Purmandal lake is also called as Chotta Kashi.
- ❖ The decision was taken in the meeting of the Jammu and Kashmir Wetland Authority, chaired by its Chief Secretary.
- ❖ Chief Secretary asked the Forest Department to profile various wetlands of Jammu and Kashmir and recommend their notification under,
 - Environment Protection Act, 1986 and
 - Wetland (Conversation & Management) rules.
- ❖ Forest Department is the nodal department for the preparation of digital inventory, documentation and development of a geo-spatial database on wetlands.

Japan sees the earliest Cherry Blossoms ever

- ❖ Usually, the Cherry trees of Japan reach their full bloom in April.
- ❖ This time the Cherry Blossom has occurred ten days earlier.
- ❖ This is the first time the Cherry trees have bloomed this earlier in Japan.
- ❖ Previously, the earliest Cherry Blossoms in Japan occurred before 1,200 years.

- ❖ This year, due to climate change, the flowers reached this stage earlier than usual.



Renewable Capacity Statistics Report 2021

- ❖ The Renewable Capacity Statistics 2021 report was released by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).
- ❖ It said that 260 gigawatts (GW) of new renewable energy capacity was added worldwide in 2020.
- ❖ More than 80% of all new electricity capacity added in 2020 was renewable, with solar and wind accounting for 91% of new renewables.
- ❖ China, the world's largest market for renewables, added 136 GW of renewables last year,
- ❖ The United States installed 29 GW.
- ❖ Share of renewables in energy generation worldwide stands at 30%.
- ❖ Nations are switching from fossil fuels to renewables in an effort to meet the long-term goal, agreed under the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Three banded Rosefinch

- ❖ A team of scientists from the Bombay Natural History Society recorded a new species of bird.
- ❖ It has been identified as the three banded Rosefinch.
- ❖ The new bird species was identified while exploring the high-altitude coniferous forests of Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The Three Branded Rosefinch belongs to the finch species of birds.
- ❖ Finch birds have worldwide distribution except for Australia and polar regions.



Climate Change platform

- ❖ The World Bank and International Monetary Fund have launched a platform to advise the poor countries on funding for conservation and climate activities.
- ❖ Both the financial organizations will use the platform to factor climate change into negotiations about reducing debt burdens of poor countries.
- ❖ According to the World Bank and IMF, there prevail twin global problems.
- ❖ They are
 - The need to restructure or reduce the heavy debt burden of poor countries
 - The need to reduce fossil fuel emissions contributing to climate change
- ❖ Therefore, the solution of including climate change into debt restructuring process will help motivate to reduce this.

Dolphins in Chilika Lake

- ❖ Odisha has released the final data on the dolphin census.
- ❖ The population of dolphins in Chilika has doubled this year compared with last year.
- ❖ Forest officials sighted 188 dolphins this year in Chilika Lake, up from 163 in 2020
- ❖ Three species were recorded during the census.
- ❖ The Irrawaddy, bottle-nose and humpback dolphins were sighted this year.
- ❖ The 2021 dolphin census report also revealed that Gahiramatha is the home of the state's largest population of dolphins.
- ❖ Gahiramatha was declared a marine sanctuary in 1997 to protect the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles in the Gahirmatha beach.

- ❖ Gahirmatha beach is the world's largest rookery of sea turtles.
- ❖ Chilika is India's largest brackish water lake.
- ❖ Dolphins have been included in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), in Appendix II of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and categorised as 'endangered' on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Red List.

Doomsday Glacier

- ❖ It is also called the Thwaites Glacier.
- ❖ It is located in Antarctica.
- ❖ It is 120 km wide at its broadest.
- ❖ This glacier is melting away faster than previously anticipated.
- ❖ Because of its size (1.9 lakh square km), it contains enough water to raise the world sea level by 10 feet.



Saint Vincent Island

- ❖ The La Soufriere volcano has erupted recently.
- ❖ It has been erupting explosively, covering the main island of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in ash and debris.
- ❖ Saint Vincent is a volcanic island in the Caribbean Sea.
- ❖ It is the largest island of the country in the Caribbean Sea.

Caribbean volcano erupts



FSRU

- ❖ India's first Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) has arrived at H-Energy's Jaigarh Terminal in the Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra.
- ❖ FSRU based LNG Terminals aim at providing the ability to enhance the pace of natural gas import capability in an environment-friendly and efficient manner.
- ❖ The port is the first deep water, 24×7 operational private port in Maharashtra.
- ❖ It will deliver regasified LNG to the 56-km long Jaigarh-Dabhol natural gas pipeline.

Bill on Climate change for Financial firms

- ❖ New Zealand recently introduced a bill on Climate Change for financial firms.
- ❖ The bill is the first of its kind in the world.
- ❖ New Zealand has fixed 2050 as the deadline to become carbon neutral.

Hydrogen Roundtable

- ❖ The Hydrogen Roundtable, the first of its kind, was titled as "The Hydrogen Economy - New Delhi Dialogue 2021".
- ❖ It was organised by the Energy Forum (TEF) and the Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI), under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- ❖ Hydrogen economy is an economy that relies on hydrogen as the commercial fuel that would deliver a substantial fraction of a nation's energy and services.
- ❖ The term 'hydrogen economy' was coined by John Bockris in 1970.



Facebook's First Renewable Project in India

- ❖ The Facebook has recently signed a deal to buy renewable energy in India from a local firm called CleanMax.
- ❖ This is the first renewable project of Facebook in India.
- ❖ The project is located in Karnataka.

Fukushima Nuclear Accident

- ❖ The Japanese Government recently approved a plan to release more than 1 million tonnes of treated radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant.
- ❖ According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the release of the water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant is similar to disposing wastewater from nuclear plants elsewhere in the world.
- ❖ Japan has planned to filter the contaminated water leaving only tritium.
- ❖ Tritium is less harmful as compared to other radioactive wastes.
- ❖ It does not emit enough energy to penetrate human skin.
- ❖ In 2011, there occurred a nuclear disaster in the plant due an earthquake and tsunami.
- ❖ It was the most severe nuclear accident that was classified as Level 7 on the International Nuclear Event Scale.

Artificial Islands

- ❖ Maldives government is developing at least three artificial islands to tide over the rising sea-levels due to climate change.
- ❖ Maldives is one of the world's most low-lying terrains.
- ❖ About 80% of the archipelago's coral islands are at less than 1 metre above sea level.

Indian Rhino Vision 2020

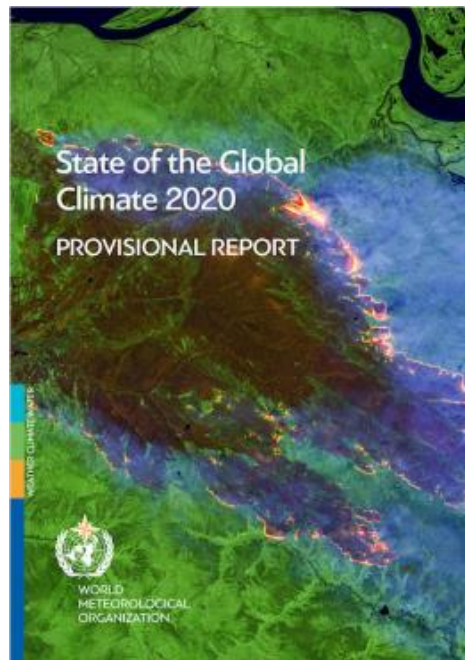
- ❖ It is drawing to a close with the translocation of two one-horned rhinos to Manas National Park, Assam.
- ❖ Under the IRV 2020 program, at least 22 rhinos have been translocated from Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary (12) and Kaziranga National Park (10) to Manas National Park within Assam since 2008.

- ❖ Launched in 2008, IRV was a joint programme of the Assam Forest Department, Worldwide Fund for Nature India (WWF-India), Bodoland Territorial Council, and the International Rhino Foundation.
- ❖ It was designed by Rhino Task Force 2005 with a target to achieve rhino population to 3,000 by establishing populations in seven protected areas in Assam by 2020.
- ❖ The Seven protected areas are Pabitora Wildlife Reserve, Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park, Laokhowa wildlife sanctuary, Burachapori wildlife sanctuary and Dibru Saikhowa wildlife sanctuary.
- ❖ Rhinos are now found in four Protected Areas in Assam: Pabitora Wildlife Reserve, Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, Kaziranga National Park, and Manas National Park.
- ❖ Only the Great One-Horned Rhino is found in India.
- ❖ Also known as Indian rhino, it is the largest of the rhino species.



State of the Global Climate 2020 Report

- ❖ The World Meteorological Organisation recently released this report.
- ❖ 2011-2020 was the warmest decade in record.
- ❖ 2020 is one of the three warmest years on record.
- ❖ The Cyclone Amphan is the costliest tropical cyclone on record in the North Indian Ocean.
- ❖ The Cyclone made a landfall in May 2020 near India-Bangladesh border.



National Climate Vulnerability Report

- ❖ The Department of Science and Technology recently launched the National Climate Vulnerability Report.
- ❖ It identifies the most vulnerable states and districts in India with respect to current climate risk and key drivers of vulnerability.
- ❖ According to the report, eight Eastern States in the country are highly vulnerable to climate change.
- ❖ They are Mizoram, Bihar, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Assam.
- ❖ Assam, Jharkhand and Bihar have more than 60% of districts in the category of “highly vulnerable districts”.
- ❖ Jharkhand received the highest Vulnerable Index of 0.67.

- ❖ Jharkhand was followed by Mizoram, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Bihar and Arunachal Pradesh in the descending order of the index.
- ❖ They were named as “Relatively highly vulnerable state”.
- ❖ Maharashtra received the lowest Vulnerability Index of 0.42.
- ❖ Apart from Maharashtra, the other comparatively least vulnerable states are Goa, Nagaland, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Haryana.
- ❖ They were named as the “Relatively Low Vulnerable states”.

	Vulnerability Indices	Ranking	Relative Vulnerability Category	Quartile (Q)-based categorisation of the vulnerability of states
Jharkhand	0.674	1	High vulnerability	Top 25% most vulnerable states (Q1)
Mizoram	0.645	2	High vulnerability	Top 25% most vulnerable states (Q1)
Orissa	0.633	3	High vulnerability	Top 25% most vulnerable states (Q1)
Chhattisgarh	0.623	4	High vulnerability	Top 25% most vulnerable states (Q1)
Assam	0.620	5	High vulnerability	Top 25% most vulnerable states (Q1)
Bihar	0.614	6	High vulnerability	Top 25% most vulnerable states (Q1)
Arunachal Pradesh	0.594	7	High vulnerability	Top 25% most vulnerable states (Q1)
West Bengal	0.592	8	High vulnerability	Top 25% most vulnerable states (Q1)

Lyrid Meteor Shower

- ❖ It is active each year in April.
- ❖ The radiant of the meteor shower is located in constellation Lyra.
- ❖ Radiant of a meteor shower is the point from which the paths of the meteors originate.
- ❖ It has been classified as the medium strength meteor shower.
- ❖ They are caused due to a cloud of dust or debris left behind by the Comet C/1861 G1 Thatcher.
- ❖ They are best viewed in northern hemisphere.
- ❖ A meteor shower occurs when the earth passes through the path of a comet.
- ❖ As the earth moves nearby, the bits of comet debris come under the influence of the earth's gravity.
- ❖ As they are pulled by the gravitational force of the earth, they begin to move towards the earth.
- ❖ When this happens, they burn up due to the friction created by the Earth's atmosphere.
- ❖ The burning up of these debris is seen as streaks of light in the night sky.
- ❖ They are called meteor showers.

Sulphur dioxide from Caribbean volcano

- ❖ The sulphur dioxide (SO₂) emissions from a volcanic eruption in the Caribbean (from La Soufriere volcano eruption) reached India on April 16, 2021.
- ❖ It was sparking the fear of increased pollution levels in the northern parts of the country and acid rain.
- ❖ It was confirmed by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- ❖ The Scientists have also found evidence for the entry of sulphate aerosol particles in the stratosphere, the second layer of the Earth's atmosphere.
- ❖ The aerosols increase the reflection of radiation from the Sun back into space, cooling the Earth's lower atmosphere or troposphere.
- ❖ The largest source of SO₂ in the atmosphere is the burning of fossil fuels by power plants and other industrial facilities.

Disc-footed bat

- ❖ Meghalaya has yielded India's first bamboo-dwelling bat with sticky discs.
- ❖ It was recorded in Meghalaya's Nongkhylllem Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ❖ The disc-footed bat has raised Meghalaya's bat species count to 66, the most for any State in India.



Light Pollution

- ❖ The Researchers recently found that Light pollution from satellites 'poses threat' to astronomy.
- ❖ Artificial satellites and space junk orbiting the Earth can increase the brightness of the night sky.
- ❖ The overall brightness of the night sky will be increased by more than 10 per cent above natural light levels across the planet.

- ❖ Such light pollution could hinder astronomers' ability to make observations of our universe.
- ❖ There are more than 9,200 tonnes of space objects in orbit around the Earth.
- ❖ The space junk not only poses a collision risk but, together with other space objects, is contributing to light pollution.
- ❖ The sunlight, reflected and scattered from space objects, can appear as streaks in observations made by ground-based telescopes.
- ❖ This research is the first to assess the overall impact of space objects on the night sky.
- ❖ Earlier the effect of individual satellites and space debris affecting astronomers' images of the night skies was analysed.
- ❖ The researchers belong to the Comenius University in Slovakia.



Norms for Thermal Power Plants (TPP)

- ❖ The Union Environment Ministry has amended these norms now.
- ❖ It had notified the emission norms for particulate matter, sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen in 2015.
- ❖ These had to be complied with by power stations in 2017.
- ❖ It now allows thermal power plants within 10 kilometres of the National Capital Region (NCR) and in cities with more than 10 lakh population to comply with new emission norms by the end of 2022
- ❖ Major pollutants from coal-fired power plants are oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and particulate matter (PM).
- ❖ TPPs account for more than 60 per cent of total industrial emissions of particulate matter; 45 per cent of SO₂; 30 per cent of NO_x; and more than 80 per cent of mercury, in the country.



- ❖ These are also responsible for 70 per cent of the total freshwater withdrawal by all industries.

Blue Nature Alliance

- ❖ The Blue Nature Alliance is a global partnership of five core partners and few other Non-Profit Organisations.
- ❖ The core partners are Conservation International, The Global Environment Facility, the Pew Charitable Trusts, Minderoo Foundation and Rob and Melani Walton Foundation.
- ❖ The Blue Alliance was launched on April 20, 2021.
- ❖ The alliance aims to protect 5% of the world ocean in five years.
- ❖ The alliance aims to target seven ocean locations.
- ❖ They are as follows
 - Antarctica
 - Seychelles
 - Canada
 - Palau
 - Western Indian Ocean
 - Fiji
 - Tristan da Cunha, an island in the South Atlantic Ocean

Note:

- ❖ Oceans are highly important for human survival as they regulate weather, rainfall and oxygen levels in the air.
- ❖ Currently they are under great threats from pollution, climate change and over fishing.

Potamophylax coronavirus

- ❖ Biologist Halil Ibrahim has named a newly discovered insect after COVID-19 virus.
- ❖ The species was found in Accursed Mountains (Kosovo's Western Bjeshket e Nemuna National Park).
- ❖ It has now been named as "Potamophylax coronavirus".
- ❖ The species is endemic to the National Park.



- ❖ The new species is considerably smaller and lives in open and high-altitude zones, that is, 2,000 metres above the sea level.
- ❖ During his study about the Caddisfly species, the scientists have also found that the Decanit River is severely deteriorated due to the construction of a hydropower plant.
- ❖ The construction of the hydropower plant across the river has a similar effect as the coronavirus creates on humans.
- ❖ Thus, the new species found near that place has been named after coronavirus.

Decanit river

- ❖ It is a tributary of White Drin.
- ❖ The Monastery of Visoki Decani is located on the bank of the River Decanit.
- ❖ It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- ❖ The river drains into the Adriatic Sea.

World Assessment Report II

- ❖ The United Nations recently released the Second World Ocean Assessment report.
- ❖ It is the work of hundreds of scientists appointed by the members of United Nations from all over the world.
- ❖ It follows the initial report, “World Ocean Assessment I” published in 2015.

Findings

- ❖ The number of dead zones in the oceans have doubled.
- ❖ It has increased from 400 in 2008 to 700 in 2019.
- ❖ 90% of the Mangrove Seagrass and marsh plant species are facing extinction.
- ❖ 30% of seabird species are facing the threat of extinction.
- ❖ Only 10% of the ocean has been explored and studied.
- ❖ The heat content in the oceans has more than doubled since 1990.
- ❖ 15% of the Sandy beaches are seeing retreating shorelines.

Dead Zone

- ❖ Dead Zone is a common term used for Hypoxia.
- ❖ The largest dead zone is located in the Arabian sea.
- ❖ This covers almost 63,700 square miles in Gulf of Oman.

The Climate Summit

- ❖ Around 40 world leaders participated in the virtual summit hosted by the US.
- ❖ PM Modi said that India's per capita carbon footprint is 60% lower than the global average.
- ❖ Also the India-US climate and clean energy Agenda 2030 partnership was launched.
- ❖ India will deploy 450 GW of renewable power under the partnership with the US.

STATES

Shigmo Festival

- ❖ Goa has announced that this year no Shigmo spring festival parades will be held.
- ❖ It was mainly due to sudden hike in COVID-19 infections.
- ❖ Shigmo is the biggest spring festival in Goa.
- ❖ It was scheduled to take place in the first week of April.
- ❖ Shigmo is the celebration of a 'rich, golden harvest of paddy' by the tribal communities of Goa.
- ❖ Agricultural communities including the Kunbis, Gawdas and Velips celebrate the festival that also marks the onset of spring.
- ❖ Folk dances like Ghodemodini, Gopha and Phugadi are among the many dances performed by the participating communities.



Jail Radio project

- ❖ “Tinka Tinka” foundation has launched ‘Jail Radio’ project in Haryana jails in collaboration with the State government.
- ❖ Jail Radio is an in-house production run by the inmates.
- ❖ The programmes are broadcast from a studio inside the premises and reach to the inmates through speakers in the barracks.
- ❖ The aim is to bring out the inmates’ creativity, give them meaningful engagement.



Banana Festival in Kushinagar

- ❖ The Uttar Pradesh government organised a ‘Banana Festival’ in Kushinagar.
- ❖ It has witnessed the participation of at least 35 farmers and entrepreneurs.
- ❖ The state government had in 2018 organised the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme to promote traditional enterprise.
- ❖ Products in the Kushinagar made from banana fibre were selected in the ODOP scheme.
- ❖ At least 4,000 farmers are linked to banana cultivation and after inclusion in the ODOP scheme.

Ashfaq Ulla khan zoo

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated Shaheed Ashfaq Ulla Khan Zoological Park in Gorakhpur recently.
- ❖ This is the first zoo in Purvanchal and the third in that state.
- ❖ The zoo has been named after great freedom fighter Shaheed Ashfaq Ullah Khan.



Energy efficient towns

- ❖ Bihar is set to become India's First State to have 2 Green Energy Efficient towns.
- ❖ The 2 towns are Rajgir & Bodh Gaya.
- ❖ They will start getting Solar Energy through the energy project from 2023.
- ❖ The green energy supply required for running the towns will be developed and supplied by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI).
- ❖ To implement the project, the state government of Bihar will construct 500 MW solar energy plants at Lakhisarai & Bhagalpur.

SECI

- ❖ It is the only CPSU (Central Public Sector Undertaking) dedicated to the Solar Energy Sector.
- ❖ It comes under the administrative control of the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- ❖ It was set up in 2011 to facilitate the implementation of the National Solar Mission.
- ❖ It is also known as Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission.

Utkal Divas - April 01

- ❖ Utkal Divas or Utkala Dibasha is celebrated on April 1 every year to remember the formation of the Odisha state.
- ❖ Under British rule, Odisha was part of the Bengal presidency, which consisted of the present-day Bihar, West Bengal, and Odisha.
- ❖ The state was originally called Orissa.
- ❖ But the Lok Sabha passed the Orissa Bill, and Constitution Bill (113rd amendment), in March 2011 to rename it Odisha.

Free bus journey for Women

- ❖ Women in Punjab can travel free of cost by government-run buses beginning April 1.
- ❖ The state cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh gave its approval to the scheme.
- ❖ The scheme is going to benefit over 1.31 crore women/girls in the state.
- ❖ According to Census 2011, Punjab has a population of 2.77 crore (1,46,39,465 males and 1,31,03,873 females).



First state to provide 5 lakh health insurance

- ❖ Rajasthan becomes the first state in the country to provide free health insurance facility to all the citizens of the state.
- ❖ This plan was announced in the state budget of 2021-22.
- ❖ The State began the registration for its cashless 'mediclaim' scheme Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme.
- ❖ Under this scheme each family will get annual health insurance up to 5 lakhs.

First state to commission Farm-based Solar Power Project

- ❖ Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Ltd (RRECL) commissioned India's 1st Farm-based Solar Power Project at Bhaloji Village, Kotputli in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- ❖ It was commissioned under the PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri-Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mahabhiyan) Scheme.

PM-KUSUM

- ❖ It was launched by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) in 2019.
- ❖ It is one of the initiatives to Double the Farmer's Income by 2022.
- ❖ It was launched with the objective of providing financial and water security.

New rules in Assembly - Haryana government

- ❖ The Haryana State Government recently added several new provisions to maintain the decorum of the State Assembly.
- ❖ According to the new rule, at least two ministers should be present at every sitting of the house.
- ❖ The members shall not tear off the documents in the House in protest.
- ❖ The new Rule says that the question asked by the members during the sitting of the house shall not contain more than 150 words.
- ❖ This will help the ministers get a better clarity and provide proper reply to the query raised.
- ❖ Another new provision says that a supplementary question shall be held out of order by the speaker if in his opinion if the question has following issues,
 - If the question does not arise from the main question.
 - If it provides information instead of seeking information.
 - If the question seeks confirmation or denial of an opinion.



- If the question infringes any of the rules regarding the questions.
- ❖ Another new rule states that timely action should be taken when the committees constituted by the Speaker of the Vidhan Sabha make recommendations.

Mask Abhiyan of Odisha

- ❖ The Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik recently launched a fourteen day “Mask Abhiyan” initiative.
- ❖ The main objective of the initiative is to turn the use of mask into a habit.
- ❖ This will play a huge role in controlling the current resurgence of COVID-19.

Electoral bonds donor's name

- ❖ The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) is the first party that has declared the name of the entity which made donations to it through electoral bonds.
- ❖ A declaration of a ₹1 crore donation was made in the party's 2019-20 contribution report.
- ❖ According to the contribution report of the ruling party in Jharkhand, the donation was made by aluminium and copper manufacturing company Hindalco.

Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme

- ❖ The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy recently released the first tranche of Rs 672 crores under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme for the year 2021-22.
- ❖ This reimbursed the fees for 10.88 lakh students.
- ❖ So far, a total of Rs 4, 879 crores have been disbursed under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme.
- ❖ The main objective of the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme is to provide scholarships to all the students who are not able to pay their fees because of their financial burden.
- ❖ The scheme mainly focuses on students seeking higher education.
- ❖ It aims to provide fee reimbursement to more than 14 lakh students of the state.
- ❖ The scheme will directly credit the amount into the accounts of students' mothers.
- ❖ Earlier, the money was transferred to the owners of the colleges.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

Anil Dharker

- ❖ The Noted journalist and author Anil Dharker passed away recently
- ❖ He was the founder and director of the Mumbai International Literary Festival.
- ❖ Dharker had been the editor of a variety of publications such as 'Debonair', 'Mid-Day', 'The Independent' and 'The Illustrated Weekly of India'.
- ❖ He has authored 'The Romance of Salt', a book on Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi March.

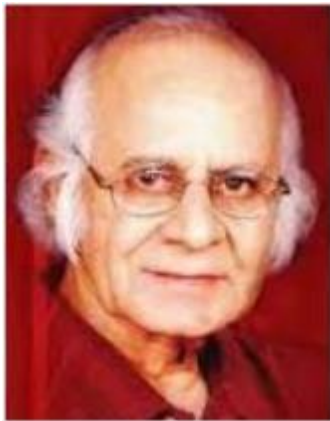
International Ranger Award

- ❖ Mahinder Giri, the range officer of Rajaji Tiger Reserve, has won the prestigious International Ranger Award.
- ❖ He is the only ranger from Asia to get receive this award.
- ❖ This award was given for his contribution towards conservation.
- ❖ The award has been announced for 10 professionals across the world.
- ❖ It was announced by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA).
- ❖ The award is developed through a collaboration between the IUCN WCPA, the International Ranger Federation, Global Wildlife Conservation, and Conservation Allies.
- ❖ The award was created in 2020.
- ❖ The award aims to highlight and felicitate the extraordinary work that rangers do in protected and conserved areas worldwide.



Saraswati Samman 2020

- ❖ The Noted Marathi writer Dr Sharankumar Limbale will receive Saraswati Samman award 2020.
- ❖ This award is for his book Sanatan.
- ❖ The award carries fifteen lakh rupees, a citation and a plaque.
- ❖ Saraswati Samman is recognised as the most prestigious and highest literary award in the country.
- ❖ It was instituted by KK Birla Foundation in 1991.
- ❖ Dr Limbale's Sanatan has been published in 2018.
- ❖ Sanatan is an important social and historical document of the Dalit struggle.



Dadasaheb Phalke Award

- ❖ Mr. Rajinikanth has been conferred with the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award in this year.
- ❖ Rajinikanth made his debut into cinema in 1975 with K Balachander's Apoorva Ragangal.
- ❖ He has completed over 45 years in Kollywood.

About the award

- ❖ The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest honour in cinema.
- ❖ The award is presented by the Directorate of Film Festivals.
- ❖ It is given for the recipient's contribution to the growth and development of Indian cinema.
- ❖ The award is named after Dhundiraj Govind Phalke.
- ❖ Phalke is revered as the father of Indian cinema.
- ❖ The award was instituted in 1969.

- ❖ The recipient receives a Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus) medallion, a shawl and a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh.



Kalinga Ratna Samman

- ❖ Odisha-born Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan received the Kalinga Ratna Samman for 2021.
- ❖ The prestigious award was conferred to him in Cuttack on the occasion of the 40th annual day of the Sarala Sahitya Sansad at the Sarala Bhawan.
- ❖ 'Matrubhasa', 'Bhasa Jhalaka', 'Rana Pratap', 'Astasikha Manasi' and 'Sangrama Sarinahi' are some of his contributions to literature.

GD Birla Award for Scientific Research

- ❖ Professor Suman Chakraborty has been selected for the 30th GD Birla Award for Scientific Research.
- ❖ He is awarded for his outstanding contribution to engineering science and its applications in developing technologies for affordable healthcare.
- ❖ He is a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur's department of mechanical engineering.
- ❖ GD Birla Award for Scientific Research recognises eminent Indian scientists below the age of 50 for their original and outstanding contributions to any branch of science or technology.



Turing Award 2020

- ❖ Alfred V. Aho has won the 2020 Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) A.M. Turing Award.
- ❖ Aho shares the award with his long-time collaborator Jeffrey David Ullman.
- ❖ The Turing Award carries a \$1 million prize, with financial support provided by Google, Inc.

Chandra Naidu passes away

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

Devishankar Awasthi Award 2020

- ❖ The famous Devishankar Awasthi Award has been awarded to the prolific Hindi prose, journalist, and critic Ashutosh Bhardwaj.
- ❖ This honour has been given to him for his work 'Pitra-Vadh'.
- ❖ He was elected by the selection committee of Ashok Vajpayee, Nandkishore Acharya, and Rajendra Kumar.
- ❖ This book has been published in English under the name of 'The Death Trap'.

International Ranger Award

- ❖ Ramanathapuram Forest Range Officer S Sathish was honoured with the International Ranger Award.
- ❖ The award was jointly announced by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), International Ranger Federation (IRF), Global Wildlife Conservation and Conservation Allies.
- ❖ He is one of the 10 recipients of the first edition of the award.
- ❖ Sathish shared the award with Mahendra Giri from Rajaji National Park in Uttarakhand and eight other Forest Rangers from Cambodia, Myanmar, Russia, Georgia, Zambia, Madagascar, Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) and Colombia.

Veerni Award

- ❖ Indian sprinter, Dutee Chand has been chosen for the inaugural edition of the Chhattisgarh Veerni Award.
- ❖ The award is given by the Chhattisgarh state government.
- ❖ The award recognises the contribution of Indian women in different fields, including sports.

Note

- ❖ The Odisha sprinter became the first Indian woman to win a gold medal at the World University Games held in Italy in 2019.
- ❖ She is a silver-medalist in 100 and 200 metres at the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games.
- ❖ Apart from this, Dutee holds the national record of 11.22 secs in 100m.



Prince Philip passes away

- ❖ Prince Philip, husband of Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom has passed away.
- ❖ He was aged 99.
- ❖ Prince Philip had been a leading figure in the British royal family for almost seven decades.
- ❖ He was officially known as the Duke of Edinburgh.

Poonam Gupta

- ❖ She will be the new director-general of the policy think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).

- ❖ She becomes the first woman to hold the post.
- ❖ Jawaharlal Nehru laid the foundation stone of NCAER campus on 31 October 1959.

BAFTA Awards 2021

- ❖ The British Academy Film Awards (BAFTAs) for the year 2021 has been announced by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts.
- ❖ The awards, the British equivalent of the Oscars, honour the best in national and international cinema.
- ❖ Best Film: Nomadland
- ❖ Best Director: Chloe Zhao (Nomadland)



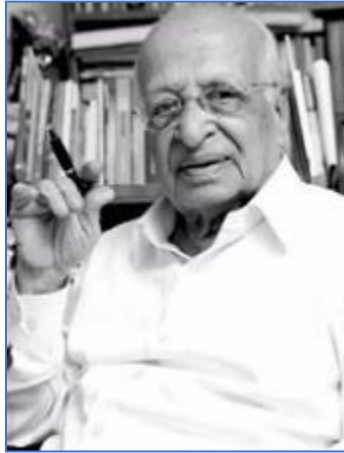
Indian Women Wrestlers for Tokyo Olympics

- ❖ Sonam Malik becomes India's youngest female wrestler to qualify for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics.
- ❖ She is an Indian woman wrestler from Haryana.
- ❖ Anshu Malik, from Haryana also, is another women wrestler qualified for this game.
- ❖ Both were qualified in the Asian Olympic qualifiers in Almaty, Kazakhstan.
- ❖ Vinesh Phogat is already qualified for Tokyo Games.
- ❖ The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, officially the Games of the XXXII Olympiad, and known as the 2020 Summer Olympics or Tokyo 2020, is an international multi-sport event.

Ganjam Venkatasubbiah

- ❖ He recent passed away at the age of 107.

- ❖ He was a Veteran Kannada writer.
- ❖ He was commonly known as a walking encyclopaedia of Kannada language and culture.



Raul Castro – Cuba

- ❖ Raul Castro (89) steps down from leadership of the ruling Cuban Communist Party.
- ❖ Raul's departure ends a near six-decade family hold on power in Cuba that started in 1959.
- ❖ Thus, for the first time in six decades, Cuba's socialist government will not have a Castro in top leadership.
- ❖ After serving two terms as Cuba's president, Raul Castro stepped down from that office in 2018.
- ❖ He handed over the presidency to Miguel Diaz-Canel, 60, in 2018.
- ❖ Díaz-Canel will likely be elected as the new secretary-general of the Communist Party.



Background

- ❖ Fidel Castro led Cuba for five decades.
- ❖ He dethroned the dictator Fulgencio Batista in 1959 along with his brother Raul.
- ❖ He was the world's third longest-serving head of state, after Britain's Queen Elizabeth and the King of Thailand Bhumibol Adulyadej.
- ❖ Raul succeeded Fidel Castro as the head of the Communist Party in 2011.
- ❖ He led the Cuban socialist government to make deals with US President Obama in 2014.
- ❖ It opened up the Cuban economy to the US for the first time since 1960.

Charles Geschke

- ❖ Charles Geschke, Adobe's co-founder, died at the age of 81 in California of the USA.
- ❖ He aided the development of the world's most widely used file format, the Portable Document Format (PDF).
- ❖ Geschke co-founded Adobe in 1982 along with John Warnock.
- ❖ Geschke was widely known as Chuck.
- ❖ In the 1990s, Warnock spearheaded the project called the "Camelot Project".



Actor Vivek

- ❖ Tamil actor Vivek recently passed away at 59.
- ❖ In 2009, the Government of India awarded Vivek the Padma Shri award for his contribution to the arts.
- ❖ His nickname Chinna Kalaivanar was as compared with NS Krishnan.

- ❖ In 2010, Vivek launched Green Kalam, under the guidance of former President of India A. P. J. Abdul Kalam.
- ❖ He had been appointed an ambassador for the Plastic Pollution Free Tamil Nadu campaign.



Priyanka Mohite



- ❖ Priyanka Mohite from Satara in western Maharashtra has scaled Mt Annapurna,
- ❖ She becomes the first Indian woman climber to achieve the feat.
- ❖ Mt Annapurna is the 10th highest mountain peak in the world.
- ❖ Mount Annapurna is considered to be one of the toughest mountains to climb.

Maidavolu Narasimham

- ❖ Former RBI Governor Maidavolu Narasimham, passed away at the age of 94.
- ❖ He served as RBI Governor between May and November 1977.
- ❖ Narasimham also served as chairperson of Committee on the Financial System, 1991 and the Committee of Banking Sector Reforms, 1998.
- ❖ He is known as the father of Indian banking reforms.

Sankha Ghosh

- ❖ Celebrated Bengali poet Sankha Ghosh died recently at 89 years.
- ❖ Sankha Ghosh is a recipient of the Jnanpith and Sahitya Akademi awards.
- ❖ Sankha Ghosh received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1977 for Babar-er Prarthana.
- ❖ He was honoured with a second Sahitya Akademi Award in 1999.
- ❖ In 2011, Sankha Ghosh was conferred with the Padma Bhushan.

Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021

- ❖ Rumana Sinha Sehgal won the Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021 by the Diplomatic Mission Global Peace.
- ❖ She is a Software engineer turned entrepreneur from Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ She was awarded for her contribution to the field of developing innovative and functional green products by recycling varied materials and non-biodegradable materials.

Oscars 2021 - First Asian woman

- ❖ Chloe Zhao is the first Asian woman and second woman ever to win best director at the Academy Awards.
- ❖ The Chinese-born Zhao not only directed Nomadland, but also wrote the screenplay and edited the film.
- ❖ Kathryn Bigelow was the first woman to win the Oscar for Best Director.
- ❖ She won in 2010 for Hurtlocker.





SPORTS

Two Guinness World Records

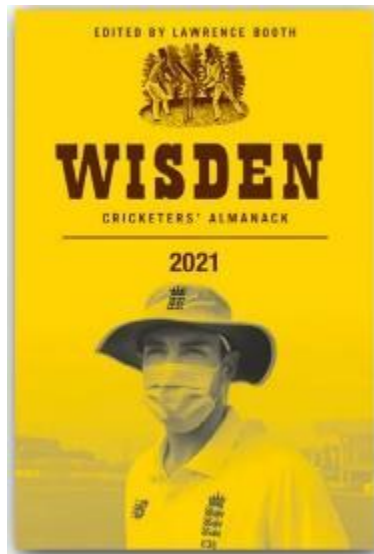
- ❖ Indian Army's Lieutenant Colonel, Bharat Pannu has earned two Guinness World Records.
- ❖ This is for his fastest solo cycling feats from October 2020.
- ❖ The first record was created when Lt Col Pannu cycled from Leh to Manali (472 km distance) on October 10, 2020, in just 35 hours and 25 minutes.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

Nethra Kumanan

- ❖ Nethra Kumanan became the first Indian woman ever to qualify for the Olympics in Sailing.
- ❖ She will be the 10th Indian to qualify for a sailing event in the Olympics.

2021 edition of the Wisden Cricketers' Almanack

- ❖ In this edition, one cricketer from each decade ranging from 1971 to 2021 were named.
 - Kapil Dev was given the title of the ODI Cricketer of the 1980s.
 - Sachin Tendulkar was awarded the ODI Cricketer of the 1990s.
 - Muttiah Muralitharan was awarded the ODI Cricketer of the 2000s.
 - Virat Kohli was awarded the title of the Wisden Almanack's ODI Cricketer of the 2010s.
- ❖ The International Cricket Council (ICC) in 2020 had also recognized Virat Kohli as the ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Decade and ICC Male Cricketer of the Decade.
- ❖ Ben Stokes, the England all-rounder, was named Wisden's Leading Cricketer in the World in 2020s.
- ❖ Kieron Pollard, West Indian all-rounder, was awarded the title of the Leading T20 Cricketer in the World.



2021 Senior Asian Wrestling Championships

- ❖ It was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan.
- ❖ This is the 34th edition.
- ❖ India won 14 medals to stand in the third spot on the medal table.
- ❖ The medals include 5 Gold, 3 Silver and 6 Bronze Medals.
- ❖ Iran and Kazakhstan topped the medal tally with 17 medals each.



Water Sports & Adventure Institute

- ❖ Water Sports and Adventure Institute (WSAI) has been established by the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) at Tehri Dam in Uttarakhand.
- ❖ The institute was inaugurated by Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju.
- ❖ ITBP's Mountaineering and Skiing Institute at Auli will independently run this institution.
- ❖ This institution will impart training in aero, water and land-related sports and adventure activities.

AIBA 2021



- ❖ Indian Women have created history at the AIBA 2021 Youth World Boxing Championship.
- ❖ A total of eight Indians entered the finals.
- ❖ Of this, seven were women.
- ❖ And they won gold in their categories.

IMPORTANT DAYS

100th year of gandhi's first visit to cuttack in odisha

- ❖ Odisha celebrated the 100th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's first ever visit to the state (March 23rd).
- ❖ On the occasion, Union Minister Sanjay Dhotre digitally released a commemorative postage stamp on '100 years of the first visit of Gandhiji to Odisha'.
- ❖ Mahatma Gandhi had stayed during his first visit to the state on 23rd March 1921.

Guru Tegh Bahadur 400th Birth Anniversary

- ❖ Guru Tegh Bahadur Birth Anniversary is observed on April 1.
- ❖ He is famously known for the protection he provided to the Sikhs and the Hindus against a 17th-century law that forced them to convert to Islam.
- ❖ He is famous to have made long journeys to places such as Kashmir and Assam in the country to preach the tenets of Guru Nanak.
- ❖ He was executed in the city of Delhi on the orders of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb after he refused to embrace Islam.
- ❖ His son Guru Gobind Singh was the last Guru of the Sikhs.

Guru Tegh Bahadur

- ❖ Guru Tegh Bahadur was born as Tyaga Mal.
- ❖ The name Guru Tegh Bahadur was given to him by Guru Hargobind.



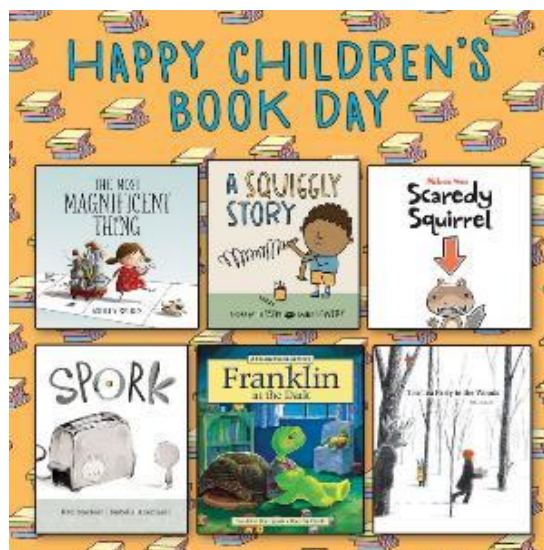
World Autism Awareness Day - April 02



- ❖ This day is celebrated to make people understand and accept people with autism, foster worldwide support, and inspire people.
- ❖ Autism is a neurodevelopment disorder characterized by deficits in social and language communication, as well as repetitive behaviours and restricted interests.
- ❖ This year, the theme is 'Inclusion in the Workplace: Challenges and Opportunities in a Post-Pandemic World'.

International Children's Book Day

- ❖ International Children's Book Day (ICBD) is organised annually by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY).
- ❖ IBBY is an international non-profit organization, to inspire a love of reading and to call attention to children's books.
- ❖ The day is observed since 1967.
- ❖ Theme for the year 2021 is "The Music of Words".



World Party day - April 03

- ❖ Idea to have a World Party day came up in 1996 after the release of novel 'Flight: A Quantum Fiction Novel'.
- ❖ The World Party Day aims to synchronize a massive, world-wide party to celebrate everything that's good and optimistic.
- ❖ It is an optimistic celebration of humanity which aims to promote unity, diversity and peaceful coexistence.

International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action – April 04

- ❖ The day is observed to spread awareness among people regarding the harmful effects of the explosive remnants of war.
- ❖ This year, the theme of International Mine Awareness Day is 'Perseverance, Partnership, and Progress'.
- ❖ On 8 December 2005, the General Assembly declared that 4 April of each year shall be observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.



National Maritime Day - April 05

- ❖ This year, India will mark its 58th edition of National Maritime Day.
- ❖ The first celebration took place in 1964 to spread awareness about intercontinental commerce and the economy.
- ❖ The theme of National Maritime Day is 'Sustainable Shipping beyond COVID-19' on the lines of 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat' initiative of the Government of India.

World Health Day 2021 - April 07



- ❖ The day is celebrated every year to recognize the widespread contributions of our medical faculty and the success of the World Health Organization.
- ❖ Health is not just about physical well-being but also about the mental and social aspects.
- ❖ The theme for world health day 2021 is Building a fairer, healthier world.

International Romani Day - April 08

- ❖ The International Romani Day is a day to celebrate Romani culture and raise awareness of the issues facing Romani people.
- ❖ It was celebrated in honour of the first major international meeting of Romani representatives, 7–12 April 1971 in Chelsfield near London.
- ❖ Since 1990 International Romani Day is celebrated by the International Romani Union.

CRPF Valour Day - April 09

- ❖ Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Valour Day (Shaurya Diwas) is observed as a tribute to the brave men of the Force.
- ❖ 2021 marks the 56th CRPF Valour Day.
- ❖ It was on this day in 1965, a small contingent of CRPF created history by defeating an invading Pakistani army at the Sardar Post located in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat.



World Table Tennis day – April 06

- ❖ The World Table Tennis day is an initiative of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF).
- ❖ World Table Tennis Day (WTTD) is annually observed across the globe to promote table tennis globally to be played in every part of the world.
- ❖ The day also marks the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.
- ❖ To promote Gender Equality and FEMpowerment, the World Table Tennis Day 2021 will focus to make table tennis popular, universal and inclusive.
- ❖ The celebration of the WTTD 2021 aims to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality.



World Homeopathy Day - April 10

- ❖ World Homeopathy Day is celebrated every year to spread awareness about homoeopathy and its contribution to the world of medicine.
- ❖ The day marks the birth anniversary of German physician Dr Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann.



- ❖ He is considered the founder of the system of alternative medicine called Homeopathy.
- ❖ The year 2021 marks the 266th birthday of Hahnemann.
- ❖ The Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH), Ministry of AYUSH, organised a two-day scientific conference on the occasion of #WorldHomoeopathyDay in New Delhi.
- ❖ The theme of this conference is “Homoeopathy - Roadmap for Integrative Medicine”.

National Safe Motherhood Day - April 11

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

World Parkinson's Day – April 11

- ❖ It is a nervous system disorder.
- ❖ The day marks the birthday of Dr James Parkinson from London.
- ❖ He was the first person to systematically described the six individuals with the symptoms of Parkinson Disease.
- ❖ This year, the theme will be Mental Health in Parkinson's and Parkinson's Care.

International Day of Human Space Flight – April 12

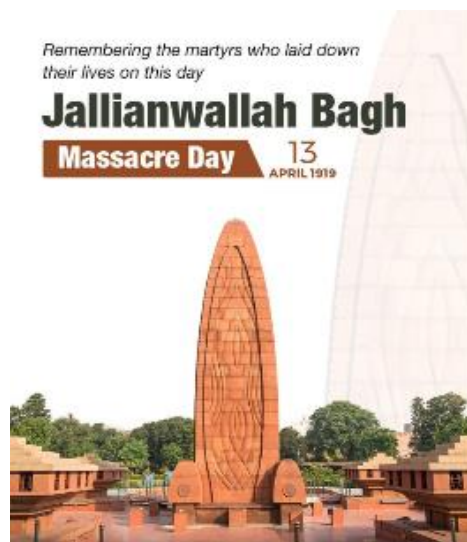
- ❖ The UN General Assembly declared that April 12 was to be celebrated as International Day of Human Space Flight.
- ❖ On 12 April 1961, 1st human space flight was carried out by Yuri Gagarin.
- ❖ He was a Soviet citizen, who became the first person to journey into outer space.

- ❖ 12 April was also the date of the 1st Space Shuttle STS-1 of Columbia launched in 1981.
- ❖ On June 16, 1963, Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman to orbit the Earth
- ❖ On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong became the first human to set foot upon the surface of the moon.
- ❖ Apollo and Soyuz were the first joint US-Russian space flight.



Jallianwala Bagh Massacre Day – April 13

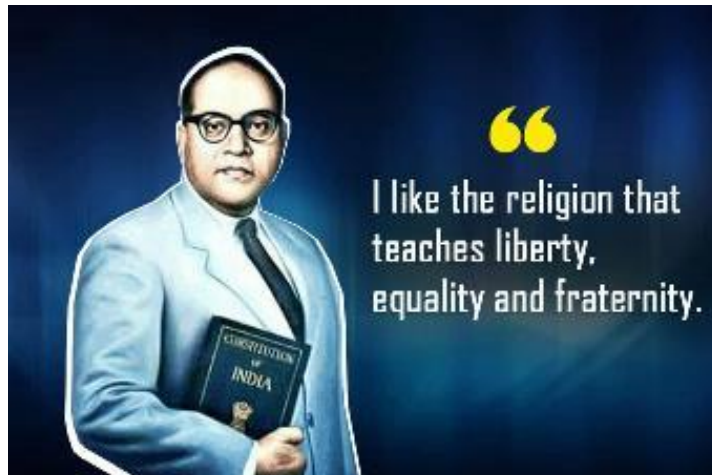
- ❖ Jallianwala Bagh Massacre refers to the incident that took place in 1919 at Amritsar's Jallianwala Bagh.



- ❖ This year is the 102nd anniversary of the incident.
- ❖ On April 13, 1919 people gathered at the Jallianwala Bagh to celebrate the festival of Baisakhi.
- ❖ The Police Officer General Dyer ordered his troops to shoot the people.
- ❖ After this, the Hunter commission was formed to enquire this.
- ❖ General Dyer's action was praised by Punjab Lieutenant Governor Sir Michael O' Dwyer.

Ambedkar Jayanthi – April 14

- ❖ This year, Ambedkar Jayanti marks the prolific leader's 130th birth anniversary.
- ❖ Ambedkar Jayanti is observed as Equality Day in India.
- ❖ Since 2015 it has been observed as an official public holiday throughout India
- ❖ He was born on 14 April 1891 in the town and military cantonment of Mhow (now officially known as Dr Ambedkar Nagar) in the Central Provinces (now in Madhya Pradesh).
- ❖ He became the first law and justice minister of independent India (1947 to 1951).
- ❖ He is hailed as the Father of the Indian Constitution.
- ❖ He died on December 6, 1956 at Delhi.
- ❖ He was awarded India's highest civilian honour the Bharat Ratna in 1990.
- ❖ The period between April 14, 1990 and April 14, 1991 was observed as "Year of Social Justice".
- ❖ The United Nations celebrated Ambedkar Jayanti in 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- ❖ Since 2017, 14 April is observed as Knowledge Day in the Indian state of Maharashtra.

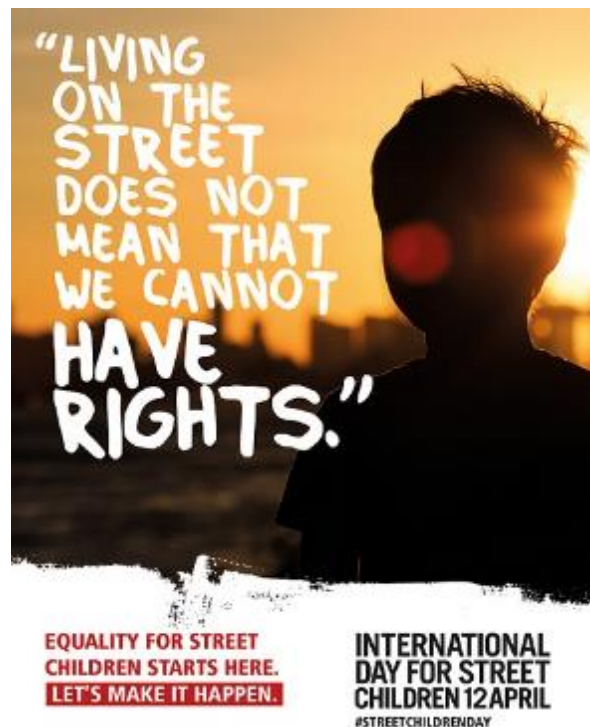


ICCR Foundation Day – April 09

- ❖ The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) celebrating its 71st Foundation Day.
- ❖ It was founded in 1950 by India's first Education Minister, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
- ❖ It is an autonomous organisation.
- ❖ It is with the objective of fostering and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and the world.
- ❖ It also aims to promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people.
- ❖ It also administers the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding, established by the Government of India in 1965.

International Day for Street Children – April 12

- ❖ It has been celebrated globally since 2012.
- ❖ It is to recognise the humanity, dignity and defiance of street children.
- ❖ The street children have rights enshrined in United Nations Convention on rights of Children (1990).



37th Siachen Day – April 13

- ❖ On this day in 1984, Indian troops first unfurled the tri colour at Bilafond La pass launching Operation Meghdoot.
- ❖ This was the codename for the Indian Armed Forces' operation to seize control of the Siachen Glacier in Kashmir.
- ❖ Siachen is the highest battlefield in the world.
- ❖ Bilafond La was pass a prominent feature in the Siachen Conflict between India and Pakistan.
- ❖ Bilafond La in Ladakh is on the ancient Silk Route linking the Indian Subcontinent and China.
- ❖ Also known as the Saltoro Pass, it is a mountain pass situated on Saltoro Ridges in Himalayas.



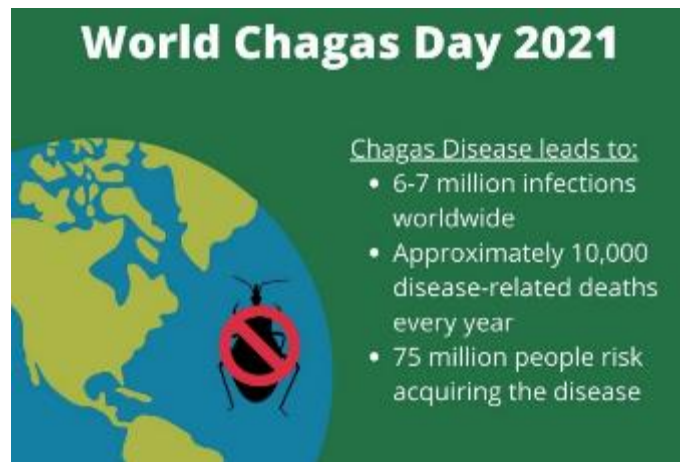
International Turban Day - April 13

- ❖ It is celebrated every year on April 13 since 2004.
- ❖ It aims to bring awareness of the strict requirement on Sikhs to put the turban as a mandatory part of their religion.
- ❖ The 2021 Turban Day marks the 552nd birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev and the festival of Baisakhi.

World Chagas Disease Day – April 14

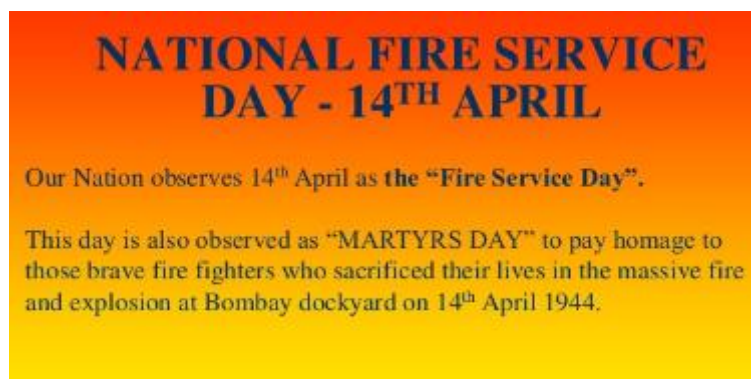
- ❖ It was first celebrated on April 14, 2020.
- ❖ It was approved for creation on 2019 at the 72nd session of the World Health Assembly.

- ❖ It is called silent because it progresses slowly, and silenced because it mainly affects the poor people who often lack political voice and proper health care.
- ❖ It is classified as a neglected tropical disease (NTD), meaning it affects the low-income populations in developing countries across the globe.
- ❖ It is one of 11 official global public health campaigns marked by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- ❖ It was named after Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas, the Brazilian doctor.
- ❖ He diagnosed the first case on 14 April 1909.



National Fire service day – April 14

- ❖ It commemorates the exemplary courage and valour exhibited by fire fighters during the rescue operations.
- ❖ It is observed to pay homage to firemen and officers of the Mumbai Fire Brigade.
- ❖ They lost their lives while fighting a major fire on the ship, Fort Stikine, in 1944, at Bombay Port.
- ❖ This year's theme is "Maintenance of Fire Safety Equipment is to Mitigate Fire Hazards".

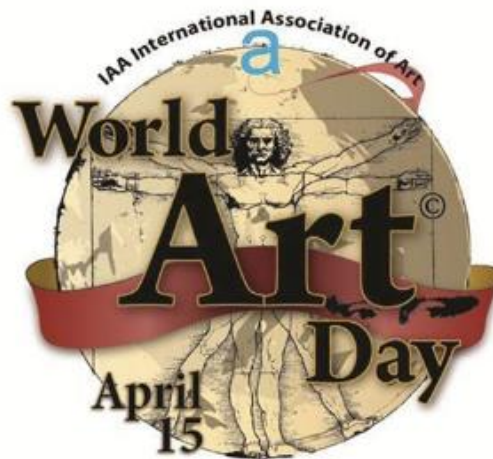


World Creativity and Innovation Day – April 15

- ❖ It aims to raise awareness around the importance of creativity and innovation in problem solving with respect to advancing the United Nations sustainable development goals, also known as the "global goals".
- ❖ It was first celebrated in 2018.

World Art Day - April 15

- ❖ It was declared by the International Association of Art (IAA), a partner of UNESCO.
- ❖ The day was celebrated for the first time in 2012.
- ❖ The date was chosen in honour of Leonardo da Vinci's birthday.
- ❖ He was an Italian painter, sculptor, architect, draughtsman, theorist, engineer and scientist.
- ❖ He was chosen as the symbol of world peace, freedom of expression and more.



Transgender Welfare Day – April 15

- ❖ Tamil Nadu established the country's first Welfare Board for transgender persons under the DMK government in 2008.
- ❖ In 2006, then Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi replaced the former title 'aravani' and replaced it with the more dignified 'Thirunangai'.
- ❖ A Welfare Board was set up with this name under the Social Welfare Department.
- ❖ In April 15th, 2014, the Supreme Court in its judgment in the National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India case, recognised the transgender community as 'third gender'.

- ❖ In 2019 the AIADMK-led government replaced the word 'thirunangai' with the title 'moondram paalinathavar' (those belonging to the 'third gender').



Himachal Day - April 15

- ❖ Himachal means "Snow covered area".
- ❖ On April 15, 1948, Himachal Pradesh was formed as the province to be administered Chief Commissioner.
- ❖ Later, it was made a "C" category state on January 25, 1950.
- ❖ In 1956, it was declared as a Union Territory.
- ❖ Later in 1970, Parliament passed the Himachal Pradesh Act.
- ❖ Since then, Himachal Pradesh came into existence as a full-fledged state.
- ❖ The official recognition of Himachal Pradesh as a state was provided on January 25, 1971.

World Voice Day (WVD) – April 16

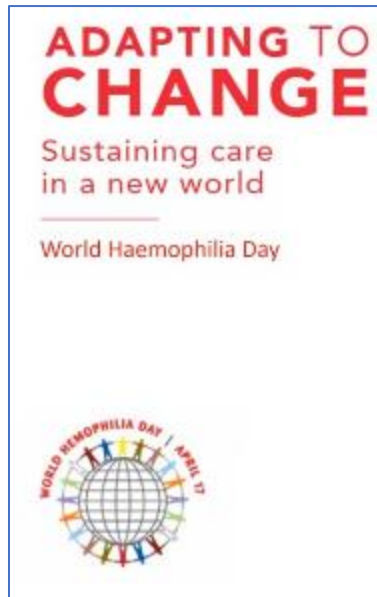
- ❖ It is a worldwide annual event devoted to the celebration of the phenomenon of voice.
- ❖ It started small with a tiny celebration in Brazil in 1999.
- ❖ The theme for this year is One World Many Voices.

International Haiku Poetry Day – April 17

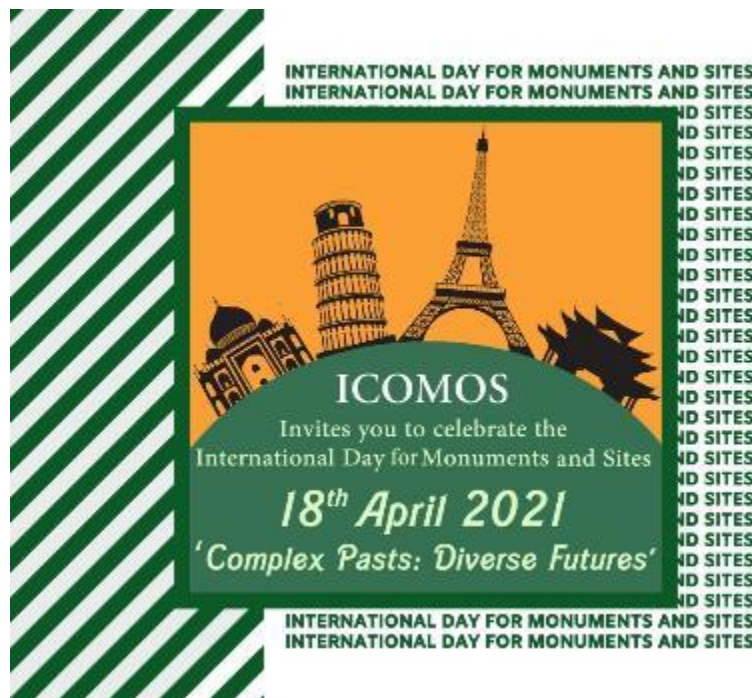
- ❖ It is an initiative of The Haiku Foundation.
- ❖ A haiku is an ancient form of Japanese poetry.

World Hemophilia Day - April 17

- ❖ The theme of the event this year is “Adapting to change: sustaining care in a new world”.
- ❖ It is an initiative of ‘World Federation of Haemophilia’.
- ❖ April 17 was chosen in honour of Frank Schnabel's birthday.



World Heritage Day – April 18



- ❖ It is also known the International Day for Monuments and Sites.
- ❖ It was proposed by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on 18 April 1982 and approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.
- ❖ The 2021 theme is “Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures”.
- ❖ Presently, there are 38 World Heritage Sites located in India that include 30 Cultural properties, 7 Natural properties and 1 mixed site.
- ❖ The Mixed site is Khangchendzonga National Park.
- ❖ In 2019, ‘Jaipur City’ became the 38th addition of India to the list under Culture.
- ❖ India has the sixth largest number of sites in the world.
- ❖ So far, only China, Italy, Spain, Germany, and France have more locations on the list than India.

UN Chinese Language Day – April 20

- ❖ The event was established by the UN Department of Public Information in 2010.
- ❖ April 20 was chosen as the date "to pay tribute to Cangjie.
- ❖ It aims to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity.
- ❖ It also aims to promote equal use of all six of its official working languages throughout the organization
- ❖ Cangjie is a mythical figure who is presumed to have invented Chinese characters about 5,000 years ago.
- ❖ There are six official languages of the UN.
- ❖ These are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.



Civil Services day – April 21



- ❖ The main aim of celebrating the day is to motivate the efforts and works of civil servants.
- ❖ The first Home Minister of Independent India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the probationers of Administrative Services Officers in 1947 at Metcalf House, Delhi on this Day.
- ❖ He referred to civil servants as the 'steel frame of India'.
- ❖ He is regarded as Father of modern All India Services.
- ❖ The All-India Services (AIS) comprises the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Indian Forest Service (IFS) and the Indian Police Service (IPS).
- ❖ The British Governor General Cornwallis (1786-93) was known as the "Father of Civil Services in India".

World Liver day – April 19

- ❖ The theme for this year is 'Keep your liver healthy and disease-free.'
- ❖ It is observed every year to spread awareness about the second largest organ in the body.
- ❖ The liver is the second largest and the most complex organ in the body, with the exception of the brain.

- ❖ Liver diseases can be caused by hepatitis A, B, C, alcohol and drugs.
- ❖ Viral Hepatitis occurs due to consumption of contaminated food and water, unsafe sexual practices and drug abuse.

Earth Day – April 22

- ❖ The UN General Assembly designated this day as International Mother Earth Day in 2009.
- ❖ It is the world's largest environmental movement.
- ❖ It was first started in 1970.
- ❖ The theme of Earth Day 2021 is “Restore Our Earth”.



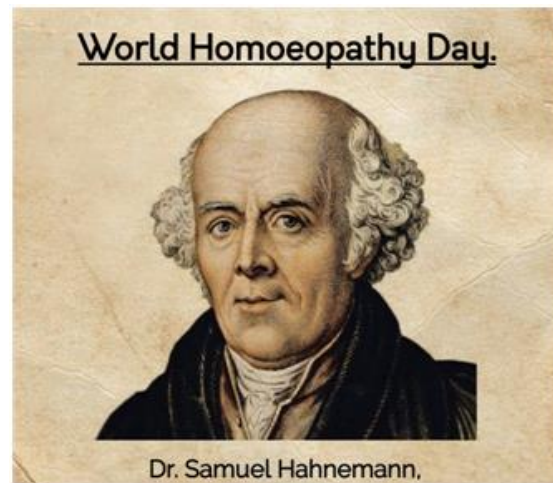
International Girls in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Day – April 22

- ❖ It was established by United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
- ❖ It is a global movement aimed at inspiring girls.
- ❖ It is to motivate girls and women to consider science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).
- ❖ It will be celebrating the 10th Anniversary this year.
- ❖ 2021 Theme is 'Connected Girls, Creating Brighter Futures'.



World Homeopathy awareness week

- ❖ Homoeopathy Awareness Week is from April 10 to April 16, 2021.
- ❖ It is observed to celebrate the birth of Samuel Hahnemann.
- ❖ He is the father of Homoeopathy.



World Book and Copyright Day - April 23

- ❖ World Book Day is celebrated by UNESCO.
- ❖ April 23 is a symbolic date for world literature.
- ❖ This is because on this date in 1616 that Cervantes, Shakespeare, and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega all died.
- ❖ Hence, the day was selected to pay tribute to the great literary figures.
- ❖ Tbilisi, the capital city of Georgia, has been chosen to be the World Book Capital in 2021.

- ❖ 'To share a story' would be the theme of this year's World Book and Copyright Day, keeping the pandemic in mind.
- ❖ As a celebration of this year's World's Book and Copyright Day, UNESCO has created a 'Bookface' challenge.

English Language Day - April 23

- ❖ This day at the UN is the date traditionally observed as both the birthday and date of death of William Shakespeare.
- ❖ The Day is the result of a 2010 initiative by the Department of Global Communications, establishing language days for each of the Organization's six official languages.
- ❖ The UN's language days are as follows
 - Arabic (18 December)
 - Chinese (20 April)
 - English (23 April)
 - French (20 March)
 - Russian (6 June)
 - Spanish (23 April)

National Panchayat Raj Day – April 24



NATIONAL PANCHAYATI RAJ DAY
24 April
CELEBRATING LOCAL SELF-GOVERNANCE

The 3 Levels:

Gram Panchayat (Village level)	Mandal Parishad or Block Samiti or Panchayat Samiti (Block level)	Zila Parishad (District level)
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Did You Know?

Organised by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the day symbolises the passing of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 that came into force from April 24, 1993, which institutionalised Panchayati Raj through village, intermediate and district-level panchayats.



- ❖ The Panchayat raj is the oldest system of local government.
- ❖ In 1992 a major change in the Panchayat system of India came in the form of the passage of the Panchayati Raj Act (73rd Amendment).
- ❖ The act came into existence with effect from April 24, 1993.
- ❖ The first National Panchayati Raj Day was celebrated in 2010.
- ❖ Since then, the National Panchayat Raj Day is celebrated on April 24 every year in India.

World Veterinary Day - April 24

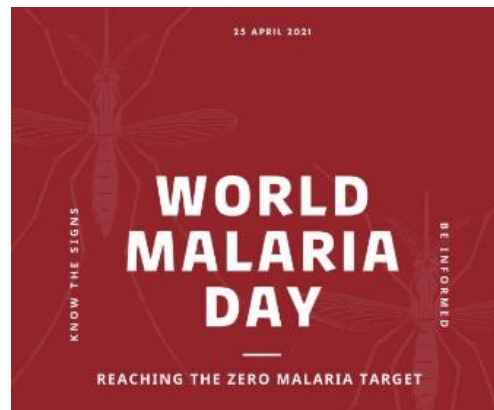
- ❖ The World Veterinary Day is observed on the Fourth Saturday of April every year.
- ❖ In 2021, the day falls on April 24, 2021.
- ❖ The theme of the 2021 World Veterinary Day is 'Veterinarian response to the COVID-19 crisis'.
- ❖ The day was created by the World Veterinary Association (WVA) in 2000.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

International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace - April 24

- ❖ 'International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace' was first observed by the United Nations (UN) on April 24, 2019.
- ❖ The Assembly proclaimed the day while considering that preserving the values of multilateralism and international cooperation is fundamental to promote and support the three pillars of the UN.
- ❖ The three pillars are Peace and Security, Development and Human Rights.
- ❖ The Day is a reaffirmation of the UN Charter and its principles of resolving disputes among countries through peaceful means.

World Malaria Day - April 25

- ❖ World Malaria Day aimed at taking urgent action in the control of the deadly disease.
- ❖ It is the Female Anopheles mosquitoes who spread the Plasmodium parasite through their saliva, which causes malaria.
- ❖ The theme of World Malaria Day 2021 is "Reaching the zero-malaria target."



International Delegate's Day - April 25

- ❖ International Delegate's Day observed globally to raise awareness of the role of the representatives and delegates of the Member States to the United Nations.
- ❖ International Delegate's Day marks the anniversary of the first day of the San Francisco Conference
- ❖ San Francisco Conference is also known as the United Nations Conference on International Organization.
- ❖ This year is the 75th anniversary of the San Francisco Conference.
- ❖ On 2 April 2019, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 25 April as International Delegate's Day.

International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day - April 26

- ❖ The International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day is observed every year to raise awareness of the consequences of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster
- ❖ It also creates awareness of the risks of nuclear energy in general.



- ❖ The United Nations (UN) proclaimed the day on April 26, 2016.
- ❖ On this day in 1986, a reactor exploded at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine with devastating consequences.

World Intellectual Property Day - April 26



- ❖ This day is being observed to celebrate creativity and raise awareness about how copyright, trademarks and designs impact daily life.
- ❖ This year's theme of the Day is: 'IP and SMEs: Take your ideas to markets'.
- ❖ This is aimed at promoting the role of small and medium enterprises in economy and how they can use intellectual property rights to build stronger and more competitive businesses.

Workers' Memorial Day - April 28

- ❖ The day is also known as International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers.
- ❖ It has been organized worldwide by the International Trade Union Confederation since 1996.
- ❖ Theme for 2021: 'Health and Safety is a fundamental worker right.'
- ❖ Its purpose is to remember workers killed in incidents at work or by diseases caused by work.

World Day for Safety and Health at Work - April 28

- ❖ This day is observed to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally and raise awareness to ensure health and safety at the workplace.
- ❖ The theme for 2021 is "Anticipate, prepare and respond to crises - Invest Now in Resilient Occupational Safety and Health Systems".
- ❖ The day has been observed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 2003.



International Dance Day - April 29

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

Ayushman Bharat Diwas – April 30

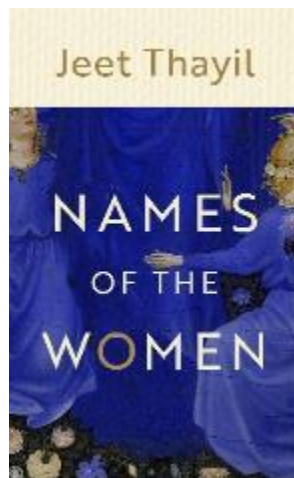
- ❖ It is celebrated to achieve twin missions.
- ❖ They are to promote health and wellness to the poor and also to provide insurance benefits to them.
- ❖ Ayushman Bharat Scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2018.
- ❖ It is the largest health scheme in the world.
- ❖ The theme for this year is "Keep your Health, Save Your Wealth".



MISCELLANEOUS

“Names of the Women” book

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



The Chilika Lake

- ❖ The Chilika Lake in Odisha was once part of the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ This is according to a study by the marine archaeology department of the National Institute of Oceanography, Goa.

Note

- ❖ Chilika Lake is the Asia’s largest brackish water lake.
- ❖ Chilika Lake is a brackish water lagoon, spread over the Puri, Khurda and Ganjam districts of Odisha.
- ❖ It is located at the mouth of the Daya River, flowing into the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ It is the largest coastal lagoon in India.
- ❖ It is the largest brackish water lagoon in the world after the New Caledonian barrier reef.
- ❖ It has been listed Ramsar Site as well as a tentative UNESCO World Heritage site.



Global gender gap report

South Asia

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Bangladesh	1	85	0.719
Nepal	2	108	0.683
Sri Lanka	3	118	0.670
Maldives	4	128	0.642
Bhutan	5	130	0.639
India	6	140	0.625
Pakistan	7	153	0.558
Afghanistan*	8	156	0.444

- ❖ The World Economic Forum has released the Global Gender Gap Report 2021.
- ❖ India has seen a decrease in its ranking on the index by 28 places.
- ❖ India has been ranked 140th among 156 countries on the index.
- ❖ With this, India became the third-worst performer in South Asia.
- ❖ The decline also took place on the economic participation and opportunity subindex.
- ❖ The report highlighted that India's gender gap on this dimension widened by 3% this year.
- ❖ It is leading to a 32.6% gap closed till date.
- ❖ The women ministers have declined to 9.1% in 2021 from 23.1% in 2019.

- ❖ One of the drivers of this decline is a decrease in women's labour force participation rate, which decreased from 24.8% to 22.3%.
- ❖ The share of women in professional and technical roles also decreased to 29.2%.
- ❖ In senior and managerial positions, the share of women is also low.
- ❖ Only 14.6% of these positions are held by women.
- ❖ Moreover only 8.9% of firms are with female top managers.
- ❖ The income earned by women in India is the only 1/5th of that earned by men.
- ❖ This has put India among the bottom 10 globally on this indicator.

Note

- ❖ Among India's neighbours, Nepal has been ranked 106, Bangladesh 65, Afghanistan 156, Pakistan 153, Sri Lanka 116, and Bhutan 130.
- ❖ The region has an overall gender gap closed at 62.3%.
- ❖ In the South Asia region, only two countries - Pakistan and Afghanistan have been ranked below India.
- ❖ Iceland has topped the index for the 12th time.
- ❖ In 2020, India was ranked 112th among 153 countries.

Mallika srinivasan - chairperson of PESB



- ❖ The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment of Padma Shri Mallika Srinivasan as the Chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB).
- ❖ She is the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Tractors and Farm Equipment (TAFE).



- ❖ TAFE is the India's 2nd and World's 3rd largest tractor manufacturer.
- ❖ Public Enterprises Selection Board is responsible for the appointment of top management posts in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).

Note:

- ❖ This is the first time where a private sector specialist was appointed as the head of PESB.
- ❖ She will serve as the Chairperson of PESB for a period of 3 years or until the attainment of the age of 65 years.
- ❖ She has taken up the position which was previously held by Rajiv Kumar, the Former Finance Secretary.

April 14 - Public Holiday

- ❖ The central government has declared April 14, Dr BR Ambedkar's birthday a public holiday.
- ❖ Dr B R Ambedkar was the sculptor of the Indian Constitution.
- ❖ The country already celebrates his birthday as Ambedkar Jayanti every year.
- ❖ The government has announced that from this year 14th April will be declared as a public holiday.
- ❖ It will be Ambedkar's 130th birth anniversary on April 14, 2021.

New immune escape variant

- ❖ A new immune escape COVID-19 variant has been found in West Bengal, according to experts.
- ❖ This new SARS-CoV-2 variant can reportedly escape immunity and infect a person even if the individual had contracted the virus before and has antibodies against it.
- ❖ This is on the same lines as the "double mutant variant" of COVID-19.
- ❖ That was detected in 18 states and UTs of India, majorly Maharashtra.
- ❖ It had been detected in 15-20 percent samples collected from Maharashtra.
- ❖ The new variant of coronavirus, B.1.618, is being called a major immune escape variant.
- ❖ It is characterised by a distinct set of genetic variants including E484K.
- ❖ According to scientists, the proportions of B.1.618 have been growing significantly in West Bengal.



Sambandh Finservice's Licence

- ❖ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a show-cause notice prior to cancelling the licence of fraud-hit Sambandh Finservice Pvt Ltd.
- ❖ This notice is given after its net worth eroded below the regulatory minimum and financial situation worsened beyond redemption over the recent months.
- ❖ Sambandh is registered as an NBFC-MFI.
- ❖ According to the RBI norms, NBFC is required to maintain minimum capital levels consisting of Tier-I and Tier-II capital, of not less than 15 per cent of their aggregate risk-weighted assets.
- ❖ Sambandh Finservice Private Limited was founded in 1992.
- ❖ Its Headquarters is in Odisha.

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