
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

7th June to 13th June, 2021

PREFACE

Dear Students,

The 'Current Affairs' section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the Week. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfill aspirations.

Happy Reading

Team CL



Career
Launcher



National



PM Narendra Modi launched E-100 project in Pune to produce, distribute ethanol across India

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the E-100 pilot project in Pune to mark the World Environment Day.** The ambitious project aims to set up a network for production and distribution of ethanol across the nation.
- The Prime Minister also released the **‘Report of the Expert Committee on Road Map for ethanol blending in India 2020-2025’**, in line with the theme for World Environment Day this year - promotion of biofuels for a better environment.
- Last year, the **government had set a target of reaching 10 per cent ethanol blending in petrol (10 per cent of ethanol mixed with 90 per cent of diesel) by 2022 and 20 per cent doping by 2030.** “Government has resolved to meet the target of 20 per cent ethanol blending in petrol by 2025. Earlier the resolve was to achieve the target by 2030 which is now preponed by 5 years.
- **Till 2014, on an average, only 1.5 per cent of ethanol could be blended in India which has now reached about 8.5 per cent.** A large part of this eightfold increase in ethanol procurement has benefitted the sugarcane farmers of the country,” PM Modi said.
- “A lot of emphasis is being laid on building the necessary infrastructure for the production and purchase of ethanol in the country. **Most of the ethanol manufacturing units are mostly concentrated in 4-5 states where sugar production is high** but now food grain based distilleries are being established to expand this to the whole country. **Modern technology based plants are also being set up in the country to make ethanol from agricultural waste,**” he further added.

The Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme was launched in January, 2003 by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoP&NG). The government has set targets of 10% bioethanol blending of petrol by 2022 and to raise it to 20% by 2030 under the Ethanol Blended Programme (EBP). Currently, the bioethanol blending in petrol stands at 5%. The EBP was launched in line with the National Biofuels Policy, 2018. It is estimated that a 5% blending can result in replacement of around 1.8 million Barrels of crude oil. As the ethanol molecule contains oxygen, it allows the engine to more completely combust the fuel, resulting in fewer emissions and thereby reducing the occurrence of environmental pollution. The renewable ethanol content, which is a by-product of the sugar industry, is expected to result in a net reduction in the emission of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide (CO) and hydrocarbons (HC).

Gujarat’s Kevadia to host ‘India’s first’ e-vehicles-only area

- A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s announcement on World Environment Day that Kevadia will be turned into an Electric Vehicle City, the **Statue of Unity Area Development and Tourism Governance Authority (SOUADTGA)** will develop the “country’s first electric vehicles-only area” in Gujarat’s Kevadia.
- The authority said that the **area surrounding the 182-metre tall Statue of Unity in Kevadia in Gujarat’s tribal-dominated Narmada district** will be converted into an electric-vehicles-only area in a phased manner. Kevadia, which houses the **world’s tallest Statue of Unity**, will become the country’s first electric vehicle city.

The Indian government has created momentum through its **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid & Electric Vehicles)** schemes that encourage, and in some segments mandates the adoption of electric vehicles (EV), with a goal of reaching **30% EV penetration by 2030**. If these aims are realised by 2030, they will generate an estimated saving of up to **474 Millions of tonnes of oil equivalent (Mtoe)** and **846 million tonnes of net CO2 emissions over their lifetime**. According to a Niti Aayog report, **India's EVs market needs a minimum of 10 GW of cells by 2022, which would need to be expanded to about 50 GW by 2025**. However, currently, India is able to add only **20 GW every year to its grid for all of our other increasing energy needs**. Thus, the fulfilment of the requirement of 10 GW additional capacity only for EVs would be a huge task.

India slips two spots to rank 117 on 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted as 2030 agenda

- **India's rank has slipped by two places from last year to 117 on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted as a part of the 2030 agenda by 193 United Nations member states in 2015.**
- **The State of India's Environment Report 2021 revealed that India's rank was 115 last year and dropped by two places primarily because major challenges like ending hunger and achieving food security (SDG 2), achieving gender equality (SDG 5) and building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation (SDG 9) remain in the country.**
- **India ranks below four South Asian countries -- Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, it said. The overall SDG score of India is 61.9 out of 100. Elaborating state-wise preparedness, the report said Jharkhand and Bihar are the least prepared to meet the SDGs by 2030, which is the target year. While Jharkhand lags in five of the SDGs, Bihar lags in seven.**
- **It said the states/UTs with the best overall score which are on the path to achieving the SDGs are Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh.**

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, was adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, which provides a **shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future**. There are **17 SDGs** which are an **urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership**. The 17 SDGs adopted by UN member states are **SDG1- no poverty, SDG 2-zero hunger, SDG3-good health and well-being, SDG4- quality education, SDG 5- gender equality, SDG 6- clean water and sanitation, SDG 7- affordable and clean energy, SDG 8 decent work and economic growth, SDG 9- industry, innovation and infrastructure. SDG 10 reduced inequalities, SDG 11- sustainable cities and communities, SDG 12- responsible consumption and production, SDG 13- climate action, SDG 14- life below water, SDG 15- life on land, SDG 16- peace, justice and strong institutions and lastly SDG 17- strengthening global partnerships for the goals.**

Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank approves release of Performance Grading Index 2019-20 for states, UTs

- **Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has approved the release of Performance Grading Index 2019-20 for States and UTs. Government has introduced the Performance Grading Index with a set of 70 parameters to catalyze transformational change in the field of school education.**
- **The PGI for States and UTs was first published in 2019 with reference year 2017-18. Punjab, Chandigarh, Tamil Nadu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Kerala occupy the highest grade, which is Grade A, for 2019-20.**
- **Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Puducherry, Punjab and Tamil Nadu have improved overall PGI score by 10 percent, that is, 100 or more points. The PGI exercise helps States and UTs to pinpoint the gaps and prioritise areas for intervention. Most of the States and UTs have improved their grade in PGI 2019-20 compared to the earlier years. Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and Punjab have shown improvement by 10 percent or more in the PGI domain: Access.**
- **As many as thirteen States and UTs have shown improvement by 10 percent or more in the PGI domain: Infrastructure and Facilities. Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Odisha have shown improvement by 20 percent or more. Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Odisha have shown more than 10 percent improvement in the PGI domain: Equity.**

India elected to UN Economic and Social Council for term 2022-24

- **India** has been elected to the **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** for the term **2022-24**. The ECOSOC is at the centre of the United Nations development system and brings together people and issues to promote collective action for a sustainable world.
- The **54-member Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** is at the heart of the United Nations system to advance the three dimensions of sustainable development economic, social and environmental.
- It is the **central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals. It is also responsible for the follow-up to major UN conferences and summits. India was elected in the Asia-Pacific States category along with Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Oman in the elections held.**
- In the Economic and Social Council by-election, **Greece, New Zealand and Denmark** were elected for a term of office from **January to December 2022** and **Israel** was elected for a term of office beginning **January 1, 2022 and until December 31, 2023.**
- **India** is currently serving the **2021-22** term as a non-permanent member of the powerful UN Security Council and will assume the Presidency of the 15-nation UN organ in August.

The UN Charter established ECOSOC in 1945 as one of the six main organs of the United Nations. ECOSOC's 54 members are elected for three-year terms by the General Assembly. Seats on the Council are allotted based on geographical representation with 14 allocated to African states, 11 to Asian states, six to eastern European states, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean states and 13 to western European and other states, according to the ECOSOC website. It is headquartered in New York, USA.

India's first International Maritime Cluster to come up at GIFT City

- **Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB)** will set up the country's first international maritime services cluster at **GIFT City**. The maritime cluster will be developed as a dedicated ecosystem comprising ports, shipping, logistics services providers and government regulators, all present in the same geographic vicinity — GIFT City. **GIFT City is India's first operational smart city and international financial services.**
- **This will be a first-of-its-kind commercial maritime services cluster in India**, which has been conceptualised to enhance the competitiveness and self-sufficiency of India in the maritime sector and provide a one-stop solution for the entire maritime fraternity.
- **The cluster looks to host maritime industry players including regulators, government agencies, maritime/shipping industry associations and businesses, intermediate service providers, such as shipping finance, marine insurance, maritime arbitrators, maritime law firms, among others, and support services providers, such as maritime education institutes.**

Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) is a business district near Ahmedabad in Gujarat, India. It is **India's first operational greenfield smart city and international financial services centre**, which the Government of Gujarat promoted as a greenfield project. **The city is located on the banks of the Sabarmati River** and is around 12 km (7.5 mi) from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport. The city is designed so residents can walk to work, and includes commercial and residential complexes.

Government extends Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana till Deepawali

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** during his televised address to the nation on June 7, 2021 announced that the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana will be extended till November 2021 to support 80 crore beneficiaries.**
- Under the scheme, **80 crore poor and vulnerable families** will be provided with free food grains such as rice and wheat. In April, 2021, the central government had announced the distribution of free food grains for the months of May and June under the scheme. **The benefits of the scheme have now been extended till Diwali to help sustain poor families that have been hardest hit by the state lockdowns imposed in April and May to contain the deadly second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

- **The Prime Minister in his address to the nation said that last year when the lockdown was imposed due to corona, the free ration was provided to more than 80 crore people for eight months under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana. He said that this year too, the scheme was implemented in May and June, due to the second wave of the pandemic.**

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY; Prime Minister's Food Security Scheme for the Poor) is a food security welfare scheme announced by the Government of India in March 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic in India. The program is operated by the Department of Food and Public Distribution under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution. The scheme aims to feed the poorest citizens of India by providing grain through the Public Distribution System, to all the priority households (ration card holders and those identified by the Antyodaya Anna Yojana scheme). PMGKAY provides 5 kg of rice or wheat (according to regional dietary preferences) per person and 1 kg of dal to each family holding a ration card. The scale of this welfare scheme makes it the largest food security program in the world.

President appoints former IAS officer Anup Chandra Pandey as EC

- **The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind has appointed former IAS officer Anup Chandra Pandey as an Election Commissioner. Mr Pandey is a retired IAS officer of the 1984 batch Uttar Pradesh Cadre.**
- **There was a vacancy in the poll body after Sunil Arora demitted office as the Chief Election Commissioner. Presently Sushil Chandra is the Chief Election Commissioner and Rajiv Kumar is the other Election Commissioner.**

The Election Commission of India is a permanent and independent body established by the Constitution of India directly to ensure free and fair elections in the country. Article 324 of the Constitution provides that the power of superintendence, direction, and control of elections to Parliament, state legislatures, the office of the President of India, and the office of vice-President of India shall be vested in the election commission. Thus, the Election Commission is an all-India body in the sense that it is common to both the Central government and the state governments. The Chief Election Commissioner of India can be removed from their office in a manner similar to the removal of a judge of the Supreme Court of India which requires a resolution passed by the Parliament of India a two-thirds majority in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha on the grounds of proved misbehaviour or incapacity. Other Election Commissioners can be removed by the President of India on the recommendation of the Chief Election Commissioner. A Chief Election Commissioner has never been impeached in India. Sukumar Sen was the first Chief Election Commissioner of India, serving from 21 March 1950 to 19 December 1958.

Four take oath as Rajya Sabha members

- **Four new members of Rajya Sabha, including Swapan Dasgupta and Mahesh Jethmalani, took oath, with Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu noting that the public representatives have a great role to play during the challenging times of the ongoing pandemic.**
- **The other two members were John Brittas (CPI-M) and V Sivadasan (CPI-M), both elected from Kerala. Dasgupta, who had quit his membership to contest the West Bengal Assembly election, and eminent lawyer Mahesh Jethmalani are both nominated.**
- **Deputy Chairman Harivansh, Leader of the House Thaawarchand Gehlot, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal were also present during the oath-taking.**

Under Article 80 of the Constitution, the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) is composed of not more than 250 members, of whom 12 are nominated by the President of India from amongst persons who have special knowledge or practical experience in respect of such matters as literature, science, art and social service. Nominated members enjoy all powers, privileges and immunities available to an elected member of Parliament. They take part in the proceedings of the House as any other member. They, however, are not entitled to vote in the election of the President of India. But in the election of the Vice-President of India, they have a right to vote. So far, none from them has been inducted into the Council of Ministers.

CESL, Ladakh ink pact to make the Union Territory carbon-neutral

- **Convergence Energy Services Ltd (CESL)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL), has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh, to make it a clean and green UT. State-owned CESL has signed a pact with the Ladakh administration to make the Union Territory carbon-neutral.
- CESL, a wholly-owned subsidiary of EESL, will build the EV ecosystem for the UT, focusing on EV charging infrastructure which will utilise renewable sources of power, and electric vehicles (EVs) that are being tested for high altitudes. CESL is a new energy company that is focused on delivering clean, affordable and reliable energy.

Ladakh is a region administered by India as a union territory, and constitutes a part of the larger Kashmir region, which has been the subject of dispute between India, Pakistan, and China since 1947. It was established on 31 October 2019, following the passage of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act. The largest town in Ladakh is Leh, followed by Kargil, each of which headquarters a district. The Leh district contains the Indus, Shyok and Nubra river valleys. The Kargil district contains the Suru, Dras and Zaskar river valleys. Radha Krishna Mathur is a retired Indian IAS officer who is serving as the first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh. He retired as the Chief Information Commissioner of India (CIC) in November 2018.

31st edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol underway

- 31st edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy is conducted till 11th June 2021.
- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Saryu, an indigenously built Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel and His Majesty's Thailand Ship (HTMS) Krabi, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both navies were participated in the CORPAT.
- The 31st Indo-Thai CORPAT will contribute towards Indian Navy's efforts to consolidate inter-operability and forge strong bonds of friendship with Royal Thai Navy.
- As part of the Indian Government's vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), the Indian Navy has been engaging with other nations in the Indian Ocean Region for enhancing regional maritime security.

For enforcing the maritime links between India and Thailand and to keep this vital part of the Indian Ocean safe and secure for International Trade, the navies of both countries have been undertaking CORPAT bi-annually along with their International Maritime Boundary Line since 2005. The CORPAT exercise builds up the interoperability and understanding between the two navies. It facilitates the institution of measures to prevent and suppress unlawful activities such as drug trafficking, Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing, armed robbery, maritime terrorism, and piracy.

Jammu & Kashmir village becomes first in India to achieve 100% vaccination of adults

- A remote hamlet in the Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir has become the first village in India to vaccinate all its adult population against the novel coronavirus. Weyan, a village in district Bandipora (J&K) has become the first village in the country, where the entire population above 18 years has been vaccinated.

Jammu and Kashmir is a region administered by India as a union territory and consists of the southern portion of the larger Kashmir region, which has been the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947 and between India and China since 1962. The region of Jammu and Kashmir is separated by the Line of Control from the Pakistani-administered territories of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the west and north, respectively. Provisions for the formation of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir were contained within the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which was passed by both houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. The act re-constituted the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, 'Jammu and Kashmir' and 'Ladakh', with effect from 31 October 2019. Manoj Sinha is the current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Girish Chandra Murmu was the first Lieutenant Governor.

PM Narendra Modi participated in outreach sessions of G7 Summit in virtual format

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the outreach session of the G7 Summit on 12th and 13th June in virtual format. UK currently holds the presidency of the G7 and has invited India along with South Korea and South Africa as guest countries for the G7 Summit. The meeting was held in hybrid mode.
- This is the second time Prime Minister Modi was participated in G7. The UK has outlined four priority areas for its Presidency. These are leading the global recovery from coronavirus while strengthening resilience against future pandemics, promoting future prosperity by championing free and fair trade, tackling climate change and preserving the planet's biodiversity and championing shared values and open societies.

Group of Seven is an intergovernmental organisation consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The heads of government of the member states, as well as the representatives of the European Union, meet at the annual G7 Summit. The seven countries involved are also the largest IMF-advanced economies in the world. The concept of a forum for the world's major industrialized countries emerged before the 1973 oil crisis.

JNU enters top 1000 global universities ranking

- In a first, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has made it to the top 1,000 list of the 2022 QS World University rankings as its new undergraduate engineering programme now makes it eligible for the rating.
- JNU, often regarded as one of India's best universities, was ranked in the 561-570 bracket by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), which only rates institutions offering both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.
- As many as 22 Indian institutions have made it to the top 1,000 list, one more than those in the previous year. Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Guwahati, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Madras saw their rankings improve significantly.
- In the overall rankings, three Indian institutions have featured in the top 200 universities list. The India Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay, was India's top ranked institution for the fourth consecutive year as per the list.
- IIT, Delhi, was India's second-best university, having risen from the 193rd rank to 185 since last year. IIT, Madras, jumped 20 places and now ranks joint-255th, which is its highest position since 2017.
- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, is the world's top research university as per the citations per faculty indicator. It got a perfect score of 100/100 for the citations per faculty (CPF) metric in the QS analysis. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati, was ranked 41st in the category.

For the QS World University Rankings, institutions and universities were judged on six indicators-- academic reputation, employer reputation, citations per faculty, faculty/student ratio, international faculty ratio and international student ratio. No Indian university ranks among the top 250 in the faculty/student ratio category.

Delhi Master Plan 2041

- The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) gave its preliminary approval to the Master Plan draft for Delhi 2041. The draft has been made available on DDA's website for objections, suggestions from the public, after which it will be enforced.
- A city's master plan is like a vision document, prepared by the planners and the city's land-owning agency, which gives a direction to the city's future development. The draft includes analysis, proposals, recommendations, considering the population, economy, transportation, housing, land use and community facilities. Delhi's current master plan (Master Plan 2021) expires this year

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, Delhi city proper's population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai. Anil Baijal is the current & 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Delhi is a Union Territory with a legislature, and it came into being in 1991 under Article 239AA of the Constitution inserted by the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991.

Punjab becomes first State to use NFC-based eIDs

- **Punjab Government, keeping pace with the technology around the globe where Electronic Identity Cards (eIDs) have been introduced in numerous countries, has also initiated the usage of eIDs equipped with Near Field Communication (NFC) technology for their officers or employees through one of its prominent entity — Punjab Mandi Board. Notably, an NFC-enabled mobile device can act as a card or reader or both, enabling the user device to share information and to prove his or her identity.**

Near-Field Communication (NFC) is a set of communication protocols for communication between two electronic devices over a distance of 4 cm or less. NFC offers a low-speed connection with simple setup that can be used to bootstrap more-capable wireless connections. NFC devices can act as electronic identity documents and keycards. They are used in contactless payment systems and allow mobile payment replacing or supplementing systems such as credit cards and electronic ticket smart cards.

Arjan Kumar Sikri appointed chairperson of Grievance Redressal body for OTT platforms

- **Industry Body, Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) said former Supreme Court judge Justice Arjan Kumar Sikri will chair the Grievance Redressal Board of the recently formed Digital Publisher Content Grievances Council (DPCGC).**
- **The DPCGC currently has 14 publishers of online curated content as members, which include Amazon Prime Video, Alt Balaji, Apple, BookMyShow Stream, Eros Now, Firework TV, Hoichoi, Hungama, Lionsgate Play, MX Player, Netflix, Reeldrama, Shemaroo and Ullu.**
- **The Grievance Redressal Board (GRB) will address content grievances pertaining to the Council members' video online streaming services. It will function as an independent body and act as the second-tier within the three-tier grievance redressal mechanism as envisioned by the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.**

An over-the-top (OTT) media service is a media service offered directly to viewers via the Internet. OTT bypasses cable, broadcast, and satellite television platforms, the types of companies which traditionally act as controllers or distributors of such content. It has also been used to describe no-carrier cellphones, where all communications are charged as data, avoiding monopolistic competition, or apps for phones that transmit data in this manner, including both those that replace other call methods and those that update software. Over-the-top services are typically accessed via websites on personal computers, as well as via apps on mobile devices (such as smartphones and tablets), digital media players (including video game consoles), or televisions with integrated Smart TV platforms.

First meeting on Cyber Security Cooperation between India and Australia held virtually

- **The first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Cyber Security Cooperation between India and Australia was held virtually. The Joint Working Group on Cyber Security Cooperation is a mechanism established under the Framework Arrangement on the Cyber and Cyber-enabled Critical Technology Cooperation between India and Australia to implement the 2020-25 Plan of Action under the Framework. It brings together policy makers and working level experts in the area to strengthen bilateral cooperation.**
- **India and Australia shared cyber security threat assessments as well as information on legislation and national cyber strategies. Noting the need to strengthen security of critical information infrastructure as well as 5G technology and IoT devices, India and Australia agreed to enhance cooperation with private sector and academia and to work together in skill and knowledge development.**

Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world's sixth-largest country by total area. Australia's capital is Canberra, and its largest city is Sydney. Scott Morrison is serving as the current Prime Minister of Australia. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. The country's other major metropolitan areas are Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, and Adelaide. Australia is a highly developed country, with the world's fourteenth-largest economy.



Global terror funding watchdog FATF retains Pakistan on “enhanced follow-up” list

- **Asia Pacific Group (APG) of global terror funding watchdog - FATF has retained Pakistan on “enhanced follow-up” list.** Islamabad will continue to report back to Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering on the country’s progress to strengthen its implementation of anti-money laundering and combating financing terror measures.
- **Pakistan was put on the grey list by the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in June 2018** and the country has been struggling to come out of it. The Asia Pacific Group (APG) is a regional affiliate of the FATF.
- **The second Follow-Up Report on Mutual Evaluation of Pakistan released by the APG also downgraded the country on one criterion.** Pakistan is now compliant or largely compliant with 31 out of 40 FATF recommendations.
- **FATF’s Mutual Evaluation Report (MER) of jurisdictions is assessed in two domains - technical compliance or legal instruments (40 FATF recommendations) and demonstration of effectiveness (11 immediate outcomes).**
- **Pakistan’s MER was adopted in October 2019** in which the country was rated compliant and largely complaint in 10 out of 40 recommendations. After adoption of MER, Pakistan was placed under post-observation period by the FATF, which expired in February this year.

FATF is an intergovernmental organization founded in 1989 on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. The FATF Secretariat is housed at the OECD headquarters in Paris. It holds three Plenary meetings in the course of each of its 12-month rotating presidencies. As of 1 March 2021, FATF currently comprises 37 member jurisdictions and 2 regional organisations (Gulf Co-operation Council and European Commission), representing most major financial centres in all parts of the globe. **India became an Observer at FATF in 2006.** Since then, it had been working towards full-fledged membership. **On June 25, 2010, India was taken in as the 34th country member of FATF.** As of 21 June 2021, only two countries were on the FATF blacklist: North Korea and Iran

Danish lawmakers give go-ahead to build Copenhagen Island

- **Denmark’s Parliament voted in favour of building a 20-billion-kroner (\$ 3.3 billion) artificial island in Copenhagen** that will house at least 35,000 people who will be connected to downtown by a harbour tunnel and a subway line. The approval of Lynetteholmen — the suggested name for the new district — has been criticised for not having investigated enough the environmental consequences of its construction, among other issues.
- **Work is set to begin in 2035 and to be completed by 2070.** The artificial island will function as protection against future flooding in Copenhagen as a result of rising sea levels. It will be built north of the trendy Refshale Island, a former industrial area, and a **harbour tunnel is planned to be connected to the existing E20 highway.**

Denmark (Danish) is a Nordic country in Northern Europe. The Kingdom of Denmark is constitutionally a unitary state comprising Denmark proper and the two autonomous territories in the North Atlantic Ocean: the Faroe Islands and Greenland. Copenhagen is the capital city of Denmark. The krone is the official currency of Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands. Mette Frederiksen is the current Prime Minister of Denmark.

Maldives Abdulla Shahid elected as President for 76th United Nations General Assembly

- **Foreign minister of the Maldives Abdulla Shahid** was elected as the **President of the 76th United Nations General Assembly** with an overwhelming three-fourth majority, with 143 in favour, 48 against and no abstentions and no invalid votes.
- **The post of the UN General Assembly President rotated annually among regional groupings.** The 76th session (2021-22) is the **turn of the Asia-Pacific group and this is the first time Maldives** will be occupying the office of the PGA, said one of the two people mentioned above.
- Both Maldives and Afghanistan have friendly ties with India. **India's vote however went to the Maldives since New Delhi had committed support to Shahid prior to Rassoul entering the fray**, the first person cited above said. **The PGA's office is the highest office in the UN System, and reflects the collective goodwill of the 193 Member States of the UN.**
- **Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit** was an **Indian diplomat and politician** who was elected as the **first female President of the United Nations General Assembly.**

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN), serving as the main deliberative, policy-making, and representative organ of the UN. Its powers, composition, functions, and procedures are set out in Chapter IV of the United Nations Charter. **The UNGA is responsible for the UN budget, appointing the non-permanent members to the Security Council,** appointing the Secretary-General of the United Nations, receiving reports from other parts of the UN system, and making recommendations through resolutions. **It also establishes numerous subsidiary organs to advance or assist in its broad mandate.** The UNGA is the **only UN organ wherein all member states have equal representation.** It's is headquartered in New York City.

Maldives is a small archipelagic state in South Asia situated in the Indian Ocean. **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih** is the current President of the Maldives. **Maldivian rufiyaa** is the currency of the Maldives.

UNSC grants Antonio Guterres second term as chief

- **The United Nations Security Council voted to give Secretary General Antonio Guterres a second term,** with conflict resolution set to top his agenda at the world body's helm. The 72-year-old former **Prime Minister of Portugal** has held the office since 2017.
- **Around 10 other people also sought the position, but they were not formal candidates because none of the 193 UN member states endorsed them.** During a brief closed door session the **Security Council voted unanimously to recommend that the General Assembly give Guterres another term,** said the council's current president, Estonian ambassador Sven Jurgenson.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. Under the Charter, the **Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.** It has **15 Members,** and each Member has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions. The **permanent members of the United Nations Security Council** (also known as the **Permanent Five, Big Five, or P5**) are **China (formerly the Republic of China), Russia (formerly the Soviet Union), France, the United Kingdom, and the United States.** **Antonio Guterres** is a **Portuguese politician and diplomat** who is serving as the **ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations.** Previously, he was the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees** between 2005 and 2015.

Russia formally exits from Open Skies pact with US after Putin's approval

- In a landmark move, **President Vladimir Putin** signed a legislation which signalled the formal exit of **Russia from the 1992 Open Skies arms control treaty.**
- **The Open Skies treaty** which had come into effect on **January 1, 2002,** allowed both countries to conduct **unarmed surveillance flights over military installations** in a bid to ensure friendly terms between the two world powers.

- There were **34 other countries** who had signed the deal and were put forward by **George H. W. Bush's administration in 1992** and was signed in Helsinki by former US secretary of state **James Baker** along with **23 countries**.

Russia or the Russian Federation is a transcontinental country spanning **Eastern Europe and Northern Asia**. It is the **largest country in the world**; covering over **17,125,191 square kilometres (6,612,073 sq mi)**, consisting of **more than one-eighth of the Earth's inhabited land area**, extending to **eleven time zones**, and has bordering sixteen sovereign nations. **Vladimir Putin** is serving as the **current President of Russia** since 2012, previously being in the office from 1999 until 2008. He was also **Prime Minister from 1999 to 2000** and again from 2008 to 2012. **Russian ruble or rouble** is the currency of the Russian Federation. **Mikhail Mishustin** is serving as **Prime Minister of Russia** since 16 January 2020.

Pandemic propels Auckland to top of world's most liveable cities ranking

- **COVID-19** has shaken up the **Economist Intelligence Unit's annual ranking of most liveable cities**, propelling **Auckland to first place**, replacing **Vienna**, which crashed out of the **top 10** as the island nations of **New Zealand, Australia and Japan** fared best.
- **The Austrian capital had led the list since 2018** and for years ran neck and neck with **Melbourne at the top of the survey of 140 urban centres**. The **EIU generally does not make the full ranking public**. The last time **Auckland was in the top 10 was in 2017**, when it came eighth, a position **Melbourne** shared with **Geneva** this year. **Vienna** fell to **12th**.
- **Illustrating New Zealand's advantage this year, Wellington also entered the top 10**. It came fourth behind **Osaka**, which rose two spots to second place, and **Adelaide**, which leapfrogged its compatriots **Sydney** and **Melbourne** to third place from **10th**.
- **The European Union struggled to get its vaccination campaign off the ground and many member states including Austria imposed more lockdowns than they had hoped to**, hurting their cities' scores in the measure of 'culture and environment'. The **four other categories assessed are stability, healthcare, education and infrastructure**.

New Zealand is an island country in the southwestern **Pacific Ocean**. **Wellington** is the **capital city**. **Jacinda Ardern** is the **current New Zealand Prime Minister**. The **New Zealand dollar** is the **official currency** and legal tender of **New Zealand**

China hosts ASEAN ministers, with message for Quad

- **China** is hosting **foreign ministers from the 10 ASEAN countries** with **Beijing pushing for closer economic cooperation and aligning COVID-19 recovery efforts** even as it looks to **push back against the recent regional outreach of the Quad grouping**.
- **Chinese officers** have in latest weeks **stepped up criticism of the Quad — the casual India, Australia, Japan and United States grouping** — and of **Washington** particularly. **During latest visits to Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, China's Defence Minister** known as **on each nations to reject "military alliances"** — a time period that some **Beijing** are utilizing to explain the **Quad**, however a label that the group rejects.

China is a country in **East Asia** and the **world's most populous country**, with a **population of around 1.404 billion**. **Beijing** is the **capital** of **China**. **Xi Jinping** is serving as **president** of the **People's Republic of China**. **National People's Congress** is the **national legislature** of the **People's Republic of China**. **With 2,980 members in 2018**, it is the **largest parliamentary body in the world**. **China's currency yuan** joins the **International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies**. The **nine-dash line area** claimed by the **Republic of China**, later the **People's Republic of China (PRC)**, which covers most of the **South China Sea** and overlaps with the **exclusive economic zone claims of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam**.

El Salvador becomes first country in world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender

- **El Salvador** has become the **first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender**. **President Nayib Bukele** proposed the bill to embrace **cryptocurrency**.

- **Mr Bukele has touted the use of Bitcoin for its potential to help Salvadorans living abroad send remittances back home. The cryptocurrency has been adopted in the Central American country despite concern about the potential impact on its programme with the International Monetary Fund.**

El Salvador is a country in Central America. El Salvador's capital and largest city is San Salvador. Nayib Armando Bukele Ortiz is the current President of El Salvador. US Dollar is the currency of it.

First edition of 2-day Arab-India Energy Forum concludes

- **The first edition of the two day Arab-India Energy Forum which was held in a virtual format concluded. The Forum was held under the co-chairship of India and Morocco. The Forum witnessed exchange of knowledge, expertise and best practices in the fields of energy efficiency programmes for different economic sectors.**

Central African Republic names former finance minister as Prime Minister

- **Henri Marie Dondra has been named Prime Minister of the Central African Republic (CAR). The appointment of the former finance minister after former Prime Minister Firmin Ngrebada announced his resignation and that of his government following legislative elections.**

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country in Central Africa. Bangui is the capital and largest city of the Central African Republic. Central African CFA franc is the currency of six independent states in Central Africa: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. Faustin-Archange Touadera is the current President of the Central African Republic.

Ex-Mongolian Prime Minister Khurelsukh wins presidential election

- **Former Mongolian Prime Minister Ukhnaa Khurelsukh became the country's sixth democratically elected president further consolidating the power of the ruling Mongolian People's Party (MPP) with a landslide victory.**
- **Khurelsukh, who was forced to resign as Prime Minister after protests earlier this year, comfortably defeated Sodnomzundui Erdene of the opposition Democratic Party and Dangaasuren Enkhbat of the Right Person Electorate Coalition in a national vote.**

Mongolia is a landlocked country in East Asia. Ulaanbaatar is the capital and largest city of Mongolia. The togrog or tugrik is the official currency of Mongolia. Khaltmaagiin Battulga is the current as President of Mongolia.

Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, UAE Elected To UN Security Council for 2022-23 Term

- **Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates were elected unopposed to the powerful UN Security Council as non-permanent members for the 2022-23 term.**
- **The 193-member UN General Assembly held elections to elect five non-permanent members who will take their seats on the 15-nation Council for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2022.**

Norway builds world's first electric zero-emission fast ferry

- **Construction commenced in Norway for a fully electric passenger fast ferry, which is being called the first of its kind in the world. The vessel, which is due to enter service in the spring of 2022, is the first of three as part of a project to develop new modular methods for the design and production of zero-emission fast ferries.**
- **The first three ferries will be operated as demonstration models to validate the project's goal to reduce investment costs and delivery time for sustainable inshore passenger transportation.**

Norway is a Nordic country in Northern Europe whose mainland territory comprises the western and northernmost portion of the Scandinavian Peninsula. Oslo is the capital and most populous city of Norway. Harald V of the House of Glucksburg is the current King of Norway. Erna Solberg has been Prime Minister since 2013. The krone is the currency of Norway and its dependent territories.



G7 countries reach landmark deal to back global minimum tax of 15 % on multinational companies

- **Group of Seven (G7), a group of the world's richest nations, have reached a landmark deal to back a global minimum tax of at least 15 percent on multinational companies.**
- **G7 finance ministers meeting in London also agreed that the biggest companies should pay tax where they generate sales, and not just where they have a physical presence. The G7 ministers said they will commit to a global minimum tax of at least 15 percent on a country by country basis.**
- **We commit to reaching an equitable solution on the allocation of taxing rights, with market countries awarded taxing rights on at least 20% of profit exceeding a 10% margin for the largest and most profitable multinational enterprises, the agreement added.**
- **The ministers also agreed to move towards making companies declare their environmental impact in a more standard way so investors can decide more easily whether to fund them.**
- **The decision of imposing minimum global tax rate 15 per cent would be placed before the G-20 countries, a group of developing and developed nations, in a meeting scheduled for July, 2021 in Venice.**
- **Ireland, which has a tax rate of 12.5 percent, has come out against the global minimum tax, arguing that it would be disruptive to its economic model. Some major countries such as China have been quietly tracking the proceedings but are considered unlikely to buy in.**

India was the one of the first countries to introduce a 6 per cent equalisation levy in 2016, but the levy was restricted to online advertisement services. India has expanded the scope of the equalisation levy over the last few years, to tax non-resident digital entities. While the levy applied only to digital advertising services till 2019-20 at the rate of 6 percent, the government in April last year widened the scope to impose a 2 per cent tax on non-resident e-commerce players with a turnover of Rs 2 crore. The scope was further widened in the Finance Act 2021-22 to cover e-commerce supply or service when any activity takes place online. Since May 2021, this also includes any entity that systematically and continuously does business with more than 3 lakh users in India. Associated Concerns regarding India's Digital services tax are: 1. Eventually the tax may become a burden for Digital Consumers. 2. It could invite retaliatory tariffs (such as the latest one), as similar tariffs were imposed by the US on France. 3. It would also result in double taxation.

Walmart, Amazon and Apple top the 2021 Fortune 500 list

- **Fortune Magazine released its annual list of the 500 top companies in the United States, and retail giant Walmart ranked first for the ninth consecutive year, followed by Amazon and Apple. The FORTUNE 500 ranks companies by total revenue in 2020 fiscal year, and this year marks the 67th edition of it.**
- **The US-based IT company with large offshore presence in India, debuted on the list in 2011 at 484. It moved into the top 200 in 2018, and advanced nine places on this year's list. Companies in the Fortune 500 are ranked by total revenues for their respective fiscal years.**

- Together, the 500 corporations on the list generated \$13.8 trillion in revenue, dropping 3.15 percent year-on-year, and the amount sum equaled to two-thirds of the US economy, Fortune said.

NTPC joins UN's CEO Water Mandate to step up work on water conservation

- NTPC Ltd has become a signatory to the prestigious United Nations Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate. The CEO Water Mandate is a UN Global Compact initiative to demonstrate commitment and efforts of companies to better their water and sanitation agenda as part of long term Sustainable Development Goals.
- It is designed to assist companies in the development, implementation, and disclosure of. NTPC is India's largest power utility under Ministry of Power. Power Ministry has said that NTPC has already taken a series of measures across its plant locations on sound water management.
- It has said that NTPC will further imbibe the 3 R's (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) for water conservation and management while carrying out its core business activity of power generation.

NTPC Limited, formerly known as National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, is an Indian Public Sector Undertaking, engaged in the business of generation of electricity and allied activities. It is a company incorporated under the Companies Act 1956 and is promoted by the Government of India. The headquarters of the company is situated at New Delhi. NTPC's core business is the generation and sale of electricity to state-owned power distribution companies and State Electricity Boards in INDIA.

Gujarat: KASEZ becomes 'first green industrial city' in India

- Kandla Special Economic Zone (KASEZ), the oldest export zone in the country, has become the "first green industrial city" in India to receive a platinum rating under IGBC Green Cities Rating for existing cities in the industrial cities category.
- Compared to the 25,000 trees in KASEZ in 2019, the 1000-odd acres have 3.5 lakh trees. Most of these trees have been planted post 2019, using the Miyawaki forestation method. Apart from this, KASEZ also used plastic waste to line the artificial water bodies created inside the area to prevent water seepage and mix with the saline water. The SEZ initiatives with solar energy and LED lighting was also among the factors that contributed to the IGBC rating, officials said.

Twitter owner's firm launches solar-powered bitcoin mining facility in U.S.

- Twitter owner Jack Dorsey's payments venture Square announced it will partner with blockchain technology firm Blockstream Mining to build an open-source, solar-powered bitcoin mining facility in the U.S., aiming to drive adoption and efficiency of renewables within the bitcoin ecosystem. The payments firm, led by Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey, will invest \$5 million for the facility.
- The initiative comes weeks after Tesla CEO Elon Musk's move to establish a council along with American crypto miners to promote sustainable bitcoin mining. Dorsey, much like Musk, has shown great interest in the development of cryptocurrency, and believes bitcoin will become the world's largest single currency of the internet within a decade.

Twitter is an American microblogging and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as "tweets". Registered users can post, like and retweet tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Users access Twitter through its website interface or its mobile-device application software ("app"), though the service could also be accessed via SMS before April 2020. Twitter, Inc. is based in San Francisco, California. Twitter was created by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams in March 2006 and launched in July of that year.

InstantPay launches India's first Cashback Card in partnership with NPCI and YES Bank

- InstantPay, India's leading open banking platform announced the launch of the InstantPay Cashback Card in partnership with NPCI and YES Bank.
- It is a premium, 'future ready' contactless card powered by RuPay that offers 1 per cent unlimited cashback on most spends, so consumers can now grow their money, even when they spend.

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India. **Founded in 2008**, the NPCI is a not-for-profit organisation registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013, established by Reserve Bank of India & IBA. It is headquartered in Mumbai.

World Bank approves USD 500 million program to help boost India's MSME sector

- The World Bank has approved a USD 500 million program to help boost India's MSME sector. The programme targets improvements in the performance of five lakh 50 thousand MSMEs.
- Out of some 58 million MSMEs in the country, more than 40 per cent lack access to formal sources of finance. The MSME sector is the backbone of the country's economy, contributing 30 percent of India's GDP and 40 percent of exports.

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. David Robert Malpass is an American economic analyst and former government official serving as President of the World Bank Group since 2019. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world's poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries.

Indian Oil Corporation Limited signs MoU with Gujarat govt to set up 6 petrochemical projects

- Indian Oil Corporation Limited has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Gujarat government to set up six petrochemical projects. These projects will be set up around Vadodara with the investment of Rs. 24,000 crore.
- According to official release, the projects will include LuPech project for petrochemicals, Acrylics-Oxo Alcohol project at Dumad near Vadodara, infrastructure for KAhSPL at JR & Dumad, shifting of LAB TTL facility in Dumad and New Flare at JR and hydrogen dispensing facility.

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) is an Indian state owned oil and Gas Company with registered office at Mumbai and primarily headquartered in New Delhi. It is the largest commercial enterprise in the country.

Arun Raste joins NCDEX as MD and CEO

- Arun Raste took charge as Managing Director and CEO of the country's leading agri-commodity bourse National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX).
- Before joining NCDEX, Raste was associated with the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) as an executive director.

RBI nod for Ghosh's re-appointment as Bandhan Bank MD and CEO for three years

- Bandhan Bank has received RBI nod to re-appoint Chandra Shekhar Ghosh as its MD and CEO for three years. With 30 years of experience in microfinance and development, Ghosh had set up Bandhan as an NGO in April 2001 and it was converted into an NBFC later.

Bandhan Bank Ltd. is an Indian banking and financial services company, headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal. Bandhan Bank is present in 34 out of 36 states and Union Territories of India.

DBS tops Forbes 'World's Best Banks' list in India for second year in a row

- DBS has been named by Forbes in their list of World's Best Banks 2021. DBS was ranked #1 out of 30 domestic and international banks in India for the second consecutive year.
- This is the third edition of the 'World's Best Banks' list by Forbes, conducted in partnership with market research firm Statista. Over 43,000 banking customers across the globe were surveyed on their current and former banking relationships.

DBS Bank Ltd is a Singaporean multinational banking and financial services corporation headquartered in Marina Bay, Singapore. The company was known as The Development Bank of Singapore Limited, before the present name was adopted on 21 July 2003 to reflect its changing role as a global bank. Headquartered in the commercial capital of Mumbai, DBS operates via a network of 33 bank branches across 22 cities in India.

BharatPe marks its first acquisition with Payback India

- **BharatPe has acquired 100% of Payback India, a multi-brand loyalty programme, from American Express and ICICI Investments Strategic Fund for an undisclosed amount. This is the first ever acquisition by the digital payments app.**
- **Launched in 2010, Payback India is a brand loyalty platform that allows customers to earn and redeem points on payments made at partner merchant points. Payback claims to have 100 million users in India. BharatPe makes payment acceptance simple by offering merchants a single QR to accept all payment apps such as PayTm, PhonePe, Google Pay, BHIM and 150+ other UPI apps.**

India slips 12 spots to 55th position in global home price index

- **India has moved down 12 spots in the global home price index to 55th rank in Q1 2021 against 43rd rank in Q1 2020, with a decline of 1.6 percent year-on-year (YoY) in home prices, Knight Frank, an international property consultancy, in its latest research report - Global House Price Index - Q1 2021.**
- **The Global House Price Index tracks the movement in mainstream residential prices across 56 countries and territories worldwide using official statistics.**

India to soon get its first subscription-based airline

- **Prince Air will start operating with leather recliner studded featuring all-business-class layout airplanes with 90-100 seats. Flights such as Airbus A320 or A321 family offering a substantial amount of space will be used for the two to three-hour routes the airline is targeting.**
- **Apart from the multiple flights options, the Prince Air monthly subscription allows fliers to arrive at the airport just 30 mins before departure. Passengers also have the benefits of switching their flights and choosing from a wide range of departures.**

Google to build undersea cable Firmina to connect Latin America and the US

- **Alphabet's Google was building an undersea cable that would connect the United States, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, to bolster Internet connection capacity between these regions.**
- **The cable, called Firmina, will be the longest cable in the world adding that it will run from the East Coast of the United States to Las Toninas, Argentina, with additional landings in Praia Grande, Brazil, and Punta del Este, Uruguay.**
- **"Firmina will improve access to Google services for users in South America. With 12 fibre pairs, the cable will carry traffic quickly and securely between North and South America, giving users fast, low-latency access to Google products such as Search, Gmail, and YouTube, as well as Google Cloud services,".**

Alphabet Inc. is an American multinational conglomerate headquartered in Mountain View, California. It was created through a restructuring of Google on October 2, 2015, and became the parent company of Google and several former Google subsidiaries. Larry Page and Sergey Brin announced their resignation from their executive posts in December 2019, with the CEO role to be filled by Sundar Pichai, also the CEO of Google. Page and Brin remain co-founders, employees, board members, and controlling shareholders of Alphabet Inc.



Inventions/Discoveries

For the first time, scientists find X-ray emission from Uranus

- Astronomers have spotted X-ray emissions from the planet Uranus for the first time. The international team, led by William Dunn at Mullard Space Science Laboratory in the UK, discovered the signals through new analysis of data from NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory. The observations could provide important guidance for upcoming X-ray studies of Uranus and Neptune.
- X-ray emissions have been detected from most planets in the solar system and can originate from a variety of processes including the scattering of X-ray photons from the Sun; collisions between plasmas and planetary rings; and aurorae generated as solar winds interact with polar atmospheres. Until recently, however, evidence for X-ray emissions were notably absent from the solar system's two ice giants: Uranus and Neptune.
- Through new analysis of data gathered by the Chandra X-ray Observatory, Dunn's team have identified three clear X-ray signals originating from Uranus: first in 2002, and then on two consecutive days in 2017. These observations are particularly interesting because of the planet's unique orientation. Unlike other planets in the solar system, Uranus's rotational axis lies parallel to its orbital plane and the planet's magnetic field has a significant tilt relative to its axis of rotation. Indeed, the magnetic field misses the planet's centre by roughly a third of its radius.

Uranus is the seventh planet from the Sun. Its name is a reference to the Greek god of the sky, Uranus, who, according to Greek mythology, was the great-grandfather of Ares (Mars), grandfather of Zeus (Jupiter) and father of Cronus (Saturn). It has the third-largest planetary radius and fourth-largest planetary mass in the Solar System. Uranus is similar in composition to Neptune, and both have bulk chemical compositions which differ from that of the larger gas giants Jupiter and Saturn. For this reason, scientists often classify Uranus and Neptune as "ice giants" to distinguish them from the other giant planets. Uranus's atmosphere is similar to Jupiter's and Saturn's in its primary composition of hydrogen and helium, but it contains more "ices" such as water, ammonia, and methane, along with traces of other hydrocarbons.

Forest, tree cover in India increases by 24.56% to over 8 lakh sq kms

- The forest and tree cover in the country has reached 24.56 per cent of the geographic area which is spread over eight lakh square kilometres. India has increased its forest and tree cover by 15 thousand square kilometres in the last six years.
- The theme of this year's World Environment Day is 'Reimagine. Recreate. Restore.' as this year marks the beginning of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The Union Environment Minister further said, India is home to rich wildlife and biodiversity having 70 per cent Tiger and Asiatic Lions and 60 percent of Leopard global population. He said, substantial increase in the population of big cats in the last seven years reflects the Government's commitment towards conservation of wildlife and environment.
- The Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru has achieved net energy neutral status by saving nearly 22 lakh units of energy in 2020-21.

Navy inducts three indigenously-built advanced light helicopters ALH MK-III

- **The Indian Navy inducted three indigenously-built advanced light helicopters ALH MK-III** that would be used for maritime reconnaissance and coastal security. **The three helicopters, made by the Centre-run Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, were inducted at the Indian Naval Station (INS) Dega, Eastern Naval Command (ENC), in Visakhapatnam.**
- **These helicopters are fitted with modern surveillance radar and electro-optical equipment,** which enable them to undertake the role of maritime reconnaissance in addition to providing long-range search and rescue, both by day and night. In addition to special operations capabilities, ALH MK-III is also fitted with a heavy machine gun to undertake constabulary missions.

On World Oceans Day, naturalists unveil Chennai's marine biodiversity

- From the last quarter of 2020 to the first of 2021, a six-member team of young naturalists which Madras Naturalists' Society honorary secretary G Vijay Kumar dotingly terms 'Chennai's own Ocean's Six' explored five biodiversity hotspots: Pulicat Lagoon, Adyar Estuary, Kovalam-Muttukadu Backwaters, Odiyur-Mudhaliyarkuppam Lagoon, and Kaliveli Lake-Yedaiynthittu Estuary. This tiny group would move around, splintered into tinier bits of 2s to maintain social distancing.

Assam notifies Dihing Patkai as its 7th National Park

- **Government of Assam has added has notified Dihing Patkai as a National Park.** "Raimona and Dihing Patkai National Parks have been formally notified, adding to Assam's total tally of National Park (NP) to 7. Assam has become the second state in the country to have the highest number of NPs.

Tata Memorial Hospital, IIT Bombay Collaborate for 'First in India' CAR-T Cell Therapy for Cancer Treatment

- **In a first for India, Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell (CAR-T) therapy, a type of gene therapy for blood cancer treatment, was successfully conducted at the Bone Marrow Transplant unit at the Advanced Centre for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer (ACTREC), Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai in collaboration with IIT Bombay.**
- **The CAR-T therapy has emerged as a breakthrough in cancer treatment,** and clinical trials across the globe have shown promising results in end-stage patients, particularly the ones suffering from acute lymphocytic leukemia.

Gopal Rai inaugurates Delhi govt's first greenhouse

- **Environment minister Gopal Rai inaugurated the Delhi government's first greenhouse at the ITO Nursery to "grow plants using modern techniques".** The greenhouse has been developed to grow the maximum number of medicinal plants in minimal time.

Maharashtra govt. clears action plan to protect heritage trees

- **The Maharashtra Cabinet passed an action plan to protect and preserve trees older than 50 years in urban areas by terming them heritage trees.**

India's first medical drone delivery trials from June 18

- **India's first official beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) medical drone delivery experiment is scheduled to begin this week in Gauribidanur, some 80 km from Bengaluru.**
- **While the consortium of firms led by Bengaluru's Throttle Aerospace Systems (TAS) had got Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) approval for object delivery experiments the pandemic had led to delays in some other permissions from agencies.**



Sports Personalities in News

Virat Kohli recently became the first Asian in the world to reach 125 million followers on the social media platform Instagram

- **Indian skipper Virat Kohli recently became the first Asian in the world to reach 125 million followers on the social media platform Instagram.**
- **He is also the only cricketer on the list. Kohli had become the first cricketer to enter the elite club of people with more than 100 million followers on Instagram.**
- **Kohli currently ranks number 21st on the list of most followed personalities on Instagram, just below model Kourtney Kardashian, who has 1 million more followers than the Indian batting superstar.**
- **Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo is the most followed person on Instagram with more than 290 million followers, followed by Dwayne Johnson with 244 million.**

Sergio Perez Wins F1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix

- **In the end, it was Sergio Perez taking a well earned second win of his Formula One career, his first for Red Bull Honda.** Following him home in second place was Sebastian Vettel scoring his first podium for Aston Martin, with AlphaTauri's Pierre Gasly rounding off the podium.

Virendra Nanavati elected as FINA Bureau member

- **India's Virendra Nanavati was elected as a member of International Swimming Federation (FINA) Bureau at the world body's General Congress held in Doha in Qatar.**
- **Nanavati, who is currently a vice-president of Indian Olympic Association and executive director of Swimming Federation of India (SFI), is the first Indian to be elected as a Bureau member of the FINA. He was elected for the term of 2021-2025.**

India's Sunil Chhetri passes Lionel Messi in international goals

- **Indian football star Sunil Chhetri has surpassed Lionel Messi in international goals, after scoring both goals in his country's 2-0 win over Bangladesh in Qatar's capital Doha.**
- **Chhetri moved past Argentinian Messi's 72 goals when he opened the scoring in the 79th minute in a qualifying match for the 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup.**

Central Athlete Injury Management System launched for training of athletes for 2024 Olympics

- **Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has launched the Central Athlete Injury Management System (CAIMS) for streamlining the sports medicine and rehabilitation support offered to the athletes.**
- **It aims to provide the best of sports injury management support nearest to the athlete's geographical location. CAIMS will help to standardize appropriate injury treatment protocol for athletes across the country.**
- **It will start with support for athletes who are a part of the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) development group expected to participate in 2024 and beyond.**

Aruna Tanwar becomes first Indian taekwondo athlete to qualify for Paralympics

- India's Aruna Tanwar, world No.4 in the women's U 49 category, has been awarded a wild card entry for the Tokyo Paralympic Games 2020. She thus becomes the first Indian taekwondo athlete to qualify for the Paralympics.

Barbora Krejcikova wins French Open women's singles title

- Barbora Krejcikova of Czech Republic has won the Women's Singles French Open title by defeating 31st seeded Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia.
- This comes a day after Krejcikova won the women's singles title on Saturday. In the doubles event, Krejcikova and Siniakova defeated the pair of Iga Swiatek and Bethanie Mattek-Sands 6-4 6-2. **With this victory, Krejcikova has become the first player to win both the women's singles and doubles event at the French Open since Mary Pierce achieved the feat way back in 2000.**

Wrestler Vinesh Phogat wins gold in women's 53 kg freestyle at Poland Ranking Series

- Tokyo Olympic Games bound wrestler Vinesh Phogat won the women's 53 kg freestyle gold with an 8-0 win over Khrystyna Bereza of Ukraine at the Poland Ranking Series in Warsaw.

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

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

Sanctioned Bench Strength of Telangana HC to go up from 24 to 42

- **Chief Justice of India N. V. Ramana's initiative has resulted in fulfilment of a long pending request of the High Court of Telangana. The Sanctioned Bench Strength will go up from 24 to 42.**
- The proposal for hike in sanctioned Bench Strength from 24 to 42 has been pending since February 2019. The pendency of cases have **gone up alarmingly to 2.37 lakh.**
- **The increase in sanctioned Bench strength of Telangana High Court, which is one of the biggest in a long time, will come into effect from June 8, 2021, the date on which Justice Ramana gave his approval. Out of 42 judges, 32 will be permanent judges and 10 will be additional judges while elevations from Bar to be 28 and from the Judicial Services to be 14.**
- The proposal to increase sanctioned Bench strength, in view of the proportionately higher pendency in the State High Court, has been pending for over two years. **The proposal was sent to Union Minister of Law and Justice by the then Chief Justice of Telangana High Court in February, 2019. The same was endorsed by Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao.**

Education Ministry develops online module for compiling out-of-school children's data

- **The Education Ministry has developed an online module for compiling out-of-school children's data identified by each State and Union Territory and map it with Special Training Centres on the PRABANDH portal.**
- Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has informed that **Child-wise information of the identified out of school children and Special Training Centres** for them will be uploaded at block level under the Block Resource Coordinators.

'Namaste Yoga' mobile App launched in curtain raiser event for 7th International Day of Yoga

- **'Namaste Yoga' a mobile application was launched in the curtain raiser event for the 7th International Day of Yoga.**
- The event was **organised by the Ministry of Ayush in association with the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga. The series has been produced by Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga.**

Child labour swells for first time in two decades: UN

- **The world has marked the first rise in child labour in two decades and the coronavirus crisis threatens to push millions more youngsters toward the same fate. In a joint report, the International Labour Organization and the UN children's agency UNICEF said the number in child labour stood at 160 million at the start of 2020 -- an increase of 8.4 million in four years.**
- The hike began before the pandemic hit and marks a dramatic reversal of a downward trend that had seen **child labour numbers shrink by 94 million between year 2000 and 2016.**

2 New TRIBES India outlets inaugurated at Daman and Silvassa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu: the first in the Union Territory

- **To help the tribal artisans and forest dwellers cope with these unprecedented times, and as a part of its ongoing initiatives to promote the livelihood of the tribal artisans through marketing and provide support to tribal produce and products, TRIFED is expanding its retail operations across the country.**
- In this context, **two new outlets were inaugurated at Daman and at Silvassa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli by Shri Praful Patel, Administrator to the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.**

Meghan Markle releases first children's book 'The Bench'

- **The first children's book by Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, is a multicultural tribute to fatherhood. "The Bench," a picture story published by Random House Children's Books, celebrates the bond between Meghan's husband Prince Harry and son Archie and fathers and sons in general.**

- **The book's jacket describes Meghan, the actor formerly known as Meghan Markle,** as “a mother, wife, feminist, and activist,” committed to “activating compassion in communities across the world. She currently resides in her home state of California with her family, two dogs, and a growing flock of rescue chickens.” In announcing “The Bench” last month, she said it began as a Father’s Day poem written a month after Archie’s birth, in 2019.
- **Publication of “The Bench” comes four days after the birth of the couple’s second child, Lilibet “Lili” Diana Mountbatten-Windsor, named in part for Harry’s grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II,** whose family nickname is Lilibet, and his late mother, Princess Diana. Meghan was pregnant with Lilibet while working on the book and the final illustration shows Harry and Archie, now a toddler, at the family’s chicken coop. Meghan is in the garden on the opposite page, wearing a sun hat, holding an infant in a sling.
- **Meghan and Harry announced last year they were quitting royal duties and moving to North America,** their reasons including the racist attitudes of the British media. In a TV interview in March with Oprah Winfrey, they described unnerving comments about how dark Archie’s skin might be before his birth and Meghan talked about isolation so intense she contemplated suicide.

Delhi, Mumbai first to get mobile CNG filling service

- **Delhi and Mumbai became the country’s first cities to get mobile CNG filling service. IGL designed the mobile refuelling units for Delhi-NCR and Mahanagar Gas Ltd for Mumbai,** with Petroleum and Explosive Safety Organisation as the co-developer for both.
- **According to the Government these Mobile Refueling Unit (MRU) will help achieve supply of CNG in areas not yet connected through pipelines or at places** where there is scarcity of land parcels to set up conventional CNG stations. They will ensure round-the-clock and doorstep delivery of CNG at no extra cost. It can store up to 1,500 kg CNG and can fill 150 to 200 vehicles per day.

Tiananmen Square: The Making of a Protest by Vijay Gokhale

- **The period from 1989-1991 was a historically significant time that continues to shape the world we live in today. Bookending it were the Tiananmen Square protests,** the subject of former Indian foreign secretary and ambassador to China Vijay Gokhale’s book. The critical months of April-June 1989 in China have sometimes been overlooked, but Gokhale makes a convincing case that it is crucial to understand the developments around the protests because they shaped the China that India and other countries face today.
- **The author Vijay Gokhale** is an illustrious diplomat having recently retired as the Indian foreign secretary. Prior to that, he was the Indian ambassador to Beijing and is counted among the most astute China experts in the country.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Indian IFS officer K Nagaraj Naidu named to lead UN bureaucracy for a year

- **Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer K Nagaraj Naidu was named chef de cabinet by the incoming UN general assembly president, Maldivian foreign minister Abdulla Shahid, for the duration of his one-year tenure to lead the world body through its return to normalcy as countries strive to bring the pandemic under control.**
- **Naidu will probably be the first Indian diplomat to be named to this position, and as such, his appointment bears testimony to India's growing influence in the world body.**

IIT Kanpur professor Mukesh Sharma appointed honorary member of WHO body

- **Mukesh Sharma, a faculty at IIT Kanpur, has been appointed as an honorary member of World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Air Pollution and Health - Technical Advisory Group (GAPH-TAG).**
- **Mukesh Sharma has been associated with WHO, Geneva, International Council for Clean Transport, Clean Air Asia United National Environmental Program, Bangkok, and the World Bank. He will now be part of the WHO advisory group on interventions and policies for air pollution control in 194 member states.**

US Senate confirms first Muslim-American as federal judge

- **The US Senate has approved the historic nomination of Pakistani-American Zahid Quraishi to the District Court in New Jersey, making him the first Muslim federal judge in the country's history.**
- **The Senate confirmation, by a vote of 81 to 16, touched off a wave of congratulatory messages on social media from Democrats and progressives. Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey called Judge Quraishi "an excellent addition to the court." Senator Mazie Hirono of Hawaii said "Congratulations Judge Quraishi!" The Senate majority leader, Chuck Schumer of New York, and Senator Gary Peters of Michigan released congratulatory messages too.**

Mahesh Kumar Jain re-appointed as RBI Deputy Governor

- **"The Central Government has re-appointed Shri Mahesh Kumar Jain as Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India for a period of two years with effect from June 22, 2021, or until further orders, whichever is earlier, upon completion of his existing term on June 21, 2021," the central bank said in a statement.**
- **Jain was appointed as deputy governor for three years in June 2018. Before joining the Reserve Bank of India, he was managing director of IDBI Bank. The other three serving deputy governors are Michael Patra, M Rajeshwar Rao and T Rabi Sankar.**

AWARDS

Assam government to confer awards on lines of Bharat Ratna, Padma awards

- Apart from the Asom Ratna award, the Assam government has also decided to bestow the 'Asom Bibhushan', 'Assam Bhushan' and 'Asom Shree' awards each year.
- The Assam cabinet has decided to institute the 'Asom Ratna' award to be presented every year to one person who has made a significant contribution to society.
- The cabinet also decided to bestow 'Asom Bibhushan' award to three people, 'Assam Bhushan' to five people and 'Asom Shree' to 10 people every year.
- The awards will be accompanied by a cash reward of Rs 5 lakhs, Rs 3 lakhs, Rs 2 lakhs and Rs 1 lakh, respectively, with other benefits like free medical treatment of critical illness, free stay at Assam Bhawans, free travel on ASTC buses, among others.

Indian-origin journalist bags Pulitzer for exposé on China's vast detention camps for Muslims

- Megha Rajagopalan, an Indian-origin journalist, along with two contributors has won the Pulitzer Prize for innovative investigative reports that exposed a vast infrastructure of prisons and mass internment camps secretly built by China for detaining hundreds of thousands of Muslims in its restive Xinjiang region.
- Rajagopalan from BuzzFeed News is among two Indian-origin journalists who won the US' top journalism award. Rajagopalan's Xinjiang series won the Pulitzer Prize in the International Reporting category.
- In 2017, not long after China began to detain thousands of Muslims in Xinjiang, Rajagopalan was the first to visit an internment camp - at a time when China denied that such places existed, BuzzFeed News said.
- Neil Bedi won for local reporting. Bedi along with Kathleen McGrory has been awarded the prize for the series exposing a Sheriff's Office initiative that used computer modelling to identify people believed to be future crime suspects.

The Pulitzer Prize is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature and musical composition within the United States. It was established in 1917 by provisions in the will of Joseph Pulitzer, who had made his fortune as a newspaper publisher and is administered by Columbia University. Prizes are awarded yearly in twenty-one categories. In twenty of the categories, each winner receives a certificate and a US\$15,000 cash award (raised from \$10,000 in 2017). The winner in the public service category is awarded a gold medal.

Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen conferred with Spain's top award

- Indian economist and Nobel Laureate, Amartya Kumar Sen has been conferred with the '2021 Princess of Asturias Award' by Spain in the social sciences category. Princess of Asturias Awards is annual prizes awarded by the Princess of Asturias Foundation in Spain to individuals, entities or organizations from around the world who make notable achievements in the sciences, humanities, and public affairs.

Veteran Indian Chemist C.N.R. Rao Receives 2020 International ENI Award

- Noted Indian scientist and Bharat Ratna Professor, C.N.R. Rao has been felicitated with the International Eni Award 2020 (also called the Energy Frontier award). The International Eni Award is considered to be the Nobel Prize in Energy Research. He has been conferred the prize for his work on metal oxides, carbon nanotubes and other materials and two-dimensional systems.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Oceans Day

- **The second fully virtual celebration of United Nations World Oceans Day, on 8 June 2021**, will highlight the theme of **The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods**.
- **“The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods” is the theme for World Oceans Day 2021**, as well as a declaration of intentions that launches a decade of challenges **to get the Sustainable Development Goal 14, “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources”, by 2030.**

World Pest Day

- **Every June 6 is World Pest Day or sometimes called World Pest Awareness Day.** The day was created to raise awareness of how pest management helps preserve the quality of life for you and your loved ones.
- **It’s estimated 900-million insects types can be pests.** They fall into four different categories based on body types: 1. beetles; 2. flies; 3. moths and butterflies; and 4. ants, bees and wasps.

International Albinism Awareness Day

- **International Albinism Awareness Day is celebrated annually on June 13** to celebrate the human rights of persons with albinism worldwide. **“Strength Beyond All Odds” is the theme for this year’s International Albinism Awareness Day.**
- In June 2015, **the Human Rights Council appointed Ms. Ikponwosa Ero as the first Independent Expert** on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism.

World Blood Donor Day

- **World Blood Donor Day takes place on 14 June each year.** The aim is to raise global awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products for transfusion and of the critical contribution voluntary, unpaid blood donors make to national health systems.
- **For 2021, the World Blood Donor Day slogan will be “Give blood and keep the world beating”.** The message highlights the essential contribution blood donors make to keeping the world pulsating by saving lives and improving others’ health. The global theme of World Blood Donor Day changes each year in recognition of the selfless individuals who donate their blood for people unknown to them.

References:

The Hindu
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Press Information Bureau of India
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Business Standard
News on AIR
Hindustan Times

QUESTIONS

- Which of the following has become the “first green industrial city” in India to receive a platinum rating under IGBC Green Cities Rating for existing cities in the industrial cities category?
(a) Kandla Special Economic Zone (b) Gurugram Special Economic Zone
(c) Noida Special Economic Zone (d) Surat Special Economic Zone
- Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the E-100 pilot project in _____ to mark the World Environment Day.
(a) Nagpur (b) Pune (c) Bengaluru (d) Chennai
- Recently, Group of Seven (G7), a group of the world’s richest nations, have reached a landmark deal to back a global minimum tax of at least _____ on multinational companies.
(a) 7 percent (b) 12 percent (c) 15 percent (d) 20 percent
- Recently, Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ has approved the release of _____ for States and UTs.
(a) Performing Grade Industry 2019-20 (b) Performance Growth Index 2019-20
(c) Performance Growth Interference 2017-19 (d) Performance Grading Index 2019-20
- Recently, India’s rank has slipped by two places from last year to _____ on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted as a part of the 2030 agenda by 193 United Nations member states in 2015.
(a) 87th (b) 117th (c) 126th (d) 134th
- India’s first electric vehicles-only area” will be developed in _____.
(a) Assam (b) Rajasthan (c) Gujarat (d) Uttar Pradesh
- Which of the following Indian Navratna Companies has become a signatory to the prestigious United Nations Global Compact’s CEO Water Mandate recently?
(a) NTPC Ltd (b) Coal India Ltd (c) BHEL (d) SAIL
- Which of the following countries Parliament recently voted in favour of building a 20-billion-kroner (\$ 3.3 billion) artificial island that will house at least 35,000 people who will be connected to downtown by a harbour tunnel and a subway line?
(a) Norway (b) Finland (c) Denmark (d) Ireland
- The theme of World Environment Day 2021 is:
(a) “Noise and Sound pollution” (b) ‘Ecosystem Restoration’
(c) ‘Time for Nature’ (d) “Air pollution”
- The United Nations World Oceans Day was on:
(a) 3rd June 2021 (b) 5th June 2021 (c) 8th June 2021 (d) 10th June 2021
- Who has been recently elected as the President of the 76th United Nations General Assembly?
(a) Foreign minister of Seychelles Sylvestre Radegonde
(b) Foreign minister of Maldives Abdulla Shahid
(c) Foreign minister of Sri Lanka Dinesh Gunawardena
(d) Foreign minister of Mauritius M Alan Ganoo
- Which of the following social networking services will partner with blockchain technology firm Blockstream Mining to build an open-source, solar-powered bitcoin mining facility in the U.S.?
(a) Facebook (b) Twitter (c) Instagram (d) Google
- The Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) will set up India’s first international maritime services cluster at _____.
(a) Bharuch City (b) GIFT City (c) Surat City (d) Jamnagar City

14. Recently, India has been elected to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the term 2022-24. The headquarters of ECOSOC is in:
 (a) London (b) Paris (c) The Hague (d) New York
15. Recently, InstantPay, India's leading open banking platform announced the launch of the InstantPay Cashback Card in partnership with NPCI and _____.
 (a) RBL Bank (b) YES Bank (c) ICICI Bank (d) HDFC Bank
16. Name the first Indian who was recently elected as a member of International Swimming Federation (FINA) Bureau?
 (a) Achyut Jamwal (b) Vibhuti Narayanan (c) Virendra Nanavati (d) Subhankar Chhatterjee
17. Recently, Indian Oil Corporation Limited has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the _____ government to set up six petrochemical projects.
 (a) Gujarat (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Tamil Nadu
18. Recently, The _____ inducted three indigenously-built advanced light helicopters ALH MK-III that would be used for maritime reconnaissance and coastal security.
 (a) Indian Navy (b) Indian Air Force (c) Indian Army (d) Indian Coast Guard
19. World Pest Day or sometimes called World Pest Awareness Day is observed every year on:
 (a) June 1 (b) June 3 (c) June 6 (d) June 8
20. Who won Formula One Azerbaijan Grand Prix?
 (a) Sergio Perez (b) Pierre Gasly (c) Sebastian Vettel (d) Valtteri Bottas
21. Recently, The President has appointed former IAS officer Anup Chandra Pandey as a/an _____.
 (a) Election Commissioner (b) Information Commissioner
 (c) Auditor General (d) Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog
22. Who among the following were nominated Rajya Sabha members recently?
 (a) Arun Mukherjee and Geeta Chandra (b) Munmun Sen and Partha Chhaterjee
 (c) Mahesh Jethmalani and Swapan Dasgupta (d) Mithun Chakravorthy and Bipasha Basu
23. In a landmark move, which of the following countries recently signalled the formal exit of from the 1992 Open Skies arms control treaty?
 (a) Russia (b) Germany (c) France (d) India
24. Who among the following took charge as Managing Director and CEO of the country's leading agri-commodity bourse National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX)?
 (a) Arun Raste (b) Hitesh Modi (c) Dibakar Bannerjee (d) Akshat Mukherjee
25. Which of the following became India's first cities to get mobile CNG filling service recently?
 (a) Delhi and Mumbai (b) Chennai and Bengaluru
 (c) Hyderabad and Lucknow (d) Kolkata and Mysuru
26. Recently, Bandhan Bank has received RBI nod to re-appoint _____ as its MD and CEO for three years.
 (a) Chandra Shekhar Ghosh (b) Deepak Pradhan
 (c) Atul Pednekar (d) Prabhakar Jha
27. Recently, The United Nations Security Council voted to give Secretary General Antonio Guterres a second term. Antonio Guterres is a former Prime Minister of:
 (a) Portugal (b) Finland (c) Ireland (d) Sweden

28. In the recent Economist Intelligence Unit's annual ranking of most liveable cities, which city stands at first position?
 (a) New York (b) Auckland (c) Canberra (d) Dhaka
29. Who among the following Indian footballer has recently surpassed Lionel Messi in international goals?
 (a) Ishan Pandita (b) Shah Abdul Samad (c) Sunil Chhetri (d) Rahul Bheke
30. The second fully virtual celebration of United Nations World Oceans Day is held on:
 (a) 5th June (b) 7th June (c) 8th June (d) 11th June
31. Name the village which has become the first village in India to vaccinate all its adult population against the novel coronavirus.
 (a) Weyan (b) Parinda (c) Fardapur (d) Atulyaghar
32. Which among the following state governments decided to confer awards on lines of Bharat Ratna and Padma awards recently?
 (a) Tripura (b) Sikkim (c) Meghalaya (d) Assam
33. Which of the following is the top ranked Indian University in the QS World University rankings?
 (a) IIT Bombay (b) IISc Bengaluru (c) AIIMS Delhi (d) AFMC Pune
34. Which of the following countries has become the first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender?
 (a) Ecuador (b) Chile (c) Argentina (d) El Salvador
35. Chief Justice of India N. V. Ramana's initiative has resulted in fulfilment of a long pending request of the High Court of Telangana. The Sanctioned Bench Strength will go up from 24 to _____.
 (a) 30 (b) 36 (c) 42 (d) 48
36. Recently, The first edition of the two day Arab-India Energy Forum which was held in a virtual format concluded. The Forum was held under the co-chairship of _____.
 (a) India and Saudi Arabia (b) India and Morocco
 (c) India and UAE (d) India and Oman
37. Who has been recently re-appointed as RBI Deputy Governor for a period of two years?
 (a) B P Kanungo (b) Mahesh Kumar Jain (c) M Rajeshwar Rao (d) Michael Patra
38. Which of the following Indian state governments has recently notified Dihing Patkai as a National Park?
 (a) Sikkim (b) Nagaland (c) Assam (d) Meghalaya
39. Name the first children's book by Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, which is a multicultural tribute to fatherhood.
 (a) The Bench (b) The Colour (c) The Forest (d) The First rain
40. For the first time, the scientists find X-ray emission from which of the following planets?
 (a) Saturn (b) Uranus (c) Jupiter (d) Mars
41. Recently, Ukhnaa Khurelsukh became the sixth democratically elected president of _____.
 (a) Indonesia (b) Portugal (c) Mongolia (d) Siberia
42. Who has been recently named chef de cabinet by the incoming UN general assembly president, Maldivian foreign minister Abdulla Shahid?
 (a) K Nagaraj Naidu
 (b) Atul Pilgaonkar
 (c) Bhaskar Chattopadhyay
 (d) A Ananthkumar

43. Which of the following banks was ranked #1 out of 30 domestic and international banks in India by Forbes in their list of World's Best Banks 2021?
 (a) Softbank (b) DBS
 (c) Royal Bank of Scotland (d) Standard Chartered Bank
44. Recently, _____ has acquired 100% of Payback India, a multi-brand loyalty programme, from American Express and ICICI Investments Strategic Fund.
 (a) BharatPe (b) PhonePe (c) Paytm (d) Google Pay
45. Which of the following countries built the world's first electric Zero-Emission fast ferry?
 (a) Finland (b) Ireland (c) Norway (d) Sweden
46. In a joint report by the International Labour Organization and the UN children's agency UNICEF, Child labour _____ for first time in two decades.
 (a) Decreased (b) Increased
 (c) Remained Constant (d) First Decreased and Then Increased
47. In a first for India, Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell (CAR-T) therapy, a type of gene therapy for blood cancer treatment, was successfully conducted at Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai in collaboration with _____.
 (a) IIT Bombay (b) IIT Madras (c) IIT Delhi (d) IIT Kanpur
48. Who became the first Asian in the world to reach 125 million followers on the social media platform Instagram?
 (a) Virat Kohli (b) Amitabh Bachchan (c) Narendra Modi (d) Sheikh Hasina
49. Who became the first Indian taekwondo athlete to qualify for the Paralympics?
 (a) Deepika Mahajan (b) Anita Pradhan (c) Aruna Tanwar (d) Vineeta Singh
50. The book Tiananmen Square: The Making of a Protest is authored by:
 (a) Harshdeep Singla (b) Vijay Gokhale (c) Amit Singhal (d) Mahesh Chandrakant Deshmukh
51. Alphabet's Google was building an undersea cable that would connect the United States, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, to bolster Internet connection capacity between these regions. Name the cable:
 (a) Alexandra (b) Auretd (c) Firmina (d) Grafiti
52. Name the first Union Territory where 2 New TRIBES India outlets inaugurated.
 (a) Puducherry (b) Daman and Diu & Dadra and Nagar Haveli
 (c) Andaman & Nicobar Islands (d) Lakshadweep
53. Who won the Women's Singles French Open title?
 (a) Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (b) Barbora Krejčíková
 (c) Deepanjala Kurshokh (d) Anatalie Kapov
54. Recently, Henri Marie Dondra has been named Prime Minister of the _____.
 (a) Central African Republic (CAR) (b) Honduras
 (c) Eritrea (d) Somalia
55. Who will chair the Grievance Redressal Board of the recently formed Digital Publisher Content Grievances Council (DPCGC)?
 (a) Justice Arun Kumar Mishra (b) Justice Arjan Kumar Sikri
 (c) Justice Kaustubh Acharya (d) Justice Deepak Misra
56. Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the _____ were elected unopposed to the powerful UN Security Council as non-permanent members for the 2022-23 term.
 (a) United Arab Emirates (b) Oman (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Jordan

57. What is the name of the Indian-origin journalist, along with two contributors won the Pulitzer Prize for innovative investigative reports that exposed a vast infrastructure of prisons and mass internment camps secretly built by China?
 (a) Deepika Luthra (b) Anjum Yashmin (c) Megha Rajagopalan (d) Meenakshi Kaustubh
58. Recently, Environment minister Gopal Rai inaugurated the Delhi government's first _____ at the ITO Nursery to "grow plants using modern techniques".
 (a) Greenhouse (b) Lighthouse (c) Amphitheatre (d) Atlas
59. International Albinism Awareness Day is observed on:
 (a) 9th May (b) 11th May (c) 13th May (d) 15th May
60. Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijju has launched _____ for streamlining the sports medicine and rehabilitation support offered to the athletes.
 (a) Central Authority Injury Management System (CAIMS)
 (b) Common Athlete Injury Management System (CAIMS)
 (c) Central Athlete Intuition Management System (CAIMS)
 (d) Central Athlete Injury Management System (CAIMS)
61. Name the mobile application which was launched in the curtain raiser event for the 7th International Day of Yoga.
 (a) 'Namaste Yoga' (b) 'Welcome Yoga' (c) 'Awagaman Yoga' (d) 'Salaam Yoga'
62. Which of the following became first State to use NFC-based eIDs?
 (a) Maharashtra (b) Haryana (c) Punjab (d) Uttar Pradesh
63. Recently, the first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Cyber Security Cooperation between _____ was held virtually.
 (a) India and Australia (b) India and USA (c) India and France (d) India and Germany
64. Recently, The US Senate has approved the historic nomination of Pakistani-American _____ to the District Court in New Jersey, making him the first Muslim federal judge in the country's history.
 (a) Zahid Quraishi (b) Gauhar Khan (c) Abid Quereshi (d) Mahtab Jahangiri
65. Which of the following is India's first subscription-based airline?
 (a) Maharaja Air (b) Queen Airlines (c) Prince Air (d) Chartered Air
66. India's first official beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) medical drone delivery experiment is scheduled to begin in _____.
 (a) Chennai (b) Bengaluru (c) New Delhi (d) Hyderabad
67. The Education Ministry has developed an online module for compiling out-of-school children's data identified by each State and Union Territory and map it with Special Training Centres on the _____ portal.
 (a) SWEEKAAR (b) PRABANDH (c) AWAKEN (d) KARYAKRAM
68. Who won the women's 53 kg freestyle gold at the Poland Ranking Series in Warsaw?
 (a) Ritu Phogat (b) Babita Phogat (c) Vinesh Phogat (d) Deepika Phogat
69. Who has been appointed as an honorary member of World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Air Pollution and Health - Technical Advisory Group (GAPH-TAG)?
 (a) Mukesh Sharma (b) Deepak Agrahari (c) Amit Vankatesh (d) Mridul Parashar
70. World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) is celebrated every year on:
 (a) 5th June (b) 11th June (c) 13th June (d) 14th June

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a Kandla Special Economic Zone (KASEZ), the oldest export zone in the country, has become the “first green industrial city” in India to receive a platinum rating under IGBC Green Cities Rating for existing cities in the industrial cities category.
2. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the E-100 pilot project in Pune to mark the World Environment Day.
3. c Group of Seven (G7), a group of the world’s richest nations, have reached a landmark deal to back a global minimum tax of at least 15 percent on multinational companies.
4. d Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ has approved the release of Performance Grading Index 2019-20 for States and UTs.
5. b India’s rank has slipped by two places from last year to 117 on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted as a part of the 2030 agenda by 193 United Nations member states in 2015.
6. c The Statue of Unity Area Development and Tourism Governance Authority (SOUADTGA) will develop the “country’s first electric vehicles-only area” in Gujarat’s Kevadia.
7. a NTPC Ltd has become a signatory to the prestigious United Nations Global Compact’s CEO Water Mandate.
8. c Denmark’s Parliament voted in favour of building a 20-billion-kroner (\$ 3.3 billion) artificial island in Copenhagen that will house at least 35,000 people who will be connected to downtown by a harbour tunnel and a subway line.
9. b The theme for World Environment Day 2021 is ‘Ecosystem Restoration’ and Pakistan will be the global host for the day.
10. c The second fully virtual celebration of United Nations World Oceans Day, on 8 June 2021, will highlight the theme of The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods.
11. b Foreign minister of the Maldives Abdulla Shahid was elected as the President of the 76th United Nations General Assembly with an overwhelming three-fourth majority, with 143 in favour, 48 against and no abstentions and no invalid votes.
12. b Twitter owner Jack Dorsey’s payments venture Square announced it will partner with blockchain technology firm Blockstream Mining to build an open-source, solar-powered bitcoin mining facility in the U.S., aiming to drive adoption and efficiency of renewables within the bitcoin ecosystem.
13. b Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) will set up India’s first international maritime services cluster at Gujarat International Finance Tec- (GIFT) City.
14. d India has been elected to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC for the term 2022-24. The headquarters of ECOSOC is in New York.
15. b InstantPay, India’s leading open banking platform announced the launch of the InstantPay Cashback Card in partnership with NPCI and YES Bank.
16. c India’s Virendra Nanavati was elected as a member of International Swimming Federation (FINA) Bureau at the world body’s General Congress held in Doha in Qatar. He was elected for the term of 2021-2025.
17. a Indian Oil Corporation Limited has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Gujarat government to set up six petrochemical projects.

- 18. a** The Indian Navy inducted three indigenously-built advanced light helicopters ALH MK-III that would be used for maritime reconnaissance and coastal security.
- 19. c** Every June 6 is World Pest Day or sometimes called World Pest Awareness Day.
- 20. a** In the end, it was Sergio Perez taking a well-earned second win of his Formula One career, his first for Red Bull Honda.
- 21. a** The President has appointed former IAS officer Anup Chandra Pandey as an Election Commissioner.
- 22. c** Mr. Swapan Dasgupta returns to complete his tenure after having resigned ahead of the West Bengal elections where he contested on the BJP ticket. The other nominated member is senior lawyer Mahesh Jethmalani.
- 23. a** In a landmark move, President Vladimir Putin signed a legislation which signalled the formal exit of Russia from the 1992 Open Skies arms control treaty.
- 24. a** Arun Raste took charge as Managing Director and CEO of the country's leading agri-commodity bourse National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX).
- 25. a** Delhi and Mumbai became the country's first cities to get mobile CNG filling service.
- 26. a** Bandhan Bank has received RBI nod to re-appoint Chandra Shekhar Ghosh as its MD and CEO for three years.
- 27. a** The United Nations Security Council voted to give Secretary General Antonio Guterres a second term, with conflict resolution set to top his agenda at the world body's helm. The 72-year-old former Prime Minister of Portugal has held the office since 2017.
- 28. b** COVID-19 has shaken up the Economist Intelligence Unit's annual ranking of most liveable cities, propelling Auckland to first place, replacing Vienna, which crashed out of the top 10 as the island nations of New Zealand, Australia and Japan fared best.
- 29. c** Indian football star Sunil Chhetri has surpassed Lionel Messi in international goals, after scoring both goals in his country's 2-0 win over Bangladesh in Qatar's capital Doha.
- 30. c** The second fully virtual celebration of United Nations World Oceans Day, on 8 June 2021, will highlight the theme of The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods.
- 31. a** Weyan, a village in district Bandipora (J&K) has become the first village in the country, where the entire population above 18 years has been vaccinated.
- 32. d** Apart from the Asom Ratna award, the Assam government has also decided to bestow the 'Asom Bibhushan', 'Assam Bhushan' and 'Asom Shree' awards each year.
- 33. a** IIT Bombay retains spot as top Indian institution.
- 34. d** El Salvador has become the first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender.
- 35. c** The Sanctioned Bench Strength will go up from 24 to 42.
- 36. b** The Forum was held under the co-chairship of India and Morocco.
- 37. b** Mahesh Kumar Jain re-appointed as RBI Deputy Governor for a period of two years.
- 38. c** Government of Assam has added has notified Dihing Patkai as a National Park.

- 39. a** “The Bench,” a picture story published by Random House Children’s Books, celebrates the bond between Meghan’s husband Prince Harry and son Archie and fathers and sons in general.
- 40. b** Uranus, which is the seventh planet from the sun, is reflecting X-rays.
- 41. c** Former Mongolian Prime Minister Ukhnaa Khurelsukh became the country’s sixth democratically elected president further consolidating the power of the ruling Mongolian People’s Party (MPP) with a landslide victory.
- 42. a** Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer K Nagaraj Naidu was named chef de cabinet by the incoming UN general assembly president, Maldivian foreign minister Abdulla Shahid, for the duration of his one-year tenure to lead the world body through its return to normalcy as countries strive to bring the pandemic under control.
- 43. b** DBS has been named by Forbes in their list of World’s Best Banks 2021. DBS was ranked #1 out of 30 domestic and international banks in India for the second consecutive year.
- 44. a** BharatPe has acquired 100% of Payback India, a multi-brand loyalty programme, from American Express and ICICI Investments Strategic Fund for an undisclosed amount.
- 45. c** Construction commenced in Norway for a fully electric passenger fast ferry, which is being called the first of its kind in the world.
- 46. b** Child labour swells for first time in two decades.
- 47. a** In a first for India, Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell (CAR-T) therapy, a type of gene therapy for blood cancer treatment, was successfully conducted at the Bone Marrow Transplant unit at the Advanced Centre for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer (ACTREC), Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai in collaboration with IIT Bombay.
- 48. a** Indian skipper Virat Kohli recently became the first Asian in the world to reach 125 million followers on the social media platform Instagram.
- 49. c** India’s Aruna Tanwar, world No.4 in the women’s U 49 category, has been awarded a wild card entry for the Tokyo Paralympic Games 2020.
- 50. b** Tiananmen Square: The Making of a Protest by Vijay Gokhale.
- 51. c** Alphabet’s Google was building an undersea cable that would connect the United States, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, to bolster Internet connection capacity between these regions.
- 52. b** In this context, two new outlets were inaugurated at Daman and at Silvassa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli by Shri Praful Patel, Administrator to the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.
- 53. b** Barbora Krejčíková of Czech Republic has won the Women’s Singles French Open title by defeating 31st seeded Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia.
- 54. a** Henri Marie Dondra has been named prime minister of the Central African Republic (CAR).
- 55. b** Industry body IAMAI said former Supreme Court judge Justice Arjan Kumar Sikri will chair the Grievance Redressal Board of the recently formed Digital Publisher Content Grievances Council (DPCGC).
- 56. a** Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates were elected unopposed to the powerful UN Security Council as non-permanent members for the 2022-23 term.

- 57. c** Megha Rajagopalan, an Indian-origin journalist, along with two contributors has won the Pulitzer Prize for innovative investigative reports that exposed a vast infrastructure of prisons and mass internment camps secretly built by China for detaining hundreds of thousands of Muslims in its restive Xinjiang region.
- 58. a** Environment minister Gopal Rai inaugurated the Delhi government's first greenhouse at the ITO Nursery to "grow plants using modern techniques".
- 59. c** "Strength Beyond All Odds" is the theme for this year's International Albinism Awareness Day on 13 May.
- 60. d** Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has launched the Central Athlete Injury Management System (CAIMS) for streamlining the sports medicine and rehabilitation support offered to the athletes.
- 61. a** 'Namaste Yoga' a mobile application was launched in the curtain raiser event for the 7th International Day of Yoga.
- 62. c** Punjab Government, keeping pace with the technology around the globe where Electronic Identity Cards (eIDs) have been introduced in numerous countries, has also initiated the usage of eIDs equipped with Near Field Communication (NFC) technology for their officers or employees through one of its prominent entity — Punjab Mandi Board.
- 63. a** The first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Cyber Security Cooperation between India and Australia was held virtually.
- 64. a** The US Senate has approved the historic nomination of Pakistani-American Zahid Quraishi to the District Court in New Jersey, making him the first Muslim federal judge in the country's history.
- 65. c** Prince Air will start operating with leather recliner studded featuring all-business-class layout airplanes with 90-100 seats.
- 66. b** India's first official beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) medical drone delivery experiment is scheduled to begin this week in Gauribidanur, some 80 km from Bengaluru.
- 67. b** The Education Ministry has developed an online module for compiling out-of-school children's data identified by each State and Union Territory and map it with Special Training Centres on the PRABANDH portal.
- 68. c** Tokyo Olympic Games bound wrestler Vinesh Phogat won the women's 53 kg freestyle gold with an 8-0 win over Khrystyna Bereza of Ukraine at the Poland Ranking Series in Warsaw.
- 69. a** Mukesh Sharma, a faculty at IIT Kanpur, has been appointed as an honorary member of World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Air Pollution and Health - Technical Advisory Group (GAPH-TAG).
- 70. d** Every year countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) on 14 June.