
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

14th June to 20th 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



India maintains 43rd rank on IMD's World Competitiveness Index; Switzerland tops chart

- India maintained 43rd rank on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by the Institute for Management Development (IMD) that examined the impact of COVID-19 on economies around the world this year.
- The 64-nation list was led by Switzerland, while Sweden has moved up to the second position (from sixth last year), Denmark has lost one place to rank third, the Netherlands has retained its fourth place and Singapore has slipped to the fifth place (from first in 2020).
- At eighth, Taiwan reached the top-10 for the first time since the ranking began 33 years ago (moving up from 11th last year). The UAE and the USA remain in their same spots as last year (9th and 10th, respectively). The top-performing Asian economies are, in order, Singapore (fifth), Hong Kong (seventh), Taiwan (eighth) and China (16th).
- The report said, “Capabilities in these areas preceding to the pandemic let these countries to address the economic repercussions of the crisis more successfully.” The report stated that economies that guaranteed the effectiveness of key public spending, such as business legislation, public finance and tax policy to ease the burden on the markets hit by COVID-19.
- IMD World Competitiveness Centre publishes the ranking annually that evaluates the prosperity and competitiveness of 64 nations by assessing four factors – infrastructure, economic performance, business efficiency and government efficiency.

The World Competitiveness Index is a comprehensive annual report and worldwide reference point on the competitiveness of countries. WCI was first published in 1989 and is compiled by the Institute for Management Development (IMD). In 2021, the IMD examined the impact of Covid-19 on economies around the world. It provides extensive coverage of 64 economies.

3 Centres of Excellence inaugurated in Karnataka under Indo-Israel Agricultural Project

- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar and Chief Minister of Karnataka B S Yediyurappa jointly inaugurated three Centers of Excellence established in Karnataka under the Indo-Israel Agricultural Project.
- The Centres of Excellence in Kolar, Bagalkote and Dharwad in Karnataka will implement advanced Israeli Agro-Technology tailored to local conditions. Kolar will work on Mango, Bagalkote on Pomegranate and Dharwad center on vegetables.
- The work will be towards demonstrating best practices and training farmers in Precision Agriculture through satellite imaging, advanced fertigation and beneficial demonstration of super Bhagwa canopy management techniques.
- Under the Indo-Israel Agricultural project, Villages of Excellence will also be set in eight states across India. Karnataka will get 10 such villages linked to Bagalkote and Kolar Centres of Excellence.

- **Indo-Israel Villages of Excellence** will focus on establishing modern agriculture infrastructure, support farmers with capacity building activities and enhance market linkages to optimise profitability of the farmers.

Israel is a country in the Middle East, Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority claim Jerusalem as their capital, however, neither claim is widely recognized internationally. Knesset is the unicameral national legislature of Israel. Israeli new shekel is the currency of Israel. Naftali Bennett is an Israeli politician serving as the 13th and current Prime Minister of Israel since 13 June 2021. Reuven Rivlin is serving as the 10th and current President of Israel since 2014.

UN body lauds success of Centre’s Aspirational Districts Programme

- **The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** has lauded the **Centre’s Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP)**, saying that it should serve as a “best practice” for other countries where regional disparities in development status persist for many reasons.
- In a report, the UNDP said, “Overall, ADP is a very successful model of local area development. It is aligned to the principle of “leave no one behind” – the vital core of the SDGs.” “Political commitment at the highest level has resulted in rapid success of the programme. It should serve as a best practice for several other countries where regional disparities in development status persist for many reasons”.
- **The 115 districts were identified from 28 states, at least one from each state. At the Government of India level, the programme is anchored by NITI Aayog.** In addition, individual Ministries have assumed responsibility to drive the progress of districts.

Aspirational Districts Programme was launched in January 2018, as the ‘Transformation of Aspirational Districts’ programme aims to quickly and effectively transform some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country. The broad contours of the programme are Convergence (of Central & State Schemes), Collaboration (of Central, State level ‘Prabhari’ Officers & District Collectors), and Competition among districts driven by a Mass Movement or a Jan Andolan.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the United Nations’ global development network. It promotes technical and investment cooperation among nations and advocates for change and connects countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life for themselves. **The UNDP provides expert advice, training and grants support to developing countries, with increasing emphasis on assistance to the least developed countries. The UNDP is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from UN member states. It is based in New York.**

Haryana tops Anemia Mukta Bharat Index

- **Haryana** has been ranked the best in the **Anemia Mukta Bharat (AMB) Index** among 29 states in the country. The ‘Anemia Mukta Bharat’, an initiative of the Union ministry of health & family welfare and UNICEF, has been launched to reduce the prevalence of anemia all over India.
- In a recently released scorecard by the Union ministry, **Haryana** was ranked at the top slot with an **AMB (Anemia Free India) Index of 46.7.** The **Anemia Mukta Bharat**, an initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and UNICEF, has been launched to reduce the prevalence of Anemia all over India. Notably, there are 34 National Programmes being run under the National Health Mission (NHM).

Anemia is caused due to iron deficiency. This condition lacks enough healthy red blood cells to carry adequate oxygen to your body’s tissues thus making the person feel tired and weak. **The lifespan of a red blood cell is around 120 days.**

Madhya Pradesh launched ‘Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan’

- In Madhya Pradesh, ‘**Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan**’ means free from corona with the help of a youth power campaign launched to make people aware about the COVID pandemic.

- **Madhya Pradesh is now at number 26 in the country** in terms of corona infection. At the same time, on the basis of the suggestions received from the various Crisis Management Committees, a new guide line will be issued in the state by June 15.
- **In the Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan**, college teachers and around 16 lakh students will be made aware of corona infection by learning Covid appropriate behavior and vaccination. This campaign will be run by the Higher Education and Technical Education Department in collaboration with the Public Health and Family Welfare Department.
- A mobile app has also been developed for effective real time online monitoring of the campaign. **On the other hand, now 20 persons each from the bride and groom side will be able to participate in the marriage ceremony. However, a corona test of all these persons will be mandatory.**

Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal. Nicknamed the “Heart of India” due to its geographical location in India. **Madhya Pradesh is the second-largest state in the country by area after Rajasthan. This state was the largest in India by area until 2000**, when its southeastern Chhattisgarh region was made as a separate state. MP has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India. The current governor of Madhya Pradesh is Anandiben Patel. Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the current Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.

In last 10 years, around 3 million hectares of forest cover added in India, enhancing the combined forest cover to almost one-fourth of the country’s total area

- **The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi delivered a keynote address at the UN “High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought” via video conference.** The Prime Minister spoke at the Opening Segment in his capacity as the President of the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
- **India is establishing a centre of excellence to develop a scientific approach to combat land degradation and is on track to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030 to achieve land degradation neutrality,** Prime Minister Narendra Modi said.
- Addressing virtually a high-level dialogue on desertification, **land degradation and drought organised by the UN General Assembly in New York**, Modi said, India which holds the current presidency of UN Convention of Combating Desertification (UNCCD), with this initiative, India would create a carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- **The Delhi Declaration, adopted at the 14th Conference of Parties to UNCCD in 2019**, called for better access and stewardship of land and emphasised gender sensitive transformative projects. In India, Modi said, **over the last 10 years, around 3 million hectares of forest cover has been added, enhancing the combined forest cover to almost one-fourth of the country’s total area.**

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) recently released the draft National Forest Policy 2018. The draft forest policy, 2018 will be an overarching policy for forest management. It aims at bringing a minimum of one-third of India’s total geographical area under forest or tree cover. It seems to address the concern of decline in forest productivity.

MoU signed for development of National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal in Gujarat

- **National Maritime Heritage Complex, a world-class facility is to be developed in the vicinity of the Archaeological Survey of India site of Lothal. It is located about 80 kms away from Ahmedabad in Gujarat.** This complex would be developed as an international tourist destination.
- An MoU has been signed between the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ministry of Culture and Tourism for Cooperation in Development of National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal in Gujarat.

Lothal was one of the southernmost cities of the ancient Indus Valley Civilization, located in the Bhal region of the modern state of Gujarat. Construction of the city began around 2200 BCE.

Tuberculosis-Free India will be achieved by 2025

- **Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Tuberculosis-Free India will be achieved by 2025.**
- Chairing a High-Level Meet with Corporates to discuss **Voluntary Crowd-Funding for treatment of patients suffering from Rare Diseases**, Dr Harsh Vardhan said, TB will be eliminated in the same expeditious manner as Polio.
- **Dr. Harsh Vardhan also enumerated the different steps taken by the government in facilitating creation of an environment** which promotes research and development of diagnostic and therapeutic interventions for rare diseases within the country.

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease usually caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis (MTB) bacteria. Tuberculosis generally affects the lungs, but can also affect other parts of the body. **Most infections show no symptoms, in which case it is known as latent tuberculosis. About 10% of latent infections progress to active disease which, if left untreated, kills about half of those affected.** Typical symptoms of active TB are a chronic cough with blood-containing mucus, fever, night sweats, and weight loss. It was historically called consumption due to the weight loss. Infection of other organs can cause a wide range of symptoms. **World Tuberculosis Day, observed on 24 March each year,** is designed to build public awareness about the global epidemic of tuberculosis and efforts to eliminate the disease.

PM Narendra Modi addresses Europe's largest digital and start-up event, VivaTech; Invites world to invest in India

- **Prime Minister, Narendra Modi virtually addressed the 5th edition of VivaTech.** VivaTech is one of the largest digital and startup events of Europe, held in Paris every year since 2016. PM Modi was invited as a **Guest of Honour to deliver the keynote address at VivaTech 2021,** which has been organised from 16-19 June 2021 in Paris.
- During his address, PM Modi invited the world to invest in **India based on the five pillars: Talent, Market, Capital, Eco-system and, Culture of openness.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India is adaptable and agile even in the middle of the pandemic. He pointed out that India implemented huge reforms across sectors, be it mining, space, banking, atomic energy and more during this period.
- **Other prominent speakers of the event include the President of France Mr. Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister of Spain Mr. Pedro Sanchez,** and Ministers/MPs from various European countries. **VivaTech is jointly organized by Publicis Groupe, a prominent advertising and marketing conglomerate,** and Les Echos, a leading French media group. The event brings together stakeholders in technology innovation and the startup ecosystem.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari addresses World Conference of BRICS Network Universities at IIT Bombay

- **A three day virtual Conference of BRICS Network Universities on the theme of electric mobility was inaugurated at IIT Bombay.** This conference is part of the engagements that **India is hosting under the education stream of the 13th BRICS Summit this year.**
- **BRICS Network University is a union of higher education institutions of the five BRICS member countries,** formed with the objective of **enhancing educational cooperation in general, and especially in the realm of research and innovation .** IIT Bombay is the lead institution of India for the BRICS Network University.
- **Shri Amit Khare, Secretary Higher Education, Government of India expressed hope that these interactions between the best minds from the BRICS countries will result in creation of a useful body of knowledge that will benefit each member country in their shared quest for sustainability and inclusive growth.**

BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (China, Brazil, Russia and India), before the induction of South Africa in 2010. In 2009, the first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

Government releases Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India

- Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Babul Supriyo called for generating awareness towards preventing and restoring land degradation for healthier and sustainable ecosystems. Speaking at a virtual event celebration of the Desertification and Drought Day, Shri Supriyo said, this will help better economy and overall human wellbeing.
- The Minister of State released the latest version of “Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India. It has been published by Space Application Centre, ISRO, Ahmedabad. The Atlas provides state wise area of degraded lands for the time frame 2018-19.
- India is striving towards achieving the national commitments of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and restoration of 26 Million ha of degraded land by 2030 which focus on sustainable and optimum utilisation of land resources.
- The event also observed release of Coffee Table Book “India Hosting UNCCD-COP 14” and a short film on UNCCD-COP 14. The commemoration of this event encourages individuals and groups to take initiatives that can keep the land healthy and productive.
- India hosted the 14th session of Conference of Parties (COP 14) of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in September 2019. India is striving towards achieving the national commitments of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and restoration of 26 Million ha of degraded land by 2030 which focus on sustainable and optimum utilisation of land resources.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD) is a Convention to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought through national action programs that incorporate long-term strategies supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements. The Convention, the only convention stemming from a direct recommendation of the Rio Conference’s Agenda 21, was adopted in Paris, France, on 17 June 1994 and entered into force in December 1996. It is the only internationally legally binding framework set up to address the problem of desertification.

Uttar Pradesh to set up India’s first leather park in Kanpur

- The Uttar Pradesh government is seeking to restore the industrial charm of Kanpur, also known as Manchester of the East. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led state government is developing a Mega Leather Park, the first leather park in the country, as part of the Mega Leather Cluster Project in Kanpur spread over an area of 235 acres.
- The park project is aimed at reestablishing Kanpur as the textile hub and leather city. **The mega leather park project, which will be built in Ramaipur village in Kanpur, will help improve Kanpur’s position** among the ten largest leather-producing states of the country.
- Under the Mega Leather Cluster Project, **50,000 people will get direct employment at the park while 150,000 people will get indirect employment.**

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state’s Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

INS Trikand, mission deployed for Anti-Piracy Operations participated in maiden IN - EUNAVFOR Joint Naval Exercise in Gulf of Aden

- **Indian Naval Ship Trikand, a mission deployed for Anti-Piracy Operations, is participated the maiden IN - EUNAVFOR Joint Naval Exercise in the Gulf of Aden.** A total of five warships from four navies are participating in the two day exercise which commenced.

- **Other warships include Italian Navy Ship ITS Carabiniere, Spanish Navy Ship ESPS Navarra, and two French Navy Ships FS Tonnerre and FS Surcouf.** The two-day exercise will see **high tempo-naval operations at sea, including advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises**, cross deck helicopter operations, tactical manoeuvres, boarding operations, underway replenishment, Search and Rescue.
- Ships of the four navies will endeavour to enhance and hone their war-fighting skills and their ability as an integrated force to promote peace, security and stability in the maritime domain. **EUNAVFOR and the Indian Navy converge on multiple issues including counter piracy operations** and protection of vessels deployed under the charter of World Food Programme (UN WFP).

Centre launches initiatives aimed at tribal welfare, new headquarters for TRIFED

- **The new TRIFED office premises at NSIC Complex in New Delhi's Okhla** is around 30,000 square feet in area and has state-of-the-art infrastructure, equipped with two conference rooms for video-conferencing and other latest amenities.
- **The 'Sankalp Se Siddhi' initiative, also known as 'Mission Van Dhan', was introduced by the central government in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's aim to establish a sustainable livelihood for India's tribal population.**
- **The initiative was launched in New Delhi by the Union minister for tribal affairs Arjun Munda.** The launch event also witnessed the inauguration of several other programmes, including the new premises of the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) headquarters.

Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) launched Van Dhan Samajik Doori Jagrookta Abhiyaan, which is aimed at educating Tribals engaged in gathering Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) in forest areas, on covid-19 response, key preventive behaviour like social distancing, home quarantine, and hygiene tips. TRIFED is a national level cooperative body under the administrative control of Ministry of Tribal Affairs. It was established under the Multi-state co-operative societies act 1984 under the former Ministry of Welfare. Arjun Munda is the current Minister of Tribal Affairs.

Government of India to identify 10 districts in North East states lagging behind and accelerate 'Ease of Living' there

- **Development of North Eastern Region, DoNER Minister Dr Jitendra Singh has said that his Ministry will identify 10 districts in North East states lagging behind the most in governance and developmental parameters.** He chaired a high-level meeting with the officials of the Ministry and North Eastern Council.
- **Government will identify 10 districts in North East states lagging behind the most in governance and developmental parameters.** The aim of this exercise is to focus on these districts and bring these at par with other developed districts in terms of saturation level.
- The main focus will be to **accelerate "Ease of Living" in these districts through smooth delivery of Goods and Services. These 10 districts will be different from the 14 aspirational districts of Northeast.**

The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region is a Government of India ministry, established in September 2001, which functions as the nodal Department of the Central Government to deal with matters related to the socio-economic development of the eight States of Northeast India: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The current, Minister of Development of North Eastern Region is Jitendra Singh (Minister of state, Independent Charge).



China-ASEAN talks on SCS code of conduct

- **India hoped that the code of conduct for South China Sea (SCS), being negotiated between the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China, would lead to outcomes in line with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and did not prejudice the legitimate rights and interests of nations that were not party to these discussions.**
- **“Maritime security challenges are another area of concern to India. The sea lanes of communication are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indo-Pacific region. Through the 15th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and the 8th ASEAN Plus Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM-Plus) from June 15-16, an agreement was reached to adopt a number of conceptual documents related to strengthening cooperation. China and ASEAN have set a target of end-2021 to finalise the code of conduct but recently officials had said it may not be concluded by then.**

South China Sea is an arm of western Pacific Ocean in Southeast Asia. It is south of China, east & south of Vietnam, west of the Philippines and north of the island of Borneo. Bordering states & territories (clockwise from north): the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan), the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam. It contains numerous shoals, reefs, atolls and islands. The Paracel Islands, the Spratly Islands and the Scarborough Shoal are the most important. It is connected by Taiwan Strait with the East China Sea and by Luzon Strait with the Philippine Sea. Several countries have made competing territorial claims over the South China Sea. Such disputes have been regarded as Asia’s most potentially dangerous point of conflict. Both the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC, commonly known as Taiwan) claim almost the entire body as their own, demarcating their claims within what is known as the nine-dotted line, which claims overlap with virtually every other country in the region.

India hosted two day summit on Green Hydrogen Initiatives involving BRICS nations

- **India hosted a two day summit on Green Hydrogen Initiatives starting involving the BRICS nations. The prestigious event offers a platform to share their respective Green Hydrogen initiatives and views on how to take it to the next level in their own countries.**
- **The online event was anchored by India’s largest power producer and one of the global energy majors, NTPC Ltd. The summit will bring the best brains, policy makers and major stakeholders from the BRICS nations deliberating and discussing at length the future of Hydrogen in the energy mix.**

BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Originally the first four were grouped as “BRIC” (China, Brazil, Russia and India), before the induction of South Africa in 2010. In 2009, the first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

UN approves Costa Rica’s Grynspan to head UNCTAD

- **The UN General Assembly approved the nomination of Costa Rican economist Rebecca Grynspan to head the UN agency promoting trade and development, the first woman and Central American to lead the Geneva-based organisation.**
- **Ms. Grynspan, the first woman and Central American to be appointed as UNCTAD’s secretary-general, is an economist and current Ibero-American secretary-general.**

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was established in 1964 as a permanent intergovernmental body. UNCTAD is the part of the United Nations Secretariat dealing with trade, investment, and development issues. The organization's goals are to: "maximize the trade, investment and development opportunities of developing countries and assist them in their efforts to integrate into the world economy on an equitable basis". UNCTAD was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1964 and it reports to the UN General Assembly and United Nations Economic and Social Council. Currently, UNCTAD has 195 member states and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Nigerian Government creates its account on Indian microblogging platform 'Koo'

- The Nigerian Government created its account on Indian microblogging platform Koo, days after the African country banned Twitter. Nigeria on June 5 banned Twitter after the social media company the President Muhammadu Buhari's tweet threatening to punish secessionists. He referred to the 1967-70 Nigerian Civil War and to treating "those misbehaving today" in "the language they will understand".
- The Indian alternative to Twitter, Koo, took up the opportunity and announced its plans to expand into the African country. Kooindia is available in Nigeria. Koo was among the first social media firms to announce compliance with the new rules. Koo co-founder Aprameya Radhakrishna welcomed the government onboard the platform.

Nigeria is a country in West Africa. Nigeria borders Niger in the north, Chad in the northeast, Cameroon in the east, and Benin in the west; its southern coast is on the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. Nigeria is a federal republic comprising 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, where the capital, Abuja, is located. Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. The Naira is the currency of Nigeria.

Israel's new Prime Minister Naftali Bennett vows to unite nation

- Israel's new Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has vowed to unite the nation frayed by four elections in two years of political stalemate.
- Mr Benjamin Netanyahu – Israel's longest-serving Prime Minister - will remain head of the right-wing Likud Party and become Leader of the Opposition. The new coalition was approved in a razor-thin vote of 60-59, with one abstention.
- He succeeds Benjamin Netanyahu, who was forced out of office after 12 years. Mr Bennett, the leader of Yamina party, will be Prime Minister until September 2023 as part of a power-sharing deal. He will then hand power over to Yair Lapid, head of the centrist Yesh Atid party, for a further two years. Mr Netanyahu – Israel's longest-serving Prime Minister - will remain head of the right-wing Likud party and become leader of the opposition.

Israel is a country in Western Asia. It is situated on the southeastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and the northern shore of the Red Sea, and shares borders with Lebanon to the north, Syria to the northeast, Jordan on the east, the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to the east and west, respectively, and Egypt to the southwest. Tel Aviv is the economic and technological center of the country, while its seat of government and proclaimed capital is Jerusalem, although international recognition of the state's sovereignty over the city is limited. Naftali Bennett is an Israeli politician serving as the 13th and current Prime Minister of Israel since 13 June 2021.

Switzerland voters reject key climate change measures

- In Switzerland, voters rejected key climate change measures in a popular vote. The climate proposal was one of several measures that Swiss voters cast their ballots nationwide.
- The voters also rejected proposals that would have made Switzerland the first European country to ban synthetic pesticides following a bitterly fought campaign.
- A referendum saw voters narrowly reject the government's plans for a car fuel levy and a tax on air tickets. The measures were designed to help Switzerland meet targets under the Paris Agreement on climate change. The vote, under Switzerland's system of direct democracy, went 51% against, 49% in favour.

- A ban on the use of pesticides was rejected. No major country has so far banned man-made pesticides. **Bhutan announced in 2012 that it wanted to become the first nation in the world to turn its home-grown food and farmers 100 percent organic.** A majority of Swiss voters supported an initiative to grant police enhanced surveillance powers and take preventative actions to help fight terrorism.

Switzerland is a landlocked country situated at the confluence of Western, Central, and Southern Europe. It is a federal republic composed of 26 cantons, with federal authorities based in Bern. **Switzerland is bordered by Italy to the south, France to the west, Germany to the north, and Austria and Liechtenstein to the east.** **Ignazio Cassis is a Swiss physician and politician serving as a Member of the Swiss Federal Council since 2017.** **Guy Parmelin is a Swiss politician serving as President of Switzerland since 2021, having previously served as Vice President of Switzerland in 2020.**

NATO adopts tough line on China at Biden's debut summit with alliance

- **NATO leaders warned that China presents “systemic challenges,”** taking a forceful stance towards Beijing in a communique at **Joe Biden's first summit with an alliance that Donald Trump openly disparaged.**
- **The new U.S. president has urged his fellow NATO leaders to stand up to China's authoritarianism** and growing military might, a change of focus for an alliance created to defend Europe from the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 European and North American countries. NATO constitutes a system of collective defence whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party. **NATO's Headquarters are located in Haren, Brussels, Belgium,** while the headquarters of Allied Command Operations is near Mons, Belgium. **Jens Stoltenberg is a Norwegian politician who has served as the 13th Secretary General of NATO since 2014.**

Global Peace Index 2021: the world's most and least peaceful countries ranked

- **Iceland has been top of the Global Peace Index for 13 years while Afghanistan has languished at the bottom for the last four.** **Afghanistan is the world's least peaceful country for the fourth consecutive year,** but it was Burkina Faso which recorded the largest deterioration in the Global Peace Index 2021.
- **Yemen is now the least peaceful country in the MENA region,** a position that had been held by Syria since 2014. Yemen has recorded declines in peacefulness every year since 2008.

Private person Aashish Chandorkar appointed director at India's WTO mission

- **The government appointed Aashish Chandorkar, a private person, as Counsellor at the level of director in India's Permanent Mission in the World Trade Organization (WTO), Geneva** for a period of three years.
- **The appointment of a private person is a first at the Mission** and comes ahead of a crucial ministerial conference of the WTO later this year. Chandorkar is director of Bengaluru-based policy think tank Smahi Foundation of Policy and Research.

World Trade Organization (WTO) is an intergovernmental organization that regulates and facilitates international trade between nations. It officially commenced operations on **1 January 1995, pursuant to the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement,** thus replacing the **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)** that had been established in 1948. **The WTO is the world's largest international economic organization, with 164 member states representing over 96% of global trade and global GDP.** The WTO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. **Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is a Nigerian-American economist and international development expert who has served since March 1, 2021 as Director-General of the World Trade Organization.** She is the **first woman and the first African to hold the office.**



Forex reserves cross \$600 billion for first time on foreign flows

- **India's foreign exchange reserves crossed the USD 600 billion mark for the first time** after increasing by USD 6.842 billion in the week ended June 4, RBI data showed.
- The reserves surged to a record USD 605.008 billion in the reporting week, **helped by a rise in foreign currency assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves**, as per weekly data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- In the previous week ended May 28, 2021, **the reserves had swelled by USD 5.271 billion to USD 598.165 billion. In the reporting week, FCA jumped by USD 7.362 billion to USD 560.890 billion**, the data showed.
- Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. **Gold reserves declined by USD 502 million to USD 37.604 billion. The special drawing rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) dipped USD 1 million to USD 1.513 billion.**
- **The main reasons for High Forex Reserves in India** are 1. Rise in investment by foreign portfolio investors and increased foreign direct investments (FDIs). The sharp jump in reserves started with the Finance Ministry's announcement in 2019, cutting corporate tax rates. 2. Fall in crude oil prices has brought down the oil import bill, saving precious foreign exchange. 3. Dollar outflow from overseas remittances and foreign travels have fallen steeply.

In India, Foreign Exchange Reserves are the foreign assets held or controlled by the Reserve Bank of India. The reserves are made of gold or a specific currency. They can also be special drawing rights and marketable securities denominated in foreign currencies like treasury bills, government bonds, corporate bonds and equities and foreign currency loans. Purpose of keeping foreign exchange reserves are 1. To keep the value of their currencies at a fixed rate. 2. Countries with a floating exchange rate system use forex reserves to keep the value of their currency lower than the US Dollar. 3. To maintain liquidity in case of an economic crisis. 4. The central bank (RBI) supplies foreign currency to keep markets steady. 5. To ensure that a country meets its foreign obligations and liabilities. As of June 2021, India has USD \$608.081 billion forex reserves. India ranks fourth in the world in forex reserves. China is in first position, followed by Japan and Switzerland.

FREO – India's first credit-led neobank

- **FREO is a first-of-its-kind; credit-led neobank in India that is designed to serve the banking needs of millennial in India and Southeast Asia.** For many of its offerings, the company has **partnered with banks to bring new solutions to its customers.**
- **FREO's vision is to bring consumers freedom from non-digital financial services** and provide simple, intuitive, and smart ways to access credit and manage money with ease on their phones.
- **Through this credit-led Neobank, consumers will have access to financial products such as a credit line, credit cards, EMI cards, deposits & savings, buy-now-pay-later, and other financial utilities,** in order to help build their credit profiles, borrow flexibly, save easily, and spend smartly.

FREO's parent company started its operations in India with the launch of MoneyTap in late 2016. Its goal was to make credit flexible, convenient, and affordable, all through an intuitive, category-creating product. Since its launch, MoneyTap, in partnership with established banks and NBFCs, has scaled to become one of India's largest and most successful consumer Fintech companies. **Through MoneyTap, FREO has attracted over 11M users to its ecosystem and disbursed upwards of Rs. 4,000 crore in credit along with issuing 175,000 credit cards (in partnership with RBL Bank).** Building on their success in India, the company also launched their credit products in Vietnam with an aim to create a strong international presence.

‘Medicines from the Sky’: Flipkart to start drone delivery pilot for vaccines, drugs

- **E-commerce major Flipkart has partnered with the Telangana government to lead a consortium** tasked with the development and execution of the drone deliveries of medical supplies to remote areas under the ‘Medicines from the Sky’ project. The pilot, which is expected to be conducted for over six days, will be tested out for delivering thousands of Covid-19 vaccines in Hyderabad while keeping in mind all the safety and efficiency parameters.
- **Google-backed delivery and e-commerce firm Dunzo Digital** has earlier this month announced similar drone delivery flights under the same project in Telangana. **Walmart-backed Flipkart will utilise learnings from its tech-enabled supply chain to deploy drones and enable deliveries of medical supplies.** These efforts will be complemented with technologies such as geo mapping, routing of shipments and track and trace of location, developed by Flipkart over the years in serving customers.

Flipkart is an Indian e-commerce company, headquartered in Bangalore, Karnataka, India, and incorporated in Singapore as a private limited company. The company initially focused on online book sales before expanding into other product categories such as consumer electronics, fashion, home essentials, groceries, and lifestyle products. **In August 2018, U.S.-based retail chain Walmart acquired a 77% controlling stake in Flipkart for US\$16 billion,** valuing Flipkart at around \$20 billion. **Flipkart was founded in October 2007 by Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal, alumni of the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi and former Amazon employees.**

Central Bank of India Introduces Online Claim Settlement Process after IBA Nudges Banks to Expediate Claim Settlement

- In order to to make the claim settlement process easier and faster for dependents of its deceased customers, **public sector bank (PSB) Central Bank of India** announced that it has **introduced an online process for the same.**
- **Central Bank of India is the first bank to recognise the need for an online claim submission process** and enable it at a crucial time when the country is going through the pandemic and state imposed local lock-downs.

Central Bank of India is an **Indian government-owned bank.** It is **under the ownership of Ministry of Finance,** Government of India and is one of the **oldest and largest government owned commercial banks in India.** It is **based in Mumbai** which is the financial capital of India and capital city of state of Maharashtra. The Central Bank of India was **established on 21 December 1911 by Sir Sorabji Pochkhanawala with Sir Pherozeshah Mehta as Chairman,** and claims to have been the first commercial Indian bank completely owned and managed by Indians.

Mahanagar Gas Ltd introduces India's first mobile CNG refueling unit

- **Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL), one of the India's leading Natural Gas Distribution Companies,** has for the **first time in India introduced Mobile CNG Refuelling Unit at Ajivali near Panvel on old Mumbai-Pune Highway.**
- **15 banks to start new trade finance system using blockchain tech. Fifteen banks** have come together to form a new company which will use blockchain technology to process inland letters of credit (LCs) in a first such initiative. Bankers said that the new system will verify data using invoices on goods and services tax (GST) and e-way bills which will quicken transactions and also eliminate risk of frauds.
- **The system will be based on Infosys' Finance Connect. Each bank has agreed to invest Rs 5 crore** in this company which was registered in the last week of May. The total capital in the company will be Rs 75 crore and banks are likely to complete their investment by June 30.

RBI releases Consultative Document on Regulation of Microfinance

- Reserve Bank of India has released a Consultative Document on Regulation of Microfinance. It has been released for harmonising the regulatory frameworks for various regulated lenders in the microfinance space.
- Key proposals of the documents are, common definition of microfinance loans for all regulated entities, Capping the outflow on account of repayment of loan obligations of a household to a percentage of the household income. It also recommends a Board approved policy for household income assessment.
- It also asked for introduction of a standard simplified fact sheet on pricing of microfinance loans for better transparency and display of minimum, maximum and average interest rates charged on microfinance loans on the websites of regulated entities.

The Reserve Bank of India was founded on 1 April 1935 to respond to economic troubles after the First World War. RBI was conceptualised as per the guidelines, working style and outlook presented by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his book titled “The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution” and presented to the Hilton Young Commission. The bank was set up based on the recommendations of the 1926 Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance, also known as the Hilton–Young Commission. In 1969, the Indira Gandhi-headed government nationalised 14 major commercial banks. Upon Indira Gandhi’s return to power in 1980, a further six banks were nationalised. The first Governor of the RBI was British banker Osborn Smith and C.D. Deshmukh was the first Indian Governor of RBI. Shashikant Das is the current Governor of RBI.

India emerges as 14th most charitable country in the World

- World Giving Index 2021 report says, India is 14th most charitable country. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown ‘giving’ trends across the world. Released by the Charities Aid Foundation’s (CAF), this year’s survey highlights the impact of lockdowns on charitable giving.
- India is now in the Top 20 most generous countries in the world. This is up from the 10-year global rank of 82. Australia and New Zealand, where the survey was undertaken in the weeks before the first wave of the pandemic took hold, maintained their top 10 rankings. Communities around the world mobilised to help fellow citizens during the pandemic, resulting in the highest ‘helped a stranger’ figures since 2009.

Canara Bank to be lead sponsor of bad bank, to pick up 12% stake

- State-owned Canara Bank will be the lead sponsor of National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) or bad bank with 12 per cent stake in the entity. Bad bank refers to a financial institution that takes over bad assets of lenders and undertakes resolution.
- The bank has sought the approval from the Reserve Bank of India for participating in NARCL as sponsor contributing 12 per cent stake. Various public sector banks (PSBs) have also announced that they have earmarked a significant portion of their NPAs to be transferred to NARCL.

Canara Bank is one of the largest Indian government owned banks. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. It is headquartered in Bengaluru. It was established at Mangalore in 1906 by Ammembal Subba Rao Pai and later the government nationalized the bank in 1969. As per the announcement made by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 30 August 2019, Manipal based Syndicate Bank merged with Canara bank on 1 April 2020, making it the fourth largest bank in the country.

TRAI launches TV channel selector portal for DTH and cable TV subscribers

- Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has launched TV Channel Selector Portal. This portal will facilitate those subscribers who do not own a mobile phone but want to use a web browser for selection of TV channels.
- This portal will help the subscriber to check their own subion and view all the channels provided by the DTH and Cable operators. With the help of this portal subscribers can choose their channel of interest and remove the unwarranted channels. The portal also allows the subscriber to modify existing subions. The users can also provide the feedback through the portal.
- Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), in March 2017, notified the New Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting and Cable services. The new framework came into effect on 29th December 2018. The new

framework promotes consumer choice and enables subscribers to select television channels they want to watch.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is a statutory body set up by the Government of India under section 3 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997. It is the regulator of the telecommunications sector in India. It consists of a Chairperson and not more than two full-time members and not more than two part-time members. The TRAI Act was amended by an ordinance, effective from 24 January 2000, establishing a Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) to take over the adjudicatory and disputes functions from TRAI. Dr. PD Vaghela is the current Chairman of TRAI.

Hallmarking of gold made mandatory in 256 districts

- **Hallmarking of gold has been made mandatory in 256 districts. The hallmark will include a six-digit code along with BIS Mark and Purity and delivery voucher** to be issued to jewellers for utmost transparency.
- **Jewellers with annual turnover upto Rs 40 lakh will be exempted from mandatory hallmarking.** Export and re-import of jewellery as per Trade Policy of the government, jewellery for international exhibitions, **jewellery for government approved B2B domestic exhibitions will also be exempted from mandatory Hallmarking.**
- **Watches, fountain pens and special types of jewellery including Kundan, Polki and Jadau will be exempted from Hallmarking.** The registration of jewellers will be one-time and no fees will be charged for registration. Any manufacturer, importer, wholesaler, distributor or retailer engaged in selling precious metal articles has to mandatorily get registered with BIS.
- During the pandemic, many people have availed of gold loans. Lenders have been taking non-hallmarked gold as collateral against the gold loan. This will continue as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regulations do not talk about mandatory hallmarking of gold taken as collateral. It says the gold taken as collateral should be valued at the **average of the closing price of 22 carat gold for the preceding 30 days as quoted by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association Ltd. So, borrowers of gold loans are unlikely to be impacted. India is the world's largest importer of gold,** with annual imports of 700-800 tonne.

Microsoft names CEO Satya Nadella as Chairman

- **Microsoft Corp named Chief Executive Officer Satya Nadella as its new chairman, in place of John Thompson. Nadella, who took over as CEO in 2014 from Steve Ballmer, has been instrumental in scaling up its business including billion-dollar acquisitions like LinkedIn, Nuance Communications and ZeniMax.**
- **The company said Thompson, who took over as chairman from the software giant's co-founder Bill Gates in 2014, will serve as lead independent director.**

Microsoft Corporation is an American multinational technology company with headquarters in Redmond, Washington. Microsoft was founded by Paul Allen and Bill Gates on April 4, 1975, to develop and sell BASIC interpreters for the Altair 8800. It was the world's largest software maker by revenue as of 2016. It is considered one of the Big Five companies in the U.S. information technology industry, along with Google, Apple, Amazon, and Facebook.

Facebook adds its first health fact-checking partner in India

- **Social media giant Facebook has added its first health-focused fact-checking partner in India.** The company has **partnered with The Healthy Indian Project (THIP Media),** a company that focuses on providing verified health-related information in five Indian languages.
- **Facebook said the partnership is part of its efforts to police covid-19 related misinformation spreading online.** According to Facebook, the company has removed 18 million pieces of harmful information from its two platforms (Facebook and Instagram) during the pandemic.
- **Its fact checking partners have labelled 167 million fake news posts on covid-19 so far.** The company had changed its rules recently, in order to accommodate covid-19 misinformation. The company has 80 fact-checking partners worldwide, who help monitor content in 60 languages. **In India, Facebook also partners with Factly, Newsmobile, BOOM Live, NewsChecker and more.**

Facebook is an American technology conglomerate based in Menlo Park, California. It was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, along with his fellow roommates and students at Harvard College, who were Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes, originally as TheFacebook.com—today's Facebook, a popular global social networking service. It is one of the world's most valuable companies. It is considered one of the Big Five companies in U.S. information technology, with Google, Apple, Microsoft and Amazon. Facebook offers other products and services beyond its social networking platform, including Facebook Messenger, Facebook Watch, and Facebook Portal. It also has acquired Instagram, WhatsApp, Oculus, Giphy and Mapillary, and has a 9.9% stake in Jio Platforms.

Bank of Japan announces first green investment fund

- Japan's central bank announced its first investment fund for efforts to address climate change, as the government works towards its new target of reaching carbon neutrality by 2050. The scheme, likely to start this year, will be a successor to an existing programme aimed at promoting economic growth more generally.

Tata Steel's rebar brand Tata Tiscon becomes first in India to receive GreenPro Certification

- Tata Steel becomes the first Indian steel company to receive the GreenPro Certification for Rebars. GreenPro Ecolabel enables the end-users to make an informed choice about buying steel having the lowest environmental impact. This certification has made Tata Tiscon the first GreenPro certified Rebar brand in India.

Tata Steel Europe Ltd. (formerly Corus Group plc) is a steelmaking company headquartered in London, United Kingdom, with its main operations in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Corus Group was formed through the merger of Koninklijke Hoogovens and British Steel plc in 1999 and was a constituent of the FTSE 100 Index. It was acquired by Tata of India in 2007, and renamed Tata Steel Europe in September 2010.

RBI to grant in-principle approval to Centrum Financial Services Ltd to set up Small Finance Bank

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to grant in-principle approval to Centrum Financial Services Limited to set up a Small Finance Bank.
- This in-principle approval has been accorded in specific pursuance to the expression of centrum financial services limited's offer dated February 1, 2021.

Small finance banks are a type of niche banks in India. Banks with a small finance bank license can provide basic banking service of acceptance of deposits and lending. The aim behind these to provide financial inclusion to sections of the economy not being served by other banks, such as small business units, small and marginal farmers, micro and small industries and unorganised sector entities. On 17 September 2015, The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced that it had given provisional licenses to ten entities who would have to convert into small finance banks within one year. Eight out of these ten entities were microfinance NBFCs, reiterating RBI's agenda of financial inclusion. Capital Small Finance Bank was the first small finance bank to begin operations, opening with 47 branches on 24 April 2016.

Gautam Adani slips to third spot on Asia's rich list

- Mukesh Ambani, who controls the retail-to-oil conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd, continues to top Asia's rich list with a net worth of \$84 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaire Index.
- China's Zhong Shanshan regained the second spot from Adani. The Indian business magnate had in April overtaken Zhong when shares of the Adani group almost doubled since January.

Adani Group is an Indian multinational conglomerate company headquartered in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. It was founded by Gautam Adani in 1988 as a commodity trading business, with the flagship company Adani Enterprises Limited (previously Adani Exports Limited). Gautam Adani is the chairman.



Inventions/Discoveries

DBT-NII Receives Trademark for India's First Indigenous Tumour Antigen SPAG9

- As per World Health Organization (WHO), one in 10 Indians will develop cancer during their lifetime, and one in 15 will die of cancer. Therefore, it is all the more critical to make extraordinary breakthroughs and innovations for this deadly disease.
- To successfully implement innovation newer modalities for cancer treatment, researchers at the New Delhi-based National Institute of Immunology (NII), an Autonomous Institute of Department of Biotechnology (DBT), and clinicians at Cancer Institute, Adyar, Chennai have been working together to translate new scientific discoveries into improved care for cancer patients.
- Over the past two decades, this team has been engaged in translating breakthrough that promises to add a highly potent weapon to the armoury against cancer especially employing targeted cancer Immunotherapy. India's first indigenous tumour antigen SPAG9 was discovered by Dr Anil Suri in 1998 who is heading the Cancer Research Program at NII.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. The WHO Constitution, which establishes the agency's governing structure and principles, states its main objective as "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health". It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, with six semi-autonomous regional offices and 150 field offices worldwide. The WHO was established by constitution on 7 April 1948 which is commemorated as World Health Day. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has been serving since 2017 as Director-General of the World Health Organization. Tedros is the first African in the role, and was endorsed by the African Union. Before serving as Director-General, he held two high-level positions in the government of Ethiopia: Minister of Health from 2005 to 2012 and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2012 to 2016.

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

- Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar has developed a device 'Jivan Vayu' which can be used as a substitute of CPAP machine.
- However, this is Nation's first such device which functions even without electricity and is adapted to both kinds of oxygen generation units like O2 cylinders and oxygen pipelines in hospitals.
- These provisions are not available in otherwise existing CPAP machines. Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) is a treatment method for patients having breathing problems during sleep called sleep apnea.
- The machine uses mild air pressure to keep the airways open for easy breathing. It is also used to treat infants whose lungs have not fully developed.
- The machine blows air into the baby's nose to help inflate his or her lungs. The treatment is all the more necessary during early stages of the Covid-19 infection. It reduces lung damage and allow patients to recover from the inflammatory effects.

Rocket Lab wins contract to design twin Mars spacecraft for NASA

- The California-based company, which will send a NASA cubesat mission to the moon this fall and aims to launch its own private life-hunting Venus mission in 2023, has been awarded a contract to design the twin spacecraft for NASA's potential ESCAPEDE Mars mission.
- ESCAPEDE, short for "Escape and Plasma Acceleration and Dynamics Explorers," would use two Mars-orbiting spacecraft to study how the planet's atmosphere is stripped away by the solar wind, the stream of charged particles flowing from the sun.
- The mission could help scientists better understand how and why Mars' climate has changed over time, as the barren planet looks quite different today than in the ancient past when it had a thick atmosphere and, scientists think, plentiful liquid water on its surface.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958. Sen. Bill Nelson was sworn in as the 14th NASA administrator on May 3, 2021, tasked with carrying out the Biden-Harris administration's vision for the agency.

The world's first wooden satellite will launch this year

- The world's first "wooden satellite" is preparing to launch this year. WISA Woodsat, a nanosatellite that measures 4 by 4 by 4 inches (10 by 10 by 10 centimeters) and weighs about 2.2 lbs. (1 kilogram), uses a special type of coated plywood (called WISA) for its surface panels.
- The wooden satellite will launch as part of a mission, designed by Arctic Astronautics, a Finnish company manufacturing cubesat kits for students. The aim of the mission is to test the behavior and durability of these plywood panels in the extreme conditions of space and assess its suitability for future missions.

15-metre tree discovered in Andaman & Nicobar Islands

- A 15-meter-tall tree that belongs to the genus of the coffee family has recently been discovered from the Andaman Islands by a team of researchers from India and the Philippines.
- The new species, *Pyrostria laljii*, is also the first record of the genus *Pyrostria* in India. Plants belonging to genus *Pyrostria* are usually found in Madagascar but the recently discovered species is new to science.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a union territory of India consisting of 572 islands, of which 38 are inhabited, at the juncture of the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. The territory is about 150 km (93 mi) north of Aceh in Indonesia and separated from Thailand and Myanmar by the Andaman Sea. It comprises two island groups, the Andaman Islands (partly) and the Nicobar Islands, separated by the 150 km wide Ten Degree Channel (on the 10°N parallel), with the Andaman islands to the north of this latitude, and the Nicobar islands to the south (or by 179 km). The Andaman Sea lies to the east and the Bay of Bengal to the west. The territory's capital is the city of Port Blair. Admiral Devendra Kumar Joshi is the Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Vice Chairman of Islands Development Agency (IDA).

Unusual solar eruptions can help explain explosion on Sun

- An explosion on the Sun is helping scientists uncover new information about what causes powerful solar eruptions and how one might be able to better predict them in the future.
- This explosion contained components of three different types of solar eruptions that usually occur separately. The eruption is the first of its kind to be reported.
- Eruptions on the Sun usually come in one of three forms - a coronal mass ejection, a jet, or a partial eruption. Coronal mass ejections (CMEs) and jets are both explosive eruptions that cast energy and particles into space, but they look very different. While jets erupt as narrow columns of solar material, CMEs form huge bubbles that expand out, pushed and sculpted by the Sun's magnetic fields. Partial eruptions, on the other hand, start erupting from the surface but don't conjure enough energy to leave the Sun, so most of the material falls back down onto the solar surface.

Nod for mission to explore marine resources

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Deep Ocean mission proposal made by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).**
- **The mission proposes to explore ocean resources and develop deep sea technologies for sustainable use of these resources. India has a 7,517-km coastline with nine coastal states and 1,382 islands.** The government's 'Vision of New India by 2030' highlights 'Blue Economy' as one of the ten core dimensions of growth.
- **The Prime Minister approved six major components of the Deep Ocean mission.** To be implemented across phases, the mission will cost around Rs 4,077 crore for a period of five years. The first phase (2021-24) will cost an estimated Rs 2,823.4 crore.

World's First True Environmentally-Friendly Mineral Processing Plant in Unju, Korea

- **Avimetal won contracts for \$5 million USD for six environmentally-friendly mineral processing plants, with the first plant set to be completed by the end of June.**
- **Avimetal is based in the USA, a subsidiary of Coronet Metals US Inc., and has a branch office in Korea which has developed a solution for cleaning up heavy metal such as cadmium, cyanide and mercury contaminated tailings.**

IIT Guwahati paves the way for better water management policies through Virtual Water Analysis

- **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT Guwahati) researchers have paved the way for better water management policies in India.**
- **Dr. Anamika Barua, Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Science, IIT Guwahati, in collaboration with scientists from the University of Zaragoza, Spain, used ecological economics to study the socio-political factors governing 'Virtual Water Flow', an emerging concept at the science-policy interface, with particular reference to India.**

After 45 yrs of wait, Odisha welcomes first hatchlings of Gharial

- **For the first time since they were introduced in its rivers back in 1975, Odisha has seen natural nesting of gharials, a critically endangered species.** As many as 28 hatchlings were spotted towards the end of May in the Mahanadi, in the Baladamara area near Satkosia range with round-the-clock vigil including drones.
- **All the original gharials introduced over the years in Odisha are dead now.** Having waited more than 40 years for their numbers to grow naturally and for them to lay eggs, **Odisha introduced 13 more gharials over the past three years in the Mahanadi.**
- **Only eight survived.** While the Forest Department is still tracking two of them via their radio collars, the other six have moved out of its radar. **With the introduction of gharials in 1975, Odisha had become the only state to have all the three species of the reptile —freshwater gharials, muggers and saltwater crocodiles.**



Sports Personalities in News

Novak Djokovic beats Stefanos Tsitsipas to win French Open title

- Novak Djokovic fought back from two sets down to beat the Greek fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas to win the French Open title for the second time.
- The Serbian world number one increased his Grand Slam tally to 19 titles and is now one adrift of the men's record held by Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

Assam's Shahil Dey becomes first-ever chess International Master from Northeast India

- India saw its first-ever chess International Master from the Northeast region with Assam's 14-year-old Shahil Dey achieving the feat.
- In a moment that is sure to bring about a reason to cheer for the Chess community in India, Shahil Dey was awarded his first International Master norm at the GM Round Robin Tournament held in Serbia.
- The tournament took place in February and was the former Under 7 and Under 9 National Champion's first major outing since the lockdown. His overall performance rating stands at 2473.

ICC announces special edition intake of 10 cricket icons ahead of WTC final

- The International Cricket Council announced a special edition intake of 10 cricket icons – including former India cricketer Vinoo Mankad – into the ICC Hall of Fame to celebrate the prestigious history of Test cricket. The decision is coinciding with this month's maiden World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand to be held from June 18.
- The stalwarts, who have made great contribution to the game and were inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame are: Aubrey Faulkner of South Africa and Monty Noble of Australia (Early Cricket Era, prior to 1918); Sir Learie Constantine of West Indies and Stan McCabe of Australia (Inter-War Era, 1918-1945); Ted Dexter of England and Vinoo Mankad of India (Post-War Era, 1946-1970); Desmond Haynes of West Indies and Bob Willis of England (ODI Era, 1971-1995); and, Andy Flower of Zimbabwe and Kumar Sangakkara of Sri Lanka (Modern Cricket Era, 1996-2015).

Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu qualifies for Tokyo Olympics in women's 49-kg category

- India's Mirabai Chanu, the 2017 world champion in weightlifting, has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in the women's 49-kg category. The International Weightlifting Federation announced that Mirabai has qualified on the basis of her world ranking points.
- Manipur lifter is ranked second in the women's 49-kg category. As per rules of the IWF, top eight lifters in each of the 14 weight categories, including seven in the women's group, are eligible to compete in Tokyo Games.

Ronaldo becomes first person to reach 300 million followers mark on Instagram

- Portugal striker Cristiano Ronaldo became the first person to reach the 300 million followers mark on social media platform Instagram.

- Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo made European Championships history as he became the all-time top scorer in the summer tournament after his record-shattering 10th and 11th finals goals in the opening Euro 2020 match against Hungary.

Yuka Saso again makes history for Filipinos globally

- The 76th US Women's Open Championship at The Olympic Club in San Francisco is not the first time that Filipino golf wunderkind Yuka Saso has brought home the bacon or has made mileposts for the Philippines, but it is certainly the most savory win, at least for now.

Sneh Rana becomes first Indian women's cricketer to achieve huge Test feat

- Playing her first international match Sneha Rana made a remarkable statement with her all-round skills in the one-off Test match against England in Bristol.
- All-rounder became the first Indian woman and fourth overall to score a half-century and take four wickets on Test debut. After figures of 4/131, Rana scored a half-century in India's second innings. She is remained unbeaten on 80 and strung together an unbeaten 104 run partnership with Taniya Bhatia (44 not out).
- Rana became the first Indian woman and fourth overall to have both a 50+ score and a 4+wicket haul on Test debut. During her unbeaten knock of 80, Sneha Rana scored the highest by an Indian batting at 6 or lower in Women's Test cricket.

Veteran Athlete Milkha Singh passes away

- Indian Athlete Milkha Singh passed away at the age of 91 due to Covid-19 related complications on June 18, 2021. During the 1960 Olympic Games, he finished to fourth-place in 400 metres final. Several records were broken in race. He finished to fourth-place in 45.73 seconds which was an Indian national record for almost 40 years.
- Captain Milkha Singh, known as The Flying Sikh, was an Indian track and field sprinter. He was introduced to sport while serving the Indian Army. He is the only athlete who won gold in 400 metres race at Asian Games & Commonwealth Games. He won gold medals in 1958 and 1962 Asian Games. He also represented India in 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne, 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome and 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. He was conferred India's fourth-highest civilian honour, Padma Shri for his sporting achievements.

Punjab Sports and Youth Services Minister launched a special Mobile App "Khedo Punjab"

- Punjab Sports and Youth Services Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi launched a special Mobile App "Khedo Punjab" for putting the Sports Department and all the Sports persons of State of Punjab on Digital platform. Rana Sodhi informed that this is the first time in the history of the Sports Department that the department has launched a mobile app.
- With the launch of Mobile App, the current sports persons and the budding players will be in a position to register online and can choose any game of their interest besides identifying their International, National and State goals, which will finally help in building competitive enthusiasm.

MISCELLANEOUS

International Day of Yoga: National Ayush Mission organized 12-hour virtual Yoga Session 'Yogathon' in Kerala

- Kerala celebrated International Day of Yoga virtually by organizing various events. National Ayush Mission has organized a 12-hour virtual Yoga Session 'Yogathon' in the state. Quiz competitions and essay competition on the theme Yoga will also be organized for school students.
- The mission also plans to broadcast yoga classes for children in collaboration with the Victor's Channel run by Kerala General Education Department. The Field Outreach Bureau under the ministry of information and broadcasting also organized webinars and virtual Yoga sessions in connection with the International Yoga Day.

Bikaner is first city in country to start door-to-door vaccination

- Bikaner in Rajasthan has become the first town in the country to start a "door-to-door" vaccination drive in the ongoing fight against the coronavirus pandemic.
- The vaccine van will reach people's homes only when a minimum of 10 people register for the getting the shot against Covid-19, according to the report, so that doses are not wasted.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan addresses inaugural ceremony of Global Yoga Conference 2021

- Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan has said that the countries around the globe have recognized the potential benefits that humankind can enjoy by embracing Yoga. Dr. Harsh Vardhan addressed the inaugural ceremony of Global Yoga Conference 2021.

Clubhouse launches program to support Indian content creators

- In a bid to get more Indian creators to adopt the platform, social audio app Clubhouse has expanded its Clubhouse Creator First accelerator program to cover India.
- The program, launched earlier in March globally, aims at supporting creators with the platform, tools, and resources they need to create content on the platform. Clubhouse, which was initially an iOS-only app, recently released its Android version.

International Day of Yoga: Culture Ministry to host Yoga drive at 75 cultural places

- Culture Ministry celebrated 'International Day of Yoga' this year under the 'Yoga is an Indian Heritage' campaign.
- Yoga Day was celebrated at 75 cultural places in the country, and there will be 45 minutes of Yoga followed by 30 minutes of cultural program. Four cities in Maharashtra have been selected for this campaign.
- These are Aga Khan Palace, Pune, Kanheri Caves, Mumbai, Ellora Caves, Aurangabad, and Old High Court Building, Nagpur. These four monuments are centrally protected monuments of national importance.

In a first, exclusive memorial for police dogs

- The Kerala Police have dedicated an exclusive memorial and cemetery for the department's dogs – probably the first of its kind in Asia.
- The K9 Squad of the Kerala Police has played a valuable role in investigations into many cases including murders, snatching and burglary. The police dogs are trained at the Kerala Police Academy with the support of expert trainers. The dogs are also used for security surveillance by the bomb squad.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Antonio Guterres re-elected as UN Secretary General for second term

- **UN General Assembly appointed Antonio Guterres as the UN Secretary General for a second term beginning January 1, 2022**, days after the powerful Security Council had unanimously recommended his name to the 193-member body for re-election.
- **President of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly Volkan Bozkir announced that Guterres has been appointed by acclamation Secretary General of the United Nations for the second term of office beginning on January 1, 2022 and ending on December 31, 2026.** Bozkir then administered the oath of office to 72-year-old Guterres at the podium of the UN General Assembly hall.

Zambia's first president Kenneth Kaunda dies

- **Kenneth Kaunda, Zambia's founding president and a champion of African nationalism** who spearheaded the fights to **end white minority rule across southern Africa, has died.**
- **In the 1950s, Kaunda was a key figure in what was then Northern Rhodesia's independence movement from Britain.** He became president following independence in 1964.

21-yr-old with Kerala roots is youngest on Queen's MBE list

- **Amika George was picked for an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire), which is the third-ranking award on the list, in education for her campaign against period poverty, #FreePeriods.**
- When she was picked as the youngest recipient of the Queen's Birthday Honours this year for pushing the UK government to provide free period products in schools and colleges, Amika George found herself in a spot. She started the campaign at the age of 17 — it made her angry that “there were girls in the UK who were missing school every month because they were too poor to afford period products”.

Indian-origin Justice becomes first person of colour to be nominated to Supreme Court of Canada

- **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has nominated Indian-origin Justice Mahmud Jamal to the Supreme Court of Canada, becoming the first person of colour to be named to the apex court of the country.** Trudeau announced Jamal's nomination to replace the retiring Rosalie Silberman Abella, the first refugee and first Jewish woman to sit on the top court.

AWARDS

NYIFF 2021: Documentary on Gandhi, Siddharth Menon, Akshata Pandavapura win top honours

- A documentary feature on Mahatma Gandhi, a documentary on the Sikh tradition of 'Seva' and a movie that explores the state of mind of a married woman during the COVID19 lockdown are among the films that won top honours at the 2021 New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF).
- Other winners at the festival were "Nasir", directed by Arun Karthick, which won the award for best film; Akshata Pandavapura was named best actress for "Where Is Pinky?", the best actor award went to Siddharth Menon for "June" and the best director award to Ajitpal Singh for "Fire In the Mountains".
- "Ahimsa Gandhi: The Power of the Powerless", directed by Ramesh Sharma, was awarded the best documentary feature.

Film 'Dhaai Peher' by Jamia Millia Islamia students wins award at LIAFF

- A film made by students of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) won the "Outstanding Achievement" award at the L'Age d'Or International Art-house Film Festival (LIAFF).
- The student film, "Dhaai Peher" (Two and a Half Moments), is directed by M.A. Mass Communication students Amal Devasiya, Danish Qazi, Jamshad Ali, Kashif Shakeel and Pankaj Rawat. It is based on the set of events that unravel in Punjab in the 1990s.
- The purpose of LIAFF is to develop a film culture that inspires and brings together cross-cultural innovations that enrich people's lives with entertainment and services that inform, educate and entertain.

RS Sodhi conferred with Asia Pacific Productivity Champion award

- The Managing Director of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (Amul), R.S. Sodhi, was conferred with the regional award as Asia Pacific Productivity Champion from Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Tokyo, Japan in recognition of enhanced productivity and efficient milk supply chain. He is the first Indian to have received the prestigious award, in the last 20 years.

David Diop wins International Booker 2021

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

IAS VK Pandian to receive FIH President's Award

- V Karthikeyan Pandian, an IAS officer, and private secretary to Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was conferred with President's award by International Hockey Federation through the 47th FIH Congress. He was awarded for his contribution in direction of the event and promotion of hockey in Odisha.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Global Wind Day

- **Global Wind Day or World Wind Day is a worldwide event that is held on June 15 around the world.** The Global Wind Day is **organised by WindEurope and the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) and the national associations.** It is a day when wind energy is celebrated, information is exchanged and adults and children find out about wind energy, its power and the possibilities it holds to change the world.

World Day against Child Labour observed

- **The World Day Against Child Labour, which is held every year on June 12, is intended to foster the worldwide movement against child labour. The theme of this year's World Day Against Child Labour is: 'Act now: end child labour.'**
- **Ahead of World Day Against Child Labour a report by UNICEF and International Labour Organization (ILO) said, the number of children in child labour has risen to 160 million worldwide - an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years. The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed millions on the brink of poverty and child labour is directly linked to it.**

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, 17 June

- **The 2021 Desertification and Drought Day to be held on 17 June will focus on turning degraded land into healthy land. Restoring degraded land brings economic resilience, creates jobs, raises incomes and increases food security.**
- **This year's theme is "Restoration.Land.Recovery. We build back better with healthy land".**

International Day of Family Remittances 16 June

- **The International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and is observed on 16 June.** The IDFR recognizes more than 200 million migrant workers, women and men, who send money home to over 800 million family members.
- **The theme of IDFR this year is 'Recovery and resilience through digital and financial inclusion'.**

World Refugee Day 20 June

- **World Refugee Day is an international day organised every year on 20 June by the United Nations. It is designed to celebrate and honour refugees from around the world.**
- **The day was first established on 20 June 2001, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The theme of World Refugee Day 2021 is 'Together we heal, learn and shine'.**

International Picnic Day

- **International Picnic Day is celebrated every year on June 18 to encourage everyone to go out and spend an amazingly easy and stress-free day with their loved ones.**

References:

The Hindu

The Economics Times

Indian Express

Press Information Bureau of India

The Times of India

Business Standard

News on AIR

Hindustan Times

QUESTIONS

- Who is the first woman and Central American to be appointed as UNCTAD's secretary-general?
(a) Anatolie Marie (b) Rebecca Grynspan (c) Michelle Rebecca (d) Gracia Brown
- Who was picked for an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire), which is the third-ranking award on the list, in education for her campaign against period poverty, #FreePeriods?
(a) Mariam Noty (b) Amika George (c) Amisha Joseph (d) Mayanka Charles
- Which of the following African countries recently created its account on Indian microblogging platform Koo?
(a) Liberia (b) Nigeria (c) Uganda (d) The Gambia
- Which of the following has become the first town in the country to start a "door-to-door" vaccination drive in the ongoing fight against the coronavirus pandemic?
(a) Bikaner in Rajasthan (b) Surat in Gujarat (c) Ambala in Haryana (d) Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh
- Which of the following organizations has recently lauded the Centre's Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP)?
(a) United Nations Development Programme (b) Amnesty International
(c) United Nations General Assembly (d) UNICEF
- Which of the following E-commerce companies has partnered with Telangana government to lead a consortium tasked with the development and execution of the drone deliveries of medical supplies to remote areas under the 'Medicines from the Sky' project?
(a) Flipkart (b) Amazon (c) Paytm (d) Ebay
- Name the first-of-its-kind; credit-led neobank in India that is designed to serve the banking needs of millennials in India and Southeast Asia?
(a) OREO (b) FREO (c) TREO (d) MERO
- India's forex reserves crossed the _____ mark for the first time on the back of continued foreign investment flow into the capital markets.
(a) \$400-billion (b) \$500-billion (c) \$600-billion (d) \$800-billion
- Global Wind Day or World Wind Day is a worldwide event that is held on _____ around the world.
(a) June 11 (b) June 13 (c) June 15 (d) June 18
- Who won the French Open title for the second time recently?
(a) Novak Djokovic (b) Andy Murray (c) Roger Federer (d) Stefanos Tsitsipas
- Which of the following Indian states has been ranked the best in the Anemia Mukta Bharat (AMB) Index among 28 states in the country?
(a) Punjab (b) Haryana (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Telangana
- Recently, 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan' means free from corona with the help of a youth power campaign will be launched to make people aware about the COVID pandemic in:
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Haryana (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Madhya Pradesh
- Name the first-ever chess International Master from the Northeast region?
(a) Shahil Dey (b) Jeevan Mukhopadhyay
(c) Deepak Makhija (d) Amit Mitra
- Recently, The International Cricket Council announced a special edition intake of 10 cricket icons. Name the only Indian cricketer who included in this list.
(a) Vinoo Mankad (b) Pankaj Roy (c) Javagal Srinath (d) Sunil Joshi

15. Recently, Naftali Bennett has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of:
(a) Jordan (b) Israel (c) Finland (d) Iceland
16. Recently, The voters rejected proposals that would have made _____ the first European country to ban synthetic pesticides following a bitterly fought campaign.
(a) Switzerland (b) Norway (c) Finland (d) Ireland
17. World Day against Child Labour is observed every year on:
(a) 12th June (b) 13th June (c) 15th June (d) 17th June
18. Recently, A 15-meter-tall tree that belongs to the genus of the coffee family “Pyrostria laljii” has recently been discovered from the _____ by a team of researchers from India and the Philippines.
(a) Lakshadweep (b) Andaman Islands (c) Karnataka (d) Assam
19. Which is the first Indian bank to recognise the need for an online claim submission process to make the claim settlement process easier and faster for dependents of its deceased customers?
(a) Union Bank of India (b) Central Bank of India
(c) Punjab National bank (d) State Bank of India
20. Which of the following Indian IIT researchers have paved the way for better water management policies in India by using ecological economics to study the socio-political factors governing ‘Virtual Water Flow’?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology Madras (b) Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati
(c) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (d) Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad
21. The 2021 Desertification and Drought Day is held on _____, which focused on turning degraded land into healthy land.
(a) 12th June (b) 15th June (c) 17th June (d) 20th June
22. Recently, The 2021 summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization which was the 31st formal meeting of the heads of state and heads of government of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was held at _____.
(a) Brussels (b) London (c) Paris (d) Milan
23. Recently, A documentary on the Sikh tradition of _____ is among the film that won top honour at the 2021 New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF).
(a) ‘Seva’ (b) ‘Saburi’ (c) ‘Kirthan’ (d) ‘Bhajan’
24. Which of the following IIT’s has developed a device ‘Jivan Vayu’ which can be used as a substitute of CPAP machine?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar
(b) Indian Institute of Technology, Mandi
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad
(d) Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati
25. The world’s first “wooden satellite” is preparing to launch this year. WISA Woodsat, a nanosatellite that weighs about _____ uses a special type of coated plywood (called WISA) for its surface panels.
(a) 0.5 Kilograms (b) 1 Kilograms (c) 2 Kilograms (d) 5 Kilograms
26. How many banks have come together to form a new company which will use blockchain technology to process inland letters of credit (LCs) in a first such initiative?
(a) Six (b) Seven (c) Twelve (d) Fifteen
27. Which of the following has released a Consultative Document on Regulation of Microfinance?
(a) SIDBI (b) Reserve Bank of India
(c) NABARD (d) SEBI

28. Which of the following has for the first time in India introduced Mobile CNG Refuelling Unit at Ajivali near Panvel on old Mumbai-Pune Highway?
 (a) Mumbai Gas Limited (b) Mahanagar Gas Limited
 (c) Brihad Mumbai Gas Limited (d) Nayanagar Gas Limited
29. The World Giving Index 2021 report says that India is _____ most charitable country.
 (a) 3rd (b) 5th (c) 9th (d) 14th
30. India's Mirabai Chanu has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in the women's 49-kg category. Mirabai Chanu belongs to:
 (a) Mizoram (b) Manipur (c) Sikkim (d) Nagaland
31. Recently, PM Narendra Modi addressed Europe's largest digital and start-up event _____.
 (a) MahaTech (b) VivaTech (c) JalTech (d) AlvaTech
32. Name the private person who has been appointed as Counsellor at the level of director in India's Permanent Mission in the World Trade Organization (WTO) by the government.
 (a) Deepak Bharadwaj (b) Amit Dahal (c) Aashish Chandorkar (d) Vikas Maharaj
33. Recently, Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated three Centers of Excellence established in _____ under the Indo-Israel Agricultural Project.
 (a) Kerala (b) Maharashtra (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
34. Name the state owned bank which will be the lead sponsor of National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) or bad bank with 12 per cent stake in the entity.
 (a) Union Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank
 (c) State Bank of India (d) Canara Bank
35. Name the film made by students of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) which won the "Outstanding Achievement" award at the L'Age d'Or International Art-house Film Festival (LIAFF) recently.
 (a) Dhaai Peher (b) Subah Shaam (c) Ujala (d) Khaali Pal
36. Recently, Hallmarking of gold has been made mandatory in 256 districts. The hallmark will include a _____ code along with BIS Mark and Purity and delivery voucher to be issued to jewellers for utmost transparency.
 (a) three-digit (b) six-digit (c) eight-digit (d) ten-digit
37. Recently, A three day virtual Conference of BRICS Network Universities on the theme of electric mobility was inaugurated at _____.
 (a) IIT Bombay (b) IIT Guwahati (c) IIT Delhi (d) IIT Madras
38. The National Maritime Heritage Complex, a world-class facility is to be developed in the vicinity of the Archaeological Survey of India site of _____.
 (a) Dholavira (b) Lothal (c) Mehrangarh (d) Surkotada
39. The California-based company has been awarded a contract to design the twin spacecraft for NASA's potential _____ Mars mission.
 (a) RED PLANET (b) POTENTIAL (c) ACCELARATOR (d) ESCAPADE
40. The International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and is observed on _____.
 (a) 12 June (b) 14 June (c) 16 June (d) 18 June
41. Recently, Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan informed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Tuberculosis-Free India will be achieved by _____.
 (a) 2021 (b) 2023 (c) 2025 (d) 2027

42. Recently, Government of India released latest version of “Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India. It has been published by _____.
- (a) Space Application Centre, ISRO, New Delhi
 (b) Space Application Centre, ISRO, Mumbai
 (c) Space Application Centre, ISRO, Ahmedabad
 (d) Space Application Centre, ISRO, Hyderabad
43. Which among the following has launched a program to support Indian content creators?
- (a) Clubhouse (b) Boathouse (c) Allhouse (d) Myth house
44. Which of the following companies has partnered with The Healthy Indian Project (THIP Media), a company that focuses on providing verified health-related information in five Indian languages?
- (a) Google (b) Facebook (c) Amazon (d) WhatsApp
45. Recently, India maintained _____ rank on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by the Institute for Management Development (IMD) that examined the impact of COVID-19 on economies around the world this year.
- (a) 14th (b) 25th (c) 33rd (d) 43rd
46. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the Deep Ocean mission proposal made by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES). India has a _____ coastline with nine coastal states and 1,382 islands.
- (a) 6,918-km (b) 7,289-km (c) 7,517-km (d) 8,346-km
47. In the Global Peace Index 2021, which of the following countries has been at the top of the Index?
- (a) Ireland (b) Iceland (c) Sweden (d) Finland
48. In 2021, International Day of Yoga was observed worldwide on _____ of June.
- (a) 19th (b) 21st (c) 24th (d) 27th
49. Who has been recently named as the new Chairman by Microsoft Corp?
- (a) John Thompson (b) Vishal Sikka (c) Satya Nadella (d) Matthew Steward
50. Recently, Kenneth Kaunda has passed away, he was founding President of which of the following countries?
- (a) Liberia (b) Nigeria (c) Zambia (d) Somalia
51. The Uttar Pradesh government will set up India’s first leather park in _____.
- (a) Ghaziabad (b) Hapur (c) Lucknow (d) Kanpur
52. The Indian Naval Ship Trikanth, a mission deployed for Anti-Piracy Operations, is participated in the maiden IN - EUNAVFOR Joint Naval Exercise in the _____.
- (a) Gulf of Mannar (b) Gulf of Aden (c) Gulf of Panama (d) Gulf of Oman
53. The ‘Sankalp Se Siddhi’ initiative, also known as _____ was introduced by the central government in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s aim to establish a sustainable livelihood for India’s tribal population.
- (a) ‘Mission Van Dhan’ (b) ‘Prerna Van’ (c) ‘Mission Van Jan’ (d) ‘Mission Jungle’
54. The Government will identify _____ in North East states lagging behind the most in governance and developmental parameters.
- (a) 4 districts (b) 6 districts (c) 8 districts (d) 10 districts
55. Recently, The UN General Assembly elected Antonio Guterres to a second term as secretary-general giving him another _____ at the helm of the 193-member world organization.
- (a) Three Years (b) Four Years (c) Five Years (d) Seven Years

56. Recently, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has nominated Indian-origin Justice _____ to the Supreme Court of Canada, becoming the first person of colour to be named to the apex court of the country.
 (a) Mahmud Jamal (b) Atul Mahajan (c) Dibakar Khrtan (d) Adil Khan
57. Recently, Japan's central bank announced its first investment fund for efforts to address climate change, as the government works towards its new target of reaching carbon neutrality by _____.
 (a) 2025 (b) 2030 (c) 2040 (d) 2050
58. Who among the following decided to grant in-principle approval to Centrum Financial Services Limited to set up a Small Finance Bank?
 (a) Ministry of Finance (b) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
 (c) Reserve Bank of India (d) State Bank of India
59. World Refugee Day is an international day organised every year on _____ by the United Nations.
 (a) 19th June (b) 20th June (c) 23rd June (d) 25th June
60. Who among the following became the first person to reach the 300 million followers mark on social media platform Instagram?
 (a) Cristiano Ronaldo (b) Leonardo Di Caprio (c) Emma Wattson (d) Virat Kohli
61. Which of the following countries hosted a two day summit on Green Hydrogen Initiatives starting involving the BRICS nations?
 (a) South Africa (b) India (c) Russia (d) Brazil
62. With the introduction of gharials in 1975, which of the following Indian states had become the only state to have all the three species of the reptile freshwater gharials, muggers and saltwater crocodiles?
 (a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Bihar (c) Odisha (d) West Bengal
63. Which of the following ministries celebrated 'International Day of Yoga' this year under the 'Yoga is an Indian Heritage' campaign?
 (a) Ministry of Culture (b) Ministry of Jal Shakti (Water)
 (c) Ministry of Earth Sciences (d) Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
64. Who is the first Indian woman and fourth overall to have a 50+ score and a 4+wicket haul on Test debut?
 (a) Tanya Bhatia (b) Pooja Vastrawarkar (c) Sneh Rana (d) Shikha Sharma
65. The World's First True Environmentally-Friendly Mineral Processing Plant is to be set up in _____.
 (a) South Korea (b) Russia (c) USA (d) Japan
66. Which of the following states Police have dedicated an exclusive memorial and cemetery for the department's dogs – probably the first of its kind in Asia?
 (a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Uttar Pradesh
67. According to the recent Bloomberg Billionaire Index, who among the following continues to top Asia's rich list?
 (a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Gautam Adani (c) Shaun Lee (d) Zhong Shanshan
68. The National Ayush Mission is organized 12-hour virtual Yoga Session 'Yogathon' in:
 (a) Karnataka (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Kerala (d) Andhra Pradesh
69. International Picnic Day is celebrated every year on _____.
 (a) June 13 (b) June 15 (c) June 18 (d) June 20
70. Yuka Saso is a Filipino professional:
 (a) Lawn Tennis Player (b) Polo Player (c) Golf Player (d) Badminton Player

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

- 1. b** The UN General Assembly approved the nomination of Costa Rican economist Rebecca Grynspan to head the UN agency promoting trade and development, the first woman and Central American to lead the Geneva-based organisation.
- 2. b** Amika George was picked for an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire), which is the third-ranking award on the list, in education for her campaign against period poverty, #FreePeriods.
- 3. b** The Nigerian Government created its account on Indian microblogging platform Koo, days after the African country banned Twitter.
- 4. a** Bikaner in Rajasthan has become the first town in the country to start a “door-to-door” vaccination drive in the ongoing fight against the coronavirus pandemic.
- 5. a** The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has lauded the Centre’s Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP), saying that it should serve as a “best practice” for other countries where regional disparities in development status persist for many reasons.
- 6. a** E-commerce major Flipkart has partnered with Telangana government to lead a consortium tasked with the development and execution of the drone deliveries of medical supplies to remote areas under the ‘Medicines from the Sky’ project.
- 7. b** FREO is a first-of-its-kind; credit-led neobank in India that is designed to serve the banking needs of millennial in India and Southeast Asia. For many of its offerings, the company has partnered with banks to bring new solutions to its customers.
- 8. c** The country’s forex reserves crossed the \$600-billion mark for the first time on the back of continued foreign investment flow into the capital markets.
- 9. c** Global Wind Day or World Wind Day is a worldwide event that is held on June 15 around the world.
- 10. a** Novak Djokovic fought back from two sets down to beat the Greek fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas to win the French Open title for the second time.
- 11. b** Haryana has been ranked the best in the Anemia Mukta Bharat (AMB) Index among 28 states in the country.
- 12. d** In Madhya Pradesh, ‘Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan’ means free from corona with the help of a youth power campaign will be launched to make people aware about the COVID pandemic.
- 13. a** India saw its first-ever chess International Master from the Northeast region with Assam’s 14-year-old Shahil Dey achieving the feat.
- 14. a** The International Cricket Council announced a special edition intake of 10 cricket icons – including former India cricketer Vinoo Mankad – into the ICC Hall of Fame to celebrate the prestigious history of Test cricket.
- 15. b** Israel’s new Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has vowed to unite the nation frayed by four elections in two years of political stalemate.
- 16. a** The voters also rejected proposals that would have made Switzerland the first European country to ban synthetic pesticides following a bitterly fought campaign.

- 17. a** The World Day Against Child Labour, which is held every year on June 12, is intended to foster the worldwide movement against child labour.
- 18. b** A 15-meter-tall tree that belongs to the genus of the coffee family has recently been discovered from the Andaman Islands by a team of researchers from India and the Philippines.
- 19. b** In order to make the claim settlement process easier and faster for dependents of its deceased customers, public sector bank (PSB) Central Bank of India announced that it has introduced an online process for the same.
- 20. b** Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT Guwahati) researchers have paved the way for better water management policies in India.
- 21. c** The 2021 Desertification and Drought Day to be held on 17 June will focus on turning degraded land into healthy land.
- 22. a** The 2021 Brussels summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was the 31st formal meeting of the heads of state and heads of government of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, held in Brussels, Belgium, on 14 June 2021.
- 23. a** A documentary feature on Mahatma Gandhi, a documentary on the Sikh tradition of 'Seva' and a movie that explores the state of mind of a married woman during the COVID19 lockdown are among the films that won top honours at the 2021 New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF).
- 24. a** Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar has developed a device 'Jivan Vayu' which can be used as a substitute of CPAP machine.
- 25. b** WISA Woodsat, a nanosatellite that measures 4 by 4 by 4 inches (10 by 10 by 10 centimeters) and weighs about 2.2 lbs. (1 kilogram), uses a special type of coated plywood (called WISA) for its surface panels.
- 26. d** Fifteen banks have come together to form a new company which will use blockchain technology to process inland letters of credit (LCs) in a first such initiative.
- 27. b** Reserve Bank of India has released a Consultative Document on Regulation of Microfinance.
- 28. b** Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL), one of the India's leading Natural Gas Distribution Companies, has for the first time in India introduced Mobile CNG Refuelling Unit at Ajivali near Panvel on old Mumbai-Pune Highway.
- 29. d** World Giving Index 2021 report says, India is 14th most charitable country. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown 'giving' trends across the world. Released by the Charities Aid Foundation's (CAF), this year's survey highlights the impact of lockdowns on charitable giving.
- 30. b** Manipur lifter is ranked second in the women's 49-kg category. As per rules of the IWF, top eight lifters in each of the 14 weight categories, including seven in the women's group, are eligible to compete in Tokyo Games.
- 31. b** PM Modi addresses Europe's largest digital and start-up event, VivaTech.
- 32. c** The government appointed Aashish Chandorkar, a private person, as Counsellor at the level of director in India's Permanent Mission in the World Trade Organization (WTO), Geneva for a period of three years.
- 33. c** Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar and Chief Minister of Karnataka B S Yediyurappa jointly inaugurated three Centers of Excellence established in Karnataka under the Indo-Israel Agricultural Project.

- 34. d** State-owned Canara Bank will be the lead sponsor of National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) or bad bank with 12 per cent stake in the entity.
- 35. a** A film made by students of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) won the “Outstanding Achievement” award at the L’Age d’Or International Art-house Film Festival (LIAFF).
- 36. b** Hallmarking of gold has been made mandatory in 256 districts. The hallmark will include a six-digit code along with BIS Mark and Purity and delivery voucher to be issued to jewellers for utmost transparency.
- 37. a** A three day virtual Conference of BRICS Network Universities on the theme of electric mobility was inaugurated at IIT Bombay.
- 38. b** National Maritime Heritage Complex, a world-class facility is to be developed in the vicinity of the Archaeological Survey of India site of Lothal.
- 39. d** The California-based company, which will send a NASA cubesat mission to the moon this fall and aims to launch its own private life-hunting Venus mission in 2023, has been awarded a contract to design the twin spacecraft for NASA’s potential ESCAPE Mars mission.
- 40. c** The International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and is observed on 16 June.
- 41. c** Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of Tuberculosis-Free India will be achieved by 2025.
- 42. c** The Minister of State released the latest version of “Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India. It has been published by Space Application Centre, ISRO, Ahmedabad.
- 43. a** Clubhouse launches program to support Indian content creators.
- 44. b** Social media giant Facebook has added its first health-focused fact-checking partner in India.
- 45. d** India maintained 43rd rank on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by the Institute for Management Development (IMD) that examined the impact of COVID-19 on economies around the world this year.
- 46. c** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Deep Ocean mission proposal made by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES). India has a 7,517-km coastline with nine coastal states and 1,382 islands.
- 47. b** Iceland has been top of the Global Peace Index for 13 years while Afghanistan has languished at the bottom for the last four.
- 48. b** International Day of Yoga will be observed worldwide on 21st of June.
- 49. c** Microsoft Corp named Chief Executive Officer Satya Nadella as its new Chairman, in place of John Thompson.
- 50. c** Kenneth Kaunda, Zambia’s founding president and a champion of African nationalism who spearheaded the fights to end white minority rule across southern Africa, has died at the age of 97.
- 51. d** The mega leather park project, which will be built in Ramaipur village in Kanpur, will help improve Kanpur’s position among the ten largest leather-producing states of the country.
- 52. b** Indian Naval Ship Trikand, a mission deployed for Anti-Piracy Operations, is participated in the maiden IN - EUNAVFOR Joint Naval Exercise in the Gulf of Aden.

- 53. a** The 'Sankalp Se Siddhi' initiative, also known as 'Mission Van Dhan', was introduced by the central government in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's aim to establish a sustainable livelihood for India's tribal population.
- 54. d** Government will identify 10 districts in North East states lagging behind the most in governance and developmental parameters.
- 55. c** The UN General Assembly elected Antonio Guterres to a second term as secretary-general giving him another five years at the helm of the 193-member world organization.
- 56. a** Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has nominated Indian-origin Justice Mahmud Jamal to the Supreme Court of Canada, becoming the first person of colour to be named to the apex court of the country.
- 57. d** Japan's central bank announced its first investment fund for efforts to address climate change, as the government works towards its new target of reaching carbon neutrality by 2050.
- 58. c** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to grant in-principle approval to Centrum Financial Services Limited to set up a Small Finance Bank.
- 59. b** World Refugee Day is an international day organised every year on 20 June by the United Nations.
- 60. a** Portugal striker Cristiano Ronaldo became the first person to reach the 300 million followers mark on social media platform Instagram.
- 61. b** India hosted a two day summit on Green Hydrogen Initiatives starting involving the BRICS nations.
- 62. c** With the introduction of gharials in 1975, Odisha had become the only state to have all the three species of the reptile —freshwater gharials, muggers and saltwater crocodiles.
- 63. a** Culture Ministry celebrated 'International Day of Yoga' this year under the 'Yoga is an Indian Heritage' campaign.
- 64. c** Sneha Rana became the first Indian woman and fourth overall to have both a 50+ score and a 4+wicket haul on Test debut.
- 65. a** World's First True Environmentally-Friendly Mineral Processing Plant in Unju, South Korea.
- 66. b** The Kerala Police have dedicated an exclusive memorial and cemetery for the department's dogs – probably the first of its kind in Asia.
- 67. a** Mukesh Ambani, who controls the retail-to-oil conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd, continues to top Asia's rich list with a net worth of \$84 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaire Index.
- 68. c** National Ayush Mission will organize a 12-hour virtual Yoga Session 'Yogathon' in the state. Quiz competitions and essay competition on the theme Yoga will also be organized for school students.
- 69. c** International Picnic Day is celebrated every year on June 18 to encourage everyone to go out and spend an amazingly easy and stress-free day with their loved ones.
- 70. c** Yuka Saso is a Filipino professional golfer, and won the first ever gold medal for the Philippines in both women's individual and women's team event in Asian Games golf competitions.