
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

24th May to 30th May, 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



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National



Haryana first state to reimburse GST on Covid-related donations

- Haryana became the first state in the country to allow reimbursement of goods and services tax (GST) paid on Covid-related donations made to the state and state-run facilities. This will be applicable till June 30.
- The move is aimed at encouraging efforts by corporations, non-government organisations (NGOs) and individuals and facilitating donations of items such as oxygen concentrators, Covid-19 vaccines, Remdesivir injections, etc. as the country battles the intense second Covid-19 wave. Haryana will reimburse GST already paid on such Covid-19 related items, subject to conditions.
- Reimbursement will be available only in cases where Covid-19 related material is donated free of cost to the government of Haryana, state-run hospitals, or any hospitals or institutions permitted by the state government to receive such material through Haryana's Health and Family Welfare department.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) is an indirect tax (or consumption tax) used in India on the supply of goods and services. It is a comprehensive, multistage, destination-based tax: comprehensive because it has subsumed almost all the indirect taxes except a few state taxes. Multi-staged as it is, the GST is imposed at every step in the production process, but is meant to be refunded to all parties in the various stages of production other than the final consumer and as a destination-based tax, it is collected from point of consumption and not point of origin like previous taxes. Goods and services are divided into five different tax slabs for collection of tax: 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%. However, petroleum products, alcoholic drinks, and electricity are not taxed under GST and instead are taxed separately by the individual state governments, as per the previous tax system. There is a special rate of 0.25% on rough precious and semi-precious stones and 3% on gold. In addition a cess of 22% or other rates on top of 28% GST applies on few items like aerated drinks, luxury cars and tobacco products. Pre-GST, the statutory tax rate for most goods was about 26.5%, Post-GST, most goods are expected to be in the 18% tax range. The tax came into effect from 1 July 2017 through the implementation of the One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India by the Indian government. The GST replaced existing multiple taxes levied by the central and state governments. The tax rates, rules and regulations are governed by the GST Council which consists of the finance ministers of the central government and all the states.

India approves opening of first consulate in the Maldives

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

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

SC's E-Committee releases manual for its free e-Courts Services Mobile App

- **Supreme Court's E-Committee** has released **manual for its free e-Courts Services Mobile App in 14 languages**. The app is available in English, Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarathi, Kannada, Khasi, Malayalam, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu.
- Law and Justice Ministry said, the app aimed to benefit Litigants, Citizens, and Lawyers, Law firms, Police, Government Agencies and other institutional litigants. **The mobile app and its manuals in English and other regional languages can be downloaded free of cost from the official website of the e-Committee, Supreme Court of India**. The manuals explain all features of app with screenshots for easy understanding for the common man.
- The Ministry said, by using the App, **one can get various citizen-centric services like search for cases with case numbers, filing numbers, party names, FIR number, advocate details, Case Status and Cause List etc**. People can get complete case history from the filing until disposal, including date wise case diary. Through the e-Courts services mobile app- one can get the case status and case details of both High Courts and District Courts.

The **Supreme Court of India** came into being on **28 January 1950**. It replaced both the **Federal Court of India** and the **Judicial Committee of the Privy Council** which were then at the apex of the Indian court system. The first **Chief Justice of India** was **Sir H J Kania**. Originally, the **Constitution of India** envisaged a supreme court with a chief justice and seven judges; leaving it to parliament to increase this number. At present, SC is consisting of the **Chief Justice of India and 33 sanctioned other judges**. The motto of the Supreme Court is **'Yato Dharmastato Jayah'**, means "whence law (dharma), thence victory". It is also referred to – as the **wheel of righteousness, encompassing truth, goodness and equity**. As per the **Article 142 of the Constitution**, it is the duty of the **President of India to enforce the decrees of the Supreme Court** and the court is conferred with the inherent jurisdiction to pass any order deemed necessary in the interest of justice. **The Supreme Court has replaced the British Privy Council as the highest court of appeal. The current CJI is Justice NV Ramana.**

Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur launches first phase of data analytics driven MCA21 Version 3.0

- **Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Singh Thakur** has launched the first phase of data analytics driven **MCA21 Version 3.0**. This Version is having **additional modules for e-Adjudication, e-Consultation and Compliance Management**.
- **Along with the launch of version 3.0, revamped website, e-Book, e-consultation module and new email services deployed for better stakeholders' experience** have also been **introduced**. The e-book will provide easy access to the updated legislations along with a tracking mechanism for historical changes in law.
- The MCA version 3.0 is going to be implemented in two phases. **The second and final phase will be launched from October this year. This version will leverage the use of latest technologies to further streamline the corporate compliance and stakeholders' experience.**
- **MCA21 has been part of Mission Mode projects** of the Government of India. Bagging several accolades in past, the project has now reached its 3rd version. **MCA21 V3.0 is part of this year's Budget announcement** and will leverage the use of latest technologies to **further streamline the Corporate Compliance and stakeholders experience.**

Captain Anurag Singh Thakur is a member of the Lower House of Parliament in India (Lok Sabha) from Hamirpur in Himachal Pradesh, and also serves as a Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs.

Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan chairs 74th World Health Assembly

- **Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan chaired the 74th World Health Assembly. Director-General of the World Health Organisation Dr Tedros** was also present on the occasion. **Chairman of WHO Executive Board Dr Harsh Vardhan** noted that the Board called for further efforts to **ensure fair and**

equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility. Harsh Vardhan, Chairman of the WHO Executive Board, noted that the board has called for further efforts to ensure equitable and fair access to Coronavirus vaccines to COVAX Facility.

World Health Assembly is a forum through which WHO is governed by its 194 member states. The World health assembly is the world's highest health policy setting body and is composed of the Health Ministers from WHO's member states. The major tasks of the World Health Assembly are to decide major policy questions and approve the WHO work programme and budget. It also elects its Director-general and annually elects 10 members for renewing part of its executive board. Currently, the Health Minister of India Dr. Harsh Vardhan is the Chairman of the WHO Executive Board.

NITI Aayog to partner with TRIFED to implement Van Dhan Yojana in districts identified as aspirational

- **TRIFED will now be partnering with NITI Aayog to implement the Van Dhan Yojana in the districts that have been identified as aspirational by NITI Aayog. It has been decided that a dedicated team from TRIFED along with the NITI Aayog team will work out the follow-up-plan for the implementation of the Van Dhan Yojana in each of the 39 Tribal Aspirational Districts.**
- **These identified districts are in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Telangana and Tripura. A special focus will be on these aspirational districts where tribal population constitutes more than 50 per cent.**
- **Under the expansion plan of tribal development program, an additional 9900 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras subsumed into 659 VDVK Clusters spread out in these tribal aspirational districts are envisaged. This is expected to give a boost to the employment generation to nearly 2 lakh tribal families.**

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.

Six Indian places added to tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites

- **Six Indian sites, including the temples of Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu, the Ganga ghats in Varanasi, and the Satpura Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh, have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO's world heritage sites, the Ministry of Culture, recently announced. The submissions were made by Archaeological Survey of India, which is responsible for the conservation and preservation of Indian monuments.**
- **The Satpura Tiger Reserve is located in Madhya Pradesh, Iconic riverfront of the historic city of Varanasi, Megalithic site of Hire Benakal is in Karnataka, Maratha Military Architecture is in Maharashtra, Bhedaghat-Lametaghat in Narmada Valley- Jabalpur, in Madhya Pradesh and temples of Kanchipuram are in Tamil Nadu.**
- **The Iconic Riverfront located in the ancient city of Varanasi has been competing for the UNESCO tag for several years now. The ghats- steps to the riverfront form a symbolic chain of holy sites. The 6.5-Kilometre long river front forms the eastern edge of Varanasi and possesses a unique history and presents a specific vision of a magnificent architectural row of lofty buildings and holy sites. There are 84 ghats in total. The five most sacred ghats are Asi, Dashashvamedha, Manikarnika, Panchaganga and Adi Keshava. The city of Varanasi, in its iconic riverfront, holds sacred and spiritual value through time immemorial.**
- **With the addition of these six sites, UNESCO has 48 proposals in the tentative list of India. "As per Operational Guidelines, 2019, it is mandatory to put any monument/site on the Tentative List (TL) before it is considered for the final nomination dossier. India has 48 sites in the TL as of now. As per rules, any country can submit the nomination dossier after one year of it being on the TL.**

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the **United Nations (UN)** based in **Paris**. **Audrey Azoulay** appointed as the **Director-general** of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), becoming the **second female leader of the organization**.

A World Heritage Site is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**. World Heritage Sites are designated by UNESCO for having **cultural, historical, scientific or other form of significance**. The sites are judged to contain “cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity”. The sites are designated as having “**outstanding universal value**” under the **Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972**. The **World Heritage Centre** is the Secretariat to the 1972 Convention. There are three types of sites: **Cultural, Natural, and Mixed**. **India has 38 world heritage sites, including 30 cultural properties, 7 natural properties and 1 mixed site**. The latest one included is **Jaipur city, Rajasthan**. **Ahmedabad** is the **India’s first city to be inscribed in UNESCO’s World Heritage City**.

India and Israel sign three-year work program for cooperation in agriculture

- **India and Israel have signed a three-year work program for cooperation in agriculture. India and Israel are implementing the “INDO-ISRAEL Agricultural Project Centres of Excellence” and “INDO-ISRAEL Villages of Excellence”.**
- **India and Israel have had bilateral relations since 1993 in the agricultural sector. This is the 5th Action Plan.** This new work programme will further strengthen the bilateral relations and mutual cooperation between the two countries in the field of agriculture for the benefit of the farming community.
- **On this occasion, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said that the agriculture sector ‘always remains a priority for India’.** “Due to the agrarian policies of the Government of India, there is a definite change in the lives of the farmers and the agriculture sector,” Tomar said.

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. Benjamin Netanyahu is serving as the 9th and current Prime Minister of Israel since 2009. Reuven Rivlin is serving as the 10th and current President of Israel since 2014.

Karnataka: Yediyurappa launches comprehensive online portal on CSR activities ‘Akanksha’

- **A portal that provides comprehensive details on all the CSR activities in Karnataka was launched by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa in Bengaluru. Named as Akanksha, the portal will help the corporate sector, government and the donors to utilise CSR funds for Government programmes.**
- **The Chief Minister has said that the portal will usher in transparency in the utilisation of CSR funds. 175 crore rupees of CSR funds are utilised in the state for the health sector to mitigate the pandemic.**
- **The UN agency UNSPU has collaborated in the creation of the portal with an objective of making CSR fund utilisation easy, simple and transparent.** The portal will also help achieve the sustainable development goals set by the UN. Mr. Yediyurappa has informed that 2.06 lakh Covid infected people were provided free medical treatment and a sum of 956 crore rupees has been spent by the State Government.

Karnataka is a state in the south western region of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act. Originally known as the State of Mysore, it was renamed Karnataka in 1973. The capital and largest city is Bengaluru. Bookanakere Siddalingappa Yediyurappa is serving as the 19th and current Chief Minister of Karnataka. Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala is currently serving as the Governor of Karnataka.

NHAI issues guidelines to ensure service time of not more than 10 seconds per vehicle at toll plazas

- **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has issued guidelines to ensure service time of not more than ten seconds per vehicle even at peak hours at the toll plazas on the National Highways.** The new set of guidelines will ensure seamless flow of traffic at the toll plazas **by not allowing vehicles to queue up more than 100 metres.** NHAI said, in most of the toll plazas, there is no waiting time after mandatory **100 per cent Fastag.**
- If there is queue of waiting vehicles of more than 100 metres due to some reason, **the vehicles will be allowed to pass without paying toll till the queue comes within 100 meters from the toll booth.** A yellow line at a distance of 100 meters from toll booth will be marked in each toll lane.

FASTag is an electronic toll collection system in India, operated by the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). It employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly from the prepaid or savings account linked to it or directly toll owner. It is affixed on the windscreen of the vehicle and enables to drive through toll plazas without stopping for transactions. The tag can be purchased from official Tag issuers or participating Banks and if it is linked to a prepaid account, then recharging or top-up can be as per requirement. **As per NHAI, FASTag has unlimited validity.**

Centre asks Social Media firms to provide details of compliance with IT Rules 2021

- **Electronics and IT Ministry has asked social media intermediaries for compliance details over the new Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.** New IT rules to regulate digital content, featuring a code of ethics and a three-tier grievance redressal framework, have come into force on May 26, 2021.
- On February 25, the Centre framed the **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021**, in the exercise of powers under section 87 (2) of the Information Technology Act, 2000 and in supersession of the earlier Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011, which have come into effect from May 26.
- The Ministry has also **sought details of Chief Compliance Officer, and Resident Grievance Officer appointed by digital platforms under the new IT rules.** Centre had given Significant Social Media Intermediaries, SSMI three months to comply with the request. **Any social media platform with more than 50 lakh users will be designated as a significant social media intermediary.**
- **Social media giants such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp messenger could face a ban if they do not comply with the new Information Technology rules.** They also run the risk of losing their status as “intermediaries” and may become liable for criminal action if they do not comply with the revised regulations.

Overview of the new rules: **It mandates a grievance redressal system for over the top (OTT) and digital portals in the country. This is necessary for the users of social media to raise their grievance against the misuse of social media.** Significant social media firms **have to appoint a chief compliance officer and have a nodal contact person who can be in touch with law enforcement agencies 24/7.** Social media platforms will also have to **name a grievance officer who shall register the grievance within 24 hours and dispose of it in 15 days.** **If there are complaints against the dignity of users, particularly women – about exposed private parts of individuals or nudity or sexual act or impersonation etc – social media platforms will be required to remove that within 24 hours after a complaint is made.** They also will have to **publish a monthly report about the number of complaints received and the status of redressal.** There will be **three levels of regulation for news publishers — self-regulation, a self-regulatory body, headed by a retired judge or an eminent person, and oversight from the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, including codes of practices and a grievance committee.**

Union Minister Kiren Rijju launched Ayush Clinical Case Repository portal

- **Union Minister Kiren Rijju launched the Ayush Clinical Case Repository portal and the third version of Ayush Sanjivani App** in a virtual event. **The Ayush Clinical Repository portal will serve as a platform to support both Ayush practitioners and general public.**

- **This portal aims to aggregate information about clinical outcomes achieved by Ayush practitioners on a large scale. It will not only benefit the practitioner community and the public, but will also help widen the solid scientific base of all streams of Ayush.**
- **The third version of Ayush Sanjivani App will facilitate a significant study and documentation regarding the efficacy of selected Ayush interventions, including Ayush-64 and Kabasura Kudineer medicines in the management of asymptomatic and mild to moderate COVID-19 patients.**

Kiren Rijiju is an Indian lawyer and politician from Arunachal Pradesh. Rijiju is the current Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and Minister of State in the Ministry of Minority Affairs of India. Rijiju entered the Lok Sabha for the second time in 2014 from the Arunachal (West) constituency of Arunachal Pradesh in India

Government to set up National Mission on use of Biomass in coal based thermal power plants

- **The Power Ministry has decided to set up a National Mission on the use of Biomass in coal based thermal power plants. It is intended to address the issue of air pollution due to farm stubble-burning and to reduce the carbon footprints of thermal power generation.**
- **It will also further support the energy transition in the country and its targets to move towards cleaner energy sources. The Mission will increase the level of co-firing from the present five percent to higher levels to have a larger share of carbon-neutral power generation from the thermal power plants.**
- **It will also work to facilitate overcoming the constraints in the supply chain of biomass pellets and agro-residue and its transport upto to the power plants. Besides, it will consider regulatory issues in biomass co-firing.**

The Ministry of Power is an Indian government ministry. The current Union Minister of state (Independent charge) is Raj Kumar Singh. The ministry is charged with overseeing electricity production and infrastructure development, including generation, transmission, and delivery, as well as maintenance projects. He is a Member of the Indian Parliament for Arrah, Bihar, since May 2014. Singh is a 1975 batch Bihar cadre Indian Administrative Service officer and former Home Secretary of India.

India's first city-wide environmental surveillance platform for COVID launched

- **With the number of cases of COVID-19 surging across the county in the second wave of the pandemic, the Government of Karnataka is introducing a city-wide sewage surveillance system in Bangalore that will help officials track the virus at an early stage, even among asymptomatic individuals. The Government of Karnataka plans to begin testing across 45 wards in Bangalore.**
- **Over the last year, scientists around the world have discovered that waste-water testing can serve as a cost-effective early warning system, often predicting an increase in COVID-19 before the number of official cases has risen. The Precision Health Platform in Bengaluru, the first of its kind in Asia, will test sewage from both sewered and non-sewered waste-water to identify clusters of new infections. Early identification of clusters can help guide the COVID-19 response and give policymakers the information they need to better allocate limited pandemic resources.**

Government of India reconstitutes empowered group on Covid-19

- **Centre has reconstituted the six Empowered Groups into ten groups to tackle the COVID situation in the country. The decision is aimed at further improving the efforts in catering the current need of COVID management.**
- **NITI Aayog Member (Health) Dr VK Paul will head the Emergency Management Plan Group and the ten-member panel on Vaccination. Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan will be the convener of the Empowered Group on Emergency Response Capabilities.**
- **It will look into the issues related to hospitals, equipment and medicines. A separate Empowered Group has been formed under the chairmanship of Road and Transport Secretary, Giridhar Aramane on oxygen production, import and other related issues.**

- **Giridhar Aramane, Union secretary**, ministry of road transport and highways has been **appointed convener of the empowered group to see the nation's requirements related to medical oxygen**. He along with 11 others will oversee production, import, logistics, matters related to equipment meant for transporting oxygen, PSA plants and conversion of industrial oxygen to medical oxygen.
- “The situation has been reviewed and a need have been felt **to reconstitute the six Empowered Groups into ten Groups in order to cater the current need of Covid-19 management**. Now, the undersigned in his capacity as **Chairperson, National Executive Committee (NEC), in exercise of the powers conferred under section 10(2)(h) and (i) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005**, hereby reconstitute these Empowered Groups as per Appendix, with the same terms and condition as have been mentioned in the Order of even number dated March 29, 2020,” the order said.
- The reconstituted empowered groups with their conveners are as follows -
- **Emergency Management Plan and Strategy - Dr VK Paul, Niti Aayog (health) member**
- **Emergency Response Capabilities - Rajesh Bhushan, Union health secretary**
- **Augmenting Human Resources and Capacity Building - Apurva Chandra, Union labour secretary**
- **Medical Oxygen - Giridhar Aramane, Union secretary, ministry of road transport and highways**
- **Vaccination - Dr VK Paul, Niti Aayog (health) member**
- **Testing - Dr Balaram Bhargava, ICMR DG**
- **Partnerships with NGOs, private sector and international organisations - Amitabh Kant, CEO, Niti Aayog**
- **Information, Communication and Public Engagement - Union information and broadcast secretary Amit Khare**
- **Economic and welfare measures - Ajay Seth, secretary, department of economic affairs**
- **Pandemic response and coordination - Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Union home secretary**

2nd BRICS Sherpas' and Sous Sherpas' meeting convened under India's Chairship concludes

- **The second BRICS Sherpas' and Sous Sherpas' meeting was convened under India's Chairship**. BRICS partners discussed the preparations for the upcoming meeting of the BRICS Foreign Ministers on 1st June.
- **They negotiated key deliverables for India's BRICS 2021 Chairship**, including outcome documents for the Foreign Ministers' meeting. The negotiations took place in a constructive and cordial atmosphere. **BRICS partners appreciated the positive leadership of the Indian Chair in advancing intra-BRICS cooperation, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Centre to roll out unified health interface under NDHM

- **Centre will soon roll out a Unified Health Interface (UHI)**, an open and interoperable IT network for digital health that shall **enable public and private solutions and apps to plug in and be a part of the National Digital Health Ecosystem**.
- It will allow users to search, book and avail necessary healthcare services such as tele-consultations or laboratory tests. **The system will ensure that only verified healthcare providers join the ecosystem. The NDHM aims to develop the backbone necessary to support the integrated digital health infrastructure of the country.** It is expected to bridge the existing gap amongst different stakeholders of the healthcare ecosystem through digital highways.

Assam appoints 'guardian ministers' for its various districts

- **The Assam Cabinet appointed ministers who would act as guardians for different districts in the state.** The guardian ministers will be **assigned with a secretary each and both will have to visit their districts at least once a month.** They will also have to **visit the districts during emergency situations and conduct extensive tours during natural disasters like floods, cyclones etc.**

Jagdish Mukhi is the current Governor of Assam and Assam is known for Assam tea and Assam silk. **Dispur** is the capital of the state of Assam. **Guwahati** is the largest city of Assam and Northeastern India. **Himanta Biswa Sarma** is current the Chief Minister of Assam. In 1874, on the formation of Assam as the Chief Commissioner's Province, it was chosen as the headquarters of the new administration because of its convenient location between the Brahmaputra and Surma valleys and more so because the climate of Shillong was much cooler than tropical India. **Shillong** remained the capital of undivided Assam until the creation of the new state of Meghalaya on 21 January 1972, when **Shillong** became the capital of Meghalaya, and Assam moved its capital to Dispur in Guwahati.



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In a first, Pakistan to host World Environment Day 2021

- **World Environment Day is hosted by different countries around the globe. It has a participation of over 143 countries annually. Pakistan, on June 5, will host World Environment Day 2021 in partnership with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). Prime Minister Imran Khan will virtually preside over the World Environment Conference in Islamabad on the night of June 4.**
- **This will be the first time in history that the country will be officially hosting the day. Only four global personalities, including Prime Minister Imran Khan, have been selected to participate in the World Environment Conference this year.**
- **Pakistan will make some important announcements related to initiatives that it has taken to mitigate the effects of climate change, including the 10 Billion Trees Tsunami Programmed, Clean Green Pakistan, the Electric Vehicle Policy, National Parks, and Green jobs.**
- **This year's theme for WED is 'Ecosystem Restoration'. Ecosystem restoration means preventing, halting, and reversing the damage caused by human activities and finally healing our nature. This WED will see the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.**
- **The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration following a proposal and resolution for action by over 70 countries around the globe. The UN Decade runs from 2021 till 2030, which is also the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals and the timeline scientists have identified as the last chance to prevent catastrophic climate change.**
- **The conference will be attended by the Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres, Pope Francis, and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel. In the year 2018, India hosted WED with a focus on plastic pollution.**

Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the fifth-most populous country. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Pakistani rupee is the currency of Pakistan. Imran Ahmed Khan Niazi is the 22nd and current Prime Minister of Pakistan and the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Before entering politics, Khan was an international cricketer and captain of the Pakistan national cricket team, which he led to victory in the 1992 Cricket World Cup. Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi is 13th and current President of Pakistan

India organises first BRICS energy meet

- **India will work on renewable energy, energy efficiency and smart grid while hosting the first meeting of BRICS Senior Energy Officials under its presidency of the five-nation group. India decided to work on the three priority areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency and smart grid.**
- **On Day 1, representatives from BRICS nations introduced their priority areas of cooperation within the Energy Research Cooperation Platform (ERCP) and focal points for work-streams of the BRICS ERCP. India decided to work on three priority areas: Renewable Energy; Energy Efficiency; and Smart Grid.**
- **On Day 2, representatives from each partner nation gave overview of their national energy sector development. During the meeting, member countries agreed in-principle on India's proposal for updated version of report on BRICS energy sector. India also proposed to prepare a BRICS Energy Technology Report with few additional priority areas and a BRICS Energy Research Directory.**

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. The term “**BRIC**” is believed to be coined in 2001 by then-chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, Jim O’Neill, in his publication Building Better Global Economic BRICs. But, it was actually coined by Roopa Purushothaman who was a Research Assistant in the original report.

Samoa swears in its first female Prime Minister in a tent

- **Samoa swore in its first female Prime Minister** in a makeshift ceremony in a tent Monday after she was locked out of Parliament amid a power struggle with the country’s longstanding leader.
- **Fiame Naomi Mata’afa’s Faith in the One True God (FAST) Party** said the dramatic **turn of events amounted to a “bloodless coup”** following weeks of uncertainty after the country’s deadlocked April 9 election.
- **Her narrow election victory was set to end almost 40 years of rule by the Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP)**, which has governed almost uninterrupted since 1982, and more than two decades with Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi as Prime Minister.

Samoa is a Polynesian island country consisting of two main islands. Apia is the capital of Samoa, and its only city. The tala is the currency of Samoa.

WHO and Switzerland launch global BioHub for pathogen storage, sharing and analysis

- **The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Swiss Confederation signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch the first WHO BioHub Facility** as part of the WHO BioHub System, which was announced in November 2020. This facility will **enhance the rapid sharing of viruses and other pathogens between laboratories and partners globally**.
- **Based in Spiez, Switzerland, the facility will serve as a centre for the safe receipt, sequencing, storage and preparation of biological materials for distribution to other laboratories**, in order to inform risk assessments, and sustain global preparedness against these pathogens.

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.

Mali’s President, PM resign after arrests by military

- **Mali’s interim President and Prime Minister resigned** two days after they were arrested by the military. Soldiers led by interim Vice President Assimi Goita, had arrested President Bah Ndaw and Prime Minister Moctar Ouane and taken them to a military base after a cabinet reshuffle in which the two officers lost their posts.
- **However a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Union and UN mission MINUSMA mediation mission told reporters that the leaders had in fact resigned before they arrived.**

Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa. Bamako is the capital and largest city of Mali. The West African CFA franc is the currency of eight independent states in West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. Colonel Assimi Goïta took power from Bah Ndaw after the 2021 Malian coup d’état, and has since been constitutionally declared President of Mali.

Bashar Al-Assad Re-Elected As Syrian President for 4th Term

- **Bashar al-Assad** has been re-elected for a fourth term as president of war-ravaged Syria, despite Western accusations the polls were “neither free nor fair”. The parliamentary speaker announced that **Assad garnered 95.1 percent of the votes cast, trouncing two virtually unknown challengers.**
- **The controversial vote extending Assad’s stranglehold on power was the second since the start of a decade-long civil conflict that has killed more than 388,000 people, displaced millions and battered the country’s infrastructure.**

Syria is a country in Western Asia, bordering Lebanon to the southwest, the Mediterranean Sea to the west, Turkey to the north, Iraq to the east, Jordan to the south, and Israel to the southwest. Damascus is the capital of Syria and the fourth holiest city in Islam. Syrian pound or Syrian lira is the currency of Syria.

First United Nations World Tourism Organisation regional office opens in Riyadh

- **The first United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) regional office has opened in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.**
- **Secretary General, Zurab Pololikashvili, was joined by Saudi Minister of Tourism, Ahmed Al-Khateeb, and Princess Haifa Al-Saud, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Saudi Arabia, to inaugurate the hub that will coordinate initiatives across 13 countries in the Middle East.**

US: Arun Venkataraman nominated for US Director General & Foreign Commercial Service & Assistant Secretary for Global Markets

- **United States President Joe Biden has nominated Indian-American Arun Venkataraman for the Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service and the Assistant Secretary for Global Markets in the Department of Commerce.**
- **Mr. Venkataraman has over 20 years of experience advising companies, international organisations and the US Government on international trade issues. He is currently the Counselor to the Secretary of Commerce, advising the Department on trade and other international economic matters.**
- **As the first-ever Director of Policy at the Department of Commerce’s International Trade Administration under President Obama, Venkataraman helped shape the US Government’s responses to critical challenges faced by firms in the US and in markets around the world, including China and India.**

Russia introduces world’s first animal specific COVID-19 vaccine, begins inoculating animals

- **Russia has registered the world’s first animal-specific vaccine.** Vaccinations at veterinary clinics have now begun in some locations, according to Rosselkhoznadzor, Russia’s veterinary regulator.
- **The vaccine, known as Carnivak-Cov, is also being sought by the EU, Argentina, South Korea, and Japan. Dogs, cats, apes, and mink are among the species found to be contaminated with the deadly infectious viral disease.**
- **Russia already has three Covid-19 vaccines for humans, the most well-known of which is Sputnik V. Moscow has also given emergency approval to two others, EpiVacCorona and CoviVac.**

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



US pips Mauritius as second largest source of FDI in India in 2020-21: DPIIT data

- The US replaced Mauritius as the second largest source of foreign direct investment into India during 2020-21 with inflows of USD 13.82 billion, according to government data. Singapore remained the top source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into the country for the third consecutive fiscal at USD 17.41 billion.
- During the last financial year, India attracted USD 5.64 billion in FDI from Mauritius, according to the data by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- The island country was followed by UAE (USD 4.2 billion), Cayman Island (USD 2.79 billion), Netherlands (USD 2.78 billion), UK (USD 2.04 billion), Japan (USD 1.95 billion), Germany (USD 667 million), and Cyprus (USD 386 million).
- Overall foreign direct investments into the country grew 19 per cent to USD 59.64 billion during 2020-21 amid measures taken by the government for policy reforms, investment facilitation and ease of doing business.
- Total FDI, including equity, re-invested earnings and capital, rose 10 per cent to the highest-ever USD 81.72 billion, as against USD 74.39 billion in 2019-20. In 2020-21, the computer software and hardware sector attracted the highest inflows of USD 26.14 billion. It was followed by construction - infrastructure activities (USD 7.87 billion) and services sector (USD 5 billion).

‘FDI’ or ‘Foreign Direct Investment’ means investment through capital instruments by a person resident outside India –in an unlisted Indian company or in ten per cent or more of the post-issue paid-up equity capital on a fully diluted basis of a listed Indian company. In India, foreign investment can be made mainly under two routes: **Automatic Route:** Under the Automatic Route, the non-resident investor or the Indian company does not require any approval from Government of India for the investment. **Reserve Bank of India is in charge of Automatic Route. Government Approval Route:** Under the Government Approval Route, prior to investment, approval from the Government of India is required. A foreign direct investment (FDI) is an investment in the form of a controlling ownership in a business in one country by an entity based in another country.

LIC hikes stake in UBI to over 5%

- The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has hiked its stake to 5.06% in state-run Union Bank of India with acquisition of nearly 2% additional stake in the bank.
- Earlier, the LIC held 3.09% stake in UBI, representing 19,79,23,251 equity shares of the bank, as per a regulatory filing of LIC sent to exchanges through Union Bank of India. Union Bank of India had closed its Qualified Institutions Placement (QIP), in which it raised a total of Rs. 1,447.17 crore.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (abbreviated as LIC) is an Indian government owned insurance and investment corporation under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. The Life insurance Corporation of India was established on September 1, 1956, when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act that nationalized the insurance industry in India. Over 245 insurance companies and provident societies were merged to create the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India. It is based in Mumbai.

Gautam Adani is world's 2nd fastest growing billionaire in 2021

- **India's industrial tycoon Gautam Adani, the world's second fastest-growing billionaire in 2021, rose to the 14th spot on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, replacing China's Zhong Shanshan to become the second richest Asian in the world.**
- **With a net worth of \$66.5 billion, Adani, who began his career as a commodity trader, is getting closer to Asia's richest, compatriot Mukesh Ambani, chairman of Reliance Industries, whose net worth is \$76.5 billion while Shanshan is worth \$63.6 billion.**
- **Currently, Ambani and Adani are placed on the 13th and 14th position, respectively, in the global billionaires' list of Bloomberg. While Adani's net worth has climbed by \$32.7 billion in the past year, Ambani's wealth has marginally decreased by \$175.5 million, as per the index. The net worth of Ambani stood at \$76.5 billion.**
- **After starting out as a commodities trader in the late 1980s, Gautam Adani has over two decades built an empire that now spans from mines, ports and power plants to airports, data centre, city gas and defence. Adani Group became third group in India to cross \$100 billion in market capitalization in April.**

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.**

RBI Innovation Hub appoints Rajesh Bansal as CEO

- **Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) has appointed Rajesh Bansal as its chief executive officer. Bansal was a member of the founding team of Aadhaar and previously served at the RBI in various capacities in the areas of technology, financial inclusion and payments systems.**

ITC Hotels gets world's first platinum infection risk certification

- **ITC Hotels became the first hotel chain in the world to receive the platinum level certification in infection risk management from Norway-based DNV, a global leader that aims at boosting customers' confidence in the wake of the ongoing pandemic.**
- **DNV gave the certification for the rigorous health, hygiene and safety protocols being implemented to ensure the safety of guests and associates across all ITC Hotels.**

IFSCA constitutes an expert committee on Investment Funds

- **The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has constituted an expert committee on Investment Funds. The Committee under the Chairmanship of Nilesh Shah, Managing Director of Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Co. Ltd, will recommend the road map for the funds industry in the International Financial Service Centres, IFSCs.**
- **The Committee comprises leaders from the Fund Management sector. The Union Finance Ministry has informed that the committee has been constituted to holistically review the global best practices and make recommendations on the roadmap for the industry.**
- **The IFSCA has been established as a unified regulator to develop and regulate financial products, financial services and financial institutions in the IFSCs in India. The Fund Industry has been playing a significant role in intermediating between seekers of capital and investors.**

The central government has established International Financial Services Centres Authority to regulate all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) with headquarters in Gandhinagar (Gujarat). The authority will regulate financial products such as securities, deposits or contracts of insurance, financial services, and financial institutions which have been previously approved by any appropriate regulator such as Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) etc., in an IFSC. It will also regulate any other financial products, financial services, or financial institutions in an IFSC, which may be notified by the central government. It may also recommend to the central government any other financial products, financial services, or financial institutions, which may be permitted in an IFSC.

Punjab National Bank and PNB Housing Finance enter new brand agreement

- **Punjab National Bank (PNB) and PNB Housing Finance** have entered into a fresh brand agreement, which gives PNB the right to withdraw its brand name from the mortgage lender. PNB holds 33% in PNB Housing. The revised brand agreement raised doubts on whether a change in holding pattern is likely anytime soon.
- **The existing brand arrangement dated December 7, 2009** will continue to govern use of PNB trademark until PNB's shareholding in the housing finance company is 30% or more. Upon PNB's shareholding falling below 30%, the new agreement dated May 24 will replace the existing agreement.

Punjab National Bank, abbreviated as PNB, is an Indian government owned bank. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India headquartered in New Delhi, India. The bank was founded in 1894 and is the second largest government owned bank in India, both in terms of business and its network. The bank has over 180 million customers, 12,248 branches and 13,000+ ATMs post-merger with United Bank of India and Oriental Bank of Commerce, effective from 1 April 2020.

ICICI Bank, first in India to link UPI ID to its 'Pockets' digital wallet

- **ICICI Bank announced the launch of a new facility, wherein the UPI (Unified Payments Interface) ID has been linked to its digital wallet 'Pockets'**, marking a departure from the current practice that demands such IDs be linked with a savings bank account.
- **ICICI Bank is the first in the industry to enable customers to make UPI transactions from their wallet balance instead of their savings account.** The Bank has collaborated with NPCI to link its 'Pockets' digital wallet to the UPI network.
- **With this, customers using 'Pockets' can pay/receive money directly from/to 'Pockets' wallet balance without using their savings bank account.** Users of 'Pockets' digital wallet can use the UPI ID to make person to person.
- **(P2P) payments such as sending money to any individual's bank account or paying to a contact.** They can also undertake person to merchant (P2M) payments like paying online at merchant sites or paying by scanning QR codes.

ICICI Bank Limited is an Indian multinational banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra with its registered office in Vadodara, Gujarat. ICICI Bank was established by the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI), an Indian financial institution, as a wholly-owned subsidiary in 1994. ICICI Bank is one of the Big Four banks of India others banks are SBI, Bank of Baroda and HDFC. Sandeep Bakhshi is the current MD & CEO, ICICI Bank since October 2018.

Amazon buys James Bond owner MGM for 8.45 billion dollars

- **Amazon.com Inc is buying MGM, the fabled US movie studio home to the James Bond franchise, for 8.45 billion US Dollars.** The deal will give Amazon a huge library of films and TV shows and ramp up competition with streaming rivals led by Netflix and Disney. **The acquisition is Amazon's second-biggest after Whole Foods Market,** which it bought for 13.7 billion US Dollars in 2017.

Amazon.com, Inc. is an American multinational technology company based in Seattle, Washington, which focuses on e-commerce, cloud computing, digital streaming, and artificial intelligence. It is one of the Big Five companies in the U.S. information technology industry, along with Google, Apple, Microsoft, and Facebook. Amazon was founded by Jeff Bezos in Bellevue, Washington, on July 5, 1994. It started as an online marketplace for books but expanded to sell electronics, software, video games, apparel, furniture, food, toys, and jewelry.

TradeIndia set to organize India's first Medical and Healthcare Expo India 2021

- **Trade India, the country's leading B2B online marketplace platform, is preparing to host its ninth landmark virtual event, the Medical and Healthcare Expo India 2021.**

- With the aim of combating the pandemic through relentless effort, **Trade India is enabling the Indian medical suppliers and manufacturers a platform to Connect with Global & Genuine Buyers Digitally**, Showcase Products and Services to Visitors, Build Business Partnerships & Channels, **attain qualified Leads & Appoint Distributors, and Exhibit in India's First & Largest Virtual medical and healthcare expo.**

ZebPay launches first crypto-based lending platform in India

- **One of the oldest crypto companies in India, ZebPay, launched a new lending platform for crypto asset exchange. The company says that the platform is a "first of its kind" crypto lending model in India and will allow users to lend their cryptocurrency to ZebPay, earning interest on the same.**
- **The exchange has started off the facility with bitcoin (BTC), ether (ETH), tether (USDT) and dai (DAI).** According to the company, the ZebPay Lending Platform generates returns on users' crypto investments if they lend the select cryptos.

Public Sector Banks announce new loans to mitigate impact of Corona

- **Public sector banks in India have announced various support measures and launch of new loan products to mitigate the impact of Covid pandemic.** This will include the unsecured loans of upto 5 lakh rupees to individuals to meet their and family members' COVID-19 treatment cost.
- The Indian Banks Association and State Bank of India jointly announced **three new loan products in Mumbai. These are based on various measures announced by the RBI and Government of India.**
- **The measures are designed to provide fresh lending support to vaccine manufacturers, hospitals or dispensaries, pathology labs, manufacturers and suppliers of Oxygen, Ventilators, importers of vaccines and Covid related drugs logistics firms and patients for treatment.**
- **Apart from individual loan for treatment, the other two loans include Healthcare Business Loan of upto 2 crore rupees and Business loans for Healthcare Facilities of upto 100 Crore rupees.**
- **Healthcare business loan is for setting up oxygen plants under Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECGLS) with 100 per cent guarantee cover of NCGTC.** Loan for Healthcare Facilities is to set up or expand healthcare infrastructure and to manufacturers of healthcare products.
- **Public Sector Banks (PSBs) are a major type of bank in India, where a majority stake (i.e. more than 50%) is held by the Ministry of Finance of the Government of India or Ministry of Finance of various State governments of India.**The officers working in these entities are gazetted officers.

Canara Bank announces three loan schemes amid fight against COVID-19

- **State-run Canara Bank announced three loan schemes as part of the fight against the pandemic under which it will offer healthcare credit, business and personal loan to individuals.**
- **The Canara Chikitsa healthcare credit facility will offer loans from over Rs 10 lakh to Rs 50 crore to registered hospitals, nursing homes, medical practitioners, diagnostic centres, pathology labs and all other units engaged in the servicing healthcare infrastructure.**
- **The Canara Jeevanrekha healthcare business loan will offer loan up to Rs 2 crore at a concessional interest rate for manufacture and supply of healthcare products such as medical oxygen and oxygen cylinders and oxygen concentrators to registered hospitals and nursing homes or other manufacturers and suppliers.**
- **CGTMSE is meant to provide financial assistance to such kinds of industries without any third party guarantee or collateral. For non-MSMEs, the collateral security will be minimum 25 per cent.** Canara Chikitsa and Canara Jeevanrekha loan schemes will be valid till March 31, 2022.

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.



Inventions/Discoveries

Pfizer-BioNTech pledge 2 billion Covid-19 vaccine doses to less wealthy nations

- American pharmaceutical company Pfizer and German company BioNTech pledged to deliver 2 billion doses of their Covid-19 vaccine to middle- and low-income countries over the next 18 months, amid international calls for more vaccine solidarity.
- The companies, which together developed the first vaccine to be authorised for use in the United States and Europe, made the announcement at a global health summit in Rome co-hosted by the European Union's executive arm and Italy. Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said they expect to provide a billion of the doses this year and another billion in 2022.
- It was unclear whether the deliveries would take place through the UN-backed COVAX program, which aims to ensure equitable access to Covid-19 shots for low-and middle-income countries, or if countries would get the doses at a reduced price.
- The COVAX effort suffered a major setback when its biggest supplier, the Serum Institute of India, announced it would likely not export any more vaccines until the end of the year due to Covid-19 crisis on the subcontinent.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic. WHO first learned of this new virus on 31 December 2019, following a report of a cluster of cases of 'viral pneumonia' in Wuhan, People's Republic of China. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are, Fever, Dry cough and Fatigue. The standard diagnosis method is by real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) from a nasopharyngeal swab. In India, the first case was reported in Kerala.

UAE asks to host 2023 UN climate change conference

- The United Arab Emirates has asked to host the COP 28 international conference on climate change in 2023. The annual Conference of Parties (COP) is the decision-making body responsible for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- The UAE exports oil and hosts the International Renewable Energy Agency's (IRENA) headquarters. "The UAE has invested around \$17 billion in commercial renewable energy projects on six continents and provided over \$1 billion of grants and soft loans for renewable energy power plants." The British government will host the next summit, COP 26, in Glasgow in November.

Ana, first named Atlantic storm of 2021, forms near Bermuda

- The first named Atlantic storm of the season is posing no threat to land and is expected to dissipate in a few days. The National Hurricane Center in Miami says Subtropical Storm Ana is drifting northeast over the Atlantic Ocean after bringing rain to Bermuda. Ana was located about 270 miles (435 kilometers) northeast of Bermuda with maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (75 kph).

Cheetah to be re-introduced in India from Africa in November: MP govt

- **Cheetah, the world's fastest land animal which was declared extinct in India in 1952, is expected to be re-introduced into the country in November this year at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh.**
- **The country's last spotted cheetah died in Chhattisgarh in 1947 and it was declared extinct in the country in 1952. The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) some years back prepared a cheetah re-introduction project.**

The cheetah, *Acinonyx jubatus*, is one of the oldest of the big cat species, with ancestors that can be traced back more than five million years to the Miocene era. The cheetah is also the world's fastest land mammal. It is listed as vulnerable in IUCN red listed species. The country's last spotted feline died in Chhattisgarh in 1947. Later, the cheetah — which is the fastest land animal — was declared extinct in India in 1952. The Asiatic cheetah is classified as a “critically endangered” species by the IUCN Red List, and is believed to survive only in Iran.

IIT Madras hosts Asia's first International Memory Studies Workshop

- **Indian Institute of Technology Madras' Centre for Memory Studies recently hosted virtually Asia's first International Memory Studies Workshop. It precedes the official launch of the Indian Network for Memory Studies (INMS), and brought together participants from all over the world.**
- **A number of participants acknowledged the academic as well as the deeply existential need to engage with the field of Memory Studies in the current pandemic world where memory, connectivity and empathy emerge as vital human attributes.**

RDIF and Panacea Biotec announce launch of production of Sputnik V in India

- **The Russian Direct Investment Fund, RDIF and Indian Biotechnology company Panacea Biotec have announced the launch of production of the Russian COVID vaccine Sputnik V in India.**
- **This move will boost the production of vaccines and help in facilitating the supply of Sputnik-V. In collaboration with the RDIF, Panacea Biotec will produce 100 million doses of Sputnik V per year.**

NGT sets up panel on Mekedatu dam construction violation

- **The National Green Tribunal has formed a committee to submit a report on alleged violation of norms in the construction of a reservoir across the Cauvery River at Mekedatu in Karnataka.**
- **A bench comprising Justice K Ramakrishnan and expert member K Satyagopal issued notices to the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Department of Water Resources, Central Water Commission, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu governments among others.**
- **The committee comprises of senior members from the Integrated Regional Office, MoEF, Bangalore, Cauvery Water Management Authority, Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Limited and the Forest Department not below the rank of Additional Conservator of Forest, Karnataka.**

National Green Tribunal has been established on 18.10.2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment and giving relief and compensation for damages to persons and property and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. It draws inspiration from India's constitutional provision of (Constitution of India/Part III) Article 21 Protection of life and personal liberty, which assures the citizens of India the right to a healthy environment. Justice Lokeshwar Singh Panta is the first Chairman of NGT. Adarsh Kumar Goel is the current Chairperson of National Green Tribunal. He is former Judge of Supreme Court of India.

IIT Guwahati team develops smart window materials for automatic climate control of buildings

- **Dr. Debabrata Sikdar, Assistant Professor, Department of Electronics and Electrical Engineering, along with his research scholar, Ashish Kumar Chowdhary from IIT Guwahati, have designed a smart window material that can effectively control the amount of heat and light passing through it in response to an applied voltage.**

- Such smart window materials would help developing efficient automatic climate control systems in buildings. According to the United Nations Environment Programme buildings around the globe account for 36 percent of energy use and 39 percent of energy-related carbon dioxide emissions annually.
- The primary consumption of energy in buildings is by the climate control system, in which energy-consuming devices are used to maintain comfortable indoor temperature and brightness.

India's First Research Reactor in PPP Mode - Dedicated to Production of Radioisotopes

- Finance Minister announced establishment of a Research Reactor in PPP mode for production of medical isotopes as a part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiatives for Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).
- Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), which is a premier research organization of DAE has evolved a design of a research reactor. BARC is ready to share the technology of production of a variety of nuclear medicines.
- Globally, nuclear medicine is a USD 6 Billion market and is expected to grow rapidly to reach USD 30 Billion by 2030. India produces all major isotopes in the country under the aegis of BARC.
- It also imports some of the isotopes to fulfil the growing demand of the country from Europe, Australia and other Asian countries. The planned PPP has an opportunity to completely transform India's stature in the global nuclear medicine industry.

Bellatrix Aerospace successfully tests India's first privately developed hall-effect thruster

- Space technology startup Bellatrix Aerospace has successfully tested India's first privately developed hall-effect thruster, an electric propulsion engine for micro satellites weighing 50-500 kg.
- The thruster will be ready for commercial use by the end of this year. Bellatrix has completed ground tests for the new thruster in line with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and European Space Agency (ESA) standards at its lab at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.
- Hall-effect thrusters were first developed by the erstwhile Soviet Union in the 1970s. While they've become a mainstay for satellite propulsion over the years, the technology has traditionally been used only for large satellites weighing in excess of 2,000 kg.

Bellatrix Aerospace is an Indian private aerospace manufacturer and Small satellite company, headquartered in Bangalore, India. The company was established in 2015. It plans to launch its own rocket named Chetak in 2023. The two-stage Chetak rocket is powered by a number of their own Aeon engines.

International Astronomical Union approves Chinese names to identify areas on Moon

- The International Astronomical Union (IAU) has approved eight Chinese names for features around the area on the Moon where China's spacecraft Chang'e-5 probe landed last year to collect samples from the lunar surface and return to Earth.
- The Chang'e-5 space mission is China's maiden attempt to retrieve materials from an extra-terrestrial body. It was the first attempt to bring the lunar samples in over 40 years after the US sent astronauts to the Moon to collect samples.

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) exists to promote and safeguard the science of astronomy through international cooperation, assign official names and designations to celestial bodies, and liaise with organizations that include amateur astronomers. Founded in 1919 and based in Paris, the IAU is a member of the International Science Council (ISC).



Sports Personalities in News

Hockey India wins Etienne Glichitch Award

- **Hockey India has won the prestigious Etienne Glichitch Award in recognition of its contribution to the growth and development of the sport** in the country. The awards were announced by the game's governing body FIH during the HockeyInvites virtual conference. It was part of its 47th FIH Congress which concluded with the FIH Honorary Awards.

Max Verstappen wins Monaco GP

- **Max Verstappen won the Monaco Grand Prix for the first time to take the Formula One championship lead** from Lewis Hamilton while pole sitter Charles Leclerc pulled out just before the race started.
- **Verstappen's second win this season and 12th of his career moved the Red Bull driver four points ahead of Hamilton overall.** The seven-time world champion finished seventh on a bad day for the usually ultra-reliable Mercedes team.

Phil Mickelson wins PGA Championship; becomes oldest major winner in history

- **In Golf, Phil Mickelson won the PGA Championship by two shots over Brooks Koepka and South African Louis Oosthuizen to become the oldest major winner in history.**
- **Phil Mickelson defied the odds to become the oldest major champion in history** as he overcame a neryv back-nine to clinch a memorable two-shot victory at the 103rd PGA Championship.

Sports Ministry gives approval to open 143 Khelo India Centres across 7 states in country

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

Achinta Sheuli bags silver medal (73 kg) at Junior World Weightlifting Championships 2021

- **Indian weightlifter Achinta Sheuli ended with the silver medal in the men's 73 kilogram category** at the Junior World Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Sheuli, a national champion, lifted a total of 313 kg (141 kg snatch and 172 kg clean and jerk) to finish behind Indonesia's Rizki Juniansyah, who lifted a world record 349 kg (155 kg snatch and 194 kg clean and jerk) for the gold medal.

India, New Zealand to be joint winners in case of draw or tie in WTC final, says ICC

- **The International Cricket Council** has announced that **India and New Zealand will end as joint winners in case of a draw or a tie in World Test Championship final**, which will also have a reserve day to make up for any lost time during regular days of the final. The ICC added that the reserve day has been kept only in the event of lost time and not to get a result. **The WTC final will be played between June 18 and 22 in Southampton.**

UAE to host remainder IPL 2021 tournament in September-October

- **The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** has announced that **the remaining matches of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021** will be played in the **United Arab Emirates in September-October** this year.
- **IPL 2021 was postponed on May 4** after **6 players, 2 support staff members and a bus cleaner** tested positive for coronavirus.



Career
Launcher

MISCELLANEOUS

Punjab to involve youth to fight Covid under Mission Fateh 2.0

- **Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh rolled out a new initiative**, involving youth, to take forward the state's **Mission Fateh 2.0** as part of the '**Corona Mukht Punjab Abhiyan**' (**Covid-free Punjab Campaign**).
- The initiative was **launched with directions to form groups of seven Rural Corona Volunteers (RCVs) per village or municipal ward as a cadre to fight the pandemic**. The Chief Minister said that as the villages were more badly affected in the second wave of COVID, it was important to drive a strong campaign to free villages from corona.

Uttarakhand government to give Rs 3,000 per month to Covid orphans

- **The Uttarakhand government announced the Chief Minister Vatsalya Yojana to take care of those children**, who lost their parents or the sole earning member of the family to Covid-19 infection.
- Under the scheme, the government would **make arrangements for the education and training of these children till they attain the age of 21 years**. According to the provisions of the scheme, an amount Rs 3,000 per month would be given to them. Besides, the district magistrates have been asked to ensure that their share of ancestral property is not sold till they turn adults. Also, such kids will be **provided with 5% horizontal reservation in Uttarakhand government jobs**.

Manipur CM launches MHIM Mobile App for home isolation patients

- **Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh launched Manipur Home Isolation Management (MHIM) Mobile Application** for home isolation patients. The Mobile App can be downloaded from mhim.in will also be available on Google Play Store soon.
- The Mobile App has been **developed with a mission to avail real time health data and information of Home Isolation COVID-19 patients at monitoring level**. With this App, patients can upload their health status including Pulse rate, SPo2, Body Temperature and Blood Pressure among others using fixed parameters at fixed intervals as set by the Health Department from time to time. The data uploaded will then **be divided as critical and normal depending on the parameters and conditions set by the Health Department**.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launches SeHAT OPD Portal

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the 'Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT) OPD Portal** via video conferencing. The Portal will help the Armed Forces in providing tele-medicine services.
- The '**Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT) OPD portal**' will provide telemedicine services to the beneficiaries. **Rajnath Singh called the SeHAT OPD portal as a great example of innovation**, especially at a time when the nation is fighting the Covid-19 crisis.

Vesak, also known as Buddha Jayanti

- **Vesak, also known as Buddha Jayanti, Buddha Purnamā and Buddha Day**, is a holiday traditionally observed by **Buddhists and Hindus** in South and Southeast Asia as well as Tibet and Mongolia.
- The festival commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of **Gautama Buddha in Theravada Tibetan Buddhism and Navayana**.
- **Buddha's Birthday is a Buddhist festival that is celebrated in most of East Asia and South Asia commemorating the birth of the Prince Siddhartha Gautama, later the Gautama Buddha, who was the founder of Buddhism. According to Buddhist tradition, Gautama Buddha was born c. 563–483 BCE in Lumbini**. Although based on stone inscriptions his birthplace might have been Odisha or Uttar Pradesh.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Sanjay Dutt receives golden visa for UAE, calls Dubai his home

- **Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt** was thrilled to receive a golden visa for the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In 2019, the UAE government had introduced the Golden Visa initiative for long-term residents to encourage foreigners to work live, study and conduct business in the country without requiring national sponsors.
- Through this initiative, **foreign investors and businessmen get a complete ownership of their businesses in the country.** These golden visas are issued for five or 10 years, which automatically get renewed.

Indian-American Neera Tanden to serve as senior adviser to Biden

- **The Biden administration** has announced that **Indian-American Neera Tanden**, who had **withdrawn her nomination to lead the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) amid bipartisan criticism**, will now join the White House as a senior adviser to President Joe Biden. Tanden serves as president and CEO of CAP and has served as the CEO of the Center for American Progress Action Fund.

IB and RAW chief get one year extension

- **The Appointments committee of the Cabinet** has approved a one year extension to both **Chief of the country's premier intelligence agency - Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Research & Analysis Wing (R&AW).**
- **IB Director Arvinda Kumar's tenure** has been extended by one year till **June 30 next year.** Similarly, **R&AW Secretary Samant Kumar Goel** will also continue in office till **June 30 next year.** Both the officers had tenure till 30th June this year.

Cricket legend Ravi Shastri's book 'Stargazing' to release this year

- Cricket legend, commentator and one of Team India's most successful coaches, **Ravi Shastri has penned a book titled 'Stargazing: The Players in My Life'.**
- **In 'Stargazing: The Players in My Life', Shastri writes about some 60 extraordinary talents** he has met from across the world who have inspired him.

Neena Gupta announces tell all autobiography 'Sach Kahun Toh'

- **Veteran actor Neena Gupta** is reflecting on her journey in **Indian cinema and her life in her new book.** Titled **'Sach Kahun Toh', Neena's autobiography** will be her first book and the **Badhaai Ho** actress recently showcased the cover of her book.

CISF chief Subodh Kumar Jaiswal appointed CBI Director

- **CISF chief Subodh Kumar Jaiswal** was appointed as the new **CBI director for two years**, according to a Personnel Ministry order.
- **Jaiswal is a 1985-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Maharashtra cadre.** He has also served as Maharashtra's director general of police in the past.
- **The Central Bureau of Investigation was working without a regular chief for over three months after Rishi Kumar Shukla completed his two-year tenure** on February 3.

AWARDS

Luiselli wins International Dublin Literary Award 2021

- Mexican author Valeria Luiselli won the International Dublin Literary Award 2021 for her novel 'Lost Children Archive'. Established in 1994, the International Dublin Literary Award is considered as one of the world's wealthiest awards for literature with Valeria a prize money of €100,000 (approximately INR 89,27,300).
- The award is given to a novel written or translated into English. Interestingly, the nominations are made by public libraries from across the world and both authors and translators are eligible for the award. The first award was made in 1996 to David Malouf for his English language novel Remembering Babylon.

Amartya Sen gets Spain's top award

- Indian economist and Nobel Laureate Amartya Kumar Sen has been conferred with Spain's top Princess of Asturias Award in the social sciences category, the Spanish prize foundation announced.
- The award comprises a Joan Miro sculpture representing and symbolising the award, a diploma, an insignia and a cash prize of 50,000 Euros. The award was announced via video-conference.

Kerala farmer bags India Biodiversity Award 2021

- Shaji N.M., fondly called as 'Tuber Man' of Kerala has been awarded the India Biodiversity Award 2021 in the individual category of 'Conservation of domesticated species'.
- Krishi Avam Paristhitiki Vikas Sansthan (KRPAVIS) has won the prestigious India Biodiversity Awards 2021 under the category 'Sustainable Use of Biological Resources.' The award was announced on the occasion of 'International Biodiversity Day' by the Union environment minister of in a virtual celebration.
- The India Biodiversity Awards is a joint initiative by the ministry of environment, forest and climate change, National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- The International Day for Biological Diversity (or World Biodiversity Day) is a United Nations-sanctioned international day for the promotion of biodiversity issues. It is currently held on May 22.

Prof CNR Rao receives Eni Award 2020 for renewable energy research

- Bharat Ratna Professor C.N.R. Rao has received the International Eni Award 2020 for research into renewable energy sources and energy storage. It is also called the Energy Frontier award. This is considered to be the Nobel Prize in Energy Research.
- The Energy Frontiers award has been conferred for his work on metal oxides, carbon nanotubes, and other materials and two-dimensional systems. Professor Rao has been working on hydrogen energy as the only source of energy for the benefit of all mankind.

Tamil film 'Seththumaan' and Karishma Dube's 'Bittu' bag top prizes at IFFLA

- Tamil filmmaker Thamizh's debut film 'Seththumaan' and Karishma Dube's short 'Bittu' have bagged top prizes at the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles (IFFLA).
- The 19th edition of festival concluded its eight-day run during which it showcased 40 films in 17 languages, including movies by 16 women directors.
- The jury also recognised National Award-winning filmmaker Rima Das' 'For Each Other' and 'Wade' by filmmakers Upamanyu Bhattacharyya and Kalp Sanghvi with Honorable Mentions.
- Actor Nivita Chaliki received the Honorable Mention for Best Performance in a Short for her film 'Forever Tonight'. The Audience Award for Best Short went to queer love story 'The Song We Sang' by Aarti Neharsh.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Anti-Terrorism Day

- **Anti-Terrorism Day is observed every year on May 21**, the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. In 1991, on this day he was assassinated by terrorists while campaigning for the Congress party at Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu.
- **It was on this day in the year 1991 that former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated.** This year commemorates Rajiv Gandhi's 30th death anniversary as India observes Anti-Terrorism Day.

World Turtle Day

- **The purpose of World Turtle Day, May 23**, sponsored yearly since 2000 by American Tortoise Rescue, is to bring attention to, and increase knowledge of and respect for, turtles and tortoises, and encourage human action to help them survive and thrive. The **theme for this year "Turtles Rock!" encourages a worldwide audience to see turtles** as more than just rocks with legs.

Amnesty International Day observed on 28th May

- **28th May is Amnesty International Day.** Amnesty International was founded in London in 1961, following the publication of the article "The Forgotten Prisoners" in The Observer 28th of May 1961, by the lawyer Peter Benenson.
- Citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights articles 18 and 19, it announced a campaign on "Appeal for Amnesty, 1961" and called for common action. Amnesty International is a non-governmental organisation focused on human rights with over three million members and supporters around the world.

International Day of UN Peacekeepers 29 May

- **The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, 29 May**, offers a chance to pay tribute to the uniformed and civilian personnel's invaluable contribution to the work of the Organization and to honour more than 4,000 peacekeepers who have lost their lives serving under the UN flag since 1948, including 130 last year.
- **The theme for this year's Day is "The road to a lasting peace: Leveraging the power of youth for peace and security."**

World Digestive Health Day (WDHD)

- **Every 29th May, the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) celebrates World Digestive Health Day (WDHD)** and initiates a yearlong, worldwide, public health campaign through more than 116 WGO Member Societies which reach over 50,000 individuals worldwide, WGO Training Centers, Regional Affiliate Associations and other WGO global partners.
- This World Digestive Health Day, WGO, together with the International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders (IFSO), have partnered to bring awareness to the **2021 theme entitled Obesity: An Ongoing Pandemic.**

References:

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Business Standard
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Hindustan Times

QUESTIONS

- Which has become the first state in the country to allow reimbursement of goods and services tax (GST) paid on Covid-related donations made to the state and state-run facilities?
(a) Punjab (b) Haryana (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Madhya Pradesh
- Which of the following countries pharmaceutical company Pfizer pledged to deliver doses of their Covid-19 vaccine to middle- and low-income countries over the next 18 months?
(a) France (b) USA (c) Germany (d) Spain
- Recently, Supreme Court's E-Committee has released manual for its free e-Courts Services Mobile App in _____.
(a) 8 Languages (b) 10 Languages (c) 14 Languages (d) 16 Languages
- Which of the following countries will host World Environment Day 2021 in partnership with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)?
(a) Bangladesh (b) Angola (c) Pakistan (d) Nepal
- Who among the following Indian-American will now join the White House as a senior adviser to President Joe Biden?
(a) Amarita Jadhav (b) Maneka Pratap (c) Neera Tanden (d) Chetana Tyagi
- Which of the following has asked to host the COP 28 international conference on climate change in 2023?
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) United Arab Emirates
(c) United States of America (d) Canada
- The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has hiked its stake to _____ in state-run Union Bank of India.
(a) 5.06% (b) 7.05% (c) 9.10% (d) 10.50%
- Recently, which of the following world's fastest land animal which was declared extinct in India in 1952, is expected to be re-introduced into the country at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh.
(a) Cheetah (b) Leopard (c) Lion (d) Tiger
- Recently, Anti-Terrorism Day is observed every year on _____.
(a) May 17 (b) May 19 (c) May 21 (d) May 23
- Who won the Monaco Grand Prix for the first time to take the Formula One championship?
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Charles Leclerc (c) Valtteri Bottas (d) Max Verstappen
- TRIFED will now be partnering with _____ to implement the Van Dhan Yojana in the districts that have been identified as aspirational.
(a) NITI Aayog (b) Ministry of Finance
(c) Ministry of Corporate Affairs (d) Reserve Bank of India
- Who has been appointed as chief executive officer of Reserve Bank Innovation Hub?
(a) Anand Mahajan (b) Deepak Gupta (c) Alankrit Shah (d) Rajesh Bansal
- Who is the world's second fastest-growing billionaire in 2021 according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index?
(a) Gautam Adani (b) Aadar Poonawala (c) Anil Ambani (d) Zhong Shanshan
- Which of the following IIT's hosted virtually Asia's first International Memory Studies Workshop?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (b) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
(c) Indian Institute of Technology Madras (d) Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

15. Which of the following became the first hotel chain in the world to receive the platinum level certification in infection risk management from Norway-based DNV?
 (a) Indian Hotels (b) Lemon Tree Hotels (c) ITC Hotels (d) Taj Mahal Hotels
16. The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) and Indian Biotechnology company Panacea Biotech have announced the launch of production of the Russian COVID vaccine _____ in India.
 (a) Sputnik V (b) Mislaj IV (c) Ashwa III (d) Aryabhata IV
17. Who won the PGA Championship in Golf recently?
 (a) Phil Mickelson (b) Brooks Koepka (c) Alex Chitru (d) Louis Oosthuizen
18. Name the veteran actor whose autobiography is titled as 'Sach Kahun Toh'.
 (a) Sanya Sana Malhotra (b) Neena Gupta (c) Ayushman Khurana (d) Surekha Sikri
19. World Turtle Day is celebrated on:
 (a) 15th May (b) 18th May (c) 21st May (d) 23rd May
20. Who has been awarded the India Biodiversity Award 2021 in the individual category of 'Conservation of domesticated species'?
 (a) Himayath N Khan (b) Aditya R Gupta (c) Shaji. N.M. (d) Shiv. N.K
21. Which of the following state governments announced the Chief Minister Vatsalya Yojana to take care of those children, who lost their parents or the sole earning member of the family to Covid-19 infection?
 (a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Haryana (d) Uttar Pradesh
22. Recently, India and _____ have signed a three-year work program for cooperation in agriculture.
 (a) Israel (b) USA (c) Canada (d) Mexico
23. Recently, The Union Cabinet has approved the opening of a new Consulate General of India in _____ in 2021.
 (a) Ottawa, Canada (b) Male City, Maldives
 (c) Port Louis, Mauritius (d) Addu City, Maldives
24. Recently, The International Financial Services Centres Authority, IFSCA has constituted an expert committee on Investment Funds. Who is the chairman of this committee?
 (a) Nilesh Shah (b) Atul Nagalkar (c) Bhupesh Jha (d) Ajit Nilansh
25. Recently, Researchers from _____ have designed a smart window material that can effectively control the amount of heat and light passing through it in response to an applied voltage?
 (a) IIT Guwahati (b) IIT Delhi (c) IIT Madras (d) IIT Bombay
26. The National Green Tribunal has formed a committee to submit a report on alleged violation of norms in the construction of a reservoir across the _____ at Mekedatu in Karnataka.
 (a) Cauvery river (b) Godavari river
 (c) Tungabhadra river (d) Tapi river
27. Who has been recently appointed as the new CBI director for two years?
 (a) Subodh Kumar Jaiswal (b) Atul Kumar Garg
 (c) Deepak Dwivedi (d) Amit Trivedi
28. Recently, Punjab National Bank (PNB) and PNB Housing Finance have entered into a fresh brand agreement, which gives PNB the right to withdraw its brand name from the mortgage lender. PNB holds _____ in PNB Housing.
 (a) 15% (b) 25% (c) 33% (d) 45%

29. Recently, The Sports Ministry has given its approval to open 143 Khelo India Centres across _____ states in the country with a total budget estimate of Rs 14.30 crore.
 (a) Three (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Eleven
30. How many Indian places have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO world heritage sites recently?
 (a) Two (b) Four (c) Six (d) Eight
31. Name the portal that will provide comprehensive details on all the CSR activities in Karnataka and was launched by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa?
 (a) Akanksha (b) Anushka (c) Suraksha (d) Deeksha
32. Union Minister Kiren Rijju launched the Ayush Clinical Case Repository portal and the third version of Ayush _____ App in a virtual event.
 (a) Sanjivani (b) Virat (c) Geetika (d) Atulit
33. Recently, The _____ has decided to set up a National Mission on the use of Biomass in coal based thermal power plants.
 (a) Power Ministry (b) Home Ministry
 (c) Finance Ministry (d) New and Renewable Energy Ministry
34. Recently, The World Health Organization (WHO) and _____ signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch the first WHO BioHub Facility as part of the WHO BioHub System.
 (a) Ireland (b) Switzerland (c) Iceland (d) Canada
35. Which of the following countries interim President and Prime Minister resigned in May 2021 after they were arrested by the military?
 (a) Eritrea (b) Mali (c) Nigeria (d) Liberia
36. Which of the following bank announced the launch of a new facility, wherein the UPI (Unified Payments Interface) ID has been linked to its digital wallet 'Pockets', marking a departure from the current practice that demands such IDs be linked with a savings bank account?
 (a) HDFC Bank (b) ICICI bank (c) Yes Bank (d) Kotak Mahindra Bank
37. Name the Indian weightlifter who won the silver medal in the men's 73 kilogram category at the Junior World Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
 (a) Achinta Sheuli (b) Ajitpal Luthra (c) Vishal Aditya (d) Akshat Raheja
38. Which of the following companies is buying MGM, the fabled US movie studio home to the James Bond franchise, for 8.45 billion US Dollars?
 (a) Berkshire Hathaway (b) Wall mart
 (c) Microsoft (d) Amazon.com Inc
39. Recently, Finance Minister announced establishment of a Research Reactor in _____ for production of medical isotopes as a part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiatives for Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).
 (a) PPP Mode (b) Private Mode
 (c) Government Mode (d) Both (b) and (c) Mode
40. Vesak commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of:
 (a) Lord Mahavira (b) Gautam Buddha (c) Guru Nanak Dev (d) Goswami Tulsidas
41. Who among the following received the International Eni Award 2020 also called the Energy Frontier award for research into renewable energy sources and energy storage?
 (a) K Sivan (b) C.N.R. Rao (c) Atul Malvade (d) Amit Bhaskar

42. Name the Indian who has been conferred with Spain's top Princess of Asturias Award in the social sciences category recently.
 (a) Narendra Modi (b) Hasmukh Adhia (c) H. R. Khan (d) Amartya Kumar Sen
43. Name the country's leading B2B online marketplace platform which is preparing to host its ninth landmark virtual event, the Medical and Healthcare Expo India 2021.
 (a) Trade India (b) Market India (c) Bharat Bazaar (d) India Online
44. Recently, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the _____ OPD Portal via video conferencing.
 (a) 'Services e-Health Availability & Tele-medicine (SeHAT)
 (b) 'Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT)
 (c) 'Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-conference (SeHAT)
 (d) 'Superficiality e-Health Assistance & Tele-conference (SeHAT)
45. Name the Indian-American appointed as the Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service and the Assistant Secretary for Global Markets in the Department of Commerce.
 (a) Vivek Parashar (b) Deepak Luthra (c) Arun Venkataraman (d) Amit Panghal
46. Which of the following countries will work on renewable energy, energy efficiency and smart grid while hosting the first meeting of BRICS Senior Energy Officials under its presidency of the five-nation group?
 (a) Brazil (b) Russia (c) India (d) South Africa
47. Which of the following companies launched first crypto-based lending platform in India?
 (a) ZebPay (b) Coin Desk (c) WazirX (d) Coin Switch
48. Which of the following state Chief Minister rolled out a new initiative, involving youth, to take forward the state's Mission Fateh 2.0 as part of the 'Corona Mukht Abhiyan'?
 (a) Haryana (b) Punjab (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Jharkhand
49. Which of the following states recently launched (MHIM) Mobile Application for home isolation patients?
 (a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Maharashtra (d) West Bengal
50. The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is celebrated on:
 (a) 12th May (b) 16th May (c) 20th May (d) 29th May
51. India's first sewage surveillance platform for Covid-19 will come up in:
 (a) Chennai (b) Gurugram (c) Hyderabad (d) Bengaluru
52. Recently, Bashar al-Assad has been re-elected for a fourth term as president of war-ravaged _____.
 (a) South Sudan (b) Syria (c) Iraq (d) Liberia
53. Name the state-run bank which announced three loan schemes as part of the fight against the pandemic under which it will offer healthcare credit, business and personal loan to individuals.
 (a) Union Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank
 (c) Canara Bank (d) State Bank of India
54. According to government data, which of the following countries emerged as largest source of foreign direct investment into India during 2020-21 with inflows of USD \$17.41 billion?
 (a) Mauritius (b) Singapore (c) USA (d) Canada
55. Recently, International Astronomical Union (IAU) has approved _____ Chinese names for features around the area on the Moon.
 (a) Four (b) Six (c) Eight (d) Eleven

56. Recently, The International Cricket Council has announced that _____ will end as joint winners in case of a draw or a tie in World Test Championship final.
 (a) India and New Zealand (b) England and Sri Lanka
 (c) New Zealand and England (d) West Indies and Pakistan
57. Amnesty International Day is observed on:
 (a) 21st May (b) 24th May (c) 26th May (d) 28th May
58. Name the film which bagged the Grand Jury Prize for Best Short at the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles (IFFLA).
 (a) Bittu (b) Shaina (c) Rocket (d) Toyfair
59. Recently, The Appointments committee of the Cabinet has approved _____ year extension to both Chief of the country's premier intelligence agency - Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Research & Analysis Wing (R&AW).
 (a) One (b) Three (c) Five (d) Seven
60. Name the Bollywood actor who recently received a golden visa for the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
 (a) Akshay Kumar (b) Ajay Devgan (c) Sanjay Dutt (d) Salman Khan
61. Recently, Centre has reconstituted the six Empowered Groups into ten groups to tackle the COVID situation in the country. Who will head the Emergency Management Plan Group?
 (a) Dr VK Paul (b) Dr Vivek Saraswat
 (c) Shri Atul Kumar Garg (d) Dr Puneet Bhattacharya
62. Which of the following countries has registered the world's first animal-specific vaccine?
 (a) China (b) France (c) India (d) Russia
63. Recently, The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced that the remaining matches of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021 will be played in the _____ in September-October this year.
 (a) United Arab Emirates (b) Singapore
 (c) Malaysia (d) Australia
64. Recently, The first United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) regional office has opened in _____.
 (a) Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (b) Lisbon, Portugal
 (c) Dhaka, Bangladesh (d) Manila, Philippines
65. Recently, The second BRICS Sherpas' and Sous Sherpas' meeting was convened under _____ Chairmanship.
 (a) India (b) China (c) Brazil (d) South Africa
66. Recently, Space technology startup _____ has successfully tested India's first privately developed hall-effect thruster, an electric propulsion engine for micro satellites weighing 50-500 kg.
 (a) Bellatrix Aerospace (b) Ayushtrap Aerospace
 (c) Deepah Aerospace (d) Kalyani Aerospace
67. The Indian Banks Association and _____ jointly announced three new loan products in Mumbai.
 (a) Punjab National Bank (b) Canara Bank
 (c) State Bank of India (d) Union Bank of India
68. The Centre will soon roll out a _____ an open and interoperable IT network for digital health that shall enable public and private solutions and apps to plug in and be a part of the National Digital Health Ecosystem.
 (a) Unified Health Interface (UHI)
 (b) United Health Intermediary (UHI)
 (c) United Health Interrogation (UHI)
 (d) Unified Health Index (UHI)

69. The World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) celebrates World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) on:
(a) 21st May (b) 24th May (c) 27th May (d) 29th May
70. Who among the following Indian cricketers has authored a book titled 'Stargazing: The Players in My Life'?
(a) Kapil Dev (b) Ravi Shastri (c) K Srikanth (d) Sachin Tendulkar



Career
Launcher

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. **b** Haryana became the first state in the country to allow reimbursement of goods and services tax (GST) paid on Covid-related donations made to the state and state-run facilities.
2. **b** American pharmaceutical company Pfizer and German company BioNTech pledged to deliver 2 billion doses of their Covid-19 vaccine to middle- and low-income countries over the next 18 months, amid international calls for more vaccine solidarity.
3. **c** Supreme Court's E-Committee has released manual for its free e-Courts Services Mobile App in 14 languages.
4. **c** Pakistan, on June 5, will host World Environment Day 2021 in partnership with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). Prime Minister Imran Khan will virtually preside over the World Environment Conference in Islamabad on the night of June
5. **c** The Biden administration has announced that Indian-American Neera Tanden, who had withdrawn her nomination to lead the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) amid bipartisan criticism, will now join the White House as a senior adviser to President Joe Biden.
6. **b** The United Arab Emirates has asked to host the COP 28 international conference on climate change in 2023.
7. **a** The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has hiked its stake to 5.06% in state-run Union Bank of India with acquisition of nearly 2% additional stake in the bank.
8. **a** Cheetah, the world's fastest land animal which was declared extinct in India in 1952, is expected to be re-introduced into the country in November this year at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh.
9. **c** Anti-Terrorism Day is observed every year on May 21, the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
10. **d** Max Verstappen won the Monaco Grand Prix for the first time to take the Formula One championship lead from Lewis Hamilton while pole sitter Charles Leclerc pulled out just before the race started.
11. **a** TRIFED will now be partnering with NITI Aayog to implement the Van Dhan Yojana in the districts that have been identified as aspirational by NITI Aayog.
12. **d** Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) has appointed Rajesh Bansal as its chief executive officer.
13. **a** India's industrial tycoon Gautam Adani, the world's second fastest-growing billionaire in 2021, rose to the 14th spot on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, replacing China's Zhong Shanshan to become the second richest Asian in the world.
14. **c** Indian Institute of Technology Madras' Centre for Memory Studies recently hosted virtually Asia's first International Memory Studies Workshop.
15. **c** ITC Hotels became the first hotel chain in the world to receive the platinum level certification in infection risk management from Norway-based DNV, a global leader that aims at boosting customers' confidence in the wake of the ongoing pandemic.
16. **a** The Russian Direct Investment Fund, RDIF and Indian Biotechnology company Panacea Biotec have announced the launch of production of the Russian COVID vaccine Sputnik V in India.

- 17. a** In Golf, Phil Mickelson won the PGA Championship by two shots over Brooks Koepka and South African Louis Oosthuizen to become the oldest major winner in history.
- 18. b** Titled ‘Sach Kahun Toh’, Neena’s autobiography will be her first book and the Badhaai Ho actress recently showcased the cover of her book.
- 19. d** The purpose of World Turtle Day, May 23, sponsored yearly since 2000 by American Tortoise Rescue.
- 20. c** Shaji. N.M., fondly called as ‘Tuber Man’ of Kerala has been awarded the India Biodiversity Award 2021 in the individual category of ‘Conservation of domesticated species’.
- 21. b** The Uttarakhand government announced the Chief Minister Vatsalya Yojana to take care of those children, who lost their parents or the sole earning member of the family to Covid-19 infection.
- 22. a** India and Israel have signed a three-year work program for cooperation in agriculture. India and Israel are implementing the “INDO-ISRAEL Agricultural Project Centres of Excellence” and “INDO-ISRAEL Villages of Excellence”.
- 23. d** The Union Cabinet has approved the opening of a new Consulate General of India in Addu City, Maldives in 2021.
- 24. a** The Committee under the Chairmanship of Nilesh Shah, Managing Director of Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Co. Ltd, will recommend the road map for the funds industry in the International Financial Service Centres, IFSCs.
- 25. a** Dr. Debabrata Sikdar, Assistant Professor, Department of Electronics and Electrical Engineering, along with his research scholar, Ashish Kumar Chowdhary from IIT Guwahati, have designed a smart window material that can effectively control the amount of heat and light passing through it in response to an applied voltage.
- 26. a** The National Green Tribunal has formed a committee to submit a report on alleged violation of norms in the construction of a reservoir across the Cauvery river at Mekedatu in Karnataka.
- 27. a** CISF chief Subodh Kumar Jaiswal was appointed as the new CBI director for two years, according to a Personnel Ministry order.
- 28. c** Punjab National Bank (PNB) and PNB Housing Finance have entered into a fresh brand agreement, which gives PNB the right to withdraw its brand name from the mortgage lender. PNB holds 33% in PNB Housing.
- 29. c** The Sports Ministry has given its approval to open 143 Khelo India Centres across seven states in the country with a total budget estimate of Rs 14.30 crore.
- 30. c** Six Indian places have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO world heritage sites. The sites are Satpura Tiger Reserve, Iconic riverfront of the historic city of Varanasi, Megalithic site of Hire Benkal, Maratha Military Architecture, Bhedaghat-Lameta Ghat in Narmada Valley- Jabalpur and temples of Kanchipuram.
- 31. a** Named as Akanksha, the portal will help the corporate sector, government and the donors to utilise CSR funds for Government programmes.
- 32. a** Union Minister Kiren Rijiju launched the Ayush Clinical Case Repository portal and the third version of Ayush Sanjivani App in a virtual event.
- 33. a** The Power Ministry has decided to set up a National Mission on the use of Biomass in coal based thermal power plants.
- 34. b** The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Swiss Confederation signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch the first WHO BioHub Facility as part of the WHO BioHub System.

- 35. b** Mali's interim President and Prime Minister resigned two days after they were arrested by the military.
- 36. b** ICICI Bank announced the launch of a new facility, wherein the UPI (Unified Payments Interface) ID has been linked to its digital wallet 'Pockets', marking a departure from the current practice that demands such IDs be linked with a savings bank account.
- 37. a** Indian weightlifter Achinta Sheuli ended with the silver medal in the men's 73 kilogram category at the Junior World Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
- 38. d** Amazon.com Inc is buying MGM, the fabled US movie studio home to the James Bond franchise, for 8.45 billion US Dollars.
- 39. a** Finance Minister announced establishment of a Research Reactor in PPP mode for production of medical isotopes as a part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiatives for Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).
- 40. b** Vesak, also known as Buddha Jayanti, Buddha Purnamā and Buddha Day, is a holiday traditionally observed by Buddhists and Hindus in South and Southeast Asia as well as Tibet and Mongolia. The festival commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of Gautama Buddha in Theravada Tibetan Buddhism and Navayana.
- 41. b** Bharat Ratna Professor C.N.R. Rao has received the International Eni Award 2020 for research into renewable energy sources and energy storage. It is also called the Energy Frontier award.
- 42. d** Indian economist and Nobel Laureate Amartya Kumar Sen has been conferred with Spain's top Princess of Asturias Award in the social sciences category, the Spanish prize foundation announced.
- 43. a** Trade India, the country's leading B2B online marketplace platform, is preparing to host its ninth landmark virtual event, the Medical and Healthcare Expo India 2021.
- 44. b** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the 'Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT) OPD Portal via video conferencing.
- 45. c** United States President Joe Biden has nominated Indian-American Arun Venkataraman for the Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service and the Assistant Secretary for Global Markets in the Department of Commerce.
- 46. c** India will work on renewable energy, energy efficiency and smart grid while hosting the first meeting of BRICS Senior Energy Officials under its presidency of the five-nation group.
- 47. a** One of the oldest crypto companies in India, ZebPay, launched a new lending platform for crypto asset exchange.
- 48. b** Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh rolled out a new initiative, involving youth, to take forward the state's Mission Fateh 2.0 as part of the 'Corona Mukht Punjab Abhiyan' (Covid-free Punjab Campaign).
- 49. a** Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh launched Manipur Home Isolation Management (MHIM) Mobile Application for home isolation patients.
- 50. d** The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, 29 May, offers a chance to pay tribute to the uniformed and civilian personnel's invaluable contribution to the work of the Organization.
- 51. d** The Karnataka government is introducing a city sewage surveillance system in Bengaluru that will help officials track the novel coronavirus at an early stage, even among asymptomatic persons.
- 52. b** Bashar al-Assad has been re-elected for a fourth term as president of war-ravaged Syria, despite Western accusations the polls were "neither free nor fair".

- 53. c** State-run Canara Bank announced three loan schemes as part of the fight against the pandemic under which it will offer healthcare credit, business and personal loan to individuals.
- 54. b** The US replaced Mauritius as the second largest source of foreign direct investment into India during 2020-21 with inflows of USD 13.82 billion, according to government data. Singapore remained the top source of FDI into the country for the third consecutive fiscal at \$17.41 billion.
- 55. c** The International Astronomical Union (IAU) has approved eight Chinese names for features around the area on the Moon.
- 56. a** The International Cricket Council has announced that India and New Zealand will end as joint winners in case of a draw or a tie in World Test Championship final.
- 57. d** 28th May is Amnesty International Day. Amnesty International was founded in London in 1961.
- 58. a** Tamil filmmaker Thamizh's debut film 'Seththumaan' and Karishma Dube's short 'Bittu' have bagged top prizes at the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles (IFFLA).
- 59. a** The Appointments committee of the Cabinet has approved a one year extension to both Chief of the country's premier intelligence agency - Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Research & Analysis Wing (R&AW).
- 60. c** Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt was thrilled to receive a golden visa for the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- 61. a** NITI Aayog Member (Health) Dr VK Paul will head the Emergency Management Plan Group and the ten-member panel on Vaccination.
- 62. d** Russia has registered the world's first animal-specific vaccine.
- 63. a** The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced that the remaining matches of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021 will be played in the United Arab Emirates in September-October this year.
- 64. a** The first United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) regional office has opened in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- 65. a** The second BRICS Sherpas' and Sous Sherpas' meeting was convened under India's Chairship.
- 66. a** Space technology startup Bellatrix Aerospace has successfully tested India's first privately developed hall-effect thruster, an electric propulsion engine for micro satellites weighing 50-500 kg.
- 67. c** The Indian Banks Association and State Bank of India jointly announced three new loan products in Mumbai.
- 68. a** Centre will soon roll out a Unified Health Interface (UHI), an open and interoperable IT network for digital health that shall enable public and private solutions and apps to plug in and be a part of the National Digital Health Ecosystem.
- 69. d** Every 29th May, the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) celebrates World Digestive Health Day (WDHD).
- 70. b** Cricket legend, commentator and one of Team India's most successful coaches, Ravi Shastri has penned a book titled 'Stargazing: The Players in My Life'.