
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

12th July to 18th July, 2021

PREFACE

Dear Students,

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

Happy Reading

Team CL



Career
Launcher

National



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath unveils new state population policy 2021-2030

- In Uttar Pradesh, the government has announced new Population Policy 2021-2030' on the occasion of World Population Day (July 11). The draft law list that has been put on public domain and the government has sought suggestions from people in policy draft.
- In the new population policy, a target has been set to bring the birth rate to 2.1 per thousand population by 2026 and to 1.9 by 2030. The state's total fertility rate is 2.7 percent currently. The recommendations of policy will be effective after one year of gazette notification. The government is to give incentives and disincentives for the promotion of the two-child norm in the state.
- According to the policy draft people having more than two children will not be able to fight local body election. Those who having up to two offsprings will be provided more government facilities and incentives.
- The draft also says that government employees not following two children norm will be forbidden several benefits. People breaching policy will not able to take benefit of subsidy and government schemes. Chief Minister on this occasion also started distribution of 'Shagun kits' to encourage the means of family planning among the newly wedded.

A draft for population control legislation was released in the public domain. Through the proposed policy, efforts will be made to increase the accessibility of contraceptive measures issued under the Family Planning Programme and provide a proper system for safe abortion. It also promotes a two-child policy, violation of which would mean people will be debarred from contesting local body elections, applying for government jobs or receiving any government subsidy. Comprehensive arrangements will be made for the care of the elderly, apart from better management of education, health, and nutrition of adolescents between 11 to 19 years. 'Health Clubs' in schools will be formed in addition to instructions which will also be given to make arrangements for digital tracking of newborns, adolescents, and elderly people.

Shri Nitin Gadkari inaugurates India's First LNG Facility plant at Nagpur

- Minister for Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari has emphasized on importance of alternate biofuels for diversification of agriculture towards energy and power sector. Inaugurating the country's first LNG Facility plant at Nagpur said we are spending 8 lakh crores for the import of petrol diesel and petroleum products which is a big challenge.
- The Country's first LNG facility plant has been set up by Baidyanath Ayurvedic Group on Kamptee Road near Nagpur Jabalpur Highway. Mr.Gadkari also informed that the Central Government is promoting Ethanol, Electric, CNG, LNG gas as an alternative to conventional fuels.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the BJP from 2010-2013. He is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways of India and During the cabinet reshuffle on 7th July 2021 the portfolio for Ministry of MSME which was under him was reassigned to Narayan Rane, another BJP MP from Maharashtra as a part of cabinet expansion. Gadkari represents Lok Sabha from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra.

Bishnupur becomes Assam's first smokeless kitchen village

- All 70 households in Cachar's Bishnupur forest village now have a unique cooking stove made of soil, cow dung and rice husk. It not only consumes 40% less firewood but also provides 100% smokeless kitchens in the village. The environment and forest department officially declared it as the first smokeless village in Assam.
- The first smokeless village in Assam is part of an initiative undertaken by a undertaking referred to as "National Appropriate Mitigation Initiative" (NAMA). The initiative is underway in numerous components of the nation to cut back greenhouse fuel emissions.

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. Tea production in West Bengal was approximately 25 million kilograms in March 2021, the highest to any other region in the country. Assam came second that year with close to 20 million kilograms.

ICCR to set up a Bangabandhu Chair at Delhi University

- The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) will set up a 'Bangabandhu Chair' at Delhi University. The Chair will focus on better understanding of developments in Bangladesh which is one of India's most important neighbours as it is positioned at the strategic intersection of India's Neighbourhood First and Act East policies.
- The MoU will be for a duration of 5 academic years. The initiative is the outcome of one of the understandings reached during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh during the Golden jubilee celebration of the liberation of Bangladesh and the birth centenary celebration of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
- The Chair will be occupied by a foreign visiting professor or subject expert on Bangladesh preferably a person of Bangladeshi origin. It will focus on the common heritage of the two countries and subjects like Anthropology, Buddhist Studies, Geography, History, Modern Indian languages including Bangla, Music, Fine Arts, Political Science, International relations and Sociology. It is the first of its kind initiative of setting up a chair on Bangladesh in India which is an important step towards strengthening Indo-Bangladesh ties.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), is an autonomous organisation of the Government of India, involved in India's external cultural relations, through cultural exchange with other countries and their peoples. It was founded on 9 April 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of independent India. The ICCR Headquarters are situated in Azad Bhavan, I.P. Estate, New Delhi.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country's largest port. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Mohammad Abdul Hamid is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh, in office since April 2013. Sheikh Hasina is the current Prime Minister of the Bangladesh.

NTPC to set up India's single largest solar park at Rann of Kutch in Gujarat

- National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) will set up India's single largest solar park at Rann of Kutch in Khavada, Gujarat. NTPC will set up 4750 Mega Watt renewable energy park. As a part of its green energy portfolio augmentation, NTPC Limited, India's largest energy integrated company aims to build 60 Giga Watt renewable energy capacity by 2032.
- Recently, NTPC has also commissioned India's largest Floating Solar of 10 Mega Watt on the reservoir of Simhadri Thermal Power Plant, Andhra Pradesh.

NTPC Limited, formerly known as National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, is an Indian Central Public Sector Undertaking, engaged in the business of generation of electricity and allied activities. It is a company incorporated under the Companies Act 1956 and is owned by the Ministry of Power, Government of India. The headquarters of the company is situated at New Delhi.

Ladakh signs MoU with Sikkim to turn the UT into organic entity

- **Ladakh administration has signed an MoU with Sikkim State Organic Certification Agency (SOCCA) to turn the Union Territory into an organic entity.**
- **A tripartite MoU has been signed between Ladakh and SSOCA regarding the implementation of Prampragat Krishi Vikas Yojana and Mission Organic Development Initiative (MODI) in the Ladakh region with the aim to convert Ladakh into organic entity by 2025.**
- **The main objective of this MoU is to get the organic certification after a tie-up with the Centre. Sikkim is the first state that is 100 per cent organic with all of its farmland certified organic and Sikkim became world's first 100% organic state. The use and sale of chemical fertilizers and pesticides are banned in Sikkim.**

According to FSSAI, 'organic farming' is a system of farm design and management to create an ecosystem of agriculture production without the use of synthetic external inputs such as chemical fertilisers, pesticides and synthetic hormones or genetically modified organisms. Organic farm produce means the produce obtained from organic agriculture, while organic food means food products that have been produced in accordance with specified standards for organic production. **Zero budget natural farming is a method of chemical-free agriculture drawing from traditional Indian practices. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is the food regulator in the country and is also responsible for regulating organic food in the domestic market and imports.**

India's first 'Grain ATM' set up in Gurugram

- **The state government of Haryana has kicked off a first of its kind unique initiative in which a grain ATM has been set up in the state's Gurugram area. The machine, named 'Annapurti' has been set up at Farrukhnagar in Gurugram and is aimed at easing up the process of dispensing grains at ration shops. It is called Automated, Multi Commodity, Grain Dispensing Machine. It can dispense up to 70 kg of grains within five to seven minutes at a time.**
- **The 'Annapurti' ATMs are a part of United Nation's World Food Programme (WFP) that are working hand in hand with the Indian government to alleviate the problems of food scarcity in and around poorer sections of India. The World Food Programme, which was awarded the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize, also works closely with Ethiopian, Mali, Bangladesh, Kenya, Sudan among other countries to address problems of food shortage and hunger.**

Haryana is a landlocked state in India located in the northern part of the country. It was carved out of the former state of East Punjab on 1 November 1966 on a linguistic basis. Chandigarh is the state capital, Faridabad in National Capital Region (NCR) is the most populous city of the state, and Gurgaon is a leading financial hub of the NCR, with major Fortune 500 companies located in it. Among the world's oldest and largest ancient civilisations, the Indus Valley Civilization sites at Rakhigarhi village in Hisar district and Bhirrana in Fatehabad district are 9,000 years old. At present, the lowest sex ratio in India is in Haryana, where sex ratio is only 879 whereas the highest sex ratio is in Kerala (1084). Bandaru Dattatreya is the current Governor of the State of Haryana since 2021. Manohar Lal Khattar is the current Chief Minister of Haryana.

PM Modi inaugurates International Cooperation and Convention Centre in Varanasi

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that Uttar Pradesh is making all round development in the sectors of health, agriculture, employment, technology and others under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.**
- **The state has done admirable and exemplary work in controlling COVID-19 pandemic in the state. He also laid foundation stones for several projects and public works worth around 839 crore rupees. The Prime Minister also inaugurated the International Cooperation and Convention Centre - Rudrakash, which has been constructed with Japanese assistance.**

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

Rajnath Singh launches AI- powered grievance management application

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched an Artificial Intelligence-powered grievance management application in New Delhi. The system was developed by Ministry of Defence with the cooperation of IIT-Kanpur.**
- **This is the first Artificial Intelligence-based system developed to improve grievance redressal in the Government.** The system can identify repeat complaints or spam automatically. It enables geographical analysis of complaints in a category including analysis of whether the complaint was adequately addressed or not by the concerned office.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces. The President of India is the ceremonial commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country. The Indian Armed Forces (including Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy) and Indian Coast Guard under the Ministry of Defences are primarily responsible for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. A military department was created by the supreme government of the British East India Company at Kolkata in the year 1776. Rajnath Singh is currently serving as the Defence Minister of India. He has been Member of parliament, Lok Sabha two times from Lucknow (Lok Sabha constituency) and once from Ghaziabad (Lok Sabha constituency).

Centre directs immediate withdrawal of all cases under Section 66A of IT Act

- **The Union home ministry asked state governments and police chiefs to immediately withdraw cases registered under the repealed Section 66A of the Information Technology (IT) Act and to stop registering such cases.** The move came days after the Supreme Court expressed shock over the continued registration of cases under the repealed Section.
- **Section 66A criminalised “grossly offensive” or “menacing character” messages sent in form of text, audio, video, images, or any other electronic record. It provided for the punishment of up to three years in prison.**
- **In 2015, the top court quashed the portion of the IT Act after holding it unconstitutional, stressing on the right to freedom of speech and expression of Indian citizens.** The law was wielded in several instances to arrest people for posts on social media solely at the discretion of police.
- **The NGO People’s Union for Civil Liberties filed a petition informing the court that 1,307 new cases were registered under the Act in the six years since what is known as the Shreya Singhal judgment that struck down 66A”.**
- **The court observed that the weakness of Section 66A lay in the fact that it had created an offence on the basis of undefined actions: such as causing “inconvenience, danger, obstruction and insult”, which do not fall among the exceptions granted under Article 19 of the Constitution, which guarantees the freedom of speech. Section 66A was contrary to both Articles 19 (free speech) and 21 (right to life) of the Constitution.**

The IT Act, 2000 provides for legal recognition for transactions through electronic communication, also known as e-commerce. The Act also penalizes various forms of cyber-crime. It empowered police to make arrests over what policemen, in terms of their subjective discretion, could construe as “offensive” or “menacing” or for the purposes of causing annoyance, inconvenience, etc. It prescribed the punishment for sending messages through a computer or any other communication device like a mobile phone or a tablet, and a conviction could fetch a maximum of three years in jail.

NTPC REL to set up India's first green Hydrogen Mobility project in Ladakh

- State-run power giant **NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd (NTPC REL)** will set up the **country's first green Hydrogen Mobility project in Ladakh**. NTPC REL is a **100 per cent subsidiary of NTPC**.
- **NTPC has plans to ply five hydrogen buses, to start with, in the region** and the company will be setting up a solar plant and a green hydrogen generation unit in Leh towards this end. This will put **Leh as the first city in the country to implement a green hydrogen-based mobility project**.

Hydrogen when produced by electrolysis using renewable energy is known as Green Hydrogen which has **no carbon footprint**. The hydrogen that is in use today is produced using fossil fuels, which is the primary source. **Organic materials such as fossil fuels and biomass are used for releasing hydrogen through chemical processes**. **Green hydrogen energy is vital for India to meet its Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) Targets** and ensure regional and national energy security, access and availability. **Green Hydrogen can act as an energy storage option, which would be essential to meet intermittencies (of renewable energy) in the future**. In terms of mobility, for long distance mobilisations for either urban freight movement within cities and states or for passengers, Green Hydrogen can be used in railways, large ships, buses or trucks, etc.

Government launches digital platform Kisan Sarathi

- **The government has launched a digital platform named as 'Kisan Saarathi'**, available in Hindi and many regional languages, through which **farmers can interact and avail personalised advisories on agriculture and allied areas directly from the respective scientists of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVKs)**, the nodal centres that ensure growers benefit from research and technology.
- **The platform Kisan Sarathi was jointly launched by Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw** through video conference on the occasion of **93rd ICAR Foundation Day**.

The agriculture contribution in India's GDP in 2019 is 15.96 percent. According to latest report, **agriculture is primary source of livelihood for 58% population in India**. The **Primary sector of the economy** includes any industry involved in the **extraction and production of raw materials, such as farming, logging, hunting, fishing, and mining**. India is a global agricultural powerhouse. It is the **world's largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices, and has the world's largest cattle herd (buffaloes)**, as well as the **largest area under wheat, rice and cotton**. It is the **second largest producer of rice, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, farmed fish, sheep & goat meat, fruit, vegetables and tea**. **Narendra Singh Tomar is the Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Minister of Rural Development** in the Second Modi ministry. He is a member of the **17th Lok Sabha from Morena, Madhya Pradesh**.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates 1st station redeveloped through PPP mode

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Gandhinagar capital railway station, the country's first redeveloped railway station** in line with the government's plan to modernise railway stations **through Public Private Partnerships**. The Ministry of Railways and the Gandhinagar Railway and Urban Development Corporation (GARUD) have jointly developed a five-star luxury hotel atop the Gandhinagar railway station.
- **Special Care has been taken to make it a Divyang friendly station by providing it with a special ticket booking counter, ramps, lifts, dedicated parking space etc**. The complete building is designed and provided with Green Building rating features. The state-of-the-art external façade will have daily theme based lighting with 32 themes. The station will also house a five star hotel".

Indian Railways (IR) is the **fourth-largest railway network in the world by size**. There are a total of **18 Railway zones**. **South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**. **Ashwini Vaishnaw is currently serving as the Minister of Railways in the Government of India**. He was elected as the **BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016**. The practice of a separate **Railway Budget** was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a **10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21**. On **21 September 2016**, **Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India**, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

Karnataka CM launches Electric Bike Taxi scheme in Bengaluru

- **Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa launched the Electric Bike Taxi scheme in Bengaluru.** The scheme will generate self-employment and serve as a bridge between public transport and daily travellers.
- It is **eco-friendly and encourages fuel conservation.** The Chief Minister said that the **main objective of the scheme is to reduce the travel time and inconvenience faced by the public to travel from their home to the bus stand, railway station and metro stations.** The vehicles registered under this scheme will be in the transport category and exempted from permits and tax.

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. **Thaawarchand Gehlot** is currently serving as the Governor of Karnataka. **Coffee production in India is dominated in the hill tracts of South Indian states, with Karnataka accounting for 71%, followed by Kerala with 21% and Tamil Nadu (5% of overall production with 8,200 tonnes).**

Centre takes complete control of district mineral funds from states

- **The Centre has taken complete control of the district mineral foundation (DMF) funds,** negating states' right to sanction or approve any expenditure out of the funds accrued from mandatory contribution from mining lease holders.
- **Since their inception in 2015-16, over Rs 49,400 crore have flown into the DMF funds.** The move is seen by many states as yet another bid by the Narendra Modi government to **usurp the states' fiscal powers and undermine their constitutionally defined role in governance,** so might spark a political storm.
- **According to MMDR (Amendment) Act, 2015, state governments are mandated to establish DMFs in all districts for interest and benefits of persons affected by mining-related operations.** Lease holders are mandated to contribute to these not-for-profit foundations a defined percentage of royalty apart from paying royalty to state governments. DMFs are required to use these funds for welfare of persons and areas affected by mining-related operations. Thus, tribal population are principal beneficiaries. **The scheme is also called as "Pradhan Mantri KhanijKshetra Kalyan Yojana".**

PMAY-U launches Short Film Contest Khushiyon Ka Ashiyana

- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U) has launched a Short Film Contest Khushiyon Ka Ashiyana for all the people above 18 Years of age,** as part of Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav. Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said, for the short film contest, **applications are invited from PMAY-U beneficiaries, students, youth, members of the civil society, institutions and individual on the broad theme of six years journey of PMAY-U Mission and how it has impacted lives of people.**
- **The Ministry said, 25 winners will be rewarded in three categories** with cash prizes of 25, 000, 20,000 and 12 thousand 500 rupees along with certificate. **The Ministry has also launched Awas Par Samvaad – series of 75 seminars and workshops, to take ahead the Prime Minister's vision of Housing for All.**
- **It aims to create awareness and promote discussion, deliberation and dissemination on 'Housing for All'** among multiple stakeholders. The declaration of the **two initiatives by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs were made on the occasion of sixth anniversary of PMAY-U on 25th June.**
- **The Cumulative release of Central Assistance under the Mission crossed one lakh crore rupees.** As the Mission moves ahead to achieve its target of one crore 12 lakh houses, more than 83 lakh houses are grounded and more than 50 lakh completed.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) is an initiative by the Government of India in which affordable housing will be provided to the urban poor with a target of building 2 crore (20 million) affordable houses by 31 March 2022. It has two components: Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) (PMAY-U) for the urban poor and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) (PMAY-G and also PMAY-R) for the rural poor. This scheme is converged with other schemes to ensure houses have a toilet, Saubhagya Yojana electricity connection, Ujjwala Yojana LPG connection, access to drinking water and Jan Dhan banking facilities, etc.

Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan's call to crank up 'catch the rain' drive

- **Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan called upon people to take up rain water harvesting activities as a movement.** "Though our country is receiving copious rains, we are lagging behind in conserving rain water, thus staring at a major water crisis," she said.
- Dr Tamilisai stated that though the country accounts for 18 per cent of the world's population and 20 per cent of livestock, it has only four per cent of the water resources. Furthermore, she urged all stakeholders to proactively promote the "catch the rain" campaign having a tagline of "where it falls, when it falls," launched as part of the National Water Mission.

The National Water Mission was launched in 2011. The India's National Water Mission enshrined five goals which are given below: 1. Comprehensive water data base in public domain and assessment of the impact of climate change on water resource. 2. Promotion of citizen and state actions for water conservation, augmentation and preservation. 3. Focused attention to vulnerable areas including over-exploited areas. 4. Increasing water use efficiency by 20% 5. Promotion of basin level integrated water resources management.

Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System: Production of 'Make in India' trains starts for India's first RRTS

- **'Make in India' trains for Delhi-Meerut RRTS: For the country's first, Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut semi-high-speed rail corridor for Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Phase 1, Alstom has started manufacturing the regional commuter and transit trains.**
- In May 2020, Alstom was awarded the contract to design, manufacture, and deliver as many as 210 regional commuter and transit train cars along with comprehensive maintenance services for a period of 15 years.
- The company, as per the contract, will deliver a total of 30 regional commuter train sets, each consisting of six cars as well as 10 intracity mass transit train sets, each comprising three cars, according to a statement issued by Alstom.
- In accordance with the Modi government's 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' vision and the 'Make in India' policy, these RRTS trains are 100 per cent indigenously manufactured, with more than 80 per cent localisation being manufactured in the company's factory in Savli, Gujarat. This facility will manufacture the car bodies, bogies as well as undertake train testing. The manufacturing of propulsion systems and electricals is being done at the company's factory located in Maneja, Gujarat.

Make in India is an initiative by the Government of India to make and encourage companies to manufacture in India and incentivize dedicated investments into manufacturing. The policy approach was to create a conducive environment for investments, develop a modern and efficient infrastructure, and open up new sectors for foreign capital. The initiative targeted 25 economic sectors for job creation and skill enhancement, and aimed "to transform India into a global design and manufacturing hub." "Make in India" had three stated objectives: to increase the manufacturing sector's growth rate to 12-14% per annum; to create 100 million additional manufacturing jobs in the economy by 2022; to ensure that the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP is increased to 25% by 2022 (later revised to 2025).



Ethiopia's ruling party wins national parliamentary election

- In Ethiopia, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity party won national parliamentary election. National Election Board of Ethiopia announced that the ruling party won 410 seats out of 436 in the federal parliament.
- This landslide victory assured a second term for the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Abiy Ahmed came to power in April 2018 after the former Prime Minister resigned amid widespread protests. He had taken many steps for political and economic reforms during his tenure but also drawn intense international criticism for his handling of the conflict in the Tigray region has that left thousands of people dead.

Ethiopia is a landlocked country in the Horn of Africa. It shares borders with Eritrea to the north, Djibouti and Somaliland to the northeast, Somalia to the east, Kenya to the south, South Sudan to the west and Sudan to the northwest. The birr is the unit of currency in Ethiopia. The national capital and largest city is Addis Ababa. Sahle-Work Zewde is the current president of Ethiopia, the first woman to hold the office.

Vietnam appoints first honorary Consul General in India

- Vietnam has appointed Honorary Consul General of Vietnam in Bangalore to promote trade, economics, investment, tourism, educational and cultural cooperation between Vietnam and the State of Karnataka.
- Industrialist N.S. Srinivasa Murthy based in Bengaluru has been appointed as Honorary Consul General of Vietnam for Karnataka. "He is the first honorary consul general of Vietnam from India and the 19th across the world. He is the third Consul General to be appointed globally this year".
- He is the first honorary consul general of Vietnam from India. The appointment is for a period of three years. Both the countries have agreed to have various commemorative activities in the year 2022, to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Vietnam is the easternmost country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia. Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam. The dong has been the currency of Vietnam since May 3, 1978. Nguyen Xuan Phuc is the current President of Vietnam. Pham Minh Chinh is the current Prime Minister of Vietnam.

India and Nepal sign MoU for execution of 679 Mega Watt Lower Arun Hydro Electric Project in Nepal

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed for execution of 679 Mega Watt Lower Arun Hydro Electric Project in Nepal between Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) under Ministry of Power and Investment Board of Nepal (IBN) in Kathmandu Nepal.
- With the active support of the Ministry of Power, SJVN won the project through International Competitive Bidding, defeating other companies of the neighbouring countries. Minister of Power R. K. Singh called this a welcome achievement saying that Nepal chose this Central Public Sector Unit based on its performance in Arun-3 HEP. During the visit of Mr Singh to Nepal in September 2019, he convinced the Prime Minister of Nepal to allot SJVN this project based on the capabilities and proven track record.
- Arun-3 HEP is the largest project in Nepal and also the largest investment of around Rs 7000 crore by India in Nepal. The commissioning of this project will go a long way in fostering friendship between the two neighbours and also lead to accelerated development and economic revival of Nepal.

Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia located in the Himalaya. Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. Constitution of Nepal is the present governing Constitution of Nepal. Nepal is governed according to the Constitution which came into effect on September 20, 2015, replacing the Interim Constitution of 2007. Sher Bahadur Deuba is currently serving as the Prime Minister of Nepal since 13 July 2021. He was the first elected prime minister under the newly adopted Constitution of Nepal.

Nepal's Supreme Court reinstates Parliament; Orders Sher Bahadur Deuba to be appointed as new Prime Minister

- Nepal's Supreme Court reinstated the Parliament and also ordered that Sher Bahadur Deuba be appointed as the Prime Minister. The parliament was dissolved by caretaker Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli in May.
- Nepal was thrown into a constitutional crisis after Mr. Oli lost a confidence vote on the 10th of May. Nepal's President Bidya Devi Bhandari on the advice of Mr. Oli dissolved the parliament for a second time this year before opposition leader Mr. Deuba could stake their claim.
- A five-member Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana issued the verdict stating that President Bidya Devi Bhandari's decision to dissolve the lower house upon a recommendation of Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli was an unconstitutional act, delivering a major blow to the veteran Communist leader who was preparing for snap polls.
- President Bidya Devi Bhandari had dissolved the 275-member lower house for the second time in five months on May 22 at the recommendation of Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli and announced snap elections on November 12 and November 19.

The political crisis in Nepal started in May 2018 when KP Sharma Oli-led CPN-UML & National Communist Party got merged and decided to serve as joint chairmen of ruling party. CPN-UML was the largest party in House of Representatives but increasing disputes within the ruling part resulted in split again. Following the split, in December 2020, Prachanda-led party expelled Prime Minister Oli as co-Chair and Prachanda was made the first Chairman. After that, house of representatives was dissolved in 2020 which was reinstated again following the order of supreme court in 2021. But, recently on May 10, Prime Minister Oli has lost the vote of confidence and the house stands dissolved.

Nepali Congress Prez Sher Bahadur Deuba sworn-in as PM of the Himalayan nation

- Nepal's newly sworn-in Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has formed a five-member cabinet. Deuba took the oath of office and secrecy. President Bidhya Devi Bhandari had appointed the Nepali Congress President to position without mentioning clauses of the constitution on the basis of which the latter has been assigned to the post.
- The new Prime Minister Deuba has inducted Bal Krishna Khand as Minister for Home Affairs, Gyanendra Bahadur Karki as Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Pampha Bhusal as Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation and Janardan Sharma as Minister for Finance. Deuba is expected to give a full shape to the cabinet, also inducting some leaders from the Janata Samjbadhi Party Nepal, in the next few days.

Singapore unveils one of world's largest floating solar panel farms

- Singapore unveiled one of the world's largest floating solar panel farms, which can produce enough electricity to power the island's five water treatment plants.
- The project is part of efforts by the country to meet a goal of quadrupling its solar energy production by 2025 to help tackle climate change. Located on a reservoir in western Singapore, the 60 megawatt-peak solar photovoltaic farm has been built by a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sembcorp Industries.
- Singapore is among the biggest per capita carbon dioxide emitters in Asia and its land scarcity makes boosting renewable energy sources a challenge.

Singapore is a sovereign city-state and island country in Southeast Asia. Singapore dollar is the official currency of Singapore. Lee Hsien Loong is the current Prime Minister of Singapore. Halimah binti Yacob is the current President of Singapore. She is the first female president in the country's history.

UAE becomes first Gulf nation to open embassy in Israel

- The United Arab Emirates became the first Gulf nation to open an embassy in Israel, nearly a year after both countries signed an agreement to normalise diplomatic ties.
- The new mission is located in Tel Aviv Stock Exchange building. The ceremony was attended by new Israeli President Isaac Herzog.
- Israel and the UAE announced in August 2020 that they would normalise diplomatic relations, bringing over a decade of covert ties into the open. Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco later also joined the US-brokered Abraham Accords, and other countries were also rumoured to be in talks.

Abu Dhabi is the capital and the second most populous city of the United Arab Emirates (the most populous being Dubai), and also capital of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates. United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federal sovereign absolute monarchy in Western Asia. Khalifa Al Nahyan is the current President of the United Arab Emirates. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. United Arab Emirates dirham is the currency of the United Arab Emirates. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the west and south and by Oman to the east and northeast. The land border with Qatar in the Khawr al Udayd area is a source of ongoing dispute.

UK's largest warship enters Indian Ocean, to conduct exercises with Indian Navy

- The UK's largest warship, the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, and its strike task group has sailed into the Indian Ocean region, where it will conduct joint exercises with the Indian Navy as part of Britain's efforts to enhance its profile in the Indo-Pacific.
- Britain has described the maiden voyage of HMS Queen Elizabeth and its task group as the country's most ambitious naval deployment for two decades, and the warships will also sail to the South China Sea for military drills with the US Navy and Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force.
- The three-day annual Konkan exercise between the Indian and British navies, has seen warships from both sides conducting a range of multi-ship, air, sea and sub-surface maritime drills, as well as close quarter manoeuvring.
- The exercise is being conducted at a time when both the UK and India are in the midst of bolstering the capabilities of their navies with aircraft carriers, and UK carrier strike group is spearheading Britain's joint expeditionary capability.
- HMS Queen Elizabeth is equipped with fifth generation F-35B Lightning multi-role aircraft, which are jointly manned by the Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and US Marine Corps. The group includes six Royal Navy ships and a submarine, a US Navy destroyer, a frigate from the Netherlands and 32 aircraft, and is manned by 3,700 sailors, aviators and marines from the combined forces of the UK, US and the Netherlands.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commonly known as the United Kingdom (UK or U.K.), or Britain, is a sovereign country in north-western Europe, off the north-western coast of the European mainland. The United Kingdom includes the island of Great Britain, the north-eastern part of the island of Ireland, and many smaller islands within the British Isles. The United Kingdom's capital is London. Boris Johnson has been Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Leader of the Conservative Party since July 2019. Elizabeth II (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary) is Queen of the United Kingdom and 15 other Commonwealth realms. Pound sterling is the official currency of the United Kingdom.

Pakistan, Russia sign terms of accord for 1,100-km gas pipeline from Karachi to Lahore

- Pakistan and Russia have signed an agreement for the construction of about 1,100-km gas pipeline from Port Qasim in Karachi to Lahore at an estimated cost of USD 2.5-3 billion by the end of 2023.
- The two sides also signed minutes of the third meeting of the Russia-Pakistan Joint Technical Committee (JTC) for implementation of the Pakstream Gas Pipeline Project - commonly known as North-South Gas project. The two sides agreed over 74:26 per cent shareholding in the special purpose vehicle (SPV) for the project.

UN human rights council passes China's resolution calling for people-centered development for human rights

- **The United Nations Human Rights Council passed China's resolution on "The contribution of development to the enjoyment of all human rights" at the 47th session**, which emphasizes the right to development and that the aim of development is to improve the well-being of the people.
- "As the eternal theme of human society, **development is the key to resolving all problems**. Only with greater development can human rights be better promoted and protected," **Ambassador Chen Xu, permanent representative of China to the United Nations office in Geneva** and other international organizations in Switzerland, said in a speech on Monday when introducing the draft resolution.
- At the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), June 21 – July 14, the **United States pushed forward on priority issues as an observer state while actively pursuing election to the Council for the 2022-2024 term**.

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the world. The Council was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006. It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights. The Council has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis. The headquarters of the Council is in Geneva, Switzerland. The International Bill of Human Rights consists of the five core human rights treaties of the United Nations that function to advance the fundamental freedoms and to protect the basic human rights of all people. The following five documents are the foundation of the International Bill of Human Rights: 1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights 2) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 3) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 4) Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 5) Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. The Universal Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948.

World's first 3D-printed steel bridge opens in Amsterdam

- **The first ever 3D-printed steel bridge has opened in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. It was created by robotic arms using welding torches to deposit the structure of the bridge layer by layer, and is made of 4500 kilograms of stainless steel.**
- **The 12-metre-long MX3D Bridge was built by four commercially available industrial robots and took six months to print.** The structure was transported to its location over the Oudezijds Achterburgwal canal in central Amsterdam last week and is now open to pedestrians and cyclists.

Syria's Assad takes oath for fourth term after criticised re-election

- **President Bashar al-Assad took the oath of office for a fourth term in war-ravaged Syria after taking 95 percent of the vote in a controversial election dismissed abroad.**
- **Assad was sworn in on the constitution and the Koran** in the presence of more than 600 guests, including ministers, businessmen, academics and journalists. **Assam Budget 2021-2022: Employment for youths, assistance to Covid affected families and more**
- **Assam Finance Minister Ajanta Neog presented Rs 566-crore deficit state Budget for 2021-2022** in the Assembly. This is the **first Budget of the Himanta Biswa Sarma-led government**. It is for the **first time in the history of Assam**, a woman Finance Minister Ajanta Neog presented the annual Budget in the Assembly.

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. Its capital and largest city is Damascus. Bashar Hafez al-Assad is the 19th president of Syria since 17 July 2000. Hussein Arnous is serving as Prime Minister of Syria. The Syrian pound or Syrian lira is the currency of Syria.



MSME Minister Narayan Rane launches two new Khadi Products

- MSME Minister Narayan Rane launched two new Khadi Products- Khadi Babywear and Unique Handmade Paper Use and Throw Slippers in New Delhi. The new products include Khadi's first ever cotton clothing for babies.
- Khadi and Village Industries Commission, KVIC has used 100 per cent hand-spun and handwoven cotton fabric that is soft on the tender and sensitive skin of the children and prevents them from any rashes or skin irritation.
- The cost of Khadi cotton babywear 599 rupees per piece. The Khadi's handmade paper use and throw slippers have been developed for the first time in India. These handmade paper slippers are 100 per cent eco-friendly and cost-effective.
- The Handmade paper is made of natural fibres like Cotton and Silk rags and agro waste. These slippers are weightless and best suited for travel and indoor usage like in home, hotel rooms, hospitals and laboratories.
- With around 63.4 million units throughout the geographical expanse of the country, MSMEs contribute around 6.11% of the manufacturing GDP and 24.63% of the GDP from service activities as well as 33.4% of India's manufacturing output. International MSME Day was observed on 27 June under the theme "COVID-19: The Great Lockdown and its impact on Small Business."

The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, a branch of the Government of India, is the apex executive body for the formulation and administration of rules, regulations and laws relating to micro, small and medium enterprises in India. Micro enterprises would be those with investments not exceeding Rs one crore and turnover of Rs 5 crore. Small enterprises would be those with investment up to Rs 10 crore and turnover of up to Rs 50 crore. Medium enterprises – as those with investments not exceeding Rs 50 crore and turnover of Rs 250 crore.

Centre rolls out second wave stimulus

- In a first set of measures to mitigate the economic impact of the devastating second Covid wave, Finance Ministry announced a series of steps aimed to push credit off-take in priority areas such as health infrastructure and the severely hit tourism sector by providing interest-rate concessions.
- Alongside a move to expand the scope of the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme for small and medium firms from Rs 3 lakh crore to Rs 4.5 lakh crore, Central government announced a credit guarantee scheme amounting to Rs 50,000 crore to ramp up healthcare infrastructure beyond the eight major metros. And a credit guarantee of Rs 60,000 crore for other sectors impacted by Covid.
- Need for the Measures: The government pegged the total financial implications of the package, which included the reiteration of some steps that were already announced such as the provision of food grains to the poor till November and higher fertiliser subsidies, at ₹ 6,28,993 crore.
- The measures to keep enterprises afloat in the aftermath of COVID 2.0. The extension of ECLGS's scope and coverage are expected to provide significant support to the cash flow of the stressed sectors.

- **Tourism** had been one of the **most impacted sectors and the package** would usher in **much-needed liquidity and help revive the employment-intensive sector**. The pinpoint focus on augmenting manpower and infrastructural resources for paediatric care is a welcome step and a new beginning.
- Economists, however, noted that **the elements of direct stimulus in the package and its upfront fiscal costs in 2021-22**, are likely to be limited. More stimulus steps may be needed to shore up the economy through the rest of the year. The focus was largely on extending loan guarantees and concessional credit for pandemic-hit sectors and investments to ramp up healthcare capacities.
- It is believed that these measures will **help to stimulate economic activities, boost production & exports and generate employment**. However, economists opine that more steps may be **needed to shore up the economy through the rest of the year**.

The Prime Minister has announced a Rs. 20 lakh crore economic package under the ‘AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan’, to aid our country out of the Coronavirus crisis (by making us self-reliant). The announcements made by Honourable Finance Minister covering the ‘#AatmaNirbharBharatAbhiyaan’, in 5 tranches from 13th May till 17th May, 2020. The Self-Reliant India Mission aims towards cutting down import dependence by focussing on substitution while improving safety compliance and quality goods to gain global market share. The Self-Reliance neither signifies any exclusionary or isolationist strategies but involves creation of a helping hand to the whole world. The Mission focuses on the importance of promoting “local” products. The Mission is also expected to complement ‘Make In India Initiative’ which intends to encourage manufacturing in India.

Amul wins its first trademark violation case outside India

- **Canada has recognised ‘The Taste of India’**. The Intellectual Property Appellate Board of Canada accorded trademark status to India’s homegrown dairy giant Amul.
- **The country’s largest co-operative will also be awarded damages to the tune of Canadian dollar (CAD) 32,733 after it won a trademark violation case** filed in the Federal Court of Canada. It is the first such case that Amul had filed against any company on foreign soil.

Amul is an Indian dairy cooperative society, based at Anand in the Indian state of Gujarat. Formed in 1946, it is a cooperative brand managed by a cooperative body, the Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. (GCMMF), which today is jointly owned by 36 lakh (3.6 million) milk producers in Gujarat, and the apex body of 13 District Milk Unions, spread across 13,000 villages of Gujarat. Amul spurred India’s White Revolution, which made the country the world’s largest producer of milk and milk products. Kaira District Milk Union Limited (later renamed to Amul - Anand Milk Union Limited) was founded in 1946 through the efforts of Tribhuvandas Patel. Amul’s foundation was a significant contributor to the white revolution in India.

Twitter names Vinay Prakash as resident grievance officer for India

- **Twitter has named Vinay Prakash as its Resident Grievance Officer for India. The microblogging platform also released the India Transparency report which is required to be published under India’s new IT rules.**
- **Twitter is required to publish a monthly report regarding handling of complaints from users in India, including action taken on them, as well as the number of URLs that Twitter has taken.**
- **The US-based company has coming under increasing criticism from the Centre over its alleged failure to comply with the new IT rules in India, which mandates, among other requirements, the appointment of three key personnel — chief compliance officer, nodal officer and grievance officer by social media platforms with over 50 lakh users. All three personnel have to be residents in India.**
- **The Delhi High Court said the Central Government can initiate action against Twitter in accordance with the new IT rules in case of non-compliance even as the micro-blogging site submitted a timeline on the appointment process of officers as mandated while maintaining that it reserves the right to challenge the rules.**

Twitter is an American microblogging and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as “tweets”. Registered users can post, like, and retweet tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Twitter was created by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams in March 2006 and launched in July of that year.

India bad bank takes shape with SBI executives as first chief

- **The National Asset Reconstruction Co. Ltd (NARCL), or the so-called bad bank, has been registered in Mumbai with a paid-up capital of Rs.74.6 crore, according to filings with the Registrar of Companies (RoC).**
- **The bad bank will be headed by Padmakumar Madhavan Nair, a stressed assets expert from State Bank of India (SBI), as the managing director.**
- **The other directors are Indian Banks' Association (IBA) chief executive Sunil Mehta, SBI deputy managing director Salee Sukumaran Nair and Canara Bank's representative Ajit Krishnan Nair. Touted as a one-stop solution to India's burgeoning bad loan menace, NARCL was set up on 7 July with an authorized capital of Rs.100 crore and has been classified as a "Union government company", the RoC filings showed.**
- **The setting up of the bad bank is part of the government's efforts to clean up India's financial system, which is sitting on one of the biggest piles of bad assets in the world. Transferring soured loans to NARCL will allow banks to cut their losses and renew lending.**
- **Initially, state-run banks will transfer 22 bad loan accounts worth Rs. 89,000 crore to NARCL. Total bad loans worth Rs. 2 trillion are likely to be transferred in tranches. As announced in the budget for FY22, NARCL will house bad loan accounts of Rs. 500 crore, or more, in a structure that will contain an asset reconstruction company and an asset management company (AMC) to manage and recover dud assets.**
- **The primary advantage of NARCL will be in its ability to aggregate bad loans. Typically, when an ARC buys such loans from a bank, it is not always possible to buy the total exposure of lenders to the borrower. This leads to a delay in taking decisions and subsequently in the recovery of the bad loans.**

NARCL, also known as a bad bank, has eight public sector banks as its shareholders. According to the Articles of Association of the company, filed with the RoC, while SBI, Union Bank of India, Bank of Baroda and Indian Bank own 99 lakh shares each, Canara Bank owns 1.2 crore shares. Other shareholders include — Punjab National Bank (90 lakh shares), Bank of India (90 lakh shares) and Bank of Maharashtra (50 lakh shares). The authorised share capital of the company is Rs 100 crore divided into 10 crore shares of Rs 10 each.

Reserve Bank introduces RBI Retail Direct facility to facilitate investment in Government Securities by individual investors

- **Reserve Bank of India introduced the RBI Retail Direct facility. The facility is a one-stop solution to facilitate investment in Government Securities, G-Sec by individual investors. Under this facility, retail investors will have the facility to open and maintain the Retail Direct Gilt, RDG Account with RBI.**
- **As part of continuing efforts to increase retail participation in government securities, the RBI Retail Direct facility was announced for improving ease of access by retail investors through online access to the government securities market along with the facility to open their gilt securities account 'Retail Direct' with the RBI. The RDG account can be opened through an Online portal provided for the purpose of the scheme. Saving Account holders in India with PAN, Valid KYC documents, email ID and Registered Mobile number are eligible to open this account.**
- **Non-Resident retail investors eligible to invest in Government Securities under Foreign Exchange Management Act are eligible under the scheme. The RDG account can be opened singly or jointly with another retail investor who meets the eligibility criteria. The RBI has said, date of commencement of the scheme will be announced later.**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Bhutanese counterpart Lyonpo Namgay Tshering jointly launch BHIM-UPI in Bhutan

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Finance Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Namgay Tshering jointly launched BHIM-UPI in Bhutan. Ms Sitharaman said that the services have started in Bhutan under India's neighbourhood first policy and India is proud of this achievement. More than 100 million UPI QRs have been created in last five years and BHIM-UPI in 2020-21 has processed 22 billion transactions worth 41 lakh crore rupees.**

Bhutan becomes first neighbor to use BHIM UPI

- **Bhutan becomes the first country, in India's immediate neighbourhood, to use the BHIM app for mobile-based payments and "to adopt UPI standards for its QR deployment".**
- **Bhutan has become the first country to adopt India's Unified Payment Interface (UPI) standards for its quick response (QR) code. It is also the second country after Singapore to have BHIM-UPI acceptance at merchant locations, NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL).**

BHIM is an Indian mobile payment App developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), based on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI). Named after B. R. Ambedkar and launched on 30 December 2016 it is intended to facilitate e-payments directly through banks and encourage cashless transactions. The application supports all Indian banks which use UPI, which is built over the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) infrastructure and allows the user to instantly transfer money between bank accounts of any two parties. It can be used on all mobile devices. Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is an instant real-time payment system developed by NPCI facilitating inter-bank transactions. The interface is regulated by the Reserve Bank of India and works by instantly transferring funds between two bank accounts on a mobile platform.

CCEA clears realignment of Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying schemes

- **The Centre decided to revise and realign schemes of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying and implement them as part of the special livestock sector package over the next five years starting from 2021-22 fiscal, in a bid to leverage an investment of Rs 54,618 crore.**
- **The first category will be the Development Programmes, which include Rashtriya Gokul Mission, National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD), National Livestock Mission (NLM) and Livestock Census and Integrated Sample Survey (LC & ISS) as sub-schemes.**
- **The second category is the Disease Control programme renamed as Livestock Health and Disease Control (LH & DC), which includes the current LH & DC scheme and the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP). The third category is the Infrastructure Development Fund, wherein the Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development fund (AHIDF) and the Dairy Infrastructure Development Fund (DIDF) are merged.**

India's forex reserves crossed the \$600 billion mark for the first time

- **India's forex reserves crossed the \$600 billion mark for the first time, as per the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The country's foreign exchange reserves rose by \$6.842 billion taking it to \$605 billion in the reporting week ended June 4, 2021. India now stands behind Russia by only \$200 million in terms of foreign exchange reserves.**
- **Shaktikanta Das, RBI Governor said, "The current level of forex reserves is enough to cover nearly 16 months of imports". The central bank has earned enough resources with the increased reserves to tackle any challenges arising due to sudden policy or geopolitical shifts that could lead to depletion of funds from India.**
- **The increase in the country's foreign reserves in the reporting week ended June 4, 2021, is mainly being attributed to a rise in the value of foreign currency assets (FCA) that are held by the central bank.**
- **As per the data, the foreign currency assets (FCA) comprising a major component of the overall reserves held by the central bank increased by \$7.362 billion to \$560.890 billion. The foreign currency assets (FCA) reflect the depreciation or appreciation of non-US currencies such as the yen, euro, or pound held in the foreign exchange reserves. Though after a volatile end to FY21, the country's forex reserves reported a rise due to continued foreign investment flow into the capital markets.**

India highlighted Chabahar port's importance at Central-South Asia conference in Uzbekistan

- **Uzbekistan hosted the Central-South Asia Conference 2021 in Tashkent titled the International Conference on Central and South Asia Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities.**
- **External Affairs Minister Dr Jaishankar was attended the conference in Taskent here on July 15-16. Talking to ANI exclusively ahead of the conference, the Indian Ambassador to Uzbekistan Manish Prabhat stressed the importance of the conference and what are India's expectations from the high-level visit.**

- The major international connectivity summit titled “Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities” is being held in Tashkent on the initiative of President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

Chabahar Port is located in Sistan and Baluchestan province in the Southeastern part of Iran, on the Gulf of Oman. In December 2018, India took over the operations of the Port. It was being operated by India Ports Global Private Limited (IPGPL). India’s first shipment of wheat to Afghanistan was sent through Chabahar Port. India began building a railway line between Chabahar port and Zahedan as part of the North-South Transport Corridor. In May 2016, India signed a series of twelve memoranda of understanding which centered upon the Port of Chabahar. The trilateral transit agreement signed by India, Iran and Afghanistan allows Indian goods to reach Afghanistan through Iran. It links ports in the western coast of India to the Chabahar port and covers the road and rail links between Chabahar and the Afghan border.

EU proposes world’s first carbon border tax for some imports

- **The European Commission put forward plans for the world’s first carbon border tax, on imports of carbon-intensive steel, aluminium, cement, fertilisers and electricity, as part of a programme to meet its new climate target.**
- **The border levy should be phased in from 2026, the Commission said, and is designed to protect European industries from competitors abroad whose manufacturers can produce at lower cost because they are not charged for their carbon output.**
- **Under the proposal, a transitional phase from 2023-25 will require importers, including those importing electricity, to monitor and report their emissions. Importers will be required to buy digital certificates representing the tonnage of carbon dioxide emissions embedded in the goods they import. The price of the certificates will be based on the average price of permits auctioned each week in the EU carbon market.**

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe. EU policies aim to ensure the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within the internal market. Passport controls have been abolished for travel within the Schengen Area. A monetary union was established in 1999, coming into full force in 2002, and is composed of 19 EU member states which use the euro currency. The United Kingdom became the first member state to leave the EU on 31 January 2020. The EU traces its origins to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC), established, respectively, by the 1951 Treaty of Paris and 1957 Treaty of Rome. The latest major amendment to the constitutional basis of the EU, the Treaty of Lisbon, came into force in 2009. It is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium. Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen is a German politician and physician who has been the president of the European Commission since 1 December 2019. Charles Michel is a Belgian politician serving as President of the European Council since 2019.



Inventions/Discoveries

NASA Announces Two New Missions To Venus

- **NASA announced two new missions to Venus** that will launch at the end of the decade and are aimed at learning how Earth's nearest planetary neighbor became a hellscape while our own thrived. "They will offer the entire science community the chance to investigate a planet we haven't been to in more than 30 years."
- The missions have been awarded about \$500 million under NASA's Discovery Program, and each is expected to launch in the 2028-2030 timeframe. Both missions were picked from a competitive, peer-reviewed process based on their scientific value and feasibility of their plans.

Venus is the second planet from the Sun. It is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty. As the brightest natural object in Earth's night sky after the Moon, Venus can cast shadows and can be, on rare occasions, visible to the naked eye in broad daylight. Venus lies within Earth's orbit, and so never appears to venture far from the Sun, either setting in the west just after dusk or rising in the east a little while before dawn. Venus orbits the Sun every 224.7 Earth days.

India's first cryptogamic garden opens in Dehradun

- **India's first cryptogamic garden housing nearly 50 species of lichens, ferns and fungi was inaugurated in Uttarakhand's Dehradun district.** Located in the district's Chakrata town, the garden was inaugurated by social activist Anoop Nautiyal. Around 50 species have been grown in the garden at Deoban in Chakrata at a commanding height of 9,000 ft.
- **Cryptogamae means "hidden reproduction" referring to the fact that no seed, no flowers are produced.** Thus, cryptogams represent the non-seed bearing plants.

IIT Madras, Sony to collaborate on hackathon

- **The Indian Institute of Technology-Madras and Sony India Software Centre have proposed to host a hackathon — Samvedan 2021.**
- Contestants will be asked to develop solutions for the country's societal problems. **Participants of the IIT-Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation (IITM-PTF)'s 'Sensing Solutions for Bharat' will use the Internet of Things sensor board.** The competition is based on Sony Semiconductor Solutions Corporation's Spresence board. Registration commenced on July 1, and is open to all Indian nationals.

IISc scientists find how electron bubbles formed in superfluid helium

- **A research team in the Bengaluru based Indian Institute of Science has shown through their experiment how electron bubbles are formed in superfluid helium.**
- **Understanding electron bubbles are important for developing soft material and next generation quantum materials.** This experiment and its findings are published in Science Advances scientific journal. **The detection of Few Electron Bubbles can help scientists decipher flow of heat in superfluid helium.**

Israel becomes first country in world to ok Covid booster for immunocompromised

- **Israel has become the first country in the world to okay Covid booster shots for immunocompromised adults.** Israel's four health providers have been informed by the Israel Health Ministry that they can administer a third booster shot to adults with underlying immune problems.

UK publishes world's first 'greenprint' to decarbonise all modes of domestic transport by 2050

- **Cleaner air, healthier communities and tens of thousands of new green jobs are set to become reality thanks to the UK's revolutionary Transport decarbonisation plan.** Transport decarbonisation plan for cleaner air, healthier communities and tens of thousands of new green jobs.
- **With just months to go until major climate summit COP26, the plan provides a world-leading 'greenprint' to cut emissions from our seas and skies, roads and railways, setting out a credible pathway for the whole transport sector to reach net zero by 2050.**
- **Cleaner transport will create and support highly skilled jobs, with the production of zero emission road vehicles alone having the potential to support tens of thousands of jobs worth up to £9.7 billion GVA in 2050.** This will also ensure the air we breathe is cleaner in our communities and reduce time spent in traffic.

European Union launches big climate plan for "our children and grandchildren"

- **European Union policymakers unveiled their most ambitious plan yet to tackle climate change, aiming to turn green goals into concrete action this decade** and set an example for the world's other big economies to follow. The European Commission, the EU executive body, set out in **painstaking detail how the bloc's 27 countries can meet their collective goal to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 55% from 1990 levels by 2030 - a step towards "net zero" emissions by 2050.**
- This will mean **raising the cost of emitting carbon for heating, transport and manufacturing, taxing high-carbon aviation fuel and shipping fuel that have not been taxed before, and charging importers at the border for the carbon emitted in making products such as cement, steel and aluminium abroad.** It will consign the internal combustion engine to history.

India's first monk fruit cultivation exercise begins in HP's Kullu

- **The 'monk fruit' from China, which is known for its properties as non-caloric natural sweetener introduced for field trials in Himachal Pradesh** by the Palampur-based Council of Scientific Research and Industrial Technology-Institute of Himalayan Bio-resource Technology (CSIR-IHBT) in Kullu.
- The field trials have begun **three years after the CSIR-IHBT imported its seeds from China** and grew it in the house. **This, as per CSIR-IHBT, is the first ever monk fruit cultivation exercise in India.**

Multi-colour limbless amphibian Ichthyophis found in Mizoram, first in India

- **The multi-colour Ichthyophis, a species of limbless amphibian, which was believed to be endemic to Mynamar has been found for the first time in India.** A team of researchers in Mizoram and Assam has found this amphibian species in Mizoram's Aizawl Municipal areas, Tamdil National Wetland in Saitual district and in Dampa Tiger Reserve in Mamit district.
- **Their findings have been corroborated by morphology and DNA sequencing.** The species was previously known to be in its typical habitat more than 800 km away in Ayeyarwady Region of Myanmar. **Mizoram shares borders with Myanmar. "This species is known only from its type locality and is presently not included in the IUCN Red List.**

Indian researchers spot rare superluminous supernova

- **Researchers have spotted an extremely bright, hydrogen deficient, fast-evolving supernova that shines with the energy borrowed from an exotic type of neutron star with an ultra-powerful magnetic field.** Such kind of supernovae called SuperLuminous Supernova (SLSNe) is very rare.
- **The SLSNe is very rare because they generally originate from very massive stars (minimum mass limits is more than 25 times that of the Sun)** and the number distribution of such massive stars in our galaxy or in nearby galaxies is sparse.

Indian Government plans to revive 'Vaccine Maitri' in July-August, but only in neighbourhood

- **Indian envoys are regularly assuring countries in the neighbourhood** that New Delhi is **keen to resume vaccine supplies that had been suspended** in April, but that prospect could be months away as domestic inoculation is the priority right now.
- Depending on the scale of production of vaccines within the country, New Delhi is **aiming at July-end or August to at least release those vaccines that have been bought by Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal and are now in pending status.** The supplies to Bhutan, which received vaccines from India as grants, will be prioritised too.
- **India, the largest vaccine producer in the world, started sending Covid shots abroad, both as grants as well as commercial shipments, from 20 January onwards under an initiative labelled 'Vaccine Maitri'.** However, as India started facing a vaccine shortage domestically, Vaccine Maitri came to a halt in April. India had shipped over 66 million doses abroad by then.

Vaccine Maitri (Vaccine Friendship) is a humanitarian and commercial initiative undertaken by the Indian government to provide COVID-19 vaccines to countries around the world. The government started providing vaccines from 20 January 2021. As of 9 May 2021, India had delivered around 66.3 million doses of vaccines to 95 countries. Of these, 10.7 million doses were gifted to 47 countries by the Government of India. The remaining 54 million were supplied by the Serum Institute of India under its commercial and COVAX obligations. In late March 2021, the Government of India temporarily froze exports of the Covishield, citing India's own COVID crisis and the domestic need for these vaccines. **India kicked off international shipment of the vaccines on 20 January 2021, only four days after starting its own vaccination program. Bhutan and Maldives were the first countries to receive vaccines as a grant by India.**

New dinosaur species identified in Spain

- **A fossilised jawbone recovered from the Spanish city of Castellón has now been identified to belong to a new genus and species of dinosaur. It was named Portellsaurus sosbaynati, in honour of Vicent Sos Baynat, a Spanish geologist who was born in Castello ´de la Plana. The genus name combines the name of Portell, the town in which the fossil was discovered, with the Greek sauros which means lizard.** It belonged to a subgroup of dinosaurs called Styracosterna.
- **The specimen was discovered in 1998 and kept in the Cincorres Museum.** New studies on the specimen revealed that the herbivorous species roamed the area during the early Cretaceous period or about 130 million years ago. The collected jaw belonged to a large individual who was about 20-26 feet in length.

ELSA-d the world's first commercial mission to demonstrate a space debris removal system launched

- **ELSA-d the world's first commercial mission to demonstrate a space debris removal system was launched recently from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.**
- **End-of-Life Services by Astroscale demonstration Mission (Elsa-d).** It was developed by Astroscale, a Japanese-UK company. The mission will be operated from the UK's in-orbit servicing control centre (IOCC) at Satellite Applications Catapult in Harwell, near Oxford.
- **ELSA-d is a small satellite designed to find, rendezvous and clamp on to an unwanted satellite.** It will then push it into the Earth's atmosphere, where it will burn up. The removal of space debris is the key to space sustainability, which will ensure that new satellites can be operated without the risk of colliding with old ones.
- **The European Space Agency estimates 3,600 working satellites are in orbit, and more than 28,000 pieces of debris are being tracked by the US Space Surveillance Network.**



Sports Personalities in News

Wimbledon men's singles final: Djokovic wins record 20th Grand Slam, equals Federer and Nadal

- World no.1 Novak Djokovic won his third Grand Slam title of 2021 as he beat Matteo Berrettini 6-7, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 in the final to clinch the Wimbledon men's singles title. Djokovic has been in spectacular form this year as he has claimed all the Grand Slam titles of 2021 so far. He was made to work hard in the first set by Berrettini but after that Djokovic overwhelmed the Italian to win his sixth Wimbledon championship.
- Djokovic has now won 20 Grand Slam titles, equal with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal in the all-time championship winners' list. He is on course for a Career Grand Slam and needs to win the US Open to become the first man since Rod Laver (1969) to do so. Djokovic is only behind Pete Sampras (7) and Roger Federer (8) in the list of players with the most Wimbledon championships in Open era.

The four Grand Slam tournaments are the Australian Open in January, the French Open from late May to early June, Wimbledon in late June to early July, and the US Open in August–September, each being played over a two-week period. The Australian and the United States tournaments are played on hard courts, the French on clay, and Wimbledon on grass. Wimbledon is the oldest tournament, founded in 1877, followed by the US in 1881, the French in 1891, and the Australian in 1905. Margaret Court is an Australian retired tennis player and former world No. 1. She won 24 Grand Slam women's singles titles in her career, 19 Grand Slam doubles titles, and 21 Grand Slam mixed doubles titles. She has won more Grand Slam titles than any other player in history, and is considered one of the greatest tennis players of all time. Serena Jameka Williams is an American professional tennis player and former world No. 1 in women's single tennis. She has won 23 Grand Slam singles titles, the most by any player in the Open Era, and the second-most of all time behind Margaret Court (24).

Argentina beat Brazil 1-0 to win Copa America, 1st major title in 28 yrs

- Argentina won their first major title in 28 years and Lionel Messi finally won his first medal in a blue-and-white shirt when an Angel Di Maria goal gave them a 1-0 win over Brazil and a record-equalling 15th Copa America.
- Di Maria, starting for just the second time in the Copa, justified his selection by scoring the opener midway through the first half. Renan Lodi failed to cut out a long ball forward from Rodrigo De Paul and Di Maria lobbed the stranded Ederson with aplomb.
- The victory was Argentina's 15th Copa America triumph and means they draw level with Uruguay as the all-time leading winners.

Deepak Kabra to become the first Indian to judge Gymnastics at the Olympics

- A gymnastics judge from India, Deepak Kabra, will be seen judging the artistic gymnastics events at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
- This is the first time that an Indian will be seen officiating in the sport of Gymnastics at the Olympics.

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo wins Euro 2020 Golden Boot

- Portugal forward Cristiano Ronaldo might have played four matches in the Euro 2020 but that didn't stop him from finishing as the top scorer in the tournament.
- Ronaldo scored five goals in the Euro Cup, the joint highest as Czech Republic attacker Patrik Schick had also netted the same number of goals. However, Portugal forward won the Golden Boot via the tie-breaker of assists.

Italy crowned Euro Cup 2020 champions after shootout win over England

- Italy crowned Euro Cup 2020 champions after shootout win over England. Italy beat England 3-2 on penalties after the Euro 2020 final ended 1-1 following extra time at Wembley to secure their second European Championship title.
- Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma was the hero for the Azzurri in the shootout, while substitutes Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Saka failed to convert from the spot for England.
- It was the first final to be decided on penalties since Czechoslovakia beat West Germany in 1976. Italy had lost in the final in 2000 and 2012.

Chris Gayle becomes first cricketer to score 14,000 t20 runs

- Swashbuckling batsman Chris Gayle has added yet another feather to his already illustrious career. The self-proclaimed 'Universe Boss' has become the first-ever batsman to breach the mark of 14,000 runs in T20s.

India to host 2026 badminton world championship

- India will host the World Badminton Championships in 2026. India were scheduled to organise the Sudirman Cup in 2023 but the Badminton World Federation decided to award the hosting rights of the world mixed team championships to China.

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launches official team India cheer song for Tokyo Olympics contingent

- Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launched the 'Cheer4India' song of the country's Olympic contingent and urged the public to wholeheartedly rally behind its athletes during the Tokyo Games.
- Grammy Award winner composer AR Rahman and young singer Ananya Birla collaborated to present the official song of the Indian contingent for the Tokyo Olympics, titled Cheer4India: Hindustani Way.
- He thanked Rahman and Ananya for composing the song in such difficult times of Covid-19 pandemic. Indian Olympic Association President Narinder Batra said the launch of Team India official cheer song was a culmination of hard work by all the stakeholders in the last 18 months.

New Cabinet Committees formed after Cabinet expansion at Centre

- **New Cabinet Committees** have been formed after the Cabinet expansion at the Centre. The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet** will be headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi while Home Minister Amit Shah will be the member.
- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs and Cabinet Committee on Security** will be headed by Prime Minister. Besides, **Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth** as well as **Cabinet Committee on Employment and Skill Development** will also be headed by Prime Minister.
- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** will Chair the **Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs** which includes Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur as members. **The Cabinet Committee on Accommodation will function under the Chairmanship of Amit Shah.** Some of the Cabinet Committees will also have special invitees.

Centre set to appoint National Maritime Security Coordinator

- **Two decades after the recommendation by the Kargil Group of Ministers (GoM),** the Union government is set to appoint a **National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC)** to interface between the civilian and military maritime domains with the objective of enhancing India's security architecture and energy security. The maritime security coordinator will work under the National Security Adviser (NSA).

Ashadhi Bij, the Kutchi New Year

- **The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi** has greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of Ashadhi Bij, the Kutchi New Year.
- **Since then, World Youth Skills Day events** have provided a unique opportunity for dialogue between young people, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, firms, employers' and workers' organizations, policy makers and development partners.
- Participants have **highlighted the ever-increasing significance of skills** as the world is embarking on a transition towards a sustainable model of development.

Nalsar launches India's first master's programme in animal law

- **The Nalsar University of Law, Hyderabad** in collaboration with the **Animal Law Centre and Humane Society International/India** launched India's first master's course in animal law.
- The two-year course **aims to cater to the growing need for trained professionals in the animal protection sector, to impart knowledge on the need to protect animals and to equip students with knowledge on the legal aspects of animal protection.**

The Union Home Minister inaugurated the newly built Center of Excellence for Research & Analysis of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances of the National Forensic Science University in Ahmedabad

- The Union Home Minister, **Shri Amit Shah** inaugurated the newly built **Center of Excellence for Research & Analysis of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances** of the **National Forensic Science University in Ahmedabad.** Shri Shah also inaugurated a virtual training on Investigation of Crimes Against Women.

Indian Railways to Build First Ever 5-Star Hotel Over Railway Tracks

- **In a first, the Indian Railways is all set to redevelop the Gandhinagar Railway Station in Gujarat to bring in a five-star hotel** that will sit on top of the railway tracks. **The Indian Railway Development Corporation (ISRDC) is working in partnership with the Gujarat government towards the new vision that will convert the Gandhinagar railway station into a world-class 24-hour travel hub.**

Pittsburgh International Airport is the First in the World to be Completely Powered by Natural Gas and Solar

- **Pittsburgh International Airport became the first airport in the world to be completely powered by natural gas and solar energy as part of its newly live microgrid. The first-of-its kind microgrid increases resilience and maximizes public safety and makes PIT one of the most site-hardened airports in the world.**

Cabinet approves continuation of National AYUSH Mission as Centrally-sponsored Scheme

- **The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of National AYUSH Mission as a Centrally-sponsored Scheme from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2026 with financial implication of nearly four thousand 607 crore rupees. Out of it, three thousand crore rupees will be as Central share and 1,607 crore rupees as State share. The Mission was launched on 15th September 2014.**

Indian Panorama calls for entries for 52nd edition of IFFI

- **The 52nd International Film Festival of India has called for entries for Indian Panorama, 2021. Indian Panorama is a flagship component of the International Film Festival of India, IFFI under which best of contemporary Indian films are selected for the promotion of film art. The 52nd edition of IFFI will be held in Goa from 20th to 28th November.**

OECD-FAO outlook report on pulses

- **The OECD-FAO Outlook report published every year makes interesting reading insofar as major crops are concerned. The latest report (Outlook 2021-2030) covers pulses, among a few other non-major crops, under 'other products' category.**
- **India is central to any projection in global pulses because it is by far world's largest producer, processor, importer and consumer of the protein-rich legume. However, this year report on pulses betrays a broad and superficial view on pulses. As per report, global pulses supply will increase by 22 million tonnes (mt) of which half of supply expected to come from Asia, particularly India by 2030.**

India, Sri Lanka and Maldives Hold Joint Exercise On Maritime Security

- **Top defence officials from India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives participated in a virtual trilateral table top exercise where they discussed best practices and procedures for countering common transnational maritime crime like curbing narcotics and assistance in maritime search and rescue.**
- **The two-day exercise, TTX-2021, from July 14 to July 15 aimed at enhancing mutual understanding and exchange of best practices procedures for countering common transnational crime was coordinated by the Maritime Warfare Centre, Mumbai. The exercise focused on maritime crimes like curbing narcotics and assistance in maritime search and rescue in the region.**

India to get its first pod taxi service between Noida Airport and Film City

- **India will see its first pod taxi running between Noida Airport and Noida Film City. As per the latest reports, it will start running on the tracks as soon as flights start operating from Noida Airport.**
- **Pod taxis have been a popular mode of commute in several western countries, and can accommodate four to six passengers per car. With this project, India is also set to experiment with this mode of commute.**

PERSONS IN NEWS

BSF IG Sonali Mishra to be first woman commander to head Punjab frontier formation

- **BSF Inspector General Sonali Mishra** will be the **first woman commander to head the force's formation along the India-Pakistan border in Punjab**, which is prone to narcotics and arms smuggling.
- Mishra, a **1993-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre**, will be the new inspector general (IG) of the Border Security Force's (BSF) Punjab frontier headquartered in Jalandhar.

VP M. Venkaih Naidu receives book entitled 'Urdu Poets and Writers - Gems of Deccan'

- **Vice President M. Venkaih Naidu** received a book entitled **'Urdu Poets and Writers - Gems of Deccan'** authored by senior journalist, **J.S. Ifthekhar**. Mr. Naidu commended the author for the book which traces the rich literary and cultural traditions of the Deccan.

Piyush Goyal will be the Leader of House in Rajya Sabha

- **Union Minister Piyush Goyal** will be the **Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha**. He will replace **Thaawarchand Gehlot**, who is now the **Governor of Karnataka**.

Bandaru Dattatreya takes oath as 18th Governor of Haryana

- **Haryana's newly appointed Governor, Bandaru Dattatreya** took oath as the **18th Governor of the state**. Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court Justice Ravi Shankar Jha administered the oath of office and secrecy to Bandaru Dattatreya at a function held at Haryana Raj Bhawan.

Cisco India names first woman head

- **Cisco** announced **Daisy Chittilapilly** as its new **President for India and SAARC region**, effective August 1, 2021, which also marks the start of Cisco's new financial year.
- **The first woman to head Cisco in India, where it began operations in 1995**, Chittilapilly will be responsible for strategy and sales, operations and investments to drive long-term growth in the region.

AWARDS

Two Indian organisations win UNDP Equator Prize 2021

- **Aadhimalai Pazhangudiyinar Producer Company Limited and Snehakunja Trust are among the 10 awardees of the prestigious Equator Prize for their work in the field of conservation and biodiversity.**
- **The UNDP gives a biennial award to recognize community efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.**
- **“Two communities from India bag this year’s prestigious UNDP Equator Prize, for their exceptional achievement in showcasing local, innovative, nature-based solutions for tackling biodiversity loss and climate change and achieving their local development goals,”.**

Gallantry Awards Portal, NCC jointly initiate scheme to pay tribute to gallants of Armed Forces

- **To mark the 75th year of Independence, Gallantry Awards Portal and National Cadet Corps have jointly initiated a unique scheme to celebrate and pay tribute to the gallants of the Armed Forces and others who made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the nation.**
- **Under the initiative, statues of the brave hearts are adopted for cleaning and upkeep and cadets spread awareness among the people about the contribution and leadership traits of the War Heroes and other national personalities through interactive lectures, poetry recital and nukkad natak.**

Sophie Ecclestone, Devon Conway win ICC Player of the Month Award

- **England Left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone has been named as ICC Women Player of the Month for June. She is the second English female to win the title after Tammy Beaumont, who was awarded the title in February 2021.**
- **In Men’s category, New Zealand opener Devon Conway has bagged ICC Player of the Month for June. He became the first New Zealand player to win the award after an astounding first month in Test cricket.**

Bangladesh’s founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to be honored by DU

- **In honour of Bangladesh’s founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the country’s Liberation War as well as India’s diplomatic ties with Dhaka. Rahman is popularly called ‘Bangabandhu’ (friend of Bengal) by the people of Bangladesh, Delhi University’s Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) will establish the ‘Bangabandhu Chair’. The Chair will be occupied by a foreign visiting professor or subject expert on Bangladesh preferably a person of that country’s origin.**
- **Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is called the “Father of the Nation” in Bangladesh. He served as the first President of Bangladesh and later as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh from 17 April 1971 until his assassination on 15 August 1975.**

Bangladesh Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus to get Olympic Laurel

- **Bangladeshi Nobel Peace Prize winner, Muhammad Yunus will receive the Olympic Laurel at the Tokyo Games, the second time the trophy will be awarded. Yunus, whose pioneering micro-lender has been hailed for cutting poverty across the globe, will be honoured for “his extensive work in sport for development. The 81-year-old economist-turned-globe-trotting celebrity speaker won the Nobel in 2006. He will be given the award at the Tokyo 2020 opening ceremony on July 23.**
- **The Olympic Laurel was created five years ago to recognise endeavours in culture, education, peace and development through sport. It was given for the first time at the 2016 Rio Games to Kenyan former Olympian Kip Keino, who opened a children’s home, a school and an athletes’ training centre in his home country.**
- **Yunus founded the Grameen Bank in the 1980s and shared the Nobel Prize with the micro-lender. His initiatives include the Yunus Sports Hub, a network of social enterprises that promote development through sports.**

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Malala Day

- **July 12 is dedicated to celebrating Malala Yousafzai, the young activist from Pakistan. Malala was shot at by Taliban insurgents while she was on her way to school in 2012.**
- **Later, the United Nations declared July 12, Malala's birthday, as World Malala Day in honour of the young education activist. Malala, at the age of 17 received Nobel Peace Prize and became the youngest recipient to receive it.**

World Youth Skills Day 15 July

- **In 2014, the United Nations General Assembly declared 15 July as World Youth Skills Day, to celebrate the strategic importance of equipping young people with skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship.**
- **This year's theme is 'The future of youth skills'. Photos should highlight the innovative aspects of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and showcase how TVET is equipping young people with skills for a sustainable future..**

World Day for International Justice 2021 is a reminder of the significance of justice for the oppressed.

- **The world celebrates International Justice Day on July 17. It's sometimes also referred to as World Day of International Justice or International Criminal Justice Day. It marks the coming together of people from all walks of life to support the idea of justice, victims' rights and most importantly ensuring no crime that jeopardises peace takes place.**
- **The day is also a reminder of the significance of social justice for the underprivileged and oppressed. It reminds states as well as civil society of the need for their commitment to the international justice system. The theme for the celebration of this year's World Day of International Justice is "A Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy."**

References:

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

QUESTIONS

1. Recently, Minister for Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari inaugurated India's first LNG Facility plant at _____.
(a) Mandla (b) Bengaluru (c) Nagpur (d) Hisar
2. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) will set up a 'Bangabandhu Chair' at _____.
(a) JNU (b) Delhi University (c) Kolkata University (d) AMU
3. Which of the following Asian countries recently appointed its first honorary Consul General in India?
(a) Mauritius (b) Thailand (c) Vietnam (d) Laos
4. Recently, All 70 households in Cachar's Bishnupur forest village now have a unique cooking stove made of soil, cow dung and rice husk. Bishnupur becomes first smokeless kitchen village of _____.
(a) Nagaland (b) Meghalaya (c) Manipur (d) Assam
5. Recently, The Intellectual Property Appellate Board of _____ accorded trademark status to India's homegrown dairy giant Amul.
(a) Canada (b) USA (c) Mexico (d) Argentina
6. Which of the following companies named Vinay Prakash as its Resident Grievance Officer for India?
(a) Facebook (b) Google (c) Twitter (d) Instagram
7. Recently, India's first cryptogamic garden housing nearly 50 species of lichens, ferns and fungi was inaugurated in _____ district.
(a) Himachal Pradesh's Chamba (b) Uttarakhand's Dehradun
(c) Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang (d) Jammu & Kashmir's Anantnag
8. Recently, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity party won national parliamentary election of _____.
(a) Libya (b) Ethiopia (c) Malaysia (d) Zaire
9. Who among the following won his sixth Wimbledon title and record-equaling 20th Grand Slam trophy in Men's Singles?
(a) Andy Murray (b) Rafael Nadal (c) Roger Federer (d) Novak Djokovic
10. Which of the following football teams won Copa America tournament 2021?
(a) Brazil (b) Argentina (c) Chile (d) Uruguay
11. Which of the following Football teams crowned Euro Cup 2020 champions after shootout win?
(a) England (b) France (c) Italy (d) Portugal
12. Recently, The National Asset Reconstruction Co. Ltd (NARCL), or the so-called bad bank, has been registered in _____ with a paid-up capital of ₹74.6 crore, according to filings with the Registrar of Companies (RoC).
(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Pune (d) Ahmadabad
13. Recently, Reserve Bank of India introduced the RBI Retail Direct facility. The facility is a one-stop solution to facilitate investment in Government Securities, G-Sec by _____ investors.
(a) Individual* (b) Group (c) Retail (d) Industrial
14. Recently, Nepal's Supreme Court reinstated the Parliament and also ordered that _____ be appointed as the Prime Minister.
(a) Sher Bahadur Deuba (b) K P Sharma Oli (c) Pushpa Kamal Dahal (d) Baburam Bhattarai

15. The _____ and Sony India Software Centre have proposed to host a hackathon — Samvedan 2021.
 (a) Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (b) Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi
 (c) Indian Institute of Technology-Mandi (d) Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad
16. Recently, A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed for execution of 679 Mega Watt Lower Arun Hydro Electric Project in _____.
 (a) Bhutan (b) Nepal (c) Sri Lanka (d) Pakistan
17. Recently, A research team in the Bengaluru based Indian Institute of Science has shown through their experiment how electron bubbles are formed in superfluid _____.
 (a) Helium (b) Beryllium (c) Hydrogen (d) Nitrogen
18. Recently, The Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah inaugurated the newly built Center of Excellence for Research & Analysis of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances of the National Forensic Science University in _____.
 (a) Ahmedabad (b) Surat (c) Mumbai (d) Gurugram
19. Who is to become the first Indian to judge Gymnastics at the Olympics?
 (a) Aniket Burman (b) Mahesh Jalan (c) Puneet Bindal (d) Deepak Kabra
20. World Malala Day is observed every year on:
 (a) 7th July (b) 9th July (c) 12th July (d) 14th July
21. In a first, the Indian Railways is all set to redevelop the _____ to bring in a five-star hotel that will sit on top of the railway tracks.
 (a) Amritsar Railway Station in Punjab (b) Gandhinagar Railway Station in Gujarat
 (c) Nasik Railway Station in Maharashtra (d) Gurugram Railway Station in Haryana
22. National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) will set up India's single largest solar park at _____.
 (a) Rann of Kutch in Gujarat (b) Mandla Plant Fossils National Park in Madhya Pradesh
 (c) Tawang Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh (d) Jim Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand
23. The Union government is set to appoint a National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC). The maritime security coordinator will work under the _____.
 (a) National Security Adviser (b) Ministry of Defence
 (c) Indian Navy (d) Indian Coast Guard
24. Which of the following Asian Countries Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has formed a five-member cabinet?
 (a) Nepal (b) Fiji (c) Trinidad and Tobago (d) Guyana
25. Who will be the first woman commander to head the BSF's formation along the India-Pakistan border in Punjab, which is prone to narcotics and arms smuggling?
 (a) Deepti Kamra (b) Maneka Raina (c) Neelam Limbachia (d) Sonali Mishra
26. Recently, New Cabinet Committees have been formed after the Cabinet expansion at the Centre. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet will be headed _____.
 (a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi (b) Home Minister Amit Shah
 (c) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman (d) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
27. Which of the following countries will host the World Badminton Championships in 2026?
 (a) Sri Lanka (b) India (c) Australia (d) New Zealand
28. Which among the following cricketers became the first-ever batsman to breach the mark of 14,000 runs in T20s?
 (a) Virat Kohli (b) Andre Russell (c) Chris Gayle (d) Steven Smith

29. Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Finance Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Namgay Tshering jointly launched _____ in Bhutan.
 (a) BHIM-UPI (b) Paytm (c) Google Pay (d) Amazon Pay
30. Which of the following countries became the first country in the world to okay Covid booster shots for immunocompromised adults?
 (a) India (b) USA (c) France (d) Israel
31. Which of the following Law Universities in collaboration with the Animal Law Centre and Humane Society International/India launched India's first master's course in animal law?
 (a) Nalsar University of Law, Hyderabad
 (b) National Law School of India University, Bangalore
 (c) Rajiv Gandhi School of Intellectual Property Law Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur
 (d) Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar
32. Who is to be the new Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha?
 (a) Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman (b) Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan
 (c) Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri (d) Union Minister Piyush Goyal
33. Which of the following has signed an MoU with Sikkim State Organic Certification Agency (SOCCA) to turn the Union Territory into an organic entity?
 (a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Ladakh (c) Lakshadweep (d) Puducherry
34. Recently, The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of National AYUSH Mission as a Centrally-sponsored Scheme from _____ with financial implication of nearly four thousand 607 crore rupees.
 (a) 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2026 (b) 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2027
 (c) 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2026 (d) 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2027
35. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated an international cooperation and convention centre, _____, in Varanasi that will offer a glimpse of the cultural richness of the ancient city of Kashi.
 (a) 'Vishwanath' (b) 'Rudraksh' (c) 'Pinaka' (d) 'Kashi'
36. Who has been recently announced by CISCO as its new President for India and SAARC region, also first woman to head Cisco in India?
 (a) Daisy Chittilapilly (b) Preeti Gupta (c) Niharika Singh (d) Lily Kumawat
37. The European Commission, the EU executive body, set out in painstaking detail how the bloc's _____ countries can meet their collective goal to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 55% from 1990 levels by 2030 - a step towards "net zero" emissions by 2050.
 (a) 13 (b) 19 (c) 21 (d) 27
38. Who among the following launched the official team India cheer song for Tokyo Olympics contingent?
 (a) Kiren Rijju (b) Anurag Singh Thakur
 (c) Narinder Batra (d) Narendra Modi
39. Which of the following governments publishes what it claims to be the world's first 'greenprint' to decarbonise all modes of domestic transport by 2050?
 (a) France government (b) UK government (c) Germany government (d) Italy government
40. The World Youth Skills Day is observed across world on:
 (a) 11th July (b) 13th July (c) 15th July (d) 17th July
41. Recently, India's first 'Grain ATM' has been set up in _____.
 (a) Chandigarh (b) Jaipur (c) Gurugram (d) Kanpur

42. Recently, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched an Artificial Intelligence-powered grievance management application in New Delhi. The system was developed by Ministry of Defence with the cooperation of _____.
 (a) IIT-Delhi (b) IIT-Kanpur (c) IIT-Kharapur (d) IIT-Bombay
43. The State-run power giant NTPC arm, NTPC REL, will set up the country's first green Hydrogen Mobility project in _____.
 (a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Ladakh (c) Lakshadweep (d) Puducherry
44. Recently, The Union Home Ministry asked state governments and police chiefs to immediately withdraw cases registered under the repealed _____ of the Information Technology (IT) Act and to stop registering such cases.
 (a) Section 11B (b) Section 25C (c) Section 66A (d) Section 97A
45. Recently, The Prime Minister inaugurated the International Cooperation and Convention Centre - Rudrakash, which has been constructed with _____ assistance in Varanasi.
 (a) Chinese (b) Japanese (c) South Korean (d) American
46. Recently, The 'monk fruit' from China, which is known for its properties as non-caloric natural sweetener is introduced for field trials in _____.
 (a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Jammu & Kashmir (c) Uttarakhand (d) Arunachal Pradesh
47. Recently, The multi-colour Ichthyophis, a species of limbless amphibian, which was believed to be endemic to Myanmar has been found for the first time in India in _____.
 (a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Nagaland
48. Which of the following became the first airport in the world to be completely powered by natural gas and solar energy as part of its newly live microgrid?
 (a) Pittsburgh International Airport
 (b) Chicago International Airport
 (c) Heathrow International Airport
 (d) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
49. Which of the following countries became the first Gulf nation to open an embassy in Israel recently?
 (a) Oman (b) Jordan (c) Saudi Arabia (d) United Arab Emirates
50. Recently, The first ever 3D-printed steel bridge has been opened in _____.
 (a) New York, United States of America (b) Amsterdam, the Netherlands
 (c) Paris, France (d) Brussels, Belgium
51. Recently, Government launched digital platform _____ to facilitate farmers to get right information at right time in their desired language.
 (a) Kisan Sewa (b) Krishak Sammridhi (c) Krishak Sahanubhuti (d) Kisan Sarathi
52. What is the name of the first railway station in India to get redeveloped in line with the government's plan to modernise railway stations through Public Private Partnerships?
 (a) Jaipur Rural railway station (b) Mumbai Central railway station
 (c) New Delhi railway station (d) Gandhinagar capital railway station
53. Recently, Pakistan and _____ have signed an agreement for the construction of about 1,100-km gas pipeline from Port Qasim in Karachi to Lahore at an estimated cost of USD 2.5-3 billion by the end of 2023.
 (a) USA (b) China (c) Japan (d) Russia
54. Which of the following states launched the Electric Bike Taxi scheme recently?
 (a) Kerala (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Telangana

55. Recently, Researchers have spotted an extremely bright, hydrogen deficient, fast-evolving supernova that shines with the energy borrowed from an exotic type of _____ star with an ultra-powerful magnetic field.
 (a) Proton (b) Electron (c) Neutron (d) Alpha
56. Which of the following published latest report (Outlook 2021-2030) that covers pulses, among a few other non-major crops, under 'other products' category?
 (a) OECD-FAO (b) UNDP
 (c) UNGA (d) Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Ministry
57. India will see its first pod taxi running between _____.
 (a) Nariman Point to Gateway of India (b) Noida Airport and Noida Film City
 (c) India Gate to Humayun Tomb (d) Victoria Memorial to Howrah Bridge
58. The Aadhimalai Pazhangudiyinar Producer Company Limited and Snehakunja Trust are among the 10 awardees of the prestigious Equator Prize for their work in the field of _____.
 (a) Astronomy (b) Conservation and Biodiversity
 (c) Geography and Geology (d) Mathematics and Statistics
59. Which of the following countries is not among the three Asian countries who participated in a virtual trilateral table top exercise TTX-2021?
 (a) Sri Lanka (b) Maldives (c) India (d) Mauritius
60. The UN General Assembly declares _____ "Nelson Mandela International Day".
 (a) 11th July (b) 13th July (c) 17th July (d) 18th July
61. The Centre has taken complete control of the _____ funds, negating states' right to sanction or approve any expenditure out of the funds accrued from mandatory contribution from mining lease holders.
 (a) District Mineral Foundation (DMF) (b) District Khanij Foundation (DMF)
 (c) District Mineral Formation (DMF) (d) District Mining Foundation (DMF)
62. Recently, Bandaru Dattatreya took oath as the 18th Governor of _____.
 (a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Punjab (c) Haryana (d) Uttar Pradesh
63. The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban, PMAY-U has launched a Short Film Contest _____ for all the people above 18 Years of age, as part of Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav.
 (a) Khushiyan Ka Ashiyana (b) Khushiyan Ka Khazana
 (c) Baharon Ki Manzil (d) Khushiyan Aseemit
64. The 52nd International Film Festival of India has called for entries for Indian Panorama, 2021. The 52nd edition of IFFI will be held in _____.
 (a) Goa (b) Sikkim (c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Haryana
65. Recently, India's first, Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut semi-high-speed rail corridor for Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Phase 1, _____ has started manufacturing the regional commuter and transit trains.
 (a) DEMCL (b) Alstom (c) NTPC (d) Hindalco
66. Recently, Bashar al-Assad took the oath of office for President for a fourth term in _____.
 (a) Iraq (b) Iran (c) Syria (d) Yemen
67. Recently, The _____ put forward plans for the world's first carbon border tax, on imports of carbon-intensive steel, aluminium, cement, fertilisers and electricity, as part of a programme to meet its new climate target.
 (a) UNSC (b) UNDP (c) European Commission (d) UNGA

68. Recently, A fossilised jawbone recovered from _____ has now been identified to belong to a new genus and species of dinosaur.
(a) Italy (b) Portugal (c) Spain (d) France
69. Recently, NASA announced two new missions to _____ that will launch at the end of the decade and are aimed at learning how Earth's nearest planetary neighbor became a hellscape while our own thrived.
(a) Venus (b) Mercury (c) Mars (d) Jupiter
70. The world celebrates International Justice Day on _____.
(a) July 7 (b) July 11 (c) July 17 (d) July 19



Career
Launcher

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. c Minister for Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari has emphasized on importance of alternate biofuels for diversification of agriculture towards energy and power sector. Inaugurating the country's first LNG Facility plant at Nagpur said we are spending 8 lakh crores for the import of petrol diesel and petroleum products which is a big challenge.
2. b The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) will set up a 'Bangabandhu Chair' at Delhi University.
3. c As part of Vietnam's efforts to deepen cooperation with various states, Industrialist N.S. Srinivasa Murthy based in Bengaluru has been appointed as Honorary Consul General of Vietnam for Karnataka.
4. d Bishnupur becomes Assam's first smokeless kitchen village
5. a The Intellectual Property Appellate Board of Canada accorded trademark status to India's homegrown dairy giant Amul.
6. c Twitter has named Vinay Prakash as its Resident Grievance Officer for India.
7. b India's first cryptogamic garden housing nearly 50 species of lichens, ferns and fungi was inaugurated in Uttarakhand's Dehradun district.
8. b In Ethiopia, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity party won national parliamentary election.
9. d Novak Djokovic wins the summit clash against first-time finalist Matteo Berrettini to win his sixth Wimbledon title and record-equaling 20th Grand Slam trophy.
10. b Argentina beats Brazil 1-0 to win Copa America tournament.
11. c Italy crowned Euro Cup 2020 champions after shootout win over England.
12. b The National Asset Reconstruction Co. Ltd (NARCL), or the so-called bad bank, has been registered in Mumbai with a paid-up capital of ₹74.6 crore, according to filings with the Registrar of Companies (RoC).
13. a Reserve Bank of India introduced the RBI Retail Direct facility. The facility is a one-stop solution to facilitate investment in Government Securities, G-Sec by individual investors.
14. a Nepal's Supreme Court reinstated the Parliament and also ordered that Sher Bahadur Deuba be appointed as the Prime Minister.
15. a The Indian Institute of Technology-Madras and Sony India Software Centre have proposed to host a hackathon — Samvedan 2021.
16. b A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed for execution of 679 Mega Watt Lower Arun Hydro Electric Project in Nepal between Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) under Ministry of Power and Investment Board of Nepal (IBN) in Kathmandu Nepal.
17. a A research team in the Bengaluru based Indian Institute of Science has shown through their experiment how electron bubbles are formed in superfluid helium.
18. a The Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah inaugurated the newly built Center of Excellence for Research & Analysis of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances of the National Forensic Science University in Ahmedabad.

- 19. d** Deepak Kabra to become the first Indian to judge Gymnastics at the Olympics.
- 20. c** July 12 is dedicated to celebrating Malala Yousafzai, the young activist from Pakistan.
- 21. b** In a first, the Indian Railways is all set to redevelop the Gandhinagar Railway Station in Gujarat to bring in a five-star hotel that will sit on top of the railway tracks.
- 22. a** National Thermal Power Corporation, NTPC will set up India's single largest solar park at Rann of Kutch in Khavada, Gujarat.
- 23. a** The maritime security coordinator will work under the National Security Adviser (NSA).
- 24. a** Nepal's newly sworn-in Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has formed a five-member cabinet.
- 25. d** BSF Inspector General Sonali Mishra will be the first woman commander to head the force's formation along the India-Pakistan border in Punjab, which is prone to narcotics and arms smuggling.
- 26. a** New Cabinet Committees have been formed after the Cabinet expansion at the Centre. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet will be headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi while Home Minister Amit Shah will be the member.
- 27. b** India will host the World Badminton Championships in 2026.
- 28. c** Swashbuckling batsman Chris Gayle has added yet another feather to his already illustrious career. The self-proclaimed 'Universe Boss' become the first-ever batsman to breach the mark of 14,000 runs in T20s.
- 29. a** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Finance Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Namgay Tshering jointly launched BHIM-UPI in Bhutan.
- 30. d** Israel has become the first country in the world to okay Covid booster shots for immunocompromised adults.
- 31. a** The Nalsar University of Law, Hyderabad in collaboration with the Animal Law Centre and Humane Society International/India launched India's first master's course in animal law.
- 32. d** Union Minister Piyush Goyal will be the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha.
- 33. b** Ladakh administration has signed an MoU with Sikkim State Organic Certification Agency (SOCCA) to turn the Union Territory into an organic entity.
- 34. a** The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of National AYUSH Mission as a Centrally-sponsored Scheme from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2026 with financial implication of nearly four thousand 607 crore rupees.
- 35. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated an international cooperation and convention centre, 'Rudraksh', in Varanasi that will offer a glimpse of the cultural richness of the ancient city of Kashi.
- 36. a** Cisco announced Daisy Chittilapilly as its new President for India and SAARC region, effective August 1, 2021, which also marks the start of Cisco's new financial year. The first woman to head Cisco in India, where it began operations in 1995.
- 37. d** The European Commission, the EU executive body, set out in painstaking detail how the bloc's 27 countries can meet their collective goal to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 55% from 1990 levels by 2030 - a step towards "net zero" emissions by 2050.

- 38. b** Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur launched the official team India cheer song for Tokyo Olympics contingent.
- 39. b** Cleaner air, healthier communities and tens of thousands of new green jobs are set to become reality thanks to the UK's 'revolutionary' transport decarbonisation plan, Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps has announced.
- 40. c** On 15 July, World Youth Skills Day is celebrated to recognise the fact that if youth acquire skills, it will enhance their ability to make informed choices regarding employment. In addition to this, they can also gain access to changing labour markets.
- 41. c** Consumers in Gurugram will no longer have to stand in long queues, nor worry about the shopkeeper giving less ration, as India's first 'Grain ATM' has been set up in the district as a pilot project.
- 42. b** The system was developed by Ministry of Defence with the cooperation of IIT-Kanpur.
- 43. b** State-run power giant NTPC said its arm, NTPC REL, will set up the country's first green Hydrogen Mobility project in Ladakh.
- 44. c** The Union home ministry asked state governments and police chiefs to immediately withdraw cases registered under the repealed Section 66A of the Information Technology (IT) Act and to stop registering such cases.
- 45. b** The Prime Minister also inaugurated the International Cooperation and Convention Centre - Rudrakash, which has been constructed with Japanese assistance.
- 46. a** The 'monk fruit' from China, which is known for its properties as non-caloric natural sweetener introduced for field trials in Himachal Pradesh by the Palampur-based Council of Scientific Research and Industrial Technology-Institute of Himalayan Bio-resource Technology (CSIR-IHBT) in Kullu.
- 47. b** The multi-colour Ichthyophis, a species of limbless amphibian, which was believed to be endemic to Myanmar has been found for the first time in India. A team of researchers in Mizoram and Assam has found this amphibian species in Mizoram's Aizawl Municipal areas, Tamdil National Wetland in Saitual district and in Dampa Tiger Reserve in Mamit district.
- 48. a** Pittsburgh International Airport became the first airport in the world to be completely powered by natural gas and solar energy as part of its newly live microgrid.
- 49. d** The United Arab Emirates became the first Gulf nation to open an embassy in Israel, nearly a year after both countries signed an agreement to normalise diplomatic ties.
- 50. b** The first ever 3D-printed steel bridge has opened in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
- 51. d** Government launched digital platform Kisan Sarathi to facilitate farmers to get right information at right time in their desired language.
- 52. d** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Gandhinagar capital railway station, the country's first redeveloped railway station in line with the government's plan to modernise railway stations through Public Private Partnerships.
- 53. d** Pakistan and Russia have signed an agreement for the construction of about 1,100-km gas pipeline from Port Qasim in Karachi to Lahore at an estimated cost of USD 2.5-3 billion by the end of 2023.
- 54. b** Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa launched the Electric Bike Taxi scheme in Bengaluru.

- 55. c** Researchers have spotted an extremely bright, hydrogen deficient, fast-evolving supernova that shines with the energy borrowed from an exotic type of neutron star with an ultra-powerful magnetic field.
- 56. a** The OECD-FAO Outlook report published every year makes interesting reading insofar as major crops are concerned.
- 57. b** India will see its first pod taxi running between Noida Airport and Noida Film City.
- 58. b** Aadhimalai Pazhangudiyinar Producer Company Limited and Snehakunja Trust are among the 10 awardees of the prestigious Equator Prize for their work in the field of conservation and biodiversity.
- 59. d** Top defence officials from India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives participated in a virtual trilateral table top exercise where they discussed best practices and procedures for countering common transnational maritime crime like curbing narcotics and assistance in maritime search and rescue.
- 60. d** UN General Assembly declares 18 July “Nelson Mandela International Day”.
- 61. a** The Centre has taken complete control of the district mineral foundation (DMF) funds, negating states’ right to sanction or approve any expenditure out of the funds accrued from mandatory contribution from mining lease holders.
- 62. c** Haryana’s newly appointed Governor, Bandaru Dattatreya took oath as the 18th Governor of the state.
- 63. a** Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban, PMAY-U has launched a Short Film Contest Khushiyon Ka Ashiyana for all the people above 18 Years of age, as part of Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav.
- 64. a** Indian Panorama is a flagship component of the International Film Festival of India, IFFI under which best of contemporary Indian films are selected for the promotion of film art. The 52nd edition of IFFI will be held in Goa from 20th to 28th November.
- 65. b** For the country’s first, Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut semi-high-speed rail corridor for Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Phase 1, Alstom has started manufacturing the regional commuter and transit trains.
- 66. c** President Bashar al-Assad took the oath of office for a fourth term in war-ravaged Syria after taking 95 percent of the vote in a controversial election dismissed abroad.
- 67. c** The European Commission put forward plans for the world’s first carbon border tax, on imports of carbon-intensive steel, aluminium, cement, fertilisers and electricity, as part of a programme to meet its new climate target.
- 68. c** A fossilised jawbone recovered from the Spanish city of Castellón has now been identified to belong to a new genus and species of dinosaur.
- 69. a** NASA announced two new missions to Venus that will launch at the end of the decade and are aimed at learning how Earth’s nearest planetary neighbor became a hellscape while our own thrived.
- 70. c** The world celebrates International Justice Day on July 17. It’s sometimes also referred to as World Day of International Justice or International Criminal Justice Day.