

June 2021, Current Affairs Compendium



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# GENERAL Knowledge

## TOPICS

- June Monthly Compendium
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# CURRENT AFFAIRS

**JUNE**  
**01ST - 30TH JUNE**

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## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

### PM ANNOUNCED COVID PENSION UNDER ESIC SCHEME

- The **Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government of India** has announced two major measures for those families who have lost the earning member due to Covid, to mitigate financial difficulties that may be faced by them.
- Firstly, the government has decided to provide family pension to such families and secondly, provide them with **enhanced & liberalised insurance compensation.**
- Family Pension under **Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)** Dependent family members of such persons will be entitled to get the **benefit of a pension equivalent to 90% of the average daily wage** drawn by the worker as per the existing norms.
- The amount of maximum insurance benefit has been increased from **Rs 6 lakh to Rs. 7 lakh.** The provision of minimum insurance benefit has **been retained at Rs. 2.5 lakh.** This benefit will apply retrospectively from 15 February 2020 for the next three years, that is 15 February 2022.



### THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT LAUNCHED 'SAGE' INITIATIVE

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- The **Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot** virtually launched an initiative called, **SAGE (Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine)** on June 04, 2021, and also the **SAGE portal to support India's elderly persons.**



- The SAGE portal will act as a “**one-stop access**” of elderly care products and services by credible start-ups.
- **About the SAGE:** The start-ups will be selected under SAGE on the basis of innovative products and services, which they should be able to provide across sectors such as health, housing, care centres, apart from technological access linked to finances, food and wealth management, and legal guidance.
- The basic aim of this initiative is to involve youth for elderly care by way of start-ups and their innovative ideas to make elderly care a national movement than just a government programme.

## INS SANDHAYAK TO BE DECOMMISSIONED

- **Indian Navy's hydrographic survey ship, Sandhayak** would be decommissioned after serving the nation for 40 years.
- **The decommissioning ceremony of INS Sandhayak** will be held at naval dockyard Visakhapatnam and will be a low-key event attended only by in-station officers and sailors with **strict observance of COVID-19 protocols.**



- **Apart from survey missions:** The ship has been an active participant in many significant operations such as **Operation Pawan** (assisting the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka in 1987) and **Operation Rainbow** (rendering humanitarian assistance post Tsunami of 2004).
- The **ship was commissioned to the Indian Navy** on February 26, 1981. Since that day, the ship has been the alma-mater nurturing the hydrographers of the Indian Navy thereby laying the foundation of complete hydrographic coverage of the peninsular waters.

## WORLD'S LARGEST GREEN RAILWAYS: INDIAN RAILWAYS

- **Indian Railways** are on their way to becoming the world's "largest green railways," with zero carbon emissions.
- **Dedicated freight corridors** are being developed into a low-carbon green transportation network with a long-term low-carbon roadmap, which will enable it to adopt more energy-efficient and carbon-friendly technologies, processes and practices.
- In 2016, an MoU was signed between **Confederation of Indian Industry and IR** to facilitate green initiatives on IR.
- Climate Change features have been incorporated into **Indian Railways' risk assessments and disaster management protocols.**
- The **Environment Sustainability Report**, published annually by **IR and subsidiary units**, establishes a framework document defining strategies and focal points in the context of climate change, the issues at stake, and steps to address them.



## RAIMONA BECOMES ASSAM'S SIXTH NATIONAL PARK

- **Raimona in Kokrajhar district has become Assam's sixth national park.** The 422 sq km wildlife habitat in Kokrajhar district adjoins the western-most buffer to **Manas Tiger Reserve.**
- The five national parks that existed prior to the 422 sq. km Raimona are **Kaziranga, Manas, Nameri, Orang and Dibru-Saikhowa.**
- The Pekua River defines Raimona's southern boundary. Raimona is an integral part of the 2,837 sq. km **Manas Biosphere Reserve and the Chirang-Ripu Elephant Reserve.**
- Such secured transboundary ecological landscape will ensure the long-term conservation of endemic species like the **golden langur, the mascot of Bodoland Territorial Council**



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and endangered species such as the Asian elephant, the Bengal tiger and varied other flora and fauna species it support.

## ASSAM'S 7TH NATIONAL PARK: DEHING PATKAI

- **The Assam Government** has decided in its recent cabinet meeting to **declare Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary as the 7th National Park** of the state.
- The newest national park, popularly known as **Dehing Patkai Rain Forest**, has unique floral and faunal diversity, which was recognized by the state government in 2004 when 111.19 square kilometres of the area was **notified as Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- The area is home to hoolock gibbon, elephant, slow loris, tiger, leopard, clouded leopard, golden cat, fishing cat, marble cat, sambar, hog deer, sloth bear, and several bird species including the endangered state bird, the white-winged wood duck.
- The state now has the second-highest number of national parks in the country. **Madhya Pradesh and Andaman and Nicobar Islands have nine national parks each.**
  - Assam Governor: **Jagdish Mukhi**
  - Assam Chief Minister: **Himanta Biswa Sarma**.



## INDIA SELECTED AS MEMBER OF UN ECOSOC

- India has been elected as a member of the **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, one of the six main organs of the United Nations, for three-year terms of 2022-24.
- India was elected to the **54-member ECOSOC**, by the **UNGA** on June 7, 2021, in the Asia-Pacific States category, along with Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Oman.
- ECOSOC serves as the central platform for discussing **international economic, social and environmental issues** and formulating policy recommendations addressed to member states and the United Nations system.



## 31ST INDO-THAI CORPAT BEGINS IN ANDAMAN SEA

- The **31st edition of the India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT)** kicked off on June 09, 2021, in the Andaman Sea.
- The **three-day coordinated patrol between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy** is being conducted from 09 to 11 June 2021.
- From the Indian side, an indigenously built Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Saryu, is participating and from **Thailand Navy, HTMS Krabi is participating in CORPAT**, along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both navies.
- **About the CORPAT:** The CORPAT exercise is being conducted between the two navies bi-annually since 2005, along their **International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL)**.
- CORPAT builds up understanding and interoperability between navies and develops measures to prevent and suppress unlawful activities like **Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing, drug trafficking, maritime terrorism, armed robbery and piracy**.



## CENTRAL GOVT. LAUNCHED 'PROJECT O2 FOR INDIA'

- The **government of India** has launched **'Project O2 for India'** to step up production of medical oxygen to meet the potential increase in demand due to further waves of the pandemic.
- **'Project O2 for India'**, an initiative of the Office of Principal Scientific Adviser, **Government of India (GoI)**, aims to help stakeholders working to augment the country's ability to meet the rise in demand for medical oxygen.
- Under the project, a **'National Consortium of Oxygen'** is enabling the supply of critical raw materials such as zeolites, setting up of small oxygen plants, manufacturing compressors, final products such as oxygen plants, concentrators, and ventilators.



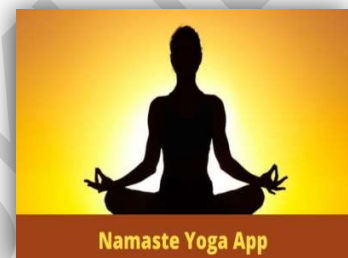


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- Besides, the consortium is also working to strengthen the manufacturing ecosystem for long-term preparedness.

## MINISTRY OF AYUSH LAUNCHED 'NAMASTE YOGA' APP

- The **Ministry of Ayush** organised a curtain raiser event for the **7th International Day of Yoga**. The event was organised by the Ministry of Ayush in association with **Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY)**.
- The event brought together several Yoga Gurus and experienced Yoga exponents on the virtual platform, to appeal to the world community to adopt Yoga in their daily life **for the betterment of both the individual self and mankind**.
- The event underlined the importance of the central **theme of IDY 2021 “Be With Yoga, Be At Home”**. As a part of the event, a mobile application devoted to Yoga named **“Namaste Yoga”, was also launched**.
- The **Namaste Yoga” app** has been designed as an information platform for the public, with the aim to raise awareness about yoga and make it accessible for the larger community.



## H. VARDHAN ADDRESSED GLOBAL YOGA CONFERENCE 2021

- **Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare** addressed the inaugural ceremony of **Global Yoga Conference 2021**.
- The event was organised by **‘Mokshayatan Yog Sansthan’** along with the **Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India & Indian Council for Cultural Relations** to mark the occasion of the 7th International Day of Yoga which falls on 21st June 2021.



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- Dr Harsh Vardhan highlighted how Yoga has helped people **during COVID restrictions on public activities.**
- The benefits of Yoga in immunity building and management of stress are well documented with evidence. With programmes like this **Global Yoga Conference**, more people shall be drawn into the fold of practising Yoga and related activities.

## UNION CABINET APPROVED "DEEP OCEAN MISSION"

- The **Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has approved the **implementation of "Deep Ocean Mission"**.
- This mission is proposed by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**, to explore the deep ocean for resources and develop deep-sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources.
- **About the Mission:** The **5 year Mission** will be implemented at an estimated cost of **Rs. 4077 crore in a phase-wise manner.**
- The first phase will be carried during 2021-2024, at an estimated cost of Rs. 2823.4 crore. The main objective of the **Deep Ocean Mission is to support the Blue Economy Initiatives** of the Government of India.
- **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** will be the nodal Ministry for implementing this multi-institutional ambitious mission.



The **Deep Ocean Mission** consists of the following six major components:

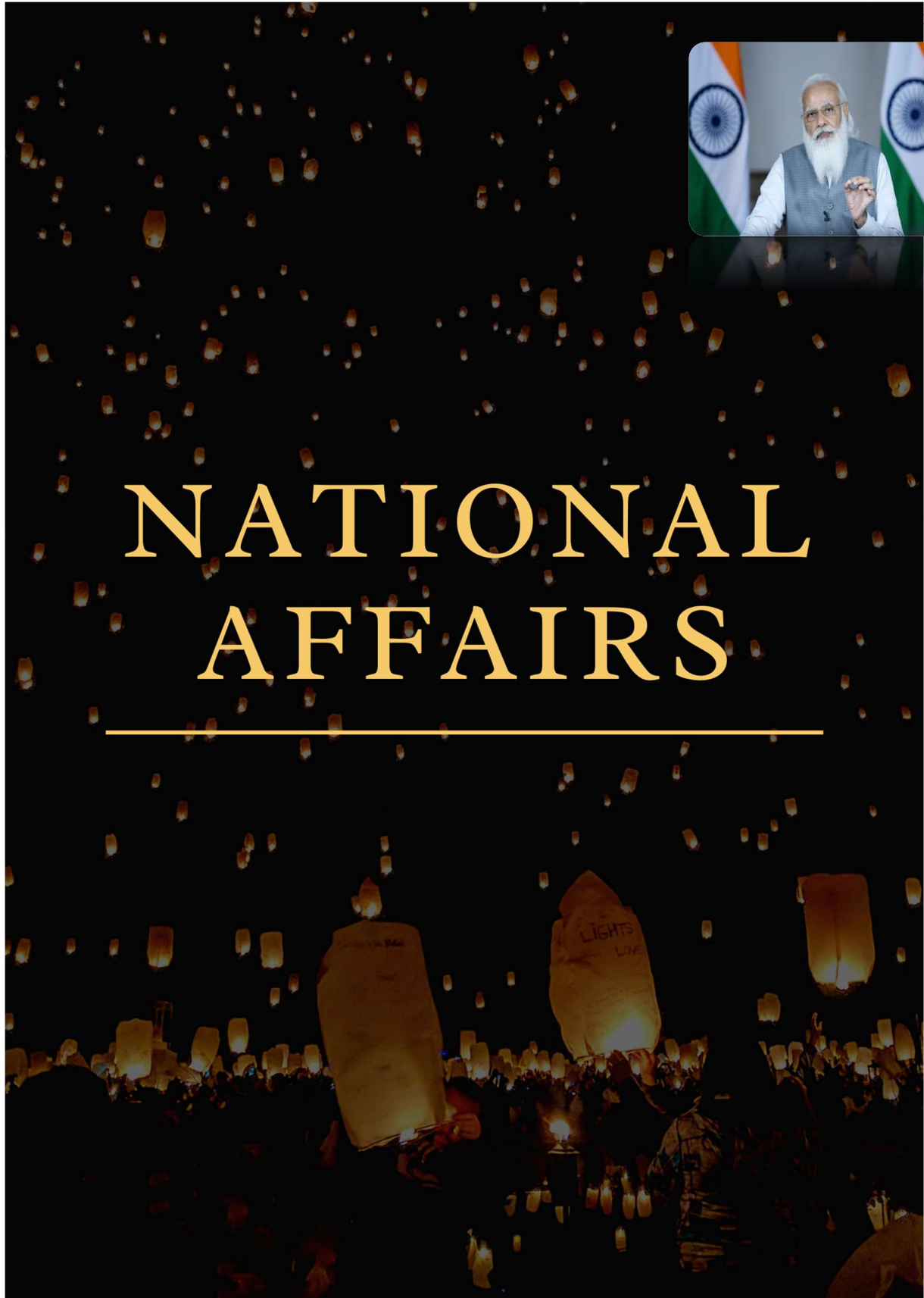
- Development of Technologies for **Deep Sea Mining, and Manned Submersible**
- Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services
- Technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity
- **Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration**
- Energy and freshwater from the Ocean
- **Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology**

## PM MODI ADDRESSED 5TH VIVATECH IN PARIS



# NATIONAL AFFAIRS

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one of the **largest digital and startup events of Europe, held in Paris** every year since 2016.

- **PM Modi** was invited as a **Guest of Honour to deliver the keynote address at VivaTech 2021**, which has been organised from 16-19 June 2021 in Paris.
- During his address, PM Modi invited the world to invest in India based on the five pillars: **Talent, Market, Capital, Eco-system and, Culture of openness.**
- **About the event:** Other prominent speakers of the event include the **President of France Mr. Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister of Spain Mr. Pedro Sanchez,** and Ministers/MPs from various European countries.
- VivaTech is jointly organized by Publicis Groupe, a prominent advertising and marketing conglomerate, and Les Echos, a **leading French media group.**
- The event brings together stakeholders in technology innovation and the startup ecosystem. It includes exhibitions, awards, panel discussions and startup contests.

## GUJARAT CM LAUNCHED 'AGRI. DIVERSIFICATION SCHEME

- Gujarat Chief Minister **Vijay Rupani** has **virtually launched the 'Agricultural Diversification Scheme-2021'**, with the aim of making agriculture sustainable and profitable in the tribal areas of the state.
- The scheme will benefit more than 1.26 lakh vanbandhu-farmers from **14 tribal districts in Gujarat.**
- Under the scheme: The state government would distribute fertilizer-seed assistance worth around Rs. 31 crores to tribal farmers, which will also include 45 kg of urea, 50 kg of NPK and 50 kg of ammonium sulphate.
- Gujarat government has already provided assistance of Rs. 250 crore to 10 lakh tribal farmers under this scheme in the last ten years.



## ANDHRA PRADESH INTRODUCES 'SALT PROGRAMME'

- **Andhra Pradesh** has started a **Supporting Andhra's Learning Transformation (SALT)** programme to transform foundational learning in government schools for which the World Bank has approved a loan of 250 million dollars.
- The **main objectives of the programme** are strengthening foundation schools and providing training and skill development to teachers. **Andhra Pradesh's public school education system** has more than 40 lakh children and nearly 2 lakh teachers.
- **About the programme:** The five-year programme is result-oriented with the **WB releasing funds after key goals are achieved**. The government has converted all Anganwadis into pre-primary schools and attached them to the nearest schools.
- The **government's document on SALT documents several challenges** to improving the learning outcomes.
- These include inadequate facilities in schools and a need for increased focus on foundational learning, the need for upgrading teaching skills of teachers, improving teacher-student interactions in classes, and capacity development of state-level institutions such as the **Andhra Pradesh State Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT)**, State Institute of Education Management and Training (SIEMAT) and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs).
- The government is also setting up new administrative structures which will monitor the working of schools, like the **AP School Education Regulatory and Monitoring Commission**.



## RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD LAUNCHED ITAT-E-DWAR

- **Union Minister for Law & Justice, Communications and Electronics & IT, Ravi Shankar Prasad** has formally launched the e-filing portal of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), '**itat e-dwar**', in New Delhi.
- The newly developed e-Filing Portal would enable the parties to file their Appeals, Miscellaneous Applications, documents,



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paper books, etc., electronically. The portal will enable the online filing of appeals, applications and documents by various parties.

- **According to Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad**, the launch of the e-filing portal of the **Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)**, should be seen as a larger narrative of transformation the country is undergoing through the digital medium.
- The **'ITAT e-dwar' portal** aims to enhance accessibility, accountability and transparency in the day-to-day working of the ITAT.
- It would not only result in economization of the use of paper and cost savings but also rationalization of the fixation of cases leading to quicker disposal of cases.
- The **e-Filing Portal** will enable the parties to electronically file their Appeals, Miscellaneous Applications, documents and paper books.
- The tribunal orders will also be **sent on the given E-Mail Id**. The ITAT in its next phase aims to designate specific benches as Paperless Benches and touch screens will be provided in these Paperless Benches to enable members to access their e-Appeals.

### 'ASHIRBAD SCHEME' FOR EDUCATION OF COVID ORPHANS

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced a new scheme **'Ashirbad' for the education, health and maintenance of Covid orphans**.
- The Chief Minister announced that **Rs 2500 per month will be deposited in the bank accounts of family members** who have taken the responsibility for the children after the death of their parents.
- Children who lost their parents or the main earning person of the family on April 1, 2020, or thereafter to Covid-19 will be eligible to be covered under the scheme. **Such children under distress have been divided into three categories**.
- Those who have lost both their parents, those who have lost either father or mother and those whose main earning member of the family, either father or mother have died.



## GOA BECOMES 1ST STATE TO BE RABIES FREE

- Chief Minister **Dr. Pramod Sawant** announced that Goa has become the first state in the country to be **Rabies free**.
- CM informed that not a single case of rabies had been found in the state since the last three years. **The team of mission rabies** had been very effectively doing its job and had been also conducting vaccination for dogs.
- As per information, no rabies cases were reported in the state in 2018. **The progress came on the heels of Mission Rabies, a statewide drive in place since 2014** which saw almost one lakh dogs given the anti-rabies vaccine yearly, and an awareness campaign that educated 5.2 lakh school children and 23,000 teachers about the virus.
- This included 50,316 vaccinations administered and 78,437 students reached until August 31st this year alone.
  - Goa Capital: **Panaji**
  - Governor of Goa: **Bhagat Singh Koshiyari**
  - Chief Minister of Goa: **Pramod Sawant**



## INDIA'S FIRST INDIGENOUS AIRCRAFT CARRIER COMMISSIONED

- The Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has informed that **India's first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-I)**, is planned to be commissioned by 2022.
- Once commissioned, the carrier will be rechristened as **INS Vikrant**, in memory of India's first aircraft carrier.



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- **About the IAC-I:** The IAC-1 carrier is being built at the **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)**, Kochi, Kerala, under a public-private partnership.
- It comprises nearly 75 per cent of indigenous content from design, to steel used in construction, to key weapons and sensors. The IAC-1 will undergo a series of sea trials before it gets inducted into the Navy. **Vikrant** is 262 metres (860 ft) long and 62 metres (203 ft) wide, and displaces about 40,000 metric tons (39,000 long tons).

## 9TH ASIAN MINISTERIAL ENERGY ROUNDTABLE


- **International Energy Forum (IEF)** announced that India has agreed to host the **9th Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable (AMER9)**.
- The **9th Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable** will be held in 2022. Dates of this conference will be announced later and it will take forward the understandings reached in the previous meeting in Abu Dhabi during 2018.
- About the conference: The decision of India to be the host of this Energy Roundtable came after a virtual meeting between **IEF Secretary-General Joseph McMonigle** and **Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan**.
- Chief executive officers of Indian Oil Corp, Bharat Petroleum, and Hindustan Petroleum Corp, in addition to senior officers from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, were also present at the meeting.
- International Energy Forum (IEF): **The International Energy Forum (IEF) is the world's largest energy organization** with 71 member countries, accounting for 90 per cent of the global energy market. It holds energy dialogue promoting energy security, market stability, and transparency in the transition to a sustainable and inclusive future.




## NATIONAL POPULATION REGISTER (NPR)



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- According to a **Union Home Ministry** manual, migrants from six non-Muslim minority communities in **Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh** can also produce **National Population Register (NPR)** enrolment slips as proof of the duration of their stay in India when applying for **long-term visas (LTVs)**.
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- The NPR number is one of more than ten documents that could be provided to apply for an LTV, which is a prerequisite to acquiring **Indian citizenship either by naturalisation or registration under Sections 5 and 6 of the Citizenship Act, 1955**, for the six non-Muslim communities.
  - These communities are: **Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jains, and Buddhists**. For the first time, a special provision for LTVs for Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan and Afghanistan was made in 2011.
  - It was also claimed that the **awareness campaign has nothing to do with the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019**, which is intended to help undocumented migrants from the six groups who entered India before the 2014 cut-off date.
  - The CAA has not yet been implemented.

## HEBBAL-NAGARWARA VALLEY PROJECT

- **Citizens and Environmentalists** are combat towards the notion to clear over 6,000 trees in Singanayakanahalli to construct a lake under **Hebbal-Nagawara Valley Project** with the aid of Minor Irrigation Department in Karnataka.
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- **Forest Department**, in a latest notification, proposed to felled 6,316 timber to advance Singanayakanahalli lake, Yelahanka hobli, due to the fact they are coming in way of this project.
  - **Hebbal-Nagawara Valley Project**: This challenge was launched with the aim of filling 65 tanks in Bengaluru Urban, Rural and Chickballapur. Bengaluru lake was the first lake to obtain handled water from this project.
  - The mission was once intended to act as an impounded reservoir to furnish water in 11 different lakes in this region.

- Direct use of handled water for ingesting and agricultural purposes used to be prohibited but farmers have been of the view that, task is growing the water table. Activists are questioning the need and good judgment of casting off such big quantity of trees.
- **Hebbal Lake: The lake is located in Bangalore** at the mouth of National Highway 7, close to the junction of Bellary Road & Outer Ring Road. These lakes had been created in 1537 with the aid of Kempe Gowda.
- It used to be shaped by using damming herbal valley systems. It spreads over a place of 75 ha with plans for extending it up to 143 ha.

### 'JAAN HAI TO JAHAN HAI' AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

- **The Minority Affairs Minister, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi** launched a nationwide **“JaanHaiToJahaanHai”** awareness campaign on Corona vaccination for rural and remote areas.
- The aim of this campaign is to aware people of the Corona vaccination and to crush rumours and apprehensions **related to Corona vaccination.**
- It has been launched by the Ministry of Minority Affairs in association with various socio-educational organizations, **NGOs, and Women Self Help Groups.**
- **Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi** urged members of **Central Waqf Council, Maulana Azad Education Foundation,** and other social and educational institutions to take part in this awareness campaign. India is running the world’s largest Corona vaccination drive.



### ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

### UNION CABINET APPROVED 'DEEP OCEAN MISSION'

Recently, the **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs** has approved the proposal of the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) on the Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)**. The blueprint of the DOM to explore the deep recesses of the ocean was unveiled in 2018. Earlier, MoES had also rolled out the draft Blue Economy Policy.



## ABOUT THE MISSION

The **cost of the Mission has been estimated at Rs. 4,077 crore** over a five-year period and will be implemented in phases. MoES will be the nodal ministry implementing this multi-institutional ambitious mission. It will be a mission mode project to support the **Blue Economy Initiatives of the Government of India**. Blue Economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health. The technology and expertise needed in such missions is now available with only **five countries - US, Russia, France, Japan and China**. India will now be the sixth country to have it.

## MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE INITIATIVE

- **Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining, and Manned Submersible:** A manned submersible will be developed to carry three people to a **depth of 6,000 metres in the ocean with a suite of scientific sensors and tools**. An Integrated Mining System will be also developed for mining polymetallic nodules at those depths in the central Indian Ocean. Polymetallic nodules are rocks scattered on the seabed containing iron, manganese, nickel and cobalt. The exploration studies of minerals will pave the way for commercial exploitation in the near future, as and when commercial exploitation code is **evolved by the International Seabed Authority, an United Nations (UN) organisation**.
- **Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services:** It entails developing a suite of observations and models to understand and provide future projections of important climate variables on seasonal to decadal time scales.
- **Technological Innovations for Exploration and Conservation of Deep-sea Biodiversity:** Bio-prospecting of **deep sea flora and fauna** including microbes and studies on sustainable utilization of deep sea bio-resources will be the main focus.
- **Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration:** It will explore and identify potential sites of multi-metal Hydrothermal Sulphides mineralization along the Indian Ocean mid-oceanic ridges.

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- **Energy and Freshwater from the Ocean:** Studies and detailed engineering design for offshore **Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC)** powered desalination plants are envisaged in this proof of concept proposal. OTEC is a technology **which uses ocean temperature differences from the surface to depths lower than 1,000 meters, to extract energy.**
- **Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology:** It is aimed at the development of human capacity and enterprise in ocean biology and engineering. It will translate research into industrial application and product development through on-site business incubator facilities.

## IMPORTANCE & SIGNIFICANCE

Oceans, **which cover 70% of the globe**, remain a key part of our life. **About 95% of the Deep Ocean remains unexplored.** Three sides of India are surrounded by the oceans and around 30% of the country's population living in coastal areas, the ocean is a major economic factor supporting fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, livelihoods and blue trade. **India has a unique maritime position.** Its **7517 km long coastline** is home to nine coastal states and 1382 islands. The Government of **India's Vision of New India by 2030**



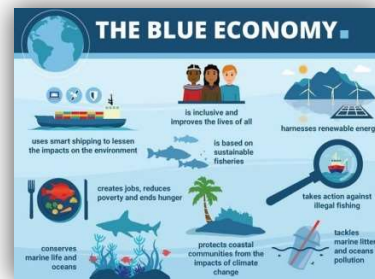
announced in February 2019 highlighted the Blue Economy as one of the ten core dimensions of growth. Oceans are also a storehouse of food, energy, minerals, medicines, modulator of weather and climate and underpin life on Earth. Considering the importance of the oceans on sustainability, the UN has declared the decade, 2021-2030 as the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

## OTHER BLUE ECONOMY INITIATIVES

- **India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development :** It was inaugurated jointly by both the countries in 2020 to develop and follow up joint initiatives **between the two countries.**
- **Sagarmala Project:** The Sagarmala project is the strategic initiative for port-led development through the extensive use of IT enabled services for modernization of ports.
- **O-SMART:** India has an umbrella scheme by the name of O-SMART which aims at **regulated use of oceans, marine resources for sustainable development.**
- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management:** It focuses on conservation of coastal and marine resources, and improving livelihood opportunities for coastal communities etc.
- **National Fisheries Policy:** India has a National Fisheries policy for promoting '**Blue Growth Initiative**' which focuses on sustainable utilization of fisheries wealth from marine and other aquatic resources.

## DRAFT BLUE ECONOMIC POLICY

Recently, the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** has rolled out the **draft Blue Economy policy**, inviting suggestions and inputs from various stakeholders. It is in line with the **Government of India's Vision of New India by 2030**. The policy document highlighted the blue economy as one of the ten core dimensions for national growth. It emphasizes policies across several key sectors to achieve holistic growth of India's economy. It recognizes the following seven thematic areas:



- National accounting framework for the blue economy and ocean governance.
- Coastal marine spatial planning and tourism. Marine fisheries, aquaculture, and fish processing.
- Manufacturing, emerging industries, trade, technology, services, and skill development. Logistics, infrastructure and shipping, including trans-shipments.
- Coastal and deep-sea mining and offshore energy.
- Security, strategic dimensions, and international engagement.

**Aims:** Enhance contribution of the blue economy to **India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**. The blue economy, which consists of economic activities dependent on marine resources, **comprises 4.1% of India's economy**. Improve lives of coastal communities. Preserve marine biodiversity. Maintain the national security of marine areas and resources.

## NEED FOR A BLUE ECONOMY POLICY

**Vast Coastline:** With a coastline of nearly **7.5 thousand kilometers**, India has a unique maritime position. Nine of its 28 states are coastal, and the nation's geography includes 1,382 islands. There are nearly 199 ports, including 12 major ports that handle approximately 1,400 million tons of cargo each year.

**Utilisation of Non-living Resources:** India's **Exclusive Economic Zone** of over 2 million square kilometers has a huge living and non-living resources with significant recoverable resources such as crude oil and natural gas. **Sustenance of Coastal Communities:** The coastal economy sustains over **4 million fisherfolk and coastal communities**.

## WHAT IS BLUE ECONOMY?

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The concept was introduced by **Gunter Pauli** in his 2010 book- “**The Blue Economy: 10 years, 100 innovations, 100 million jobs**”. It is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health. It advocates the greening of ocean development strategies for higher **productivity and conservation of ocean's health**.

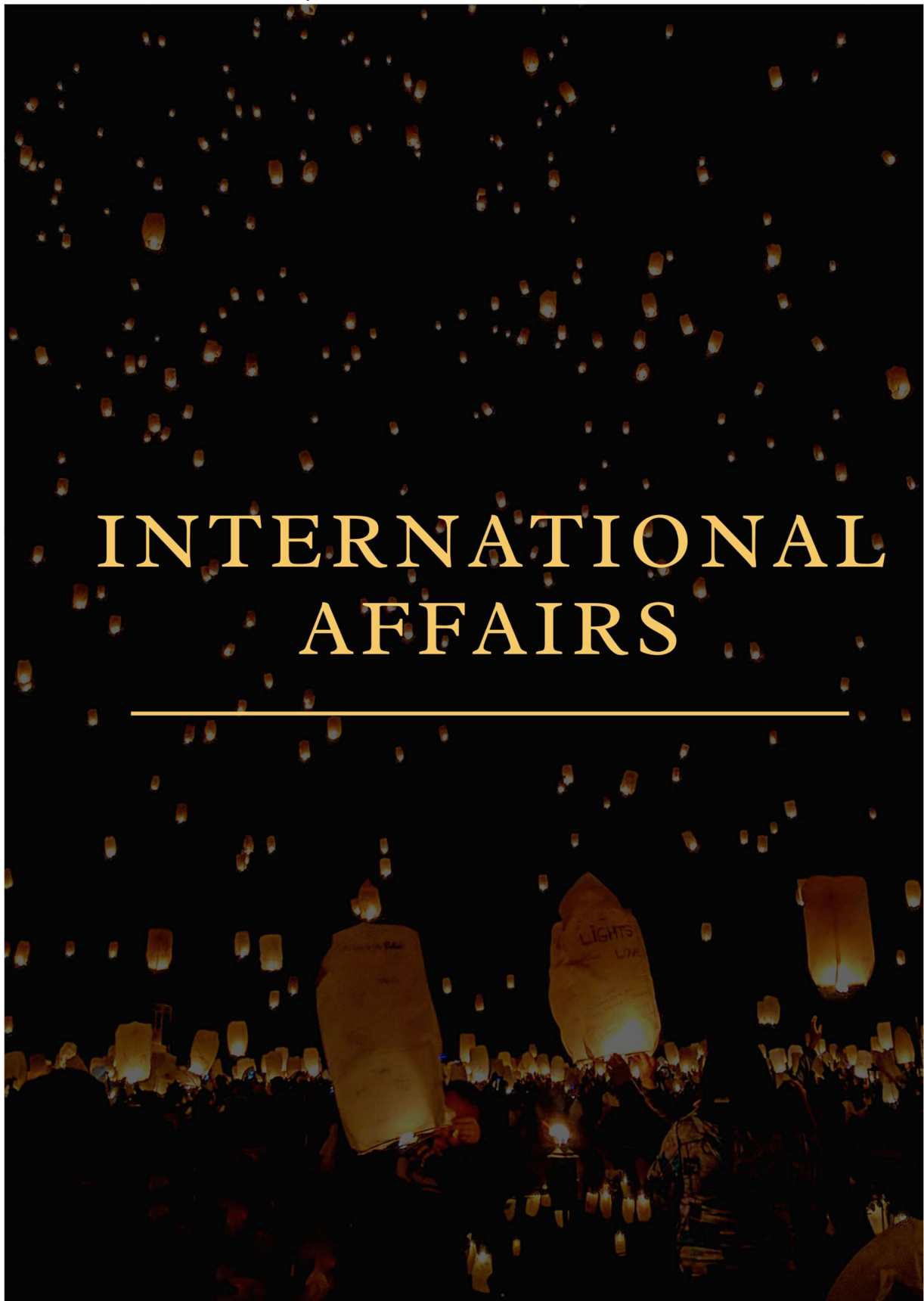
- It encompasses– Renewable Energy: Sustainable marine energy can play a vital role in social and economic development.
- **Fisheries:** Sustainable fisheries can generate more revenue, more fish and help restore fish stocks.
- **Maritime Transport:** Over **80% of international goods traded are transported by sea**.
- **Tourism:** Ocean and coastal tourism can bring jobs and economic growth.
- **Climate Change:** Oceans are an **important carbon sink (blue carbon)** and help mitigate climate change.
- **Waste Management:** Better waste management on land can help oceans recover. Blue Economy emphasizes on integration of **development of the ocean economy with social inclusion**, environmental sustainability, combined with innovative business models.

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# INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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## PAKISTAN TO REMAIN ON FATF 'GREY LIST'

- The **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** decided to retain Pakistan on “increased monitoring list”. “Increased monitoring list” is another name for the **Grey List**.
- The FATF had issued the **27-point action plan after placing Pakistan on the ‘Grey List’** in June 2018. The action plan pertains to **curbing money laundering and terror financing**.
- During the October-2020 Plenary, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Pakistan was given an extension for full compliance with the 27-point action plan till February 2021.
- It had then not fully complied with 6 of the 27 directives. In February 2021, **FATF acknowledged Pakistan’s significant progress** in combating terrorism, however it was still to fully comply with three of the 27-point action plan.
- The three points pertained to effective steps in terms of financial sanctions and **penalties against the terror funding infrastructure and the entities involved**.
- The FATF said Pakistan had failed to take appropriate action against UN-designated terrorists such as **26/11 accused Hafiz Saeed and JeM chief Masood Azhar**. However, Pakistan has completed 26 of the 27 action items.
- The FATF encourages **Pakistan to continue to make progress to address as soon as possible** the one remaining **Countering Finance of Terrorism (CFT)**-related item by demonstrating that Terror Financing investigations and prosecutions target senior leaders and commanders of UN-designated terrorist groups.
- In addition, the FATF has handed down another 6-point list of tasks mainly on money laundering actions to be completed as well.
- Pakistan is expected to amend its **Money-Laundering Act, crackdown on Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBPs)** like real estate agencies and gemstone traders, confiscate and freeze assets of money laundering entities and monitor businesses for proliferation financing, with sanctions for non-compliance.





## PHILIPPINES INCLUDED IN FATF'S 'GREY LIST'

- **Philippines** has been included in the grey list of the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**. FATF has released its grey list of jurisdictions that will be subjected to increased monitoring.
- In **addition to the Philippines, Haiti, Malta, and South Sudan** have also been added to the grey list. Now, these jurisdictions will be required to submit progress reports to the FATF thrice a year.
- The **Philippines was removed from the blacklist of FATF in 2005**. It was previously included in FATF's blacklist in 2000.
- **FATF grey list** is the list in which jurisdictions **under increased monitoring are placed**. If a jurisdiction is placed under increased monitoring, this means that jurisdiction is committed to resolving strategic deficiencies within agreed timeframes.
- **Jurisdictions under the FATF grey list** actively work with FATF to address strategic deficiencies in their regime to fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.
- FATF blacklist is the list of countries judged by **FATF as non-cooperative** in the global fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.
  - Philippines President: **Rodrigo Duterte**.
  - Philippines Capital: **Manila**.
  - Philippines Currency: **Philippine peso**.



## TAX INSPECTOR WITHOUT BORDER (TIWB) INITIATIVE

- **India and Bhutan** have jointly launched the “Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB)”. **It has been launched for strengthening the tax administration of Bhutan**. It will focus on International Taxation and Transfer Pricing.
- TIWB programme aims to **strengthen tax administrations among developing countries** by transferring technical know-how and



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skills to their tax auditors and by sharing general audit practices & dissemination of knowledge products with them.

- This programme is another milestone in the relationship between India and Bhutan. It will be completed in 24 months' duration.
- About the Tax Inspectors without Borders: **Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB) initiative was launched in 2015**. Its main aim is to strengthen developing countries' auditing capacity.
- It is a joint initiative of the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**. TIWB initiative has completed 80 programmes in 45 countries.

## PM OF SWEDEN RESIGNS FOLLOWING NO CONFIDENCE VOTE

- The **Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan Lofven**, has announced his resignation on June 28, 2021, after he lost a confidence vote in parliament.
- The 63-year-old **Lofven is the first Swedish government leader to be defeated by a no-confidence vote**. He was serving as the Prime Minister of Sweden since 2014.
- The confidence motion was filed by the far-right **Sweden Democrats after the Left Party** said it was planning such a motion itself in protest against a plan to ease rent controls.



## TURKEY & AZERBAIJAN BEGUN JOINT MILITARY DRILL

- **Turkey and Azerbaijan** have begun joint military drills “**Mustafa Kemal Atatürk – 2021**” in Baku, deploying tanks, helicopters and drones in an effort to improve the two countries' combat interoperability.
- The exercises involve up to 600 personnel in an effort to improve the **allies' combat interoperability**.



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- The main purpose of the exercises is to improve the interaction between the two countries' army units during combat operations, **to develop the commanders'** military decision-making skills and their ability to manage military units.
  - Turkey President: **Recep Tayyip Erdogan.**
  - Turkey Capital: **Ankara.**
  - Azerbaijan Capital: **Baku.**
  - Azerbaijan Prime minister: **Ali Asadov.**
  - Azerbaijan President: **Ilham Aliyev.**

## UKRAINE & US LAUNCHED 'SEA BREEZE DRILLS'

- **Ukraine and the United States** launched joint naval exercises “**Sea Breeze drills**” in the **Black Sea** in a show of Western cooperation with Kiev as it faces off with Russia.
- The drills come just days after the **British Royal Navy's HMS Defender** passed near Russian-annexed Crimea in the Black Sea, with Moscow saying it fired warning shots at the destroyer to ward it off.
- The **Sea Breeze drills**, which have taken place 21 times since 1997, will involve some 5,000 military personnel from more than 30 countries.
- The exercises will last two weeks and involve around 30 ships, including the missile destroyer USS Ross.



## INDIA & JAPAN CONDUCTED BILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE

- Ships of the **Indian Navy and Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF)** participated in a joint naval exercise at the Indian Ocean to realize “**Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)**”.
- “**JS KASHIMA (TV3508) and JS SETOYUKI (TV3518)** conducted a bilateral exercise with **INS KULISH (P63)** at the Indian Ocean. Naval cooperation between India and Japan has increased in scope and complexity over the years.



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- **Naval cooperation between India and Japan** has increased in scope and complexity over the years.
- Last year, in the month of September, the **Indian Navy and JMSDF** conducted a three-day naval **exercise JIMEX-2020**. It was the 4th edition of the India-Japan maritime bilateral exercise JIMEX.

## EUROPEAN UNION & INDIAN NAVY JOINT EXERCISE

- **In a first, the Indian Navy** is participating in a joint exercise with the **European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR)**.
- **Stealth frigate INS Trikand**, will participate in the two-day exercise in the Gulf of Aden as it is already deployed in the region on anti-piracy operations.
- The aim of the exercise is to enhance and hone their war-fighting skills and their ability as an integrated force to promote peace, security and stability in the maritime domain.
- **Along with the Indian Navy, other naval forces are from Italy, Spain and France.** The naval exercise included advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises, tactical manoeuvres, Search & Rescue, and other maritime security operations.



## PASSAGE EXERCISE BETWEEN INDIAN & US NAVY

- The **Indian Navy** is taking part in a Passage Exercise with a **US Navy Carrier Strike Group**.
- On June 23 and 24, 2021, **Indian Naval Ships Kochi and Teg, along with P8I and MiG 29K aircraft**, will participate in a Passage Exercise with US Navy Carrier Strike Group Ronald Reagan while transiting through the **Indian Ocean Region**.
- Indian Naval warships, as well as aircraft from the Indian Navy and Air Force, will participate in joint multi-domain operations with the Carrier Strike Group.



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- The two-day exercise aims to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation by demonstrating the ability to fully integrate and coordinate maritime operations.
- **High-speed operations during the exercise include advanced air defence exercises, cross-deck helicopter operations, and anti-submarine exercises.**
- The participating forces will strive to improve their warfighting abilities and interoperability as an integrated force in order to **promote peace, security, and stability in the maritime domain.**
- During the Carrier Strike Group's **current deployment in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), the Indian Air Force will also participate in operational engagements** with the US Navy. The exercise will take place over two days south of Thiruvananthapuram on the western seaboard.

## 47TH G7 LEADER'S SUMMIT 2021 HELD IN CORNWALL, UK

- The **47th G7 Leaders' Summit 2021** (Outreach Session of the G7 meeting) took place in a Hybrid format from June 11-13, 2021 at **Cornwall, United Kingdom (UK)**.
- **It was hosted by the United Kingdom (UK)** as it holds the **Presidency of G7 for 2021**. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually participated in the meeting and called **G7 summit members for the 'One Earth One Health'** approach to effectively deal with the coronavirus pandemic globally, and sought the support of the **G7 grouping to lift patent protections for COVID-19 vaccines.**
- **Key highlights of the summit:** The theme for the Summit – 'Building Back Better'. The UK invited Australia, India, South Korea, and South Africa (**jointly called 'Democracy 11'**) as **Guest Countries to the 2021 summit.**
- US President Joe Biden, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Japan Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Italy's Prime Minister Mario Draghi attended the Summit in person.
- The **47th G7 Leaders' Summit** has been called the **1st ever net-zero G7** as all have committed to reaching **net-zero emissions by 2050** (or at the latest with ambitious reductions targets in the 2020 decade).



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- **PM Narendra Modi participated in the 1st Outreach Session of the G7 Summit**, he was the lead speaker for the session titled ‘**Building Back Stronger – Health**’, which focused on global recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and on strengthening resilience against future pandemics.

## NAFTALI BENNETT TAKES CHARGE AS ISRAEL'S NEW PM

- **Naftali Bennett, the former Defence Minister of Israel**, and leader of the Yamina party took oath as the Prime Minister of the country.
- The 49-year-old former tech entrepreneur replaces Benjamin Netanyahu, who has been forced out of office after 12 years (2009 to 2021). (**Netanyahu is the longest-serving PM of Israel**).
- Bennett will lead a new **coalition government, formed with Yair Lapid**, head of the centrist Yesh Atid party.
- The new Coalition government will run on a rotation basis, which means that Bennett would serve as Israel’s prime minister until September 2023, following which Lapid would take charge of the office, for the next two years, until 2025.



## NATO SUMMIT 2021 HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

- The **leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** held a face-to-face summit on NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.
- The **2021 Brussels summit of NATO was the 31st formal meeting** of the heads of state and heads of government of the alliance. The summit of the 30-member NATO group was held as a part of **U.S. President Joe Biden’s first foreign trip** since he took office.
- **About the summit:** All the leaders agreed on the “**NATO 2030**” agenda, a comprehensive initiative to make sure that the alliance remains ready to face future challenges.



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- The agenda **also states that NATO will strengthen political consultation and the resilience of society**, reinforce defence and deterrence, sharpen the technological edge, and develop its next Strategic Concept in time for the summit in 2022.
- The bloc agreed on a new cyber defence policy, to ensure that the bloc has strong technical capabilities, political consultations, and military planning in place to “**keep its systems secure.**”

## NATO DECLARES CHINA ' A GLOBAL SECURITY CHALLENGE'

- **NATO leaders declared that China** poses a constant security challenge and is working to undermine global order.
- This is a message in sync with **US President Joe Biden’s efforts** to get allies to speak out with a more unified voice against China’s trade, military and human rights practices.
- The NATO leaders said that **China’s goals and ‘assertive behaviour** present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to alliance security.
- The warning to China comes as Biden has stepped up his effort to rally allies to put up a **unified voice about China’s human rights record.**
- Biden has also **criticised China’s trade practices and its military’s increasingly assertive behaviour** that has unnerved US allies in the Pacific.



## UAE, BRAZIL, ALBANIA, GABON & GHANA ELECTED TO UNSC

- UN Security Council elected **Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, and UAE as non-permanent members** for the 2022-23 term.
- All countries, elected unopposed, will begin their term from 1 January 2022. The **election for the non-permanent members of the Security Council** is held through secret ballot and candidates require a **two-thirds majority in the General Assembly to get elected.**



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- **India, Ireland, Mexico and Norway** had begun the term as **non-permanent members of the UN Security Council** from 1 January 2021.
- In the election, Ghana obtained 185 votes while Gabon received 183 votes. The United Arab Emirates received 179 votes and Albania got 175 votes. **Gabon, Ghana, and the United Arab Emirate** were elected from the **African and Asian States seats**.
- **Brazil is elected from Latin American** and Caribbean Group seat and the Eastern European Group seat **went to Albania**.

## EX-MONGOLIAN PM KHURELSUKH WON PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

- **Former Mongolian Prime Minister, Ukhnaa Khurelsukh** became the country's sixth democratically elected president, further consolidating the power of the **ruling Mongolian People's Party (MPP)** with a landslide victory.
- With 99.7% of votes counted overnight, **Khurelsukh's tally had reached 821,136, or 68% of the total**, the largest share of the vote since the democratic era began in 1990.
- Khurelsukh will **replace incumbent Khaltmaa Battulga**, who was denied an opportunity to seek re-election following controversial changes to Mongolia's constitution that restricted presidents to one term in office.



## ISRAEL BECOMES WORLD'S 1ST MASK-FREE NATION

- Israel will become the **world's first mask-free country** in the Corona period. Here the rule of applying masks in closed places will end from June 15.
- This was announced by **Israel's Health Minister Yuli Edelstein**. The rule of applying masks outside has already been abolished in the country.
- However, most restrictions related to foreign travel have not yet been lifted. **For example, travel to nine countries is still banned**. There is a rule of quarantine for travellers coming from these countries. **His corona test is also being done**.





## RUSSIA BUILDING 1ST FULLY STEALTH WARSHIP

- **Russia is building the first naval ship** that will be fully equipped with **stealth technology** to make it hard to detect.
- The **hull of the Mercury naval corvette dubbed project 20386** has already been built and the vessel is expected to be delivered to the navy next year. The warship will be armed with cruise missiles, anti-aircraft missiles and artillery.
- The naval ship is capable of searching for and destroying submarines. Stealth technology can make **military assets such as ships and planes harder for radar to detect**.
- While **Russia has used stealth technology**, such as a **radar-absorbing coating** into some of its navy vessels, they have not had full stealth technology.



## UK & AUSTRALIA AGREED ON HISTORIC FTA

- A new free trade agreement **with the United Kingdom will deliver more Australian jobs** and business opportunities for exporters, bringing both countries closer together in a changing strategic environment.
- **Prime Ministers Scott Morrison and Boris Johnson** have agreed on the broad outlines of an **Australia-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**.
- The **FTA is the right deal for Australia and the United Kingdom**, with greater access to a range of high-quality products made in both countries as well as greater access for businesses and workers, all of which will drive economic growth and job creation in both countries.
- Australian producers and farmers will receive a significant **boost by getting greater access to the UK market**.



## BRICS FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING CONCLUDED

- **External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar** has chaired the meeting of **BRICS foreign ministers** through video conferencing.
- **Foreign ministers of Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa** participated in this meeting. In this meeting, Ministers agreed to cooperate on the pillars of political and security, economic and finance, and People to people and cultural exchanges.
- **About the Meeting:** They also discuss the social and economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and also agreed on the need for reform in the **United Nations and other multilateral organizations**.
- They also discussed many issues including **sustainable development, Terrorism, intra-BRICS cooperation, etc.** All member countries adopted and released the ‘BRICS Joint Ministerial Statement on Strengthening and Reforming of the Multilateral System’.



## CHINA CREATED AIR DEFENCE SYSTEM ALONG LAC

- China has created a combined **air defence system along the Line of Actual Control (LAC)**. The combined air defence system has been developed with the elements of the air force and army of western theatre command.
- For the first time, an integrated army air defence system has been developed by china along the western borders.
- The **combined air defence system** has been developed for putting all assets of the army and air force under central control. Since 2017, China has increased the **number of airbases and heliports near the LAC**.
- **Line of Actual Control:** It is a line that separates India controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory. The major **disagreement between India and China** is on the western side of LAC.



*India-China LAC is divided into three parts:*

- **Arunachal and Sikkim Border**
- **Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh Border**
- **Ladakh Border**

## BILL GATES & EU PLEDGES FOR GREEN TECHNOLOGY

- The **European Union** and an **energy investment programme founded by Bill Gates** plan to raise up to \$1 billion to roll out the low-carbon technologies Europe is betting on to meet its climate change goals.
- The partnership would see **Gates-founded Breakthrough Energy** use private capital and philanthropic funds to match funding provided by the EU.
- The **aim is to together provide up to 820 million euros, or \$1 billion, from 2022 to 2026**. Support will target hydrogen produced from renewable energy, sustainable aviation fuels, **technology to suck CO<sub>2</sub> out of the atmosphere, and long-duration energy storage**.
- Those technologies are seen as critical to slashing emissions from sectors like heavy industry and aviation but remain too expensive to scale up without support and compete with cheaper fossil fuel alternatives.



## G7 MINIMUM GLOBAL CORPORATE TAX DEAL

- **Group of Seven (G7) advanced economies** signed a landmark deal on taxing multinational companies. As per the deal, the **minimum global tax rate would be at least 15 per cent**.
- The agreement was signed by finance ministers of the **United Kingdom, United States, Germany, Canada, France, Italy and Japan**. It opens the way for levies on multinational companies in countries where they operate rather than just where they are headquartered.
- The old system of global taxation was being criticized over the years as it allowed big companies to save billions of dollars in tax bills by shifting their jurisdictions. Major digital



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companies were making money in multiple countries and paying taxes only in their home country.

- Thus, this proposal was made which would impose an additional tax on several multinational companies and technology giants like **Facebook, Amazon and Google to pay taxes to countries based on where their goods or services are sold** irrespective of their physical presence there. The deal seeks to modernize the century-old international tax code.

## MALDIVIAN MINISTER ELECTED AS PRESIDENT OF UNGA

- Maldivian foreign minister, **Abdullah Shahid** was elected **President of the 76th United Nations General Assembly (PGA)** with an overwhelming majority.
- He garnered 143 votes in favour with 48 against – that gave him victory by a three-fourths majority. **The post of the UN General Assembly President rotated annually among regional groupings.**
- The 76th session (2021-22) is the turn of the Asia-Pacific group and this is the **first time Maldives will be occupying the office of the PGA.** The PGA's office is the highest office in the UN System and reflects the collective goodwill of the 193 Member States of the UN.
- Both Maldives and Afghanistan have friendly ties with India. India's vote however went to the Maldives since New Delhi had committed support to Shahid prior to Rassoul entering the fray.



## EL SALVADOR BECOMES 1ST TO LEGALISE BITCOIN

- **El Salvador** has become the first country in the world to **grant legal tender status to bitcoin.** The use of bitcoin as legal tender will become law in 90 days.
- El Salvador's economy heavily relies on remittances and so those who are working abroad can **send money back home in bitcoins.** The use of bitcoin will be totally optional.
- It will bring financial inclusion, investment, tourism, innovation and economic development to the country.



- El Salvador Capital: **San Salvador**; Currency: **United States Dollar**;
- President of El Salvador: **Nayib Bukele**.

## **INTERPOL LAUNCHED 'I-FAMILIA' TO IDENTIFY MISSING PERSON**

- **Interpol** has launched a new **global database named “I-Familia”** to identify missing persons through family DNA and help the police solve cold cases in member countries.
- Describing it as a groundbreaking database officially launched this month, the Interpol in a statement said it applied cutting-edge scientific research and **used the DNA of relatives to identify missing persons or unidentified human remains around the world.**
- **About I-Familia:** I-Familia is a global database launched to **identify missing persons through family DNA.** It will help the police to solve cases in member countries.
- Interpol applies cutting-edge scientific research and **uses the DNA of relatives to identify missing persons or unidentified human remains around the world.**
- DNA kinship matching is used mostly in cases where a direct sample of the missing person is not available.

### **Components: I-Familia has three components:**

- Dedicated global database to host the DNA profiles provided by relatives. It is held separately from any criminal data;
  - DNA matching software called Bonaparte developed by Dutch company Smart Research; and
  - Interpretation guidelines developed by Interpol.
- Interpol President: **Kim Jong Yang**
  - Interpol Founded: **7 September 1923**.
  - Interpol Headquarters: **Lyon, France, Motto: “Connecting police for a safer world”**.

## ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

### 47TH G-7 SUMMIT 2021

Recently, the **Indian Prime Minister** addressed the **47th G7 Summit 2021** through video conferencing. Earlier, the **Finance Ministers from the G7 nations** reached a landmark accord setting a **Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate (GMCTR)**. Apart from India, **Australia and South Korea** were also invited to participate in the proceedings of the summit as “guest countries”. This year’s summit was hosted by the UK. The last G-7 summit was in France in 2019, with last year’s event in the US canceled due to the pandemic.



### GROUP OF SEVEN (G-7)

It is an **intergovernmental organisation that was formed in 1975**. The bloc meets annually to discuss issues of common interest like global economic governance, international security and energy policy. The G7 countries are the **UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the US**. All the G7 countries and India are a part of G20. The G7 does not have a formal constitution or a fixed headquarters. The decisions taken by leaders during annual summits are non-binding.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMIT

- **Build Back Better for the World Project:** It is aimed squarely at **competing with China’s trillion-dollar Belt and Road infrastructure initiative**, which has been widely criticised for saddling small countries with unmanageable debt but has included even G7 member Italy since launching in 2013. It will collectively catalyse hundreds of billions of infrastructure investment for low- and middle-income countries **(in Asia and Africa)** and offer a **values-driven, high-standard and transparent partnership with G7**.
- **Democracies 11:** Signed off on a **joint statement (Democracies 11)** by G-7 and guest countries on “open societies” that reaffirm and encourage the values of freedom of expression,



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both online and offline, as a freedom that safeguards democracy and helps people live free from fear and oppression. The statement also refers to politically motivated internet shutdowns as one of the threats to freedom and democracy. **While the statement is directed at China and Russia, India has been under scrutiny over Internet curbs in Jammu and Kashmir** even as the Government is locked in a **face-off over its New IT rules 2021** with tech giants. **Democracies 11 is facing threats to freedom and democracy** from rising authoritarianism, electoral interference, corruption, economic coercion, manipulation of information, including disinformation, online harms and cyber attacks, politically motivated internet shutdowns, human rights violations and abuses, terrorism and violent extremism.

- **Carbis Bay Declaration: The G7 signed the Carbis Bay Declaration.** It is aimed at preventing future pandemics. The **G7 also pledged over 1 billion coronavirus vaccine doses** for poorer nations with half of that coming from the United States and 100 million from Britain. 11 billion doses are needed to vaccinate at least 70% of the world's population by mid-2022. The doses would come both directly and **through the international COVAX program.**
- **Climate Change:** Renewed a pledge to raise their contributions to meet an overdue spending pledge of USD 100 billion a year to help poorer countries cut carbon emissions. **Promised to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. Pledged to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.**

## GROUP OF SEVEN (G-7) AGAINST CHINA

The G-7 statement which was not signed by India and other outreach countries hit out at China on **“human rights and fundamental freedoms” in Xinjiang (Uyghur Muslims) and Hong Kong,** and the unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the South China Sea. It also called for a **transparent and timely World Health Organization's Covid origins study in China.** India had also called for the same in a statement during the World Health Assembly.

## INDIA'S STAND AT THE SUMMIT

**India is a natural ally for the G7 countries** in defending the shared values from a host of threats stemming from authoritarianism, terrorism and violent extremism, disinformation and economic coercion. Expressed concerns that open societies are **particularly vulnerable to disinformation and cyber-attacks.** It sought the support of the grouping **to lift patent protections for Covid-19 vaccines.** Planet's atmosphere, biodiversity and oceans cannot be protected by countries acting in silos, and called for collective action on climate change. India is the **only G-20 country on track to meet its Paris commitments.** Developing countries need better access to climate finance, and called for a holistic approach



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towards climate change that covers mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer, climate financing, equity, climate justice and lifestyle change. Highlighted the revolutionary impact of digital technologies on social inclusion and empowerment in India through applications such as **Aadhaar**, **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** and **JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar- Mobile) trinity**.

## G7 GLOBAL MINIMUM CORPORATE TAX DEAL

Recently, the **Finance Ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) nations** reached a landmark accord setting a Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate (GMCTR). The agreement could form the basis of a worldwide deal. It will now be discussed in detail at a meeting of **G20 financial ministers and central bank governors** in July 2021. G7 also agreed to move towards making companies declare their environmental impact in a more standard way so investors can decide more easily whether to fund them.



## GLOBAL MINIMUM CORPORATE TAX RATE

- G7 would back a minimum **global corporation tax rate of at least 15%**, and put in place measures to ensure taxes were paid in the countries where businesses operate. Corporation tax is a direct tax imposed on the net income or profit that enterprises make from their businesses.
- **Applicability:** It would apply to companies' overseas profits. Therefore, if countries agree on a global minimum, governments could still set whatever local corporate tax rate they want. But if companies pay lower rates in a particular country, their home governments could “**top-up**” **their taxes to the agreed minimum rate**, eliminating the advantage of shifting profits to a tax haven. A tax haven is generally an offshore country that offers foreign individuals and businesses little or no tax liability in a **politically and economically static environment**.

## NEED OF GMCTR

**Reduce Tax Loss:** Increasingly, income from intangible sources such as drug patents, software and royalties on **intellectual property** has migrated to low tax jurisdictions, allowing companies to avoid paying higher taxes in their traditional home countries (**tax base erosion of the higher-tax jurisdictions**). These companies typically rely on complex webs of subsidiaries to Hoover profits out of major markets into low-tax countries such as **Ireland or Caribbean nations such as the British Virgin Islands or the Bahamas**, or to central American nations such as Panama. India's annual tax loss due to corporate tax abuse is estimated at over USD 10 billion.



**To Bring Uniformity:** GMCTR will end a decades-long race to the bottom in which countries have competed to attract corporate giants with ultra-low tax rates and exemptions. And it will bring uniformity in corporate taxation worldwide.

## CHALLENGES RELATED TO IT

- **Uniting Nations:** Getting all major nations on the same page is a problem, since the **GMCTR impinges on the right of the sovereign to decide a nation's tax policy.**
- **Policy Issues:** A **global minimum rate** would essentially take away a tool that countries use to push policies that suit them. A lower tax rate is a tool they can use to alternatively push economic activity. Also, a **global minimum tax rate will do little to tackle tax evasion.**
- Other International Effort: The **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** has been coordinating tax negotiations among 140 countries for years on rules for taxing cross-border digital services and curbing tax base erosion, including a **global corporate minimum tax.**
- **India's Stand:** While taxation is ultimately a sovereign function, and depends upon the needs and circumstances of the nation, the government is open to participate and engage in the emerging discussions globally around the corporate tax structure. **India is likely to benefit from the global minimum 15% corporate tax rate pact** as the effective domestic tax rate is above the threshold, and the country would continue to attract investment. In September 2019, the government had reduced the corporate tax rate to 22% for companies that gave up all exemptions and incentives. Further, a **15% rate was offered to new manufacturing firms.** The effective tax rate, inclusive of surcharge and cess, for **Indian domestic companies is around 25.17%.**



## SIGNIFICANCE OF G7 SUMMIT FOR INDIA

- **America First To America is Back:** Former US President **Donald Trump's "America First"** policies weakened the US hegemony. Now US President Joe Biden is determined to strengthen US alliances and draw India into a new global architecture.
- **Need for a Strong G-7 Coalition:** The need for reinvigoration of **G-7 emanates** from the challenges put forward by increasingly aggressive China, the urgency of mitigating climate

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change, and the construction of a post-pandemic international order. These challenges are generating an unprecedented convergence between the interests of India and the West.

- **G-7 to G-11:** Not a long time ago, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that the **G-7 of the world's most developed nations was "outdated"** and proposed to expand it. Now, the move to invite **India, Australia, South Africa and South Korea** to this can be seen as a possible step onwards **upgradation of G-7 to G-11**. The idea of a G-11 also can emerge as a global democratic coalition and India is at the very heart of this narrative. Further, the **proposed G-11 grouping** would recognise **India's place amongst the world's richest nations**, and acknowledge its global voice.
- **Countering China:** India now can't escape the conclusion that China is the greatest obstacle to India's global aspirations. Thus, forming a western pivot which includes strong bilateral strategic cooperation with the **US, France, UK, EU as well as the Quad can help India counter China**. India is also eager to emerge as a critical node in future supply chains oriented to the democratic world, including in the area of vaccine production.
- **Easing Navigation Among Great Powers:** With Russia also invited at the **G-7 summit**, India now hopes that a renewed dialogue between US and Russia can lead to a relaxation of tensions between them and will ease **India's navigation among the great powers**.

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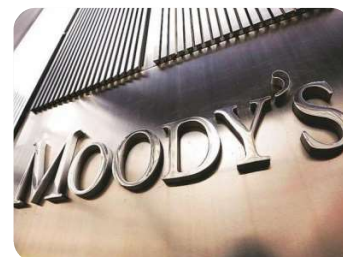
# ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

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## MOODY'S PROJECTS INDIA'S ECONOMY TO GROW AT 9.3%

- According to **Moody's Investors Service**, India's economy will rebound in the current financial year to mark a growth of 9.3 per cent but the second Covid-19 wave has increased risks to the country's outlook with potential longer-term credit implications.
- Moody's Investors Service has projected the GDP growth rate of the Indian economy as follows:
  - 2021-22 (FY22): **9.3%**
  - 2022-23 (FY23): **7.9%**
- In terms of Sovereign ratings, **Moody's has estimated a 'Baa3' rating on India with a negative outlook.** The economy rebounded quickly from a steep contraction in 2020, it said.
- But risks to India's credit profile including a persistent slowdown in growth, weak government finances and rising financial sector risks have been exacerbated by the shock of **coronavirus second wave.**



## WIPRO 3RD INDIAN IT FIRM TO CROSS 3 TRILLION CAP

- **Wipro has touched Rs 3 trillion** in market capitalization for the first time, becoming the third Indian IT firm to achieve the milestone after Tata Consultancy Services and Infosys.
- The company won its largest deal ever from **German retailer Metro and has seen deal wins of \$7.1 billion.** India has a total of 13 listed firms that have crossed the Rs 3 trillion m-cap. Wipro now ranks 14th.
- **Reliance Industries is India's most valued company** with a market capitalisation of ₹14.05 trillion, followed by Tata Consultancy Services Ltd and HDFC Bank with an m-cap of ₹11.58 trillion and ₹8.33 trillion, respectively.



## INDIA'S RANKS IN TERMS OF MONEY IN SWISS BANK

- According to 'Annual Bank Statistics of 2020' released by **Swiss National Bank (SNB)**, the Central Bank of Switzerland.
- **India with Swiss Francs (CHF) 2.55 billion (INR 20,706 Crore)** has been placed at 51st place in the list of foreign clients' money in **Swiss Banks during 2020**. The **United Kingdom (UK)** topped the list with CHF 377 billion, followed by the US (152 billion).
- India was ahead of countries like **New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Hungary, Mauritius, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka** in terms of foreign clients' money in Swiss banks.
- Funds held by Indian individuals and firms in **Swiss banks rose over 2.55 billion Swiss francs** (over Rs 20,700 crore) in 2020 marking the highest level in 13 years.
- The figures stood at a record high of nearly CHF 6.5 billion in 2006, after which it has been mostly on a downward path, except for a few years including in 2011, 2013, and 2017, **as per the Swiss National Bank (SNB) data**.
  - Swiss National Bank Chairman of the Governing Board: **Thomas J. Jordan**
  - Swiss National Bank Head Offices: **Berne, Zurich**.



## INDIA 5TH LARGEST RECIPIENT OF FDI INFLOWS

- As per the **World Investment Report 2021** by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), India was the **fifth-largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows** in the world in 2020.
- The country received **USD 64 billion FDI in 2020**, which is an **increase of 27 per cent**, over USD 51 billion inflows in 2019.
- The **United States remained the largest recipient of FDI**, although, the FDI inflow to the country decreased by 40 per cent, to \$156 billion, in 2020.



- China was the **second-largest recipient with USD 149 billion FDI**. The global FDI flows decreased by 35 per cent in 2020 to USD 1 trillion from USD 1.5 trillion in 2019.

## BHARTI AIRTEL & TATA PARTNERED FOR 5G NETWORK

- **Bharti Airtel and Tata Group** have announced a **strategic partnership for implementing 5G network solutions for India**, which will be available for commercial development from January 2022.
- Tata Group has developed an **O-RAN (open-radio access network)**-based radio and non-standalone architecture/stand-alone architecture (NSA/SA) core and has integrated a totally indigenous telecom stack, leveraging the capabilities of the group and its partners.
- The **NSA/SA are radio technology that controls the signalling of 5G radio**. While NSA can control signalling of 5G to the 4G core, the SA can connect the 5G radio directly to the 5G core network and control signalling does not depend on the 4G network.
- Airtel will pilot and deploy this indigenous solution as part of its 5G rollout plans in India and start the pilot in January 2022, as per the guidelines formulated by the government.
- According to sources, **Tata Group will work with Indian tech companies and start-ups for hardware solutions**, Tata 'acting as a super integrator'. It can benefit from this partnership to export the technology to other countries such as Africa and Sri Lanka.
  - Bharti Airtel CEO: **Gopal Vittal**.
  - Bharti Airtel Founder: **Sunil Bharti Mittal**.
  - Tata Group Chairman: **Natarajan Chandrasekaran**
  - Tata Group Headquarters: **Mumbai, Maharashtra**.



## ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

### INDIA 5TH LARGEST RECIPIENT OF FDI IN WORLD

India received **USD 64 billion in Foreign Direct Investment in 2020**, as per World Investment Report 2021 by the **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** that was released on June 21, 2021. This makes India the **fifth-largest recipient of inflows in the world**. The UN report though stated that the COVID-19 second wave weighs heavily on the country's overall economic activities but its strong fundamentals provide "optimism" for the medium term.



### UN REPORT ON GLOBAL FDI FLOWS

The **World Investment Report 2021** noted that the global FDI flows have been severely hit by the pandemic and they **plunged by 35 percent in 2020 to USD 1 trillion from USD 1.5 trillion in 2019**. The report stated that the lockdowns imposed around the world due to COVID-19 slowed down the existing investment projects and the prospects of a **recession led multinational enterprises (MNEs)** to reassess new projects.

### UN REPORT ON INDIA'S FDI FLOWS

The report stated that in India, **FDI inflow increased by 27 percent to USD 64 billion in 2020** from USD 51 billion in 2019. This makes India the fifth-largest FDI recipient in the world. The inflow was boosted by acquisitions in the **information and communication technology (ICT)** industry. Further, it noted that the pandemic boosted demand for digital infrastructure and services globally. This led to **higher values of greenfield FDI project** announcements targeting the ICT industry. **Such announcements rose by more than 22 percent to USD 81 billion**. Some of the major project announcements in the ICT industry included a USD 2.8 billion **investment by online retail giant Amazon in ICT infrastructure** in India. However, the second wave of the COVID-19 outbreak in India in April 2021 has heavily impacted the country's overall economic activities, leading to a large contraction in 2021. The outbreak severely **hit main investment destinations such as Maharashtra**, which is home to one of the biggest automotive manufacturing clusters and

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**Karnataka, which is home to the Bengaluru tech hub.** These states like most others in India were under a strict lockdown since April 2021.

## UN REPORT ON FDI IN SOUTH ASIA

As per the UN report, **FDI in South Asia** grew by 20 percent to USD 71 billion in 2021, driven mainly by strong mergers and acquisitions in India. The report noted that robust investment through **acquisitions in ICT (software and hardware)** and construction bolstered FDI amid India's struggle to contain the virus outbreak. The cross-border mergers and acquisitions surged by **83 percent to USD 27 billion** during this time with major deals **involving ICT, health, infrastructure and energy.**

*Some of the larger transactions included:*

- Acquisition of **Jio Platforms** by Jaadhu, a subsidiary of Facebook for USD 5.7 billion
- **Tower Infrastructure Trust** acquisition by **Brookfield Infrastructure** (Canada) and GIC (Singapore) for USD 3.7 billion
- **Sale of L&T India's electrical and automation division** for USD 2.1 billion. Unilever India's merger with **GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare India**, subsidiary of GSK (United Kingdom) for USD 4.6 billion

The **FDI outflows from South Asia** fell by 12 percent to USD 12 billion, driven by investment drop from India. India was ranked 18 among the world's top 20 economies for FDI outflows. India recorded outflows worth USD 12 billion in 2020 as compared to USD 13 billion in 2019. The investments from India are expected to stabilise in 2021, **supported by the resumption of free trade agreement (FTA) talks with the European Union (EU) and its strong investment in Africa.**

## UNCERTAINTY TO REMAIN SAYS THE REPORT

The UN report has cautioned that while Asia has managed to **deal with the COVID-19 pandemic relatively well**, the second wave of COVID-19 shows that there are still many uncertainties. A wider resurgence of COVID-19 in Asia could significantly lower global FDI in 2021, given that region's significant contribution to the total. Further, the **FDI inflows to Asia grew by 4 percent to USD 535 billion in 2020**, making it the only region to record growth. This has increased Asia's share of global inflows to 54 percent. China saw FDI increase by 6 percent to USD 149 billion in 2020. **China and India are some of the largest economies in developing Asia** to have recorded FDI growth in 2020, as the rest recorded a contraction. The FDI inflows in Asia are expected to further increase in 2021, surpassing the other developing regions with a projected growth of 5-10 percent.



## WHAT WILL PUSH FDI GROWTH IN ASIA?

The report states that the **signs of trade and industrial production recovering in the second half of 2020** provide a strong foundation for FDI growth in 2021. However, it notes that there are substantial downside risks for the many economies in the region that struggle to contain successive waves of COVID-19 cases and where the fiscal capacity for recovery spending is limited. " **The economies in East and South-East Asia and India** are predicted to continue to attract foreign investment in high-tech industries, given their market size and their advanced digital and technology ecosystem.

## FDI PROSPECTS IN INDIA IN 2021

India's strong fundamentals provide optimism for the medium term, as per the report. **FDI to India has been on a long-term growth trend** and its market size is expected to attract more market-seeking investments. The **investment into the ICT industry** is also expected to keep up its upward growth. While India's export-related manufacturing, which is a priority investment sector, will take longer to recover, government facilitation is expected to play a major role in helping it. Further, **India's Production Linkage Incentive scheme**, which is designed to attract the **manufacturing and export-oriented investments** in priority industries including automotive and electronics, is expected to drive a rebound of investment in manufacturing.

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# APPOINTMENTS

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## ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

### TATA STEEL'S TV NARENDRAN AS CII PRESIDENT

- Tata Steel Ltd chief executive officer and managing director, **T.V. Narendran has taken over as president of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for 2021-22.**
  - He takes over the leadership of the industry body from **Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd managing director and chief executive officer Uday Kotak**, who has completed his term.
  - Narendran, an alumnus of the **Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta**, has been associated with the CII for many years.
  - He was the chairman of CII eastern region during 2016-17 and has led the industry body's national committees on leadership and human resources, besides being chairman of CII Jharkhand.
- Confederation of Indian Industry Founded: **1895.**



### AK MISHRA TO BE THE NEW CHAIRPERSON OF NHRC

- Former Supreme Court judge Arun Kumar Mishra will be the new chairperson of the **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** after a high-powered recommendation committee proposed his name.
- The selection panel consisted of **Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Harivansh, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge.**
- Former Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court, Mahesh Mittal Kumar, and former Director of Intelligence Bureau, Rajiv Jain, had also been recommended by the high-powered panel as members of the NHRC but the official notification is yet to be out until the filing of this report.



## **CBDT MEMBER JB MOHAPATRA: ADDL. CHARGE AS CHAIRMAN**

- The Finance Ministry **Jagannath Bidyadhar Mohapatra, Member, CBDT**, has been given the additional charge of chairman of the **direct taxes board** for three months.
- The extended tenure of the incumbent chairman **Pramod Chandra Mody** ended on May 31.
- In February, he was given a third extension till May 31. Last week, the government had appointed three new members to the **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)**, the administrative and policy-making body for the Income Tax Department.



## **WHATSAPP NAMED PARESH B LAL AS GRIEVANCE OFFICER**

- The Facebook-owned messaging app WhatsApp has named **Paresh B Lal as the Grievance Officer for India**.
- **WhatsApp** has updated the details on its website for how to contact Mr Lal because, under the IT law, social media companies are required to display the names and other details of their grievance officers on their websites.
- The appointment is **in line with the government's new IT order** that requires all the tech companies, like **Google, Facebook, WhatsApp** to appoint a grievance officer, nodal officer and a chief compliance officer from India.
- The grievance officer shall address the complaint within 24 hours and dispose of the complaint within 15 days.
  - WhatsApp Founded: **2009**
  - WhatsApp CEO: **Will Cathcart (Mar 2019–)**
  - WhatsApp Headquarters: **Menlo Park, California, United States**
  - WhatsApp Acquisition date: **19 February 2014**
  - WhatsApp Founders: **Jan Koum, Brian Acton**
  - WhatsApp Parent organization: **Facebook**.



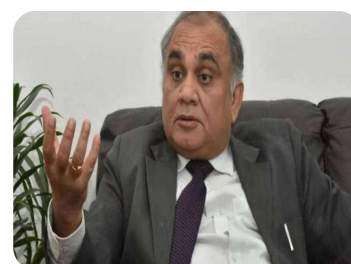
## RANJITSINH DISALE APPOINTED AS WB EDUCATION ADVISER

- **Ranjitsinh Disale** has been appointed as the **World Bank Education advisor**, starting from June 2021 to June 2024.
- He is the **first Indian to have been awarded the Global Teacher Award in 2020**, will now be working on the Coach Project, launched by the World Bank in March 2021. The project's aim is to 'help countries accelerate learning by improving teacher professional development.'
- **About Ranjitsinh Disale:** Disale is from Paritewadi Village in the **Solapur district of Maharashtra**. He had initially wanted to become an engineer, but later took up the teacher's training programme.
- He is the first Indian to have been awarded the Global Teacher Award in 2020. He won the award in **recognition of this work in promoting the education of girls.**
  - World Bank Headquarters: **Washington, D.C., United States.**
  - World Bank Formation: **July 1944.**
  - World Bank President: **David Malpass.**



## ANUP C. PANDEY APPOINTED AS ELECTION COMMISSIONER

- The Union government has appointed **Anup Chandra Pandey**, a retired IAS officer of the 1984 batch, Uttar Pradesh cadre, as **Election Commissioner**.
- In the Election Commission, Pandey will have a little under three years in office and will retire in February 2024.
- Pandey has been appointed to the position left vacant by former **Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora's** retirement on April 12. Chief Election Commissioner **Sushil Chandra** and Election Commissioner **Rajiv Kumar** are the other two members of the panel.



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- This restores the three-member commission to its full strength, which will now oversee the next set of crucial assembly elections in **Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Goa, Manipur and Uttarakhand next year.**

## FACEBOOK NAMED SPOORTHI PRIYA AS GRIEVANCE OFFICER

- **Facebook has named Spoorthi Priya** as its grievance officer for India, the company said on its website.
- This move comes close on the heels of the new **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021**, coming into force last month.
- According to the new government guidelines, social media companies with over 50 lakh users have to **appoint a grievance officer, nodal officer and a chief compliance officer.** All three personnel will have to be residents of India.
- **WhatsApp, Facebook, and Google** had shared information on their compliance officer, resident grievance officer and nodal contact person with the government on May 29. **Two days after the new IT rules kicked into action.**
- **Under the new rules:** Social media platforms also have to publish the name and other relevant information of the grievance officer on their website so that users can easily reach out to them.



## REBECCA GRYNSPAN AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF UNCTAD

- The U.N. General Assembly has approved the appointment of **Costa Rican economist Rebecca Grynspan, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).**
- She will serve a four-year term of office. **She is the first woman and Central American to head UNCTAD.** She was nominated as Secretary-General by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.
- **Grynspan would replace Isabelle Durant**, who is serving as acting Secretary-General since 15 February 2021.



- Prior to this, Grynspan served as UNDP's regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean and second vice president of **Costa Rica from 1994 to 1998.**
- About the UNCTAD: **UNCTAD is a Geneva-based U.N. agency** to promote trade, investment and development opportunities of developing countries and assist them in their efforts to integrate into the world economy on an equitable basis.

## MICROSOFT CEO 'SATYA NADELLA' NAMED AS CHAIRMAN

- **Microsoft Corp, named Chief Executive Officer, Satya Nadella** as its new chairman. He took over as the software giant's CEO in 2014, succeeding Steve Ballmer.
- He is credited with bringing new energy to the company, founded in 1975. The company also appointed former chairman **John Thompson as a lead independent director.**
- The top-level executive change comes just over a year after Gates stepped down from the board, saying he would focus on philanthropic works of the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, one of the world's biggest charities.**



## KARIM KHAN SWORN IN AS ICC CHIEF PROSECUTOR

- **British lawyer Karim Khan** was sworn in as the new **chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court.** He pledges to reach out to nations that are not members of the court and to try to hold trials in countries where crimes are committed.
- He has defended clients at international courts including former **Liberian President Charles Taylor & Kenya's Deputy President William Ruto.**



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- Khan, a 51-year-old **English lawyer**, has years of experience in international courts as a prosecutor, investigator and defence attorney. He takes over from **Fatou Bensouda of the Gambia**, whose nine-year term ended.

- International Criminal Court Founded: **1 July 2002.**
- International Criminal Court Headquarters: **The Hague, the Netherlands.**
- International Criminal Court Member states: **123.**
- International Criminal Court Working languages: **English; French.**

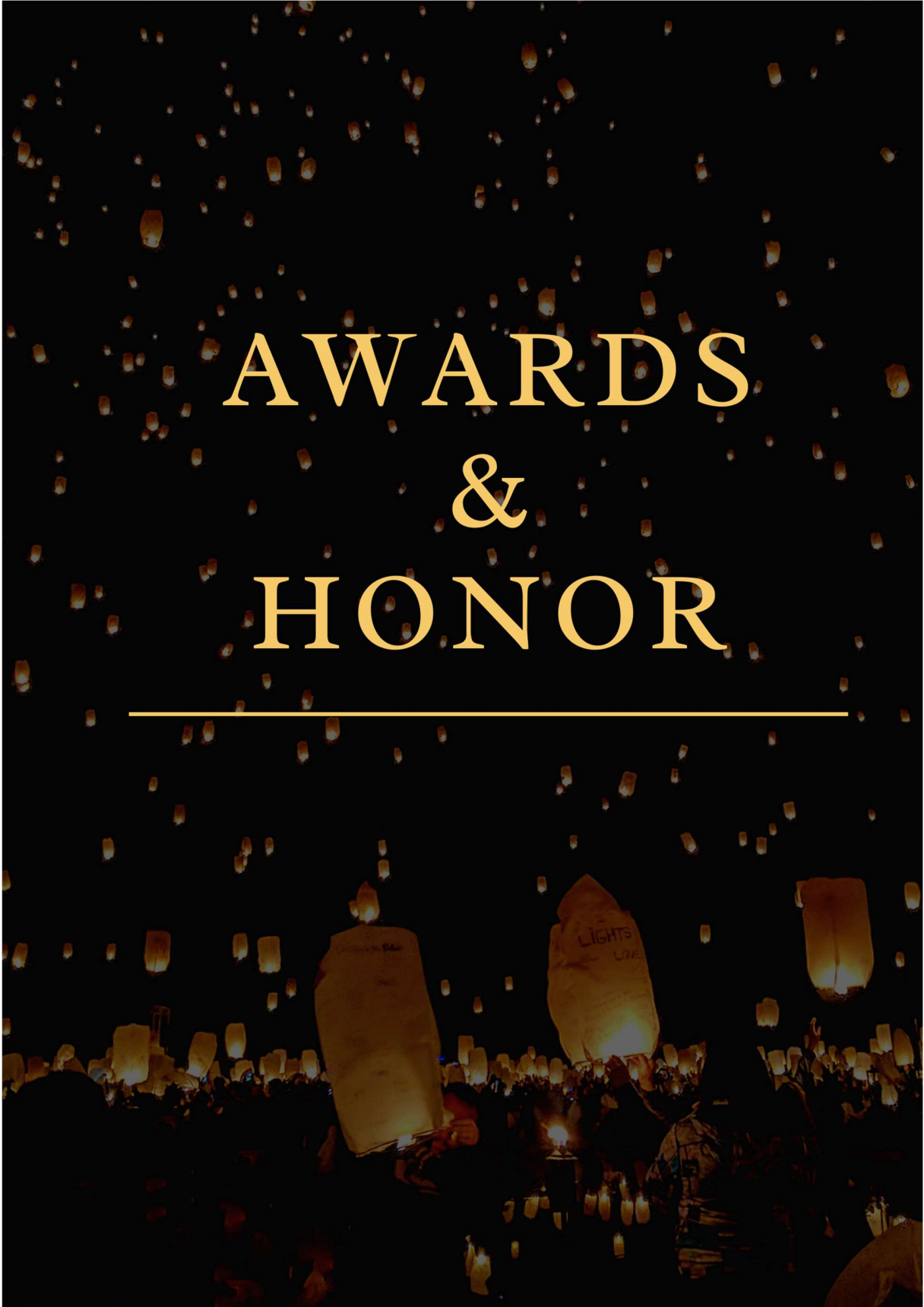
## SURESH N PATEL APPOINTED AD ACTING CVC

- The incumbent Vigilance Commissioner, **Suresh N Patel has been appointed as the acting Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC)** of India in the Central Vigilance Commission with effect.



- He has been appointed in place of **Sanjay Kothari, who completed his term on June 23, 2021.** He will remain on the post until the appointment of the new Central Vigilance Commissioner.
- The Central Vigilance Commission is headed by the CVC and can have a maximum of two vigilance commissioners. Currently, Mr Patel is the only VC in the commission.
- The Personnel Ministry has invited applications for the posts of CVC and a vigilance commissioner.
  - Central Vigilance Commission Formed: **February 1964**
  - Central Vigilance Commission Headquarters: **New Delhi.**





# AWARDS & HONOR

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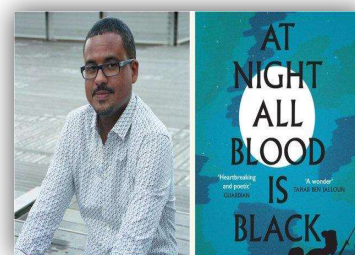
## WHO HONOURED VARDHAN FOR EFFORTS IN TOBACCO CONTROL

- World Health Organisation (WHO) has awarded **Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan** with 'WHO Director-General Special Recognition Award' for his accomplishments in the area of tobacco control.
- Every year, WHO recognises individuals or organisations in each of the six WHO Regions for their accomplishments in the area of **tobacco control**.
- This recognition takes the form of the WHO Director-General **Special Recognition Award and World No Tobacco Day Awards**.
- Dr Harsh Vardhan leadership was instrumental in the 2019 national legislation to **ban E-cigarettes and heated tobacco products**.



## DAVID DIOP WINS INT. BOOKER PRIZE

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



## ZIMBABWEAN NOVELIST WINS PEN PINTER PRIZE

- **Tsitsi Dangarembga**, the Booker-shortlisted **Zimbabwean writer** who was arrested last year in Harare while protesting against corruption, has been awarded the **PEN Pinter**

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**prize**, praised for her “ability to capture and communicate vital truths even amidst times of upheaval”.

- Dangarembga was also shortlisted for the **2020 Booker Prize for her work**, This Mournable Body.
- Established in 2009, **PEN Pinter prize** is given in memory of Nobel-laureate playwright **Harold Pinter**.
- The annual award is given to an author who, the website specifies, must have “a significant body of plays, poetry, essays, or fiction of outstanding **literary merit, written in English.**”

## P SAINATH AWARDED WITH FUKUOKA GRAND PRIZE

- **Journalist Palagummi Sainath** has been awarded the **Fukuoka Grand Prize for 2021**. He is a committed journalist who has continued to investigate impoverished farming villages in India and captured the reality of the lifestyle of the residents in such areas.
- The award, established by Japan’s Fukuoka city and the **Fukuoka City International Foundation**, is given to individuals and organisations for their work in preserving Asian culture.
- **Besides the Grand Prize**, there are two more award categories, academics and culture.
- The **Academics Prize** was given to **Professor Kishimoto Mio**, a historian from Japan who specialises in the socio-economic history of China in the Ming-Qing period. Thailand-based writer and filmmaker **Prabda Yoon** received the **Arts and Culture Award**.
- **About the Sainath:** Sainath was born in Chennai and has served as the editor of The Hindu and as the vice-editor of political magazine Blitz.
- The journalist was awarded the **European Commission’s Lorenzo Natali Prize** for journalism in 1995 and the **Amnesty International Global Human Rights Journalism Prize** in 2000.



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- He received the **United Nation's Food & Agriculture Organization's Boerma Prize** in 2001 and the **Ramon Magsaysay Award** for outstanding contribution to Asian journalism in 2007.
- His major publications include everybody loves a good drought, which is a collection of 85 articles published in The Times of India, under the series "**The face of poor India**".

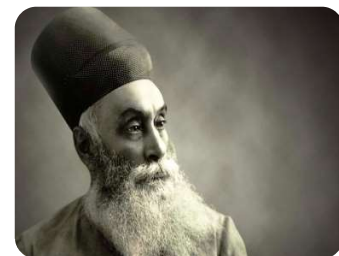
## KK SHAILAJA AWARDED WITH 'CEU OPEN SOCIETY PRIZE

- **The Central European University (CEU) Open Society Prize** for the year 2021 has been awarded to **KK Shailaja, the former Health Minister of Kerala.**
- The award was to her in attention of "her determined management and community-based public health work, saving lives throughout the pandemic".
- She demonstrates to the **world that decided leadership, community-based public health and high-quality communication can save lives.**
- The CEU' Open Society Prize is awarded yearly to an man or woman or corporation "whose achievements have contributed drastically to the advent of an open society".
- CEU was situated in 1991 **through George Soros, a Hungarian-born political activist and billionaire philanthropist** based totally on his vision of a special group that would teach future generations of scholars, professionals, politicians, & civil society leaders "to make contributions to building open and democratic societies that admire human rights and adhere to the rule of law"



## JAMSETJI TATA TOPS IAUGURAL LIST OF PHILANTHROPIST

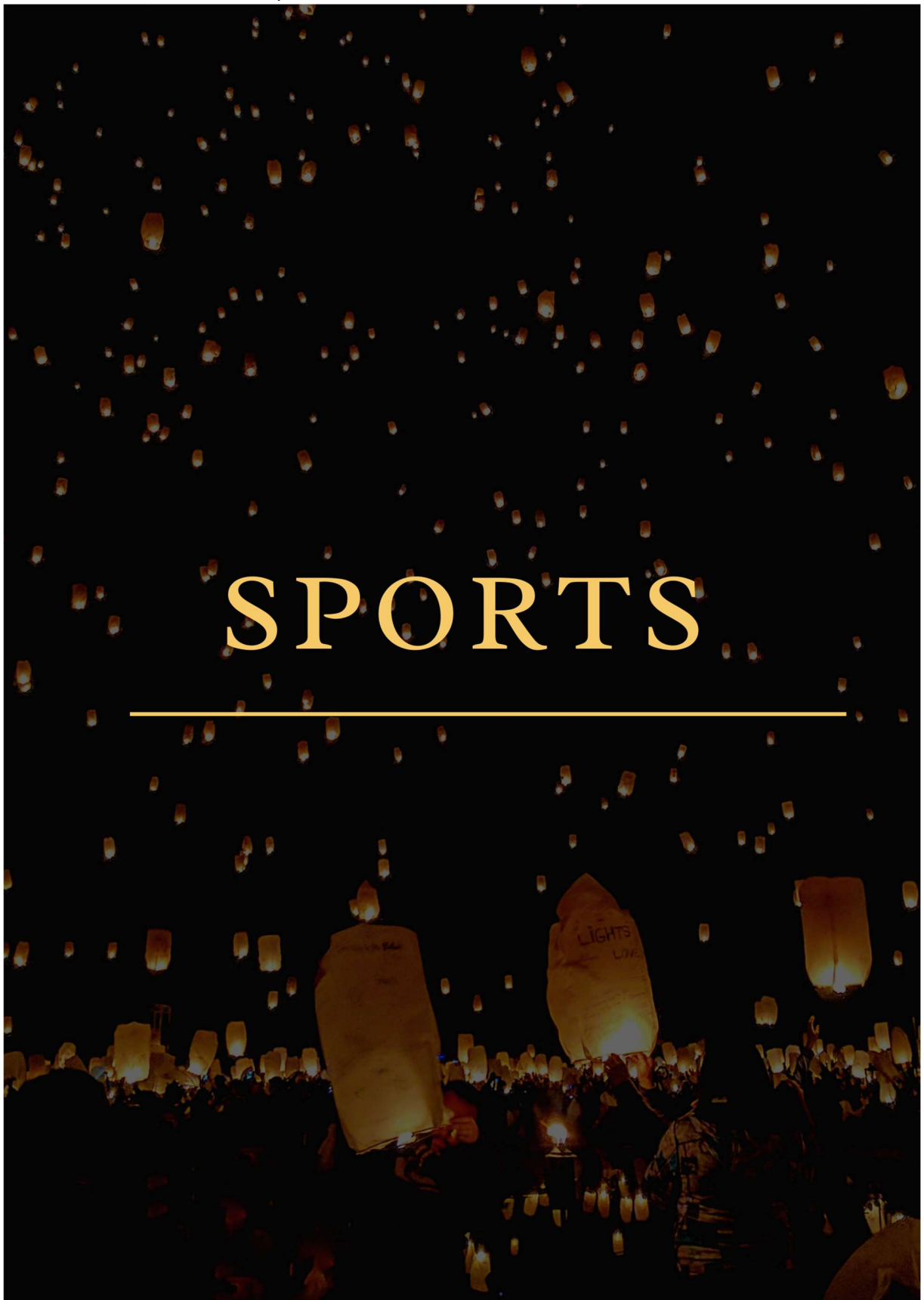
- **Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata**, Indian pioneer industrialist and founder of the Tata Group, has topped the inaugural, **EdelGive Hurun Philanthropists** of the Century list, which ranks the world's 50 most generous individuals in the last century.
- As per the report, the **total donation made by Mumbai-based Jamsetji Tata** is estimated at US\$102.4 billion. He is



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the only Indian among the top 10 list, compiled by **Hurun Research and EdelGive Foundation**.

- The only other Indian in the list of 50 global philanthropists is **Azim Premji, former chairman of Wipro**.
- He is ranked at 12th position. **Bill Gates & Melinda French Gates** ranked second with donations worth \$74.6 billion. They are followed by Henry Wellcome (\$56.7 billion), Howard Hughes (\$38.6 billion), and Warren Buffett (\$37.4 billion) respectively.
- Individuals have been ranked based on their Total Philanthropic Value, which is calculated as the “**value of the assets today together with the sum of gifts or distributions to date**”.
- The **top 50 most generous individuals in the list belongs to five countries**, and is led by the US with 38, followed by UK (5), China (3), India (2), Portugal (1) and Switzerland (1). The total donations from these philanthropists amounted to USD 832 billion.



## INDIAN TEAM AT FOURTH POSITION IN FIH RANKINGS

- In Hockey, the **Indian men's team maintained their fourth position** while the women's team held to the ninth position in the latest **International Hockey Federation world rankings**.
- Despite missing the European leg of the FIH Hockey Pro-League series in **Great Britain, Spain and Germany** in April and May, the Indian men's team maintained its fourth spot.



### **In the men's category:**

- **Belgium, the reigning world and European champions** lead the table, followed by the 2019 FIH Hockey Pro-League winners, **Australia**.
- **The Netherlands** are placed third.
- **Germany has jumped to fifth place** due to their recent performances in the FIH Pro-League.
- **Great Britain** has also moved up a **spot to the sixth position**.
- **Argentina**, the reigning Olympic champions, are seventh.
- **New Zealand** is eighth,
- **Spain ninth Canada is 10th**.

### **In the women's category:**

- The **Netherlands women's team** is leading while **Argentina** is second.
- **Australia** climbed to the third position while **Germany** slipped to the fourth position with 2115.185 points.
- **Great Britain is ranked fifth**

## ICC ANNOUNCED 14 TEAMS IN MEN'S CRICKET WC

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- The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** has announced that the Men's Cricket World Cup in 2027 and 2031 will once again be a 14-team, 54-match tournament.
- Earlier in the **2019 World Cup**, only 10 teams contested, compared to 14 teams in the 2015 World Cup.
- These 14 teams will split into two groups of seven, top three from each group will be progressing to a **Super Six stage, followed by semifinals and final.**
- ICC has also decided to expand the men's T20 World Cup to 20 teams. **The tournament will take place every two years from 2024-2030.**
  - Chairman of ICC: **Greg Barclay.**
  - CEO of ICC: **Manu Sawhney.**
  - Headquarters of ICC: **Dubai, United Arab Emirates.**



## SUNIL CHHETRI SURPASSED ARGENTINA'S MESSI

- **Sunil Chhetri surpasses Argentina's Lionel Messi** and he has become the second-highest active international goal-scorer with 74 strikes.
- He made this record in a joint preliminary **qualifying round match for the 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup.**
- He is **currently behind Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo (103)** in the active international goal-scorer list. Chhetri also helped India register its first win in six years in the World Cup qualifiers.
- Chhetri is just a goal away from entering world **football's all-time top-10.** Sunil Chhetri is an Indian professional footballer. He is popularly known as Captain Fantastic.



## NOVAK DJOKOVIC WINS FRENCH OPEN TITLE



- Novak Djokovic defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas to lift the **French Open** title for the second time in his career. Djokovic, with his 19th Grand Slam title, has closed in on **Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal** on the all-time Grand Slam titles list. Both the players have won 20 Grand Slams each.



- Djokovic has also become the **first man in the Open Era to complete the career Grand Slam twice**. (He has won the Australian Open nine times, Wimbledon five times, and the US Open three times.)
- He has become the first man in 52 years, after **Rod Laver**, to win all the four Grand Slams twice. Overall, he is the third male tennis player to achieve this unique feat. The third being Roy Emerson.

#### *Winners of French Open Tennis Tournament 2021*

- Men's Singles: **Novak Djokovic (Serbia)**
- Women's Singles: **Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic)**
- Men's Doubles: **Pierre-Hugues Herbert (France) and Nicolas Mahut (France)**
- Women's Doubles: **Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic) and Kateřina Siniaková (Czech Republic)**
- Mixed Doubles- **Desirae Krawczyk (United States) and Joe Salisbury (United Kingdom)**.

### **VINOO MANKAD & OTHERS INDUCTED INTO ICC HALL OF FAME**

- The **ICC** has inducted **10 icons of the game, including India's Vinoo Mankad**, into its illustrious Hall of Fame with two players each from five eras, dating back to cricket's early days, making it to the list.
- The announcement has been coincided with the inaugural **World Test Championship final**, to be played between India and New Zealand from June 18 in Southampton.



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- The 10 legends of the game to be inducted have all made a significant contribution to the history of Test cricket, and join an illustrious list of **ICC Hall of Famers, taking the total number to 103 as a result of this intake.**

*The inductees are:*

- **Aubrey Faulkner of South Africa and Monty Noble of Australia** for the early era (pre-1918),
- Sir Learie Constantine of West Indies and Stan McCabe of Australia for the inter-war Era (1918-1945),
- **Ted Dexter of England and Vinoo Mankad of India** for the post-war Era (1946-1970).
- **Desmond Haynes of the West Indies and Bob Willis of England** were inducted from the ODI era (1971-1995)
- **Andy Flower of Zimbabwe and Kumar Sangakkara of Sri Lanka** were from the modern era (1996-2016).

## NEW ZEALAND DEFEATED INDIA TO WIN 1ST WTC FINAL

- **New Zealand defeated India to win the 1st ICC World Test Championship.** New Zealand chased down the goal of 139 to win the first-ever World Test Championship final with eight wickets in hand.
- The final day of the in shape used to be performed on June 23, 2021. The fit saw 6 days play in region of the normal 5 days due to the rain factor.
- **Kyle Jamieson (NZ)** chosen as the Player of the match, while **Kane Williamson (NZ)** is the Player of the series. The **first test championship** started in 2019 with the finals being played in 2021.
- The pinnacle three teams, as a result, are: **First: New Zealand; Second- India; Third- Australia.** The remaining healthy was once played at Ageas Bowl Stadium (Rose Bowl Stadium) in Southampton, England.
- The subsequent Test Championship will be held between 2021-2023.



## ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP TO BE HELD IN UAE

- **ICC Men's T20 World Cup**, originally slated to be held in India, will now be shifted to the UAE.
- The **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**, which holds the hosting rights of this year's event, will inform the International Cricket Council (ICC) in this regard. The **T20 World Cup** was postponed last year due to the pandemic.
- The BCCI will remain the hosts of the event, which will now be held in **Dubai International Stadium, the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi**, the **Sharjah Stadium**, and the **Oman Cricket Academy Ground**, from 17 October to 14 November 2021.
  - Secretary of BCCI: **Jay Shah**.
  - President of BCCI: **Sourav Ganguly**.
  - Headquarters of BCCI: **Mumbai, Maharashtra**
  - Founded: **December 1928**



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# DATES & DAYS

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## INT. DAY OF INNOCENT CHILDREN VICTIMS OF AGGRESSION

- **International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression** is observed globally on 4th June every year. This day affirms the UN's **commitment to guard the rights of children.**
- This day is to acknowledge the pain suffered by children throughout the planet who are the **victims of physical, mental and emotional abuse.**
- The main aim of celebrating today is to spread the notice about the **pain and sufferings faced by the victims as children.**
- **International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression:** On August 19, 1982, during an emergency session on the question of Palestine, the UN General Assembly, appalled at the amount of innocent **Palestinian and Lebanese child victims of Israel's acts of aggression,** decided to commemorate 4 June of every year because of the **International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression.**



## WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY: 5TH JUNE

- **World Environment Day** is observed globally on **5th June every year.** This day is observed to raise awareness about protecting the environment and to remind people not to take nature for granted.
- The day provides an opportunity to broaden the “**basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises, and communities in preserving and enhancing the environment.**”
- The theme of this year's World Environment Day is ‘**Reimagine. Recreate. Restore.**’ as this year marks the beginning of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.
- **Pakistan is the global host for the day** to highlight the importance of ecosystem restoration this year.



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- **World Environment Day:** The first time World Environment Day was celebrated in 1974 with the slogan “**Only one Earth**”. In 1972 the conference was held on Human Environment which began from 5th to 16th June at the United Nations.

## UN RUSSIAN LANGUAGE DAY: 6TH JUNE

- The **UN Russian Language Day** is observed annually on 06 June. It is **one of the six official languages** used by the **United Nations throughout the Organization**.
- The day was established by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** in 2010.
- 6 June is chosen as **UN Russian Language Day** as it coincides with the birthday of Aleksandr Pushkin, a Russian poet who is considered the father of the modern Russian language.
- Each of the six official languages has been assigned a day of celebration by the **UN’s Department of Public Information** in 2010 to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all **six official languages throughout the Organization**.



## WORLD FOOD SAFETY DAY: 7TH JUNE

- **World Food Safety Day** is observed on 7th June globally. The aim of the day is to raise awareness about different foodborne risks and the measures of how to prevent it.
- The campaigns will also **spread awareness that how food safety** is very much important and related to different other important factors of life such as human health, economic growth, and many others.
- Also, the day will surely ensure in building up a connection between food safety and other elements such as agriculture, sustainable development, and market access.
- This year’s theme is “**Safe food today for a healthy tomorrow**”.



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- It discusses the fact that the production and consumption of safe food have immediate and long-term benefits. Recognizing the systemic connections between the **health of people, animals, plants, the environment and the economy** will help us meet the needs of the future.
  
- **History of World Food Safety Day:** The first-ever **World Food Safety Day**, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2018.
  
- The theme of the first-ever Food Safety Day 2019 is “**Food Safety, everyone’s business**”. In this direction, the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** in collaboration with the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** of the United Nations decided to celebrate 7th June as the **First food safety day since 7th June 2019**.
  - Director-General of WHO: **Tedros Adhanom**
  - Headquarters: **Geneva, Switzerland**
  - Food and Agriculture Organization headquarters: **Rome, Italy**
  - Food and Agriculture Organization Established: **16 October 1945**
  - Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization: **Dr QU Dongyu**.

## WORLD OCEAN DAY OBSERVED ON 8TH JUNE

- **World Ocean Day** is observed globally on **8th June every year**. This day is observed to raise global awareness about the importance of the ocean in our lives and the ways through which we can protect it.
  
- The purpose of the Day is to tell the general public of the **impact of human actions on the ocean**, develop a worldwide movement of citizens for the ocean, and mobilize and unite the world’s population on a project for the **sustainable management of the world’s oceans**.
  
- “**The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods**” is the theme for **World Oceans Day 2021**, as well as a declaration of intentions that launches a decade of challenges to get the Sustainable Development Goal 14, “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources”, by 2030.
  
- This year’s theme is especially relevant in the lead-up to the **UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development**, which will run from 2021 to 2030.



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- The Decade will strengthen international cooperation to develop scientific research and innovative technologies that can connect ocean science with the needs of society.
- The government of Canada had proposed the concept of **World Ocean Day, at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.**
- **Officially World Ocean Day** was established by the **United Nations General Assembly in 2008** to be celebrated worldwide annually on 8 June to resolve the issues of oceans and also to save ocean water. By the collaboration of **The Ocean Project and the World Ocean Network**, it has been started celebrating on the international level.

## WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR: 12TH JUNE


- **World Day against Child Labour** is observed globally on 12th June every year. According to the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, there are about 152 million children globally who are engaged in child labour, 72 million of whom are in hazardous work.
- This year's **World Day Against Child Labour** focuses on action taken for the 2021 International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour. The theme of this year's **World Day Against Child Labour** is **Act now: End child labour!**
- It is the first **World Day** since the **universal ratification of the ILO's Convention No. 182** on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and takes place at a time when the **COVID-19 crisis** threatens to reverse years of progress in tackling the problem.
- **About World Day Against Child Labour:** The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** launched the **World Day Against Child Labour in 2002** to focus attention on the worldwide extent of kid labour and therefore the action and efforts needed to eliminate it.
- Each year on 12 June, this **Day brings together governments**, employers and workers organizations, civil society, also as many people from around the world to spotlight the plight of kid labourers and what are often done to assist them.
  - Headquarters of the International Labour Organization: **Geneva, Switzerland.**
  - President of the International Labour Organization: **Guy Ryder.**






- International Labour Organization Founded: 1919.

## WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY: 14TH JUNE

- World blood donor day is observed globally on June 14th every year. **The aim is to raise global awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products** for transfusion and of the critical contribution voluntary, unpaid blood donors make to national health systems.
- 
- The poster is red with a white blood bag icon on the left. On the right, it says '14TH JUNE WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY' in white and red text. At the bottom, it says 'DONATE BLOOD SAVE LIFE'.
- The day also provides an opportunity to call to action to governments and national health authorities to provide adequate resources and put into place systems and infrastructures **to increase the collection of blood from voluntary, non-remunerated blood donors.**
  - For 2021, the **World Blood Donor Day slogan will be “Give blood and keep the world beating”**. The host country for World Blood Donor Day 2021 is **Rome, Italy**. Every year on the **birth anniversary of Landsteiner** on 14 June 1868, World donor Day is widely known.
  - This event was first initiated and established to be celebrated on 14 June 2004 by the **“World Health Organisation, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies”** with an aim to boost public awareness about the necessity for safe blood donation voluntarily and unpaid by the healthy person.


## GLOBAL WIND DAY: 15TH JUNE

- Every year the **Global Wind Day is celebrated worldwide on 15 June** to spread awareness about wind energy, the various uses of wind energy, and the ways and possibilities as to how wind energy can help change the world.
- 
- The image shows several white wind turbines on a green grassy field under a blue sky with white clouds.
- **Global Wind Day was first observed as Wind Day in 2007**. Later, it was renamed Global Wind Day in 2009. Global Wind Day is organized by **WindEurope and the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC)**.

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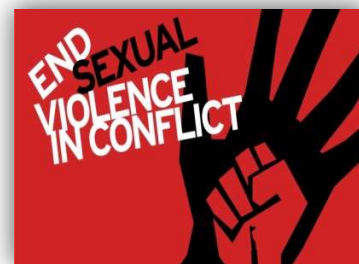
- According to the **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)**, wind energy is one of the fastest-growing renewable energy sources in the world. India will install 20GW of wind capacity over 2021-25.
- Wind energy is a source of clean energy and it is inexhaustible. At present, India has a total installed wind power capacity of 38.789 GW. India has the **fourth-largest installed wind power capacity in the world.**

## WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION & DROUGHT

- **World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought** is observed on 17th June every year. The day is celebrated to raise awareness of the presence of desertification and drought, and highlight methods of **preventing desertification and recovering from drought.**
- 
- **“Restoration. Land. Recovery. We build back better with healthy land”** is the theme for 2021 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought.
  - **World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought:** In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly declared June 17 the **“World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought”** to market public awareness of the difficulty.
  - The **World Day to Combat Desertification** may be a unique occasion to remind everybody that **desertification is often effectively tackled**, that solutions are possible, which key tools to the present aim lay in strengthened community participation and co-operation in the least levels.

## INT. DAY FOR ELIMINATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

- **International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict** is observed globally on 19th June every year.
- The day aims to raise awareness of the need to **put an end to conflict-related sexual violence**, honour the victims and survivors of sexual violence around the



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world and pay tribute to all those who have courageously devoted their lives to and lost their lives in standing up for the eradication of these crimes.

- **Worldwide Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict:** On 19 June 2015, the United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/69/293) announced 19 June of consistently the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.
- The date was picked to recognize the selection on 19 June 2008 of **Security Council goals 1820 (2008)**, during which the Council censured sexual savagery as a strategy of war and a hindrance to peacebuilding. **2021 marks the seventh year of celebration of the day.**

## WORLD MUSIC DAY OBSERVED ON 21ST JUNE

- **World Music Day** is observed globally on **21st June every year**. This day is celebrated to **honour amateur and professional musicians**.
- Over **120 countries** celebrate **World Music Day** by organizing free public concerts in parks, streets, stations, museums and other such public places.
- The **aim of celebrating World Music Day** is to provide free music to everyone, and also to encourage amateur musicians to showcase their work to the world.
- World Music Day was founded by **France's Minister of Culture, Jack Lang** and also **Maurice Fleuret**, a French composer, music journalist, radio producer, arts administrator, and festival organiser, on the day of the summer solstice in Paris in 1982.



## UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC SERVICES DAY

- **United Nations Public Service Day** is observed globally on 23rd June every year. This day is to highlight the contribution of public service in the **development process and to value public service to the community.**



- This day is widely known by various public service organisations and departments around the world by organising several events to recognise the role of public servants in making developments and improvements in the community.
- LAs a part of the occasion, the Division of Public Institutions and Digital Government of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs will host a virtual event, in collaboration with the government of the United Arab Emirates, under the theme of **“Innovating the Future Public Service: New Government Models for a New Era to Reach the SDGs”**.
- On 20 December 2002, the **United Nations General Assembly** designated 23 June per annum to watch as United Nations Public Service Day by passing a resolution 57/277.
- The day marks the anniversary of the date when the **International Labour Organization adopted the Convention on Labour Relations (Public Service)**, 1978 (No. 151) for determining the working conditions of all civil servants across the world.

## INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC DAY OBSERVED ON 23RD JUNE

- **The International Olympic Day** is held on June 23 each year. The day is celebrated to encourage more people to participate in the Olympic Games and spread awareness about the event and promote the Olympic Movement.
- Based on the three pillars – **“move”, “learn” and “discover”** – the National Olympic Committees are deploying sports, cultural and educational activities to encourage participation regardless of age, gender, social background, or sporting ability.
- The Olympic Day 2021 theme is **“Stay healthy, stay strong, stay active with the #OlympicDay workout on 23 June.”**



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- **History of the day: The International Olympic Committee (IOC)** approved to observe Olympic Day in January 1948 to commemorate the creation of the International Olympic Committee on 23 June 1894.
- The creation of the **modern-day Olympic Games is inspired by the ancient Olympic Games held in Olympia, Greece**, from the 8th century BC to the 4th century AD. The first Olympic Day was celebrated in the year 1948.
  - International Olympic Committee Headquarters: **Lausanne, Switzerland.**
  - International Olympic Committee President: **Thomas Bach.**
  - International Olympic Committee Founded: **23 June 1894 (Paris, France).**

## INTERNATIONAL ASTEROID SAY: 30TH JUNE

- **International Asteroid Day** is observed globally on 30th June every year.
- International Asteroid Day aims to raise public awareness **about the asteroid impact hazard** and to inform the public about the crisis communication actions to be taken at the global level in case of a credible near-Earth object threat.
- **International Asteroid Day:** In December 2016 the **United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/71/90**, declaring 30 June International Asteroid Day in order to “observe each year at the international level the anniversary of the Tunguska impact over **Siberia, Russian Federation**, on 30 June 1908, and to boost public awareness **about the asteroid impact hazard.**”
- Asteroids are the small rocky body that orbits around the sun. Mostly, they are found between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter but some have more eccentric orbits.
- So, we will say that asteroids are rocky-metallic objects which range in size from about the dimensions of pebbles to around 600 miles across.
- They are so small **that aren't considered as planets but they orbit Sun.** They are known as the leftover material of the **Solar System.**



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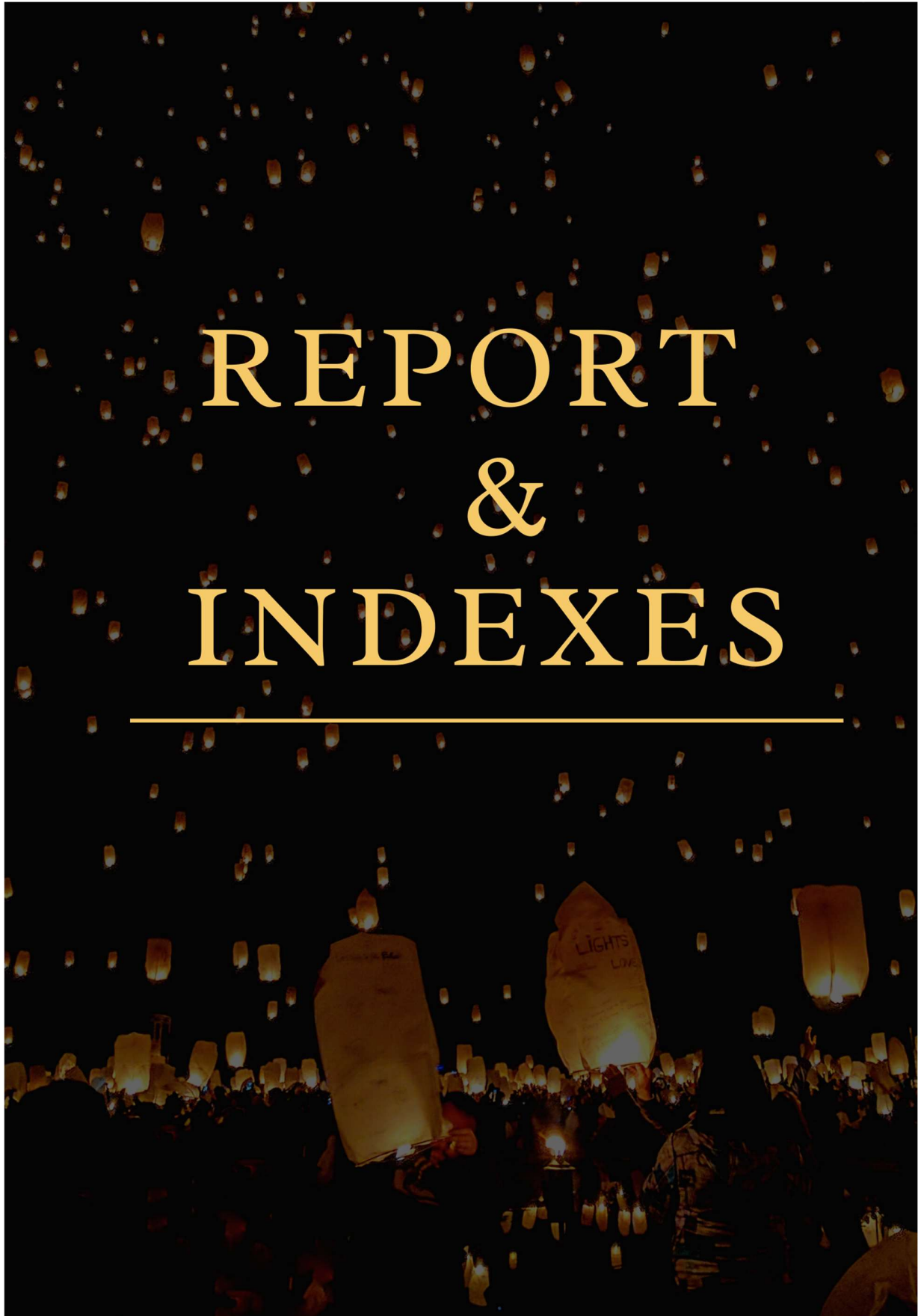
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# REPORT & INDEXES

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## V CENTRE FOR WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKING 2021-22

- Centre for World University Rankings 2021-22 has announced, **19,788 institutions were ranked**, and those that placed at the top made the global 2000 list.
- **Harvard University has topped the ranking** globally followed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Stanford University, University of Cambridge, and Oxford University respectively.
- As many as **68 Indian institutes have made it to the list of the top 2000 higher education institutes** across the world, as per the Centre for World University Rankings (CWUR) 2021-22.
- The Indian pack is led by the **IIM-Ahmedabad which has bagged 415th rank followed by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) at 459th rank.**



### *CWUR Ranking 2021: Top 10 Indian Institutes*

- Global Rank 415: **IIM Ahmedabad**
- Global Rank 459: **Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru**
- Rank 543: **Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai**
- Rank 557: **IIT Madras**
- Rank 567: **IIT Bombay**
- Rank 571: **University of Delhi**
- Rank 623: **IIT Delhi**
- Rank 708: **IIT Kharagpur**
- Rank 709: **Panjab University**
- Rank 818: **IIT Kanpur**



## QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2022 RELEASED

- The London-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) has released the **QS World University Rankings 2022** which compares and ranks Universities from across the globe on various parameters.
- Eight Indian universities have found a place among the **400 global universities in the QS World University Rankings 2022**, released on June 09, 2021. However, only three Universities namely the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, IIT-Delhi, and IISc Bangalore feature among the top 200.**
- Top Indian University: **IIT-Bombay is ranked as the best University in India** with a rank of 177. It is followed by IIT-Delhi (185) and IISc (186).
- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), **Bengaluru, has also been adjudged as “world’s top research university**, achieving a perfect score of 100/100 for Citations Per Faculty (CPF) indicator, which measures research impact. This is the first time that any Indian institute has scored a perfect 100 in research or any other parameter.
- Top University: **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has topped the ranking for the 10th years in a row.** MIT is followed by the University of Oxford in the second position. Stanford University and the University of Cambridge shared the third spot.



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## 17TH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT

- **India’s rank has slipped by two places** from last year to 117 on the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** adopted as a part of the 2030 agenda by 193 United Nations member states in 2015.
- India ranks below four South Asian countries: Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- The **State of India’s Environment Report 2021** revealed that India’s rank was 115 last year and dropped by two places primarily because of **major challenges like ending hunger and achieving food security (SDG 2).**



- **Achieving gender equality (SDG 5) and building resilient infrastructure**, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation (SDG 9) remain in the country.

## ALL INDIA SURVEY ON HIGHER EDUCATION (AISHE)

- **All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20 report** has been released by Union Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’**.
- As per AISHE in the last five years (2015-16 to 2019-20), **student enrolment has grown by 11.4%**. As per AISHE, female enrolment in Higher Education has increased by 18.2% from 2015-16 to 2019-20.
- **Key features of AISHE 2019-20** are given below: **Total Enrolment in Higher Education: It stands at 3.85 crores in 2019-20.**
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER):** It is defined as the percentage of students belonging to the eligible age group enrolled in Higher Education. It is 27.1% in 2019-20.
- **Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Higher Education:** It stands at 1.01 in 2019-20. It shows improvement in the relative access to higher education for females of eligible age group compared to males. **Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Higher Education:** It is 26 in 2019-20. The number of students pursuing PhD: It is 2.03 lakh in 2019-20.



## 15TH GLOBAL PEACE INDEX (GPI) 2021

- The **15th edition of the Global Peace Index (GPI)** announced by Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) Sydney, the GPI is the **world’s leading measure of global peacefulness**.
- The index ranks **163 independent states and territories** according to their level of peacefulness. This report presents most comprehensive data-driven analysis to date on trends in peace, its economic value, and how to develop peaceful societies.
- Global: **Iceland** remains the most peaceful country in the world, a position it has held since 2008.



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- It is joined at the **top of the index** by **New Zealand, Denmark, Portugal, and Slovenia.**
- **Afghanistan is the least peaceful country** in the world for the fourth consecutive year, followed by **Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, and Iraq.**
- **South Asia:** India has moved up two notches from its previous year's ranking to become the **135th most peaceful country in the world and the 5th in the region.**
- **Bhutan and Nepal are named as the first and second most peaceful in this region.** Bangladesh has been ranked 91th out of 163 countries in Global Peace Index for 2021. According to the list, Bangladesh is the 3rd most peaceful in South Asia.
- Sri Lanka has slipped down 19 rungs from 2020, to become 95th globally in this year's rankings, and the 4th in South Asia.

## CHINA, INDIA & PAK EXPANDING NUCLEAR ARSENAL: SIPRI

- **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** has released the SIPRI Yearbook 2021. The report assesses the current state of **armaments, disarmament and international security.**
- China is in the middle of significant modernization and expansion of its nuclear weapon inventory, and **India and Pakistan also appear to be expanding their nuclear arsenals.**
- According to the yearbook, India possessed an estimated 156 nuclear warheads at the start of 2021 compared to 150 at the start of last year, while Pakistan had 165 warheads, up from 160 in 2020.
- China's nuclear arsenal consisted of 350 warheads up from 320 at the start of 2020. The nine nuclear-armed states – **the U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea** – together possessed an estimated 13,080 nuclear weapons at the start of 2021.
- **Russia and the U.S. together possessed over 90% of global nuclear weapons** and have extensive and expensive modernization programmes underway.



## INDIA RANKED 120TH IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

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- According to the **6th Edition of ‘Sustainable Development Report 2021 (SDR 2021)’** released by Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), India with a score of 60.1 has been placed at **120th rank out of 165 countries**. Finland topped the Index followed by Sweden & Denmark.
- For the 1st time since 2015, all countries have shown a reversal in progress in achieving **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) due to the COVID-19 pandemic**.
- SDR 2021 has been written by a group of authors led by Professor Jeffrey Sachs, President of the SDSN and has been published by **Cambridge University Press**.
- **SDR Report:** SDR is an annual report which ranks the 193 UN member countries based on their performance against the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**.
- It has been released since 2015 and is **based on official data sources (UN, World Bank, etc.)** and non-official data sources (research institutions and non-governmental organizations).
  - Sustainable Development Solutions Network President: **Jeffrey Sachs**
  - Sustainable Development Solutions Network Headquarters: **Paris, France & New York, USA**.

### BENGALURU MOST LIVEABLE 'EASE OF LIVING INDEX'

- **Bengaluru** has been named as the most liveable city of India, the **Ease of Living Index 2020**, released by the **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)**. in
- The **Ease of Living Index 2020** is part of the report titled **State of India’s Environment 2021**. Bengaluru is followed **Chennai, Shimla, Bhubaneshwar, and Mumbai**, as the top five best cities respectively. by
- The report focused on four parameters to determine the ease of living index score of each city, which are: **quality of life, economic ability, sustainability and citizens’ perceptions**.
- Each city was rated out of 100 in all parameters. The **Ease of Living Index 2020 is the second edition of the index** after the first one was launched in 2018.



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## SUICIDE WORLDWIDE IN 2019 BY WHO

- **Recently, a report titled Suicide worldwide in 2019 was published by the World Health Organization (WHO).** Suicide is defined as death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with intent to die as a result of the behavior.
- Reducing the global suicide mortality rate by a third is both, indicator and a target (the only one for mental health) in the **United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. But the world will not be able to reach this target.
- The **Covid-19-pandemic** has increased mental stress globally. However a crisis was already in place in 2019. Approximately 7,03,000 people or one in a 100, died by suicide in 2019.
- **Africa, Europe and South-East Asia** recorded suicide rates higher than the global average. This number was highest in the **Africa region (11.2) followed by Europe (10.5)** and South-East Asia (10.2). In 20 years (2000-2019), the global suicide rate had decreased by 36%.



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- **Suicides in India:** India has the highest suicide rate in the **Southeast Asian region**. A total of 1,34,516 cases of suicide were reported in 2018 in India, according to the National Crime Records Bureau. While the **rate of suicide was 9.9 in 2017, it increased to 10.2 in 2018**.
- Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) states whoever attempts to commit suicide and does any act towards the commission of such offence, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or both.

## WORLD DRUGS REPORT 2021 BY UNODC

- Recently, the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, in its World Drug Report 2021, has highlighted that the lockdown restrictions during **Covid-19 have accelerated drug trafficking using the Internet**.
- By drugs, the Report refers to substances controlled under **international drug control conventions, and their non-medical use**.
- Data Analysis: Between 2010-2019, **the number of people using drugs increased by 22%**, owing in part to an increase in the global population.
- Around 275 million people used drugs worldwide last year, while over 36 million people suffered from drug use disorders. **Opioids continue to account for the largest burden of disease attributed to drug use**.
- A rise in the non-medical use of pharmaceutical drugs was also observed during the coronavirus pandemic.
- **Cannabis is More Potent but Fewer Young People See it as Harmful:** In the last 24 years, cannabis potency had increased as much as four times in some parts, even as the percentage of adolescents who perceived the drug as harmful fell by as much as 40%.
- The major psychoactive constituent in **cannabis,  $\Delta$ 9-THC, is responsible for the development of mental health disorders, in the long-term**.
- Reason: Aggressive marketing of cannabis products and promotion through social-media channels.



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- Rising Web-based Sales Could Transform Global Drug Use Patterns: Access to drugs has also become simpler than ever with online sales, **and major drug markets on the dark web are now worth some \$315 million annually.**
- In Asia, China and India are mainly linked to shipment of drugs sold on the 19 major darknet markets analysed over 2011-2020.

## ASHGABAT: WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE CITY FOR WORKERS

- **Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan** in Central Asia, has been named the world's most expensive city for foreign workers.
- The city topped the list in a 2021 cost-of-living survey by consultancy firm Mercer. Hong Kong was the second position, **followed by Beirut in Lebanon and Tokyo in Japan.**
- The annual report ranks 209 cities based on the cost of expenses like housing, food and transport. Most of the cities in the top 10 are those where economic growth has contributed to an increase in the cost of living.
- Three are Swiss cities, of which **Zurich dropped to fifth**, followed by **Shanghai and Singapore.** London was placed 18th.
- About the Ashgabat: Ashgabat is known for its magnificent marble buildings and monuments. It is also home to one of **Central Asia's most colourful bazaars called Tolkuchka Bazaar.**
- Other tourist attractions include the National Museum, White Marble, Turkmenbashi Cableway, Museum of Fine Arts, Alem Cultural and Entertainment Center, and Turkmen Carpet Museum.
- **Indian cities:** Mumbai remains India's most expensive city at 78th rank but has dropped 18 places in this year's ranking "due to a relatively weak Indian rupee in comparison with other cities in the ranking."
- Other Indian cities on the list are **New Delhi (117), Chennai (158), Bengaluru (170), and Kolkata (181).**



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## ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

### GLOBAL EXPANSION OF NUCLEAR ARSENAL

According to a recent report published in the SIPRI Yearbook 2021, the number of nuclear warheads which are ready and deployed have increased globally. The SIPRI Yearbook is released by the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** which researches international armament and conflict. The SIPRI “Yearbook 2021” assesses the **current state of armaments, disarmament and international security.**



### NINE NUCLEAR ARMED STATES

**The nine nuclear armed states are: US, Russia, the U.K., France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea.** These countries together possessed an estimated 13,080 nuclear weapons at the start of 2021. Russia and the US together possessed over 90% of global nuclear weapons and have extensive and expensive modernization programmes under way. **Both the US and Russia have approved the extension of the New START treaty.** The Treaty is the last remaining nuclear Russia-US arms control treaty which expired in February 2021. **China’s nuclear arsenal consisted of 350 warheads** up from 320 at the start of 2020. China is in the middle of a significant modernisation and expansion of its nuclear weapon inventory. **India possessed an estimated 156 nuclear warheads** at the start of 2021 compared to 150 at the start of last year, while **Pakistan had 165 warheads**, up from 160 in 2020. **India and Pakistan are seeking new technologies and capabilities** that dangerously undermine each other's defence under the nuclear threshold.

**Low Levels of Transparency:** The availability of reliable information on the status of the **nuclear arsenals and capabilities of the nuclear-armed states vary considerably.**

**Largest Military Spenders:** The growth in total spending in 2020 was largely **influenced by expenditure patterns in the United States and China** (first and second largest spenders respectively). **India’s spending of USD 72.9 billion, an increase of 2.1% in 2020,** ranked it as the **third highest spender in the world.**

### IMPORTERS & SUPPLIERS OF MAJOR ARMS



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- SIPRI identified 164 states as importers of major arms in 2016-20.
- Country Wise: The five largest arms importers were **Saudi Arabia, India, Egypt, Australia and China**, which together accounted for 36% of total arms imports.
- Region wise: The region that received the largest volume of major arms supplies in 2016-20 was Asia and Oceania, **accounting for 42% of the global total, followed by the Middle East, which received 33%.**
- The five largest suppliers in 2016-20 - **the United States, Russia, France, Germany and China** - accounted for 76% of the total volume of exports of major arms.



## RECENT INSTANCES OF ARMED CONFLICT

- The **territorial conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir**. The situation in 2020 largely reverted to the status quo of relatively low levels of armed violence.
- In June 2020, for the first time in over five decades, the **border tensions between China and India in the disputed eastern Ladakh region of Kashmir turned deadly.**
- A new armed conflict broke out in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia in November 2020 between federal government forces and the **Tigray People's Liberation Front**, which killed thousands and forced more than 46, 000 refugees to flee into eastern Sudan.

## WHAT IS NUCLEAR WEAPON?

**Nuclear weapon** is a device designed to release energy in an explosive manner as a result of **nuclear fission, nuclear fusion, or a combination of the two**. Fission weapons are commonly referred to as atomic bombs, and fusion weapons are referred to as **thermonuclear bombs or, more commonly, hydrogen bombs**. These have been used in the bombings of **Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945**.

## TREATIES PREVENTING NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

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**The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons:**

The **NPT is an international treaty** whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to foster the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to further the goal of disarmament. The **treaty was signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970**. Presently, it has 190 member states. It requires countries to give up any present or future plans to build nuclear weapons in return for access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

**It represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.** Nuclear-weapon states parties under the NPT are defined as those that manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive devices before January 1, 1967.



India is one of the only five countries that either did not sign the NPT or signed but withdrew later, thus becoming part of a list that includes **Pakistan, Israel, North Korea, and South Sudan**. India always considered the NPT as discriminatory and had refused to sign it. India has opposed the international treaties aimed at non-proliferation since they were selectively applicable to the non-nuclear powers and legitimised the monopoly of the five nuclear weapons powers.

The **Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests In The Atmosphere, In Outer Space And Under Water**, also known as the **Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT)**. The **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** was signed in 1996 but has yet to enter into force.

**India's Nuclear Weapon Program:** India tested its first nuclear device in May 1974, and remains outside both the Treaty on the **Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)** and the **Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)**. However, India has a facility-specific safeguards agreement in place with the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** and a waiver from the **Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)** allowing it to participate in global civilian nuclear technology commerce. It was admitted as a member into the **Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in 2016, Wassenaar Arrangement in 2017** and Australia Group in 2018. India maintains its official commitment to no-first-use of nuclear weapons.



# SCIENCE & TECH.

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## INDIA TO RECEIVE 3 MH-60 ROMEO HELICOPTERS FROM US

- The Indian Navy is set to receive its first set of **multi-role helicopters** as America is set to hand over **three MH-60 Romeo helicopters to the force in the United States in July.**
- The first batch of Indian pilots has also reached the US for training on the helicopters which would be arriving in India year in July.
- India and the US had signed over-Rs 16,000 crore deal to buy **24 MH-60 Romeo helicopters from Lockheed Martin in 2020** under fast track procedures on a government-to-government deal to hasten the process.
- About the Romeo: **The 24 MH-60 Romeos would be equipped with multi-mode radars and night-vision devices** as well as armed with Hellfire missiles, torpedoes and precision-guided weaponry.
- India and the US are also working on finalising a deal for buying 30 Predator drones to enhance the **strike capabilities of the three defence forces.**



next

## ESA TO LAUNCH 'ENVISION MISSION' TO VENUS

- **European Space Agency (ESA)**, is now developing its own probe to study Venus, for holistic view of the planet from its inner core to upper atmosphere. The mission dubbed as “**EnVision**” will probably be **launched to the planet in early 2030.**
- About the EnVision: EnVision probe of ESA will determine **how and why Venus and Earth evolved** so differently, even while being in the habitable zone to the Sun.
- ESA will undertake this mission with contributions from NASA. EnVision spacecraft will carry a range of instruments to study the planet’s atmosphere and surface, monitor trace gases in the



atmosphere and analyse its surface composition. **NASA would provide a radar to image and map the surface.**

## SHENZHOU-12 MANNED MISSION PROGRAMME

- A Chinese spacecraft "Shenzhou XII" with three crew members docked with China's new space station module Tianhe 1. This follows the launch of the **Tianzhou-2 cargo spacecraft**, which delivered critical supplies to the space station.
- About six hours after taking off from the Jiuquan launch centre in the Gobi Desert, the Shenzhou-12 spacecraft connected with the **Tianhe space station module**.
- The three-man crew will spend three months on the Tianhe module, which will orbit the **Earth at 340km to 380km altitude**.
- This is the first of two manned space missions scheduled for this year, as part of a intense launch schedule aimed at completing the **Chinese space station by 2022**.
- The three astronauts are the first to live in the main living module, where they will conduct experiments, test equipment, perform maintenance, and prepare the station for the arrival of two laboratory modules next year.
- It was **China's seventh crewed space mission**, but it was a number of firsts for the country, including the first manned mission during the **construction of China's space station**, the first in nearly five years since the country's last manned mission in 2016, and China's longest crewed space mission to date.
- **Purpose of the Mission:** It will aid in the testing of technologies related to long-term astronaut stays and health care, the recycling and life support system, space material supply, extravehicular activities and operations, and in-orbit maintenance.



## DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TEST FIRED NIRBHAY CRUISE MISSILE

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- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully **test-fired the subsonic cruise missile ‘Nirbhay’** on June 24, 2021, from an **Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Odisha’s Balasore.**
- This was the eighth test flight of the missile. The first test flight of Nirbhay was held on 12 March 2013.
- About the Missile: Nirbhay is a **long-range, all-weather, subsonic cruise missile** indigenously designed and developed by DRDO.
- The missile can be launched from multiple platforms and is capable of carrying conventional and nuclear warheads. **Nirbhay is a two-stage missile and can engage several targets in a single flight.**
- The missile has a length of 6 metres, a width of 0.52 metres, a wingspan of 2.7 metres and weighs about 1500 kg. It has a strike range of about 1500 km.



### DRDO TEST-FIRED PINAKA ROCKET OFF ODISHA COAST

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test-fired an extended-range version of the indigenously developed **Pinaka rocket.**
- The rockets were launched from a **Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL)** at Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- The enhanced range version of the Pinaka Rocket System can destroy targets at distances up to 45 km. **25 Enhanced Pinaka Rockets** were launched in quick succession against different range targets.
- The Pinaka Rocket system has been developed jointly by **Pune based Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE)** and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) with manufacturing support from M/s Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur



### DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRED AGNI-P MISSILE

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- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully flight-tested a New Generation **Nuclear-Capable Ballistic Missile “Agni P (Prime)”** from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha, Balasore.
- As per **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** officials, **Agni-Prime** is a new generation advanced variant of the **Agni class of missiles**.
- **About the Agni P: Agni P (Prime)** is a new-generation advanced variant from the Agni class of missiles. It is a canisterised **surface-to-surface ballistic missile** having a range capability between **1,000 and 2,000 km**.

## WORLD'S FIRST PHYSICALLY DISABLED ASTRONAUT

- The **European Space Agency** will hire and launch the **world’s first physically disabled astronaut**.
- It received 22000 applicants for this recruitment call. **ESA is developing technologies for para-astronaut**. It will give a message to the world that ‘Space is for everyone’.
- **European Space Agency** is facing tough competition from private players and other space agencies for launching commercial satellites.
- **Amazon founder Bezos** will become the first man to go into space on his own rocket in July 2021.
  - **European Space Agency** is an intergovernmental organization of 22 member states
  - **European Space Agency** was established in 1975 and headquartered in Paris.



## MICROSOFT OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED 'WINDOWS 11'

- Microsoft officially launched its new **Windows operating system ‘Windows 11’**. It is being called as the “**next generation**” of Windows.
- The release comes nearly six year after the current latest Windows Operating System ‘Windows 10’ was launched in July 2015.



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- Windows 11 is special because **it focuses on a new user interface, a new Windows Store, and improvements to performance, including a centre-aligned Taskbar and Start button.**
- Key features of Windows 11:
- One of the unique features of Windows 11 is that **it will support Android apps via Amazon's app store.** It will work better in touch mode as well.
- Windows 11 operating system (OS) will be available as a free upgrade for Windows 10 users in late 2021, as long as the user has a compatible PC that meets the requirements of Microsoft's new operating system.
- **Windows 11 OS will work on PCs having a processor that has two or more cores and a clock speed of 1GHz or higher.**
- PCs having Intel's sixth and seventh-generation processors will not be eligible to use Windows 11.
  - Microsoft CEO and Chairman: **Satya Nadella**
  - Microsoft Headquarters: **Redmond, Washington, United States.**





# MISCELLANEOUS

- **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)** is organising “Steadfast Defender 21 war games” **military exercises in Europe** as tensions with Russia increases.
- These war games are being organised with the aim of simulating the response of a **30-nation military organisation for the attack on any one of its members**. It seeks to test the ability of NATO to deploy troops from America.
- Top NATO brass insists that the military exercises, involving some 9,000 troops from 20 nations, are **not aimed at Russia specifically, but they focus on the Black Sea region**, where Russia stands accused of blocking the free navigation of ships.
  - NATO Headquarters: **Brussels, Belgium**.
  - NATO Chairman of the NATO Military Committee: **Air Chief Marshal Stuart Peach**.



## BENGALURU INT. AIRPORT: NET ENERGY NEUTRAL STATUS

- The **Kempegowda International Airport** here has achieved **net energy neutral status** in the Financial Year 2020-21 as part of its sustainability goals.
- **Bengaluru international airport (BIAL)** has been able to nearly 22 lakh units of energy in the Financial Year 2020- enough to power nearly 9,000 houses for a month.
- According to BIAL, these measures were achieved through installation at rooftops of utility buildings, car parks, ground-mounted solar installation at the airside, rooftops of cargo buildings and project offices.
- It has also begun **purchasing 40 million units of solar power** through open access and wind power purchase through open access. **Adoption of LED and optimal use of natural light** contributed to energy-neutral status.



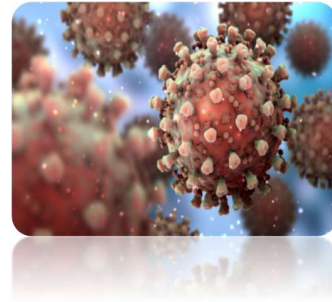
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## WHO NAMES INDIAN VARIANTS AS 'KAPPA' & 'DELTA'

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- The UN health agency, **World Health Organisation (WHO)**, has given easy-to-say labels to two variants of the Covid-19, first found in India.
- The two variants are B.1.617.1 and B.1.617.2. The B.1.617.1 variant of the Covid 19 has been named as **‘Kappa’** while the B1.617.2 variant is named as **‘Delta.’**
- The naming of these variants do not aim at replacing the existing scientific names of these **#SARSCoV2 Variants of Concern (VOCs) & Interest (VOIs)**, but is aimed at helping the public discussion about VOI/VOC.



## ESA TO LAUNCH WORLD'S 1ST WOODEN SATELLITE

- The **European Space Agency (ESA)** has planned to launch the **world’s first wooden satellite**. It is going to be launched from New Zealand.
- It will be launched from a **Rocket Lab Electron rocket by the end of 2021**. The satellite is the brainchild of Jari Makinen.
- The **satellite, WISA Woodsat**, is a nanosatellite. It is 10cm on each side, length, height, and width. The sensors of the satellite have been developed by the **European Space Agency (ESA)** and designers have placed the wood in a thermal vacuum chamber to keep it dry.
- A **very thin aluminium oxide layer** has been used to minimize the vapour coming from the wood and to protect it from the erosive effects of atomic oxygen. The **non-wooden external parts are made up of aluminium rails**.
  - European Space Agency Headquarters: **Paris, France.**
  - European Space Agency Founded: **30 May 1975, Europe.**
  - European Space Agency CEO: **Johann-Dietrich Worner.**



## LEGENDARY SPRINTER 'MILKHA SINGH' PASSED AWAY

- **Legendary Indian sprinter, Milkha Singh** has passed away to coronavirus disease (Covid-19), at the age of 91.
- A former army man, Milkha Singh won several laurels for the country in track and field events across the globe.
- **Milkha Singh won four gold medals for India in the Asian Games**, winning the 200 metre and 400-metre races in the 1958 Tokyo Asiad.
- He followed it up with **gold medals in the 400 metre and 4×400 metre relay races in the 1962 Jakarta Asiad**. He was unlucky to have missed out on an Olympic medal as he finished a close fourth in the 400 metres final at the 1960 Rome Olympics.



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## WORLD'S THIRD LARGEST DIAMOND UNEARTHED

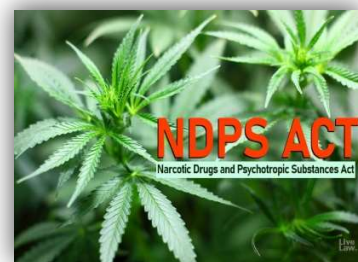
- A **1,098-carat diamond** has been discovered in Botswana, Debswana Diamond Company, a joint venture between the government of Botswana and the **South African diamond company De Beers**.
- The newly discovered diamond is believed to be the **third-largest gem-quality stone ever to be mined in the world**.
- The stone has been presented by **Debswana Diamond Company to the President of Botswana, Mokgweetsi Masisi**.
- The largest diamond to be recovered to date is 3,106 carat Cullinan stone in South Africa in 1905, followed by the 1,109 carats Lesedi La Rona unearthed by Lucara Diamonds in Botswana in 2015.



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## SECTION 27A OF NDPS ACT DECLARED 'INOPERATIVE'

- Recently, the **Tripura High Court** has discovered that an oversight in drafting the 2014 amendments to the **Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985** had unintentionally rendered a key provision (**Section 27A**) of the Act inoperable.
- **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985**: India is a signatory to the **United Nations (UN) Single Convention on Narcotics Drugs**



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1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 and the Convention on Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988.

- They prescribe various forms of control aimed to achieve the dual objective of limiting the use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes as well as preventing the abuse of the same.
- The **basic legislative instrument of the Government of India in this regard is the NDPS Act, 1985**. The Act provides stringent provisions for the control and regulation of operations relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
- It also provides for forfeiture of property derived from, or used in, illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. It also provides for death penalty in some cases where a person is a repeat offender. The **Narcotics Control Bureau was also constituted in 1986 under the Act**.
- **Section 27A of the NDPS Act:** The provision reads that whoever indulges in financing, directly or indirectly, any of the activities specified in sub-clauses (i) to (v) of clause (viii) of section 2 or harbours any person engaged in any of the aforementioned activities.
- He shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may extend to twenty years and shall also be liable to fine which shall not be less than one lakh rupees but which may extend to two lakh rupees:
- **Reason of Section 27A getting Inoperable:** The text of the provision says that offences mentioned under Section 2 (viii) sub-clauses i-v are punishable through Section 27A.
- **However, Section 2 (viii) sub-clauses i-v**, which is supposed to be the catalog of offences, does not exist after the 2014 amendment. So, if Section 27A penalises a blank list or a non-existent provision, **it can be argued that it is virtually inoperable**.

## WHO DECLARES END OF EBOLA OUTBREAK

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- The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared end of the **Ebola outbreak in Guinea**, which began in February 2021.
- Ebola, also known as **Ebola virus disease (EVD) or Ebola hemorrhagic fever (EHF)**, is a viral hemorrhagic fever caused by Ebola viruses in humans other primates.
- It is transmitted to humans from wild animals and spreads in the human population via human-to-human transmission.
- The Ebola virus was discovered in 1976 near **the Ebola River (the current Democratic Republic of the Congo)**. Ebola virus transmission occurs naturally in fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family.
- **Animal to Human Transmission: Ebola is transmitted to humans through close contact with the blood, secretions, organs, or other bodily fluids of infected animals such as fruit bats, chimpanzees, and gorillas that have been found ill, dead, or in the rainforest.**
- **Human-to-Human Transmission:** Ebola is transmitted through direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with:
  - The blood or body fluids of people who have contracted Ebola virus or died of Ebola virus. Objects contaminated with such bodily fluids (like blood, feces, vomit).
  - Symptoms include **fever, fatigue, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhoea, and, in some cases, both internal and external bleeding.**



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## RAJASTHAN'S FOURTH TIGER RESERVE

- **The Ramgarh Vishdhari wildlife sanctuary was approved by the National Tiger Conservation Authority's (NTCA) technical committee to become Rajasthan's fourth Tiger reserve.**
- The NTCA was established in 2005 in response to the Tiger Task Force's recommendations.



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- It is a statutory body of the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change with an overarching supervisory/coordination role, performing functions as specified in the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
  - Protection Status of Tiger:
  - **Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I**
  - IUCN Red List: **Endangered**.
  - CITES: Appendix I.
- Rajasthan's other three tiger reserves are:
  - **Ranthambore Tiger Reserve (RTR) in Sawai**
  - **Madhopur, Sariska Tiger Reserve (STR) in Alwar, and**
  - **Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve (MHTR) in Kota.**

## ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

### AUSTRALIA'S GREAT BARRIER REEF (UNESCO SITE)

Recently, the **UNESCO World Heritage Committee** has recommended that the **Australia's Great Barrier Reef** should be added to a list of **"in danger" World Heritage Sites**. Placement on the "in-danger list" is not considered a sanction. Some nations have their sites added to gain international attention and help to save them.



**Reason behind this Move:** It was recommended to add to the list because of the **impact of climate change**. **Despite Reef 2050**, the coral reef ecosystem has suffered three major bleaching events since 2015 due to severe marine heatwaves. The **Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan** is the Australian and Queensland Government's overarching framework for protecting and managing the **Great Barrier Reef by 2050**. When corals face stress by changes in conditions such as temperature, light, or nutrients, they expel the symbiotic algae zooxanthellae living in their tissues, causing them to turn completely white. This phenomenon is called coral bleaching. Marine heatwave is an event of **anomalous warm sea surface temperatures (SST)** from several days to years.

**Repercussions:** It prompted environmental groups to take aim at the **Australian government's** reluctance to take stronger climate action. Australia, which is one of the **world's largest carbon emitters per capita**,

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has remained reluctant to commit to stronger climate action and has cited jobs as a major reason to back the country's fossil fuel industries. **It has not updated its climate goals since 2015.**

## ABOUT GREAT BARRIER REEF

It is the **world's most extensive and spectacular coral reef ecosystem** composed of over 2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands. The reef is located in **the Coral Sea (North-East Coast)**, off the **coast of Queensland, Australia**. It can be seen from outer space and is the world's biggest single structure made by living organisms. This reef structure is composed of and built by billions of tiny organisms, known as coral polyps. They are made up of genetically identical organisms called polyps, which are tiny, soft-bodied organisms. At their base is a hard, protective limestone skeleton called a calicle, which forms the structure of coral reefs. These polyps have microscopic algae called zooxanthellae living within their tissues. **The corals and algae have a mutualistic (symbiotic) relationship. It was selected as a World Heritage Site in 1981.**

## INITIATIVES TO PROTECT CORALS

A number of global initiatives are being taken to address the issues,

- International Coral Reef Initiative
- Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)
- Global Coral Reef Alliance (GCRA)
- The Global Coral Reef R&D Accelerator Platform
- Similarly, the Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), India has included the studies on coral reefs under the Coastal Zone Studies (CZS).



like:

In India, the **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)**, with help from Gujarat's forest department, is attempting a process to **restore coral reefs using "biorock" or mineral accretion technology**. National Coastal Mission Programme, to protect and sustain coral reefs in the country.

## LARGEST CORAL REEF AREA:

- **Indonesia** has the **largest coral reef area** in the world. **India, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Chagos** have the maximum coral reefs in South Asia. The **Great Barrier Reef of the Queensland coast of Australia** is the largest aggregation of coral reefs.
- **Coral Reef Areas in India:** India has four coral reef areas: **Gulf of Mannar, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep islands** and the Gulf of Kutch.



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- **Benefits:** Protect humanity from natural calamities. Provide revenue and employment through tourism and recreation. Provide habitats for fishes, starfish and sea anemones.
- **Use: They are used in jewellery.** Coral blocks are used for buildings and road construction. The lime supplied by corals is used in cement industries.
- **Threats:** Due to anthropogenic activities such as coastal development, destructive fishing methods and pollution from domestic and industrial sewage. **Due to increased sedimentation, over-exploitation and recurring cyclones.** Coral diseases such as black band and white band due to infectious microorganisms introduced by the **human population that live on the coastal regions.**
- **Role of Mangroves:** Mangrove forests play a crucial role in helping the coral reef system by acting as filters and providing protection from cyclones, storms and tsunamis.

## WHAT IS UNESCO?

**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN). It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. It is also a member of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG)**, a coalition of UN agencies and organizations aimed at fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **UNESCO's Headquarters** are located in Paris and the Organization has more than 50 field offices around the world. It has 193 Members and 11 Associate Members (As of April 2020) and is governed by the General Conference and the Executive Board. Three UNESCO member states are not UN members: **Cook Islands, Niue, and Palestine.** While three UN member states (Israel, Liechtenstein, United States) are not UNESCO members.



*UNESCO focuses on a set of objectives such as:*

- Attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning
- Mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development
- Addressing emerging social and ethical challenges
- Fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace
- Building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication
- Focuses on global priority areas - **“Africa” and “Gender Equality”**.

**History:** In 1942, during the Second World War, the governments of the European countries, which were confronting Germany and its allies, met in the United Kingdom for the **Conference of Allied Ministers**

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**of Education (CAME).** Upon the proposal of CAME, a United Nations Conference for the establishment of an educational and cultural organization was convened in London in November 1945. At the end of the conference, UNESCO was founded on 16 November 1945. The first session of the **General Conference of UNESCO was held in Paris during November-December of 1946.**

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