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Creativity in Science



N Modi attends closed-door session of
Summit for
Democracy

India International Science Festival

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge)

Jitendra

Inauguration



China launched new Satellites Jian-605"



INDIA Commonwealth Weightlifting Championship 16 medals

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

CABINET APPROVALS

Cabinet Approval on December 8, 2021

Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the following proposals:

- ✓ Cabinet approved the proposal of the Department of Rural Development for continuation of **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Gramin (PMAY-G)** beyond March 2021 till March 2024 as per the existing norms to complete the remaining 155.75 lakh houses from the cumulative target of 2.95 crore houses in rural areas.
- ✓ Cabinet also approved the funding and implementation of Ken-Betwa inter-linking of rivers project with an outlay of Rs 44,605 crore at 2020-21 price levels. It is the first project under the National Perspective Plan for interlinking of rivers.
- ✓ It is proposed to be implemented in **8 years with state-of-the-art technology** and will generate **103 MW (Mega Watt)** hydropower and **27 MW** solar power.

Cabinet Approval on December 15, 2021

Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi approved the following important initiatives on December 15, 2021.

- ✓ The cabinet has approved an incentive scheme with an estimated financial outlay of Rs 1,300 crore (for 1 year i.e. FY22) to promote RuPayDebit cards and low-value (up to Rs 2,000) BHIM-UPI (Bharat Interface for Money – Unified Payments Interface) transactions (Person-to-Merchant (P2M)) in India.
- ✓ Cabinet approved a **production linked incentive (PLI) scheme** with an outlay of Rs 76,000 crore to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in India.
- ✓ Cabinet has approved the extension of **implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)** for 2021-26 with an outlay of Rs 93,068 crore.
- ✓ The cabinet cleared a Bill on electoral reforms, including one to link the electoral roll with Aadhaar on a voluntary basis to root out multiple enrolments.
- ✓ Cabinet has also approved the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland.

Cabinet Approvals on December 22, 2021

Union Cabinet chaired by Indian Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi approved the following proposals which were briefed by Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB).

- ✓ On the basis of the recommendations provided by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (**CACP**), The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (**CCEA**) chaired by the PM Narendra Modi has given its approval for the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for Copra for 2022 season.
- ✓ Union Cabinet approved the signing of MoU between the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (**ICAI**) and the Polish Chamber of Statutory Auditors (**PIBR**), an audit profession regulator in Poland, to establish mutual co-operation.
- ✓ Union Cabinet also approved MoU signing between Competition Commission of India (**CCI**) and Competition Commission of Mauritius (**CCM**) for promotion and strengthening of co-operation in competition law and policy through exchange of information, sharing of best practices and capacity building initiative.

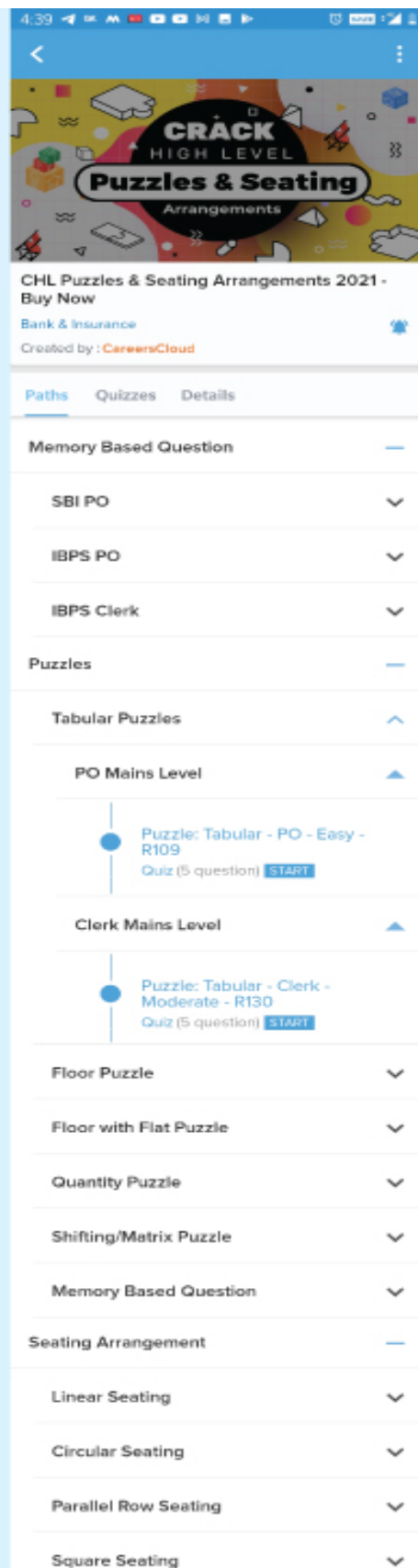
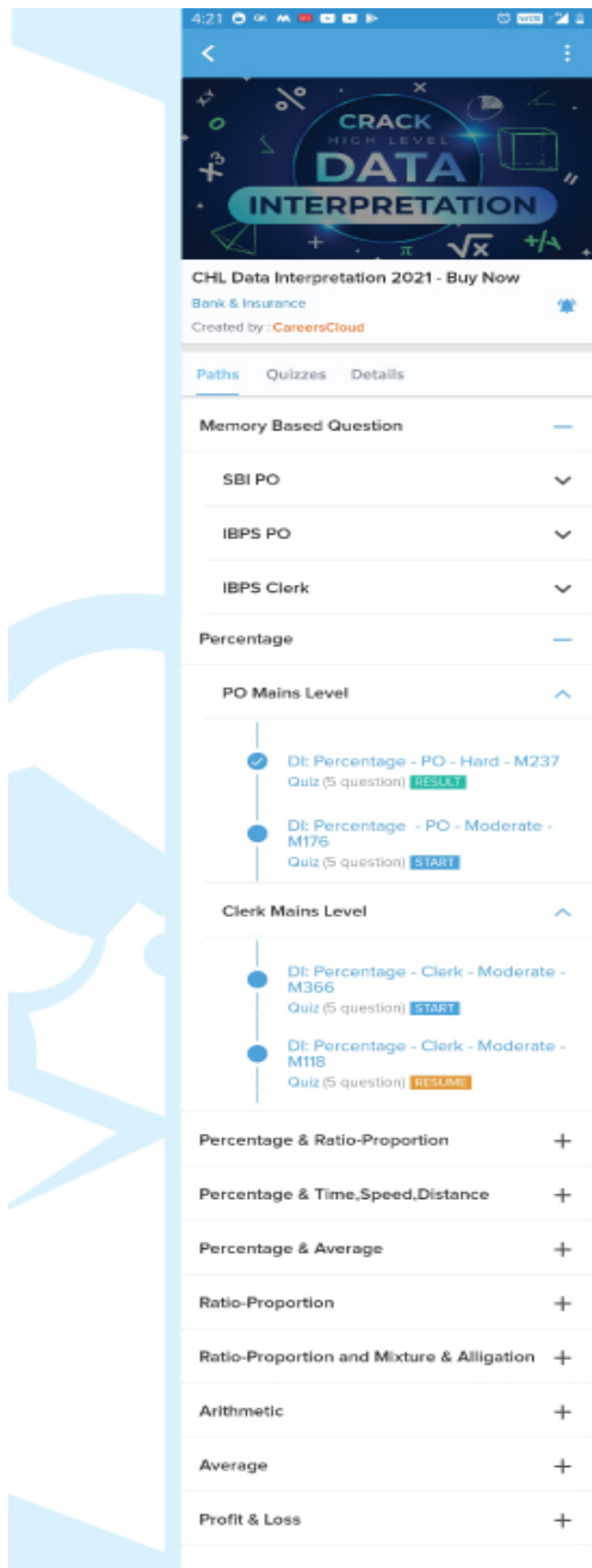
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Course Name	No. of sets	No. of ques
CHL - Data Interpretation	410	2050
CHL - Puzzle & Seating	400	2000
CPL - Data Interpretation	330	1650
CPL - Puzzle & Seating	340	1700
CHL - Arithmetic	85	850
CPL - Arithmetic	195	1950
CHL - Quantitative Aptitude	90	900
CPL - Quantitative Aptitude	140	1400
CHL - Logical Reasoning	80	800
CPL - Logical Reasoning	185	1850
Total	2255	15150
CPL: Crack Prelims Level (Preliminary Exam Focused) CHL: Crack High Level (Mains Exam Focused)		

Best wishes for your exams, keep working hard and you are sure to be successful.

Union Cabinet gives nod to raise women's marriage age to 21 from 18 years

Union Cabinet has given its nod for proposal to bring uniformity in the marriageable age of men and women, thereby, increasing the legal age of marriage of women from 18 to 21 years. In this regard, a Bill will be introduced to amend **the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006, Special Marriage Act, 1954 and personal laws such as the Hindu Marriage Act 1955** in the ongoing winter session of Parliament (November 29- December 23, 2021).

STATEWISE NATIONAL NEWS

Haryana

Sanjeev Kaushal Appointed as New Chief Secretary of Haryana

Sanjeev Kaushal, IAS officer of 1986 batch Haryana Cadre, has been appointed as the **New 35th Chief Secretary (CS) of Haryana** following the superannuation of Vijai Vardhan, a 1985 batch IAS officer. He is due to retire in July 2024. Additional Chief Secretary (Planning) **Debashish Chakrabarty**, IAS officer of 1986 batch, has been given the Additional charge of chief secretary of Maharashtra.

- ✓ **Sitaram Kunte**, Chief Secretary (CS) of Maharashtra has retired from the post after the government of India declined to extend his term.

Karnataka

Karnataka govt partners with NPCI & SBI to implement 'e-RUPI' for Payment of Scholarships

The Karnataka government has partnered with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) & State Bank of India (SBI) to enable and implement the '**e-RUPI**' payment solution to students under its scholarship programme.

For redeeming e-RUPI, the identified institutes will scan the QR code or SMS string displayed by the students using an application.

Nagaland

Nagaland Govt creates 3 new districts namely Tseminyu, Nuiland and Chumukedima

The State Government of Nagaland has created three new districts namely **Tseminyu, Nuiland and Chumukedima**, reaching the total district tally of the state to 15. Tseminyu became the 13th district followed by Nuiland and Chumukedima as 14th and 15th Districts respectively.

- ✓ The decision was taken during a state cabinet meeting held under the leadership of Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio at Kohima.
- ✓ Nuiland and Chumukedima have been formed out of Dimapur district, while Tseminyu is the sub-division of the Kohima district.

Odisha

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Launched Mukhyamantri Vayu Swasthya Seva for Remote Tribal Districts

Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister (CM) of Odisha has launched the **Mukhyamantri Vayu Swasthya Seva (Air Health Services)** at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (Bhubaneswar Airport) and flagged off the first flight headed to Malkangiri District with a medical team. Under this scheme, specialist doctors will be flown to remote areas of Odisha to treat the people suffering from serious diseases.

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Odisha's Longest Bridge in Cuttack

Chief Minister (CM) of Odisha inaugurated Odisha's longest bridge, '**T-Setu**', built over the Mahanadi river at **Gopinathpur, Cuttack District, Odisha**. The bridge in the shape of the English alphabet 'T' was constructed at a cost of Rs 111 crore.

Odisha Launches Digital Life Certificate for Pensioners

On 29th December 2021, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched Digital Life Certificate system for pensioners virtually while attending the orientation programme for newly recruited 153 officers of Odisha Civil Services. Odisha is the first state in the country to implement such a digital service for pensioners.

Punjab

Punjab CM Channi declares Krishan Balram Rath Yatra as State Festival

Chief Minister (CM) of Punjab Charanjit Singh Channi declared **Lord Krishna Balram Jagannath Rath Yatra** as an annual state festival. The announcement for the same was made during **flagging off the 25th Shri Lord Krishna Balram Jagannath Rath Yatra**. He also announced a grant of Rs 2.51 crore for the Iskcon Temple in Ludhiana, Punjab.

- ✓ Notably, Punjab Government is also developing the Bhagavad Gita and Ramayana Research Centre on 20-acre land in Patiala.

Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu Declared 'Tamil Thai Vaazhthu' by Manonmaniam Sundaranar as State Song

M K Stalin, Chief Minister (CM) of Tamil Nadu (TN) announced that "Tamil Thai Vazhthu" ('Neerarum Kadaludutha') from Manonmaneeyam (Tamil Drama), penned by Tamil scholar Manonmaniam Sundaranar Pillai as the State Song of Tamil Nadu.

- ✓ The song should be sung in 55 seconds in Mullaipaani Ragam (Mohana Raagam).
- ✓ A government order (GO) has been issued directing everyone present during the rendition of the song, barring differently-abled persons, should remain standing.

Tamil Nadu Government Launches CM Dashboard "CM Dashboard Tamil Nadu 360"

The Tamil Nadu government launched the Chief Minister (CM) Dashboard monitoring system, "CM Dashboard Tamil Nadu 360" in Chennai. It will enable CM to track all welfare schemes, including the status of their implementation, fund allocation and the number of beneficiaries along with updates on the storage of water in dams and rainfall patterns.

MK Stalin CM of TN Launched Meendum Manjappai Campaign to Promote Cloth Bags

Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin (MK Stalin) Chief Minister (CM) of Tamil Nadu (TN) launched the 'Meendum Manjappai' Campaign (Meendum Manjappai Vizhipunarvu Iyakkam), a campaign against single-use plastic (SUP) bags at the Kalaivanar Arangam, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The campaign of the Department of Environment, Climate Change & Forest, Government of Tamil Nadu is supported by GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH).

Uttarakhand

Pushkar Singh Dhami launches - 'Milk Price Incentive Scheme' in Uttarakhand

Chief Minister (CM) of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhami launched the '**Milk Price Incentive Scheme**' in Dehradun. The scheme is aimed to provide incentives benefiting around 53,000 people of Uttarakhand. It is a Direct Bank Transfer (DBT) scheme, the amount under the scheme would go directly into the accounts of the beneficiaries through their linked bank accounts.

Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra Appointed as Acting Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court

In the exercise of the power conferred by Article 223 of the Constitution of India 1949, the President of India has appointed Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra, the senior-most judge of Uttarakhand High Court (HC), has been appointed as the Acting Chief Justice (CJ) of the Uttarakhand HC with effect from 24th December 2021. He was appointed following the retirement of Justice Raghvendra Singh Chauhan, CJ of Uttarakhand HC.

Uttar Pradesh

UP Cabinet approves Atma Nirbhar Krishak Development Scheme to boost Agri Sector

Uttar Pradesh (UP) Cabinet has approved the implementation of Atma Nirbhar Krishak Integrated Development Scheme in the state from 2021-22 to 2031-32 to boost the agriculture sector. The expected outlay for its implementation is Rs 1,220.92 crore for a period of 10 years.

PFC will Finance 350 Electric Buses in Uttar Pradesh

Power Finance Corporation (PFC), a Maharatna company signed an agreement with GreenCell Mobility, to lend **INR 275 crore** for deployment of 350 electric buses across nine cities of Uttar Pradesh. The initiative is part of the **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME)-II** scheme.

- ✓ GreenCell Mobility is an e-mobility platform supported by Governments of India and United Kingdom to boost adoption of electric vehicles in the country.

Durga Shankar Mishra becomes new Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh

The Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary of India, Durga Shankar Mishra got approval from the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet to take charge as the new Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh (UP). He will succeed Rajendra Kumar Tiwari, the present Chief Secretary of UP, who is due to retire in February 2023.

LAUNCHES & INAUGURATION

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal Inaugurated 40th Edition of IITF 2021; Bihar won Gold Award

Union Commerce and Industry Minister, Piyush Goyal inaugurated the 40th edition of the **India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2021 at Pragati Maidan in Delhi**. It was organised by the India Trade Promotion Organisation with 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' as the theme and to further promote the idea of 'Vocal for Local'.

- ✓ Bihar is the partner state for the 40th IITF and the focus states are Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand. Bihar won Gold award at IITF 2021 and has been adjudged the 'First for Excellence' in display in the 40th IITF in the category of the State Government or Union Territory pavilions.

9th International Tourism Mart was inaugurated for the North East Region

Neiphiu Rio, Chief Minister (CM) of Nagaland, Ajay Bhatt, Minister of State (MoS) for Tourism inaugurated the three-day long **9th International Tourism Mart for the North East Region** at Kohima, Nagaland to highlight the tourism potential of the region in the domestic and international markets. Nagaland is hosting this Mart for the first time.

PM Narendra Modi Inaugurated, lays Foundation Stone for Multiple Projects in Dehradun

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi inaugurated 7 projects worth Rs.2,573 crore and laid the foundation stone of 11 projects worth Rs.15,728 crore in Dehradun, Uttarakhand (Cumulatively the projects worth around Rs 18,000 crore). Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami also participated in the project's inauguration.

PM laid the foundation stone for the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor project at a cost of around Rs 8,300 crore.

1st Edition of India Young Water Professional Programme was Launched

The 1st edition of the India Young Water Professional Program (IYWPP) launched virtually to provide a structured platform for capacity building with strategic and long-term investment to support the water management reforms in India.

This Program will be implemented by Australia India Water Centre (a consortium of Australian and Indian universities). The program has been taken up under the National Hydrology Project, a Central Scheme of DOWR (Department Of Water Resources).

Dr Jitendra Singh launches 'unique' face recognition Technologies for all Pensioners

Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh launched a "Unique" face recognition technology for all pensioners in the country. It will work as a proof of 'life certificate' for pensioners. The initiative to provide digital life certificates was launched by the Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW).

- ✓ This face recognition technology has been devised by the National Informatics Center (NIC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in collaboration with the UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India).
- ✓ Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions decided to integrate the electronic Pension Payment Order (e-PPO) with Digi Locker.

Devusinh Chauhan MoS for Communications Released Commemorative Stamp to Mark 75 Years of Mahindra Group

Devusinh Chauhan, Minister of State (MoS) for Communications, has unveiled the commemorative postage stamp to mark the 75th anniversary of the Mahindra Group. He also urged the group to collaborate with the postal department to improve the delivery of social services in the rural areas. During the event, the First Day Cover (FDC) and an Information Brochure were also released.

MoS E&IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar Released the National Strategy on Blockchain, Launches India's 1st Indigenous Server RUDRA

On 3rd December 2021, while celebrating Azadi Ka Digital Mahotsav, the Minister of State (MoS) for Electronics and Information Technology (IT) & Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, released the National Strategy on Blockchain. It was formulated by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) to create trusted digital platforms through shared Blockchain infrastructure.

- ✓ Rajeev Chandrasekhar also launched India's 1st indigenous Server, RUDRA, which was developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) supported by MeitY and DST (Department Of Science & Technology).

SBM-U 2.0 Launched Swachh Technology Challenge for Entrepreneurial Skills in Waste Management Sector

Swachh Technology Challenge was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs' (MoHUA) Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0) during a virtual launch occasion. The challenge seeks entrepreneurial skills for India's waste management sector that can be further utilized by the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in implementing various components of SBM-U 2.0.

Minister of SJE Dr Virendra Kumar Launched 'Shreshtha Yojna' and National Fellowship Management and Grievance Redressal Portal

On the occasion of the Mahaparinirvana Diwas 2021 (6th December), Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment (SJE), Dr Virendra Kumar participated in the event organised by Dr Ambedkar Foundation at Dr Ambedkar International Center, New Delhi campus and launched the 'Shreshtha Yojna' and National Fellowship Management and Grievance Redressal Portal during the event. He also paid floral tribute to Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar at the Dr Ambedkar National Memorial, New Delhi.

MeitY organized 'Digital Payment Utsav' in New Delhi; Yes Bank launched RuPay-branded Credit Card on Payment Platform

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (**MeitY**) organized '**Digital Payment Utsav**' in New Delhi, Delhi as a part of the week-long '**Azadi Ka Digital Mahotsav**' to acknowledge the rise of digital payments in India by bringing together leaders from the Government, Banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI), and startups. Union Minister launched various initiatives viz.

- ✓ Unveiling of the **DIGIDHAN logo**, launch of an awareness campaign called Digital Payments Sandesh Yatra with digital payments anthem titled '**Chutki Baja ke**' (cashless, touchless, paperless), an Awards ceremony for banks and fintechs namely '**Digidhan Awards**' for their achievements and promotion of digital payments in FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21.
- ✓ Yes Bank launches RuPay-branded Credit Card on Payment Platform in partnership with National Payments Corporation of India (**NPCI**).

AIM NITI Aayog, & Embassy of Denmark Launched AIM-ICDK Water Innovation Challenge 2.0

Atal Innovation Mission (**AIM**), NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) and the Royal Embassy of Denmark to India launched the 2nd edition of the water innovation challenges, "**AIM-ICDK Water Innovation Challenge 2.0**" to address the global water distress through innovations. This is a part of the Indo-Danish Bilateral Green Strategic partnership.

The 2nd edition of the water challenge (**2022 AIM-ICDK Water Challenge**) was launched under the partnership of AIM, NITI Aayog and Innovation Center Denmark (ICDK) under the aegis of the Denmark Embassy in India, and the Denmark Technical University (DTU).

NITI Aayog launches 'e-Sawaari India e-bus Coalition'

National Institution of Transforming India (NITI) Aayog launched the '**e-Sawaari India Electric Bus Coalition**' in partnership with Convergence Energy Service Ltd (CESL) and World Resources Institute, India (WRI India) and with the support from Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI).

- ✓ The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI Aayog has launched a Digi-book titled "Innovations for You".

Govt Launches National Helpline To Report Atrocities Against SCs/STs

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched a National Helpline Against Atrocities (**NHAA**) to prevent atrocities on members of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). The NHAA will ensure proper execution of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, (POA) 1989.

PM Modi Inaugurated 1st Phase of Kashi-Vishwanath Corridor Project, Varanasi

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi inaugurated the 1st phase of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor project (Kashi Vishwanath Dham project) which connects the Kashi Vishwanath temple and Ganga ghats in Varanasi. 23 building spread over around 5 lakh square feet area was inaugurated as a part of the **1st** phase of the Rs 339 crore Kashi Vishwanath Corridor project.

PM Inaugurated AIIMS, Fertilizer plant & ICMR centre in Uttar Pradesh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated several development projects worth Rs.10,000 crore including the Fertiliser Plant, **AIIMS** (All India Institute of Medical Sciences), and a new building of the regional centre of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh (UP). The fertiliser plant will enhance farmers' income by supplying them with ample urea fertiliser. The plant will serve the needs of the farmers in Purvanchal, UP.

Airtel Partners with Invest India to Launch "Airtel India Startup Innovation Challenge"

Bharti Airtel (Airtel) and Invest India, National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency jointly launched '**Airtel India Startup Innovation Challenge**' for Startups to develop solutions in 5G, IoT. Under the Startup Innovation Challenge, early-stage technology companies are being invited to demonstrate differentiated solutions in areas such as 5G, Cloud computing, Internet of Things (IoT) and digital entertainment.

Govt launches 2nd edition of Animal Husbandry Startup Grand Challenge

The 2nd edition of '**Animal Husbandry Startup Grand Challenge**' or '**Animal Husbandry Startup Grand Challenge 2.0**' was launched by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), in partnership with Startup India. It was launched by Union Minister Parshottam Rupala, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying (MoFAHD) during an event celebrating '**National Milk Day**' in Anand, Gujarat to commemorate the birth centenary of Dr. Varghese Kurien.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Saryu Nahar National Project in Balrampur, UP

The 40-year long pending project, Saryu Nahar National Project, was inaugurated by Prime Minister (PM) of India Narendra Modi in Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh (UP) on December 11, 2021. The outlay of the project is over Rs 9,800 crore, out of which more than Rs 4,600 crore was provisioned in the last four years. It will cater to the problem of water shortage mainly in eastern UP/ Purvanchal with assured water for irrigation to over 14 lakh hectares of land and benefit about 29 lakh farmers. It will cater to the problem of water shortage mainly in eastern UP/ Purvanchal with assured water for irrigation to over 14 lakh hectares of land and benefit about 29 lakh farmers.

Govt Lays Foundation for Maa Umiya Dham Development Project

Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone of Umiya Mata Dham temple and temple premises under Maa Umiya Dham Development Project at Umiya Campus in **Sola in Ahmedabad**, Gujarat along with several developmental projects including a railway bridge.

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has virtually attended and stated that the Project as an example of the notion of 'SabkaPrayas' (Efforts of everyone).

MoS of S&T Dr Jitendra Singh Inaugurated 7th India International Science Festival 2021

Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (MoS) (Independent Charge) **Science & Technology (S&T)**, inaugurated the **7th edition of the India International Science festival, IISF 2021 at Panaji, Goa**. IISF is a **joint program** of the Ministry of Science & Technology (MoST), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA), a swadeshi science movement of Bharat. Nodal Agency for organising IISF 2021 was the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, an autonomous institute under the MoES.

IFSCA Launched FinTech Hackathon 'Sprint04: Market-Tech' under I-Sprint'21

International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), launched the FinTech Hackathon 'Sprint04: Market-Tech' under I-Sprint'21 during the the closure of the InFinity Forum 2021. Sprint04: Market-Tech hosted by IFSCA and **GIFT city in collaboration with NSE**. The Hackathon focuses on the Capital Market Segment and this is one of its kind being backed by a Regulator.

DPIIT Launched LogiXtics, Unified Logistics Interface Platform Hackathon

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) has launched the Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) Hackathon – '**LogiXtics**' with an aim to crowdsource ideas to benefit the logistics industry in India. The hackathon was launched by Amitabh Kant, CEO of NITI Aayog.

The cost of logistics in India is about 14% which is higher than in other countries in the world especially with developed countries like the United States(US) and Germany.

PM Modi lays Foundation stone of Ganga Expressway in UP

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the longest highway in India, the Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh (UP) to offer fast-paced connectivity in India. The six-lane 594 km long expressway will be built at a cost of about Rs 36200 crore will connect the western and eastern regions of UP.

NSDC and GIF launched Project AMBER to Empower Youth with Industry Relevant Skills

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Generation India Foundation (GIF) launched 'Project AMBER' (Accelerated Mission for Better Employment and Retention) at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi to bridge the gap between skilling and employment.

- ✓ The aim of the project to develop and implement a scalable, and sustainable model of skill development to empower India's youth with industry-relevant skills and employment opportunities.

CJI NV Ramana Inaugurated India's 1st IAMC in Telangana

Justice NV Ramana, Chief Justice of India(CJI) and K Chandrasekhar Rao, Chief Minister(CM) of Telangana has inaugurated India's First International Arbitration and Mediation Centre(IAMC) at Hyderabad, Telangana. IAMC has been established to quickly resolve the issues that arise due to the Lack of sufficient judges.

PM Narendra Modi Launches Development projects worth Rs.650 crore on Goa liberation day

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of several development projects worth over 650 crore rupees in Goa during the Goa Liberation Day celebrations at Shyamaprasad Mukherjee Stadium in Taleigao, Goa. Some of the major projects are Renovated Fort Aguada jail museum, The super speciality hospital block at Goa medical college (GMC), and The new south Goa district hospital.

GIS based 'Automatic Water Supply System', 1st of its kind in India launched by Rajnath Singh

On the occasion of Defence Estates Day 2021 i.e. December 16, 2021, Union Minister Rajnath Singh, Ministry of Defence has launched India's first of its kind Geographic Information System (GIS) based 'Automatic Water Supply System' for citizens of Cantonment Boards under eChhawani project. It is an easy and fast application with 100% automatic process.

- ✓ The module for this system has been developed by Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo informatics (BISAG) under the guidance of Defence Secretary and Director General of Defence Estates (DGDE), Delhi.

AIM, NITI Aayog Launched 1st of its kind Vernacular Innovation Programme to Empower Entrepreneurs

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) under the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) has launched the first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Programme(VIP) to empower the entrepreneurs and innovators across India.

VIP will enable the innovators and entrepreneurs across India to have access to the innovation ecosystem in 22 scheduled languages of India and English.

India's 1st ABDM integrated health locker launched by Docprime Technologies

Gurugram (Haryana)-based Docprime Technologies Private Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of PB Fintech has launched, free of cost, India's first Health Locker integrated with Ayushman Bharat Digital

Mission (ABDM) namely **'Docprime Health Locker'**. The Locker has received the ABDM Sandbox approval and went live on August 6, 2021. Initially restricted to select UTs (Union Territories), it was nationally rolled out by the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi Aug 27, 2021.

PM Modi Launches Multiple Development Initiatives in Varanasi, UP

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi inaugurated or laid the foundation stones of 27 development projects worth Rs 2,095 crore in his Varanasi parliamentary constituency of Uttar Pradesh (UP). PM reviewed the development projects along with UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

- ✓ List of Development initiatives launched: Banas Dairy Sankul, Electricity generation plant, a portal and logo which was dedicated to the Conformity Assessment Scheme of milk products, developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) with the help of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and others.

Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda Launched Different Projects of TRIFED

Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Arjun Munda launched several ambitious projects of **TRIFED (Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India)** including the launch of the TRIFED VanDhan Chronicle, 14 Honey Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), an MoU with UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) to boost Tribal Samvaad Network and also unveiled a report titled, 'Tribal Livelihoods: From Sustenance to Sustainability'.

MoRTH Launches 1st 'Intelligent Transport System'

On 23rd December 2021 Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) Nitin Gadkari launched the first Intelligent Transport System (ITS) on the six-lane Eastern Peripheral Expressway at Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. The Union Minister also laid the foundation stone of National Highway projects of 240 km worth Rs 9,119 crore in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh.

NITI Aayog's AIM releases 'Innovations for You' & 'The Ingenious Tinkerers' Digi Books

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI (National Institute for Transforming India) Aayog released the digital books – **'The Ingenious Tinkerers'** and the 2nd edition of 'Innovations for You'. The Digital books were released virtually in the presence of Niti Aayog Vice-Chairman, Rajiv Kumar, AIM Mission Director, Chintan Vaishnav and others. The 2nd edition of the 'Innovations for You' is a compendium of innovations in Agriculture and allied sectors. It features 70 startups supported by Atal incubation Centers (AICs) of AIM.

Defence Minister Lays Foundation Stone of Some Centre of DRDO in Lucknow

Union Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for Defence Technology & Test Centre (DTTC) and BrahMos Manufacturing Centre. The 2 defence manufacturing houses will be established by Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (UP).

- ✓ The state-of-the-art DTTC is set up as a result of the MoU signed between Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) & DRDO during DefExpo-2020 held in Lucknow.

PM Modi Inaugurated & Laid Foundation Stone of Rs 11,000 crore Worth Hydropower Projects in Himachal Pradesh

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi presided over the 2nd groundbreaking ceremony of the Himachal Pradesh **Global Investors' Meet 2021** in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh (HP). He also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of the hydropower projects worth Rs 11000 crore in Mandi, HP. The Meet is aimed to boost the investment in the region through projects worth around Rs 28,000 crore.

PM inaugurates Kanpur Metro Rail Project & Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project in UP

Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi visited Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh (UP) to inaugurate the completed section of 9 km long priority section of Corridor-1 of the project from IIT Kanpur to Moti Jheel (9 elevated stations). The PM also inaugurated the 356 Km long Bina (Madhya Pradesh-MP)-Panki (Kanpur, UP) Multiproduct pipeline project with an outlay of Rs 1524 crore (Rs. 1227 crore in UP and Rs. 297 crore in MP). PM attended the 54th Convocation of IIT Kanpur as Chief Guest.

UP's Jhansi Railway Station Renamed As 'Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station'; Road Named 'Narendra Modi Marg' Inaugurated in Sikkim

Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister (CM) of Uttar Pradesh (UP) has announced that the government of UP has renamed the Jhansi Railway Station, in Jhansi, UP as **"Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station"** after Rani Laxmibai, the Maharani consort of the Maratha princely state of Jhansi.

Ganga Prasad, Governor of Sikkim has inaugurated the **"Narendra Modi Marg"**, a road named after Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi. The Narendra Modi Marg is the 2nd road connecting the Tsomgo lake and Nathula border pass with Gangtok, Sikkim.

PM Narendra Modi Lays Foundation stone for 23 projects in Uttarakhand

On 30th December 2021 Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 23 projects worth over Rs 17,500 crore in Uttarakhand. Among the 23 projects, the foundation stone is being laid for 17 projects worth over Rs 14,100 crore...

- ✓ He laid the foundation stone of **Aroma Park** at Kashipur and **Plastic Industrial Park** at Sitarganj... [Click here for more detail.](#)

ITC Ltd & Invest India Partners to Crowdfund Innovative Ideas for SUP Substitution; ITC PSPD Launched ITC Sustainability Innovation Challenge

ITC Limited has collaborated with Invest India, a non-profit venture of the Indian Government for national investment promotion and facilitation, to crowdfund innovative ideas for single-use plastic (SUP) substitution and automate waste segregation. Under this partnership, ITC Paperboards and Specialty Papers Division (PSPD) has launched the ITC Sustainability Innovation Challenge, which will support innovative start-up ideas on sustainable packaging and smart waste management solutions.

FESTIVALS

22nd Hornbill Festival begins in Nagaland

22nd Hornbill Festival began in Nagaland at Naga Heritage Village, Kisama (Kohima). The **Governor** of Assam and Nagaland **Prof. Jagdish Mukhi** inaugurated the programme of the 10-day festival. It is also called the **'Festival of Festivals'**. It is the **largest celebration of the Indigenous Warrior Tribes** of Nagaland, generally celebrated **for 10 days**.

- ✓ The festival is also known as Dhanesh bird festival and organized by the State Tourism and Art & Culture Departments.

Rajasthan's Art and Culture Minister BD Kalla inaugurated 24th Lokrang-2021

Rajasthan's Art and Culture Minister Dr. Bulaki Das Kalla inaugurated 11-day long **24th 'Lokrang-2021'**, an annual festival of folk artists in Jaipur, Rajasthan. It is organized by Jawahar Kala Kendra (JKK), Art and Culture Department and RUDA (Rural Non-Agriculture Development Agency) under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

- ✓ It will comprise National Handicrafts Fair in Shilpgram (rural arts and crafts complex in JKK) in collaboration with RUDA; and Rajasthani Language Writing Festival.

OTHER NATIONAL NEWS

India's 1st Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects to be set up by NTPC at Simhadri, AP

National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has awarded a project of "Standalone Fuel-Cell based Micro-grid with hydrogen production using electrolyser in Simhadri, near Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh (AP).

It is India's 1st Green Hydrogen based Energy Storage Project and one of the largest in the world.

- ✓ India targets to become carbon neutral by 2070.

Kazhuveli Wetland declared as 16th Bird Sanctuary of Tamil Nadu

Kazhuveli wetland situated in Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu has been declared as the 16th Bird Sanctuary by Surpiya Sahu, Environment and Forest Secretary, at the Minister of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

- ✓ The declaration was made under subsection (1) of section 18 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- ✓ The Kazhuveli wetlands is referred to as the 2nd largest Brackish Water Lake in South India, only after Pulicat lake.
- ✓ The recognition was first proposed by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Chief Wildlife Warden, Shekar Kumar Niraj.

Alternative Mechanism approved GoI's 100% stake sale in CEL to Nandal Finance and Leasing Pvt. Ltd

Nandal Finance and Leasing Pvt. Ltd received an approval from ministerial panel namely 'Alternative Mechanism' to acquire 100% equity shareholding of Government of India (GoI) in Central Electronics Ltd (CEL). CEL is a CPSE (Central Public Sector Enterprises) under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR). This is the second strategic stake sale by GoI after Air India.

MoHUA extends Timeline for Implementation of Smart Cities Mission to June 2023

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) extended the timeline for the implementation of the Smart Cities Mission (SCM) for all 100 participating cities to June 2023 due to the COVID-19 induced slowdown and other factors. The Mission was launched in the year FY2015-16 & set a target of five years i.e. upto FY 2019-20. This decision is also based upon the recommendations made by NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog in August 2021.

India achieves target of 40% Power Generation Capacity from Non-Fossil Fuel Sources

In accordance with the ministry of new and renewable energy (MNRE), India has achieved the target of 40% power generation capacity to 156.83 GW (Giga Watt) from non-fossil fuel sources in November 2021. Now, India's installed renewable energy (RE) capacity stands at 150.05 GW, while its nuclear energy-based installed electricity capacity is 6.78 GW.

- ✓ India announced to cut net carbon emissions to zero by 2070 at COP26 in Glasgow.

GoI to Develop Indigenous Jet Engines for LCA Tejas Aircrafts

The Government of India (GoI) has informed the Parliament about the future development of indigenous engines for powering aircraft such as Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas variants and Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) in association with an International Engine House. Currently, the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas is integrated with an imported engine.

Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia Announced New Helicopter Policy to Set Up Dedicated Hubs & Corridors

Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Union Minister of Civil Aviation has announced a New 10- point (Step) Helicopter Policy at the 3rd Helicopter Summit 2021 – India@75: Expediting the Growth of Indian Helicopter Industry and Enhancing Air Connectivity organised by FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry), Ministry of Civil Aviation(MoCA) and Pawan Hans Ltd. in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

- ✓ Under this new policy dedicated hubs and corridors will be established to boost air connectivity. Initially four Heli Hubs and Training Units will be set up Juhu in Mumbai, Guwahati, Delhi, and Bangalore.

NEDFi Introduced Atmanirbhar Hastshilpkar Scheme for North-Eastern Artisans

North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (NEDFi), a premier financial institution in the North-Eastern (NE) Region, has introduced a new scheme named Atmanirbhar Hastshilpkar Scheme to the grass-root Artisans of the NE region under the Ministry of Doner (Development of NE Region).

UP, Delhi, Karnataka leads in Total Registered EVs in India

During the Winter Session of the Parliament, Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways, informed the Rajya Sabha on the state of **Electric Vehicles (EV)** in India. As per the data release, **India has a total of 870,141 registered EVs**, with **Uttar Pradesh (UP)** holding the top spot with **255,700 registered EVs**. UP is followed by **Delhi (125,347)**, **Karnataka (72,544)**, **Bihar (58,014)** and **Maharashtra (52,506)** in successive positions.

PM Modi Addressed Depositors in a Bank Deposit Insurance Programme

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a bank deposit insurance programme titled '**Depositors First: Guaranteed Time-bound Deposit Insurance Payment up to Rs 5 Lakh**' in Delhi and addressed depositors. It covers all deposits such as savings, fixed, current, recurring deposits, etc. in all commercial banks, functioning in India. Deposits in State, Central and Primary cooperative banks, functioning in States/Union Territories are also will be covered under it.

Central Govt. Accepts plea to Grants Mithila Makhana GI Tag

Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry accepted the proposal to **rename Bihar Makhana as Mithila Makhana** and retain its Geographical Identification (GI) tag. It also suggested amendments in the brand logo to highlight its origins and protect the product's Geographical Indications (GI) rights.

Uttar Pradesh's Haiderpur Wetland Recognized as 47th Ramsar Site in India

Haiderpur Wetland, the human-made wetland of around 6908 hectares in Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh (UP) has been recognised as the **47th Ramsar Site of India and 2,463rd site internationally**. The wetland is located within the boundaries of Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh.

- ✓ Haiderpur Wetland, a human-made wetland formed in 1984 by the construction of the Madhya Ganga Barrage on a floodplain of the River Ganga.

Uttarakhand's Askot Wildlife Sanctuary Declared as Eco-Sensitive Zone

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), an area of 454.65 square kilometres around the boundary of Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand has been declared as the Askot Wildlife Sanctuary Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ). There is no village falling inside the Eco-Sensitive Zone of Askot Wildlife Sanctuary. The notified area extends from 0 to 22 km around the Askot Wildlife Sanctuary.

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh handed over 5 DRDO Products to Armed Forces & 6 LAToT

Union Minister Rajnath Singh, Ministry of Defence (MoD) handed over five Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) developed products to the Armed forces and other security agencies at an event held at DRDO Bhawan, New Delhi (Delhi) as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations. He also handed over six **Licensing Agreements for Transfer of Technology (LAToT)** to seven public and private sector companies.

- ✓ The LAToT documents of DRDO developed systems were handed over during the event for the technologies viz. Chemical Agent Monitor (CAM), Unit Maintenance Vehicle, Unit Repair Vehicle, Fused Silica based Ceramic Core technology and the Fire Suppressing Gel.

India & Uzbekistan Pushes Cooperation to Boost Economic Ties

Uzbekistan's Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade – **Sardor Umurzakov & Indian Envoy**, Manish Prabhat took part in a meeting, where they decided to promote interregional cooperation, especially between Andijan (Uzbekistan) and Gujarat (India). They also discussed various financial-technical cooperation between India & Uzbekistan & signed agreements for strengthening the cooperations.

- ✓ The Countries welcomed the financial allocation of \$448 million by Eximbank of India for implementation of priority projects in Uzbekistan (that includes infrastructure development and education).

CBDT rolls out 'e-Verification Scheme, 2021' for Taxpayer's info e-verification

Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has issued new rules namely 'e-Verification Scheme, 2021' for faceless collection of information from taxpayers, where mismatches are detected. The scheme is notified under a provision in Income Tax Act 135A that proposes faceless information gathering aimed at imparting efficiency, transparency and accountability. It eliminates the interface between the income-tax authority and the assessee.

Ashok Leyland Signs Pact with DRDO Arm for Combat Vehicle Engines

Ashok Leyland has partnered with Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE), a premier lab of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), to develop and manufacture 600-HP indigenous engines. The partnership will power futuristic combat vehicles under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat mission.

HAL signs biggest order of Rs 2,400cr with BEL for LCA fighters

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) signed a Rs 2,400 crore contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) for development and supply of 20 types of systems for **LCA (Light Combat Aircraft)** 83 Tejas Mk1A fighter aircraft programme.

- ✓ The duration of the contract is 5 years i.e. from 2023 to 2028.

Notably, this is HAL's biggest order on any Indian company thus boosting the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' campaign.

HAL Obtains ADE-DRDO Supply Order for 'ABHYAS' Target Platform

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has obtained an order for manufacturing, assembly, integration, testing and supply of High-Speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) System, named '**ABHYAS**' from the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). After completion of this order, HAL will become the Development-cum-Production Partner (DcPP) for the supply of HEAT systems along with private firms (50 percent of the volume).

Central Government Grant 'In-Principle' Approval for 6 Nuclear Reactors at Maharashtra

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra granted 'In-Principle' approval for setting up 6 Nuclear Reactors at Jaitapur in Maharashtra. The approval is for setting up 6 nuclear power reactors of 1650 MW each, making Jaitapur as India's largest nuclear power generating site with a total capacity of 9900 MW.

India & US announce new programme 'Technology-based Energy Solutions: Innovations for Net Zero'

India and the United States (US) announced a new programme 'Technology-based Energy Solutions: Innovations for Net Zero' to support innovations to tackle climate and clean energy challenges. The aim of the program is to support India and the United States (US) announced a new programme 'Technology-based Energy Solutions: Innovations for Net Zero' to support innovations to tackle climate and clean energy challenges.

'Durga Puja in Kolkata' Inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of ICH of Humanity

The Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) of UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) 2003 Convention on Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has inscribed 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' on the Representative List of ICH of Humanity during its 16th session of IGC which was held in Paris, France from 13 to 18 December 2021.

- ✓ With the inscription of Durga Puja in Kolkata, India now has 14 ICH elements on the prestigious UNESCO Representative List of ICH of Humanity.
- ✓ Before Durga Puja, the two latest inscriptions in the ICH list from India are Kumbh Mela (inscribed 2017) and Yoga (inscribed 2016).

India and Maldives Jointly Launches Pilot Project on Pre-arrival Customs Data Exchange

India and Maldives signed a MoU between the customs of two countries for the joint launch of a pilot project on 'pre-arrival customs data exchange' in a virtual ceremony. It was Launched by Vivek Johri, Chairman Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) and Abdulla Shareef, Commissioner General, Maldives Customs Service. This MoU helps in faster Export-Import (EXIM) clearances, fast-track customs payments and help identify frauds.

PM Modi Transferred Rs 1000 Crore under DAY-NRLM to Bank Accounts of SHGs

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India addressed the gathering of women beneficiaries of several government scheme at Prayagraj district of Uttar Pradesh (UP) and transferred Rs.1000 crore into the bank accounts of the women Self Help Groups (SHGs) in UP. The amount was transferred under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM).

- ✓ 80000 SHGs received a Community Investment Fund (CIF) of Rs 1.10 lakh per SHG and 60000 SHGs received a Revolving Fund of Rs 15000 per SHG.

MHA extends AFSPA, 1958 in Nagaland for 6 more months declaring Nagaland as Disturbed Area

In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), 1958 (No.28 of 1958) the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) declared the entire Nagaland as a 'disturbed area' for six more months w.e.f. December 30, 2021 till June 30, 2022. This decision came days after the Union Government constituted a 7-member high-level committee headed by secretary-level officer Vivek Joshi to examine the possibility of withdrawing the controversial AFSPA, 1958 from Nagaland.

GOVT SCHEMES

Govt Approves Continuation of 'Scheme for Investment Promotion' for 5 Years

Ministry of Commerce and Industry has approved the continuation of the Scheme for Investment Promotion (SIP) for five years from 2021-22 till 2025-26 with a financial outlay of Rs.970 crore. SIP is a Centrally Sponsored scheme, launched on 11th November 2008, to promote Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is the implementing agency of the scheme.

Jharkhand CM Launches SAHAY Scheme for Maoist-hit areas

Chief Minister (CM) of Jharkhand Hemant Soren has launched Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY) scheme aimed at nurturing young sporting talents in Maoist-hit districts of the state. Currently, it is launched in Saraikela-Kharsawan, West Singhbhum, Khunti, Gumla and Simdega districts of Jharkhand, and will extend to other districts too.

Haryana Govt Starts Khel Nursery Scheme to Promote Sports

Haryana's Minister of State for Sports and Youth Affairs Sandeep Singh launched 'Khel Nursery Scheme 2022-23' to promote sports in the state. The scheme promotes sports nurseries that will be started in government, private educational institutions and private sports institutions.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

India joins G20's Troika with Indonesia and Italy

Indonesia assumed the Presidency of G20 (Group of 20) from the outgoing Italy, which held the presidency for the last 1-year. With this Presidency change, India which is set to hold the G20 Presidency from 1st December 2022 to 31st November 2023 has entered the G20 Troika. G20 Troika is a group comprising the previous, current & the next G20 Presidencies of G20.

- ✓ Theme for G20 Leaders Summit 2022 - "Recover Together, Recover Stronger".

South Korea to Get World's Sustainable First Floating City by 2025

South Korea is set to get the World's first floating city, a joint effort by OCEANIX and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat), which is likely to be completed by 2025. The floating city will be developed on the coast of Busan, South Korea, to tackle the problem of rising sea levels.

G7 Finance Leaders set Guidelines for CBDCs

G7 (Group of Seven) advanced economies' central banks have been working to set common standards toward issuing 'Central Bank Digital Currency' (CBDC). As per the statement of G7, any CBDC issued by a central bank should not harm the bank's ability to fulfill its mandate on monetary and financial stability, and also should meet the standards.

- ✓ A CBDC is a legal tender that would be issued by the central bank in a digital form. It is exchangeable one-to-one with fiat currency and it would appear as a liability (currency in circulation) on a central bank's balance sheet.

UNGA granted Observer Status to International Solar Alliance

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) granted Observer Status to the International Solar Alliance (ISA) by adopting resolution 76/123. This decision has been taken based on the UNGA's Sixth Committee report. 4th UNGA of International Solar Alliance (ISA) was held in October 2021 which saw

the participation of 108 countries including 74 Member Countries and 34 Observer and Prospective Countries, 23 Partner Organizations and 33 Special Invitee Organizations.

India Assumed the Chairmanship of Council of Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO

India assumed the Chairmanship of Council of **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (RATS SCO)** for 1 year from October 28, 2021. The National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), Government of India, in association with Data Security Council of India (DSCI), as a Knowledge Partner, organized a 2-day Practical Seminar on 'Securing Cyberspace in the Contemporary Threat Environment' (on December 7 and 8, 2021) for delegates from SCO member States.

India re-elected to International Maritime Organisation Council for 2022-2023

Assembly of the International Maritime Organization has elected the Members of its Council for the 2022-2023 biennium. India has been re-elected to International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council for the 2022-2023 biennium under category B states.

UAE Became the 1st Country to Transition to 4 and Half-day Work Week

United Arab Emirates (UAE) has announced to change its **5-day work-week** to a 4 and a half day starting from 1st January 2022 and became the first country to make the employee-friendly transition as part of its efforts to improve productivity and work-life balance.

Dubai becomes World's 1st 100% Paperless Govt.

Dubai became the world's first government to turn 100 percent paperless, the announcement was made by the United Arab Emirate (UAE) **Crown Prince, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**. It will save around 3 billion Dirham (USD 350 million) and 14-million-man hours. A comprehensive digital government services platform is managing all internal, external transactions and procedures of the Government of Dubai.

Japan introduces world's 1st Dual-Mode Vehicle that can run on Roads and Tracks

Japan has introduced a minibus lookalike world's first dual-mode vehicle (DMV) in its town of Kaiyo. The vehicle can run on normal rubber tyres on the road but its steel wheels, which are in its underbelly, descend when it hits the rail tracks. This feature of effectively changing into a train-like module easily on **a rail track** is the first of its kind. It runs on diesel.

India Welcomes Egypt as Member of New Development Bank of BRICS

On 29th December 2021 India welcomed Egypt as the fourth new member of the **New Development Bank (NDB)** that was established by BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South-Africa) in 2015. NDB is developed to mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in emerging economies.

VISITS

INDIAN VISIT

Highlights of Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India on December 6, 2021

President of the Russian Federation H.E. Vladimir Putin paid an official visit to India, New Delhi on 6 December 2021 for the 21st India-Russia Annual Summit. Putin and PM Modi held the 21st India-Russia summit, to further enhance the special and **privileged strategic partnership between the two countries.**

Highlights of Vietnam's H.E. Nguyen Van Hung visit to India

H.E. Nguyen Van Hung, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MoCST) of Vietnam paid a 5-day official visit to India from December 15 to 19, 2021. India and Vietnam are celebrating 50 years of diplomatic ties in 2022 and the 5th anniversary of the Indo-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2021.

- ✓ In line with the comprehensive strategic and economic partnership and growing relations between the Republic of India and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Ministers of both countries signed a 'Letter of Intent' for enhanced cooperation in the Postal Sector.
- ✓ 12 MoUs were signed between Vietnamese and Indian companies in the areas of education, pharmaceutical materials, drug and vaccine production, information technology and technology transfer, and oil and gas...[Click here for more detail..](#)

FOREIGN VISIT

President Ram Nath Kovind's 3-day visit to Bangladesh

President of India Ram Nath Kovind was on a 3-day State visit to Bangladesh to attend the 50th Victory Day (Bijay Dibos or Vjay Diwas) celebrations at the National Parade ground in Dhaka as a guest of honour. He was the only foreign dignitary invited to jointly commemorate these celebrations reflecting a strong bond between two nations.

- ✓ India-Bangladesh celebrates 16th December as Victory Day to commemorate the win over Pakistan and their surrender to our joint forces in 1971 leading to the liberation of Bangladesh (Bangladesh Liberation war of 1971).
- ✓ The year 2021 commemorates the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's independence...[Click here for more detail..](#)

BANKING & FINANCE

RBI IN NEWS

RBI supersedes Board of Reliance Capital; appoints Nageswar Rao Y as New Administrator

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) superseded the Board of Directors of Reliance Capital Ltd (RCL), a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) by exercising its power conferred under Section 45-IE (1) of the RBI Act, 1934. RCL is promoted by Anil Dhirubhai Ambani's Reliance Group.

- ✓ In this regard, the apex bank has appointed Nageswar Rao Y (Ex-Executive Director, Bank of Maharashtra) as the Administrator of the company under Section 45-IE (2) of the RBI Act.
- ✓ RCL will become the third large NBFC to go under the insolvency procedure after Dewan Housing Finance (DHFL), and Srei Group companies viz. Kolkata (West Bengal) based Srei Infrastructure Finance and Srei Equipment Finance.

RBI appointed 3-member Advisory Committee to assist RCL Administrator Nageswar Rao Y

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) superseded the Board of Directors of Reliance Capital Ltd (RCL), a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) by appointing Nageswar Rao Y (Ex-Executive Director, Bank of Maharashtra) as the administrator of the company. Now, to assist the administrator, RBI appointed a three-member advisory committee by exercising its powers conferred under section 45-IE (5) (a) of the RBI Act 1934. The committee will assist the administrator in discharge of his duties.

RBI Imposes Restrictions on Nagar Urban Co-operative Bank

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed several restrictions on Nagar Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, including restriction on withdrawals upto Rs. 10,000 for customers. RBI has issued the directions in the exercise of powers vested in it under subsection (1) of Section 35 A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 for six months.

Highlights of the Fifth Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy of FY21-22

Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) 6-members Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) had met on 6th, 7th and 8th December 2021 and released its **fifth bi-monthly monetary policy statement** for FY22 (April 2021 – March 2022).

The unchanged Policy rates are as follows:

Category	Rates
Policy Rates	
Policy Repo Rate	4.00%
Reverse Repo Rate	3.35%
Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate	4.25%
Bank Rate	4.25%
Reserve Ratios	
Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)	4.00%
Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)	18.00%

RBI granted Scheduled Payment Bank Status to Paytm Payments Bank Limited

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) granted a scheduled payment bank status to the **Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL)** by including it into the **Second Schedule to the RBI Act, 1934**. With this approval, PPBL becomes the 3rd Scheduled Payments Banks. This status will help PPBL to explore new business opportunities, including participation in government and other large corporations issued request for proposals (RFP), primary auctions, fixed-rate and variable rate repos, and reverse repos.

- ✓ The Headquarters of Paytm Payments Bank is Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

RBI Mandated 20-digit LEI for Cross-Border Transactions above Rs 50 crore

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated the companies to quote the 20-digit **Legal Entity Identifier (LEI)** for cross-border transactions for capital or current account transactions of Rs 50 crore and above, from October 1 2022. LEI is a number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions worldwide to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems.

- ✓ AD (Authorised Dealers) Category-I banks were directed by RBI to obtain LEI numbers from local companies (resident entities) undertaking capital or current account transactions of Rs 50 crore and above, for each transaction.

RBI Introduces PCA Framework for NBFCs

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued the **Prompt Corrective Action (PCA)** Framework for Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) to further strengthen the supervisory tools applicable to NBFCs. The provisions of the PCA framework will be effective from October 2022 based on the financial position of NBFCs on or after March 31, 2022. Capital and Asset Quality would be the key areas for monitoring in PCA Framework.

RBI Allows Payments Banks, SFBs as Agency Bank to conduct Govt Business

On December 15, 2021, in consultation with the Department of Financial Services (DFS), the Ministry of Finance, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to make the Scheduled payments banks and scheduled **small finance banks (SFBs)** eligible to conduct Government (govt) agency business.

RBI Authorised RBL Bank to Collect Indirect Taxes

Based on the recommendation from the Controller General of Accounts, the Ministry of Finance, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted permission to RBL Bank to collect indirect taxes on behalf of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

- ✓ RBL Bank has already got permission from RBI in November 2021 to collect direct taxes. Thus, the current announcement enables the bank to collect both direct and indirect taxes.

RBI empaneled CSB Bank as Agency Bank to Undertake Government Businesses

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced empanelment of CSB Bank, a private sector lender as an 'Agency Bank' to undertake general banking business of central and state governments. Through this appointment, the CSB Bank will undertake general banking business of the central and state governments under the guidelines set by the RBI.

RBI Extends CoF Tokenisation Deadline

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) extended the card-on-file (CoF) tokenisation deadline by 6 months i.e. to June 30, 2022. Earlier the deadline was fixed till December 31, 2021. In March 2020, RBI had issued guidelines for the regulation of payment aggregators and payment gateways, prohibiting payment aggregators and merchants to store customer card credentials within their database or server from 30 June 2021.

- ✓ **Cause for extending the deadline:** Industry bodies including Merchant Payments Alliance of India (MPAI) and the Alliance of Digital India Foundation (ADIF) had sent representations to the RBI seeking an extension of the deadline.

RBI Extends Direction for PMC Bank till March 2022

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) extended the restrictions for Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank for another three months from January 1 2022 to March 31 2022. In exercise of the powers conferred on it by Sub-section (4) of Section 45 read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, the Reserve Bank of India had prepared a draft scheme of amalgamation of The Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank with Unity Small Finance Bank Ltd. (USFB).

RBI's 24th FSR 2021: Banks GNPA may Rise to 8.1% by September 2022

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the 24th issue of its bi-annual Financial Stability Report (FSR) 2021. It estimated the Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPAs) to rise from 6.9 percent in September 2021 to 8.1 percent of total assets by September 2022 (under a baseline scenario) and to 9.5 percent (under severe stress scenario).

Financial Stability Report Key Projections:

i. SCBs' GNPA and NNPA Ratio Projection at end-September 2021:

Type	GNPA Ratio	Net Non-Performing Assets (NNPA) Ratio
All SCBs	6.90%	2.30%
Public Sector Banks (PSBs)	8.80%	3.00%
Private Banks (PVBs)	4.60%	1.30%
Foreign Banks (FBs)	3.20%	0.60%

RBI Extends Deadline for Periodic KYC Update till March 31, 2022

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended the deadline for periodic Know Your Customer (KYC) updation in bank accounts till March 31, 2022, from the previous deadline of December 31, 2021, due to the Omicron variant of the COVID-19 in India. The deadline was extended so that no restriction can be

placed on bank accounts related to cash deposits, withdrawals etc. due to non-compliance with KYC requirements.

RBI's Report on Banking in India 2020-21: GNPA's of Banks dipped to 6.9% by September 2021

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the '**Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2020-21**', which presents the performance of the banking sector, including co-operative banks, and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) during FY21 and FY22 (till December 2021). The gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio of SCBs (Scheduled Commercial Banks) declined from 8.2 percent at end of March 2020 to 6.9 percent at end-September 2021.

BANKING TECHNOLOGY

Paytm Launches EdTech Platform to Train Traders, Investors - 'Paytm Wealth Academy'

India's Leading online payment ecosystem Paytm launched the first of its kind Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered Educational Technology (EdTech) platform named, '**Paytm Wealth academy**' for traders and investors. The educational platform will offer courses and webinars on trading and financial concepts according to the needs of individuals.

LOANS ISSUED BY BANKS

LOANS ISSUED BY	RECEIVED BY	AMOUNT	KEY NOTES
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Uttarakhand	\$125 million (around Rs 938 crore)	Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a loan of \$125 million (around Rs 938 crore) for water supply and sanitation projects in Uttarakhand. The funds will be utilised to improve access to quality water supply and sanitation services to the entire population of the state. ADB will provide a USD 250,000 technical assistance (TA) grant from its Technical Assistance Special Fund. The Headquarters of Asian Development Bank (ADB) Manila, Philippines.
World Bank	West Bengal	USD 135 million	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the lending arm of World Bank Group, has approved a USD 135 million loan to West Bengal (WB) to improve the operational efficiency and reliability of electricity supply in selected areas in the state. The aim is to To strengthen distribution networks, invest in smart-grid technologies, and ensure financial sustainability of the state discom (distribution companies). ✓ The project will support the implementation of the Government of India's 24X7 Power for all programme in the state and support WBSEDCL (West Bengal State Electricity

			<p>Distribution Company Limited) in transitioning toward a leading public sector utility in India.</p> <p>The Headquarters of International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is Washington DC, USA.</p>
Asian Development Bank	India	\$500 million (Rs 3,752 crore)	<p>Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a \$500 million (Rs 3,752 crore) loan to the Government of India to improve the quality of India's school education and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student's learning. ADB's loan supports the Samagra Shiksha, an Integrated Scheme for School Education and the new Exemplar School Initiative of the Ministry of Education (MoE).</p>
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	India	Rs.2653.05 crore (USD 350 million(mn))	<p>Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved Rs.2653.05 crore (USD 350 million(mn)) policy-based loan to improve urban services in India. This loan supports the policies formulated by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to benefit the urban poor, economically weaker section and low-income groups. ADB will also provide knowledge and advisory support to MoHUA in program implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The Headquarters of Asian Development Bank (ADB) is Manila, Philippines.</p>
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Assam Skill University (ASU)	\$112 million	<p>Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$112 million loan to strengthen skills education and training through the establishment of the Assam Skill University (ASU). The Loan will create a path for skill development to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of Assam's economy and industries.</p> <p>The project will improve skills and provide greater paying, decent job opportunities for youth and adults (especially women and disadvantaged groups).</p>
Germany Development Bank- KfW	India	Euro 442.26 million	<p>Government of India (GoI) and the Germany Development Bank- KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau) signed Euro 442.26 million loan for 40.35 km Surat Metro Rail project in Gujarat. The</p>

			total cost of the project is Euro 1.50 billion, out of which KfW is financing Euro 442.26 million. The project is co-financed by French Development Agency, AFD (Agence Française de Développement) with Euro 250 million.
German based KfW Development bank	Government of India	140 million Euro for reduced interest loan	<p>Government of India (GoI) signed agreements with the German based KfW Development bank for a 140 million Euro for reduced interest loan & 2 million Euro grant for an energy reform programme in Madhya Pradesh (MP). The project consists of two components, implementation of Smart Meters & Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) and separation of agriculture and non-agriculture feeders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Headquarters of KfW Development bank is Frankfurt, Germany. <p>Another loan agreement was also signed between GoI and European Investment Bank (EIB) for a loan of Euro 250 million for the Agra Metro Rail project in Uttar Pradesh (UP).</p>

AGREEMENTS & MoUs SIGNED

BANKS	SIGNED WITH	KEY NOTES
State Bank of India	Usha International Limited (UIL)	<p>For empowering women entrepreneurs by providing financial assistance named 'NAVCHETNA' by SBI. The financial assistance will be provided under the Joint Liability Group model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This is the first of its kind collaboration between UIL and SBI for the upliftment of the social and economic status of women in rural areas. ✓ 'NAVCHETNA' makes women entrepreneurs self-reliant through equal opportunity for financial growth and inclusion. <p>The headquarters of SBI is Mumbai, Maharashtra.</p>
State Bank of India	Adani Capital Private Ltd	<p>State Bank of India (SBI) signs a master agreement with Adani Capital Private Ltd (Adani Capital), the NBFC (Non-Banking Financial Company) Adani Group, to provide support for co-lending to farmers for purchase of tractor and farm implements. The co-lending is part of priority sector lending (PSL), which aims to improve credit flow to unserved and underserved sectors of the economy.</p>
Shivalik Small Finance Bank (SSFB)	Fintech firm, Indiagold	<p>Shivalik Small Finance Bank (SSFB) signed a partnership agreement with fintech firm, Indiagold to launch India's first Loan against Digital Gold. The aim of the agreement is to</p>

		provide access to secure and affordable credit to the customers looking for quick liquidity against their gold assets.
Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB)	Liberty General Insurance	Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB), a Regional Rural Bank (RRB) signed a MoU with Liberty General Insurance to sell general insurance products through the 629 branches of KVGB. It will boost insurance penetration in Karnataka. Under the agreement, the company will provide a variety of general health insurance products to the customers at affordable cost.
Bank of Baroda (BoB)	Centrum Housing Finance Limited (CHFL)	For sourcing and financing housing loan borrowers under Co-Lending Model (CLM) mechanism. The Headquarters of Bank of Baroda (BoB) is Vadodara, Gujarat.
NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL)	Western Union	NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), international payments arm of National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) signed a MoU with Western Union to enable real-time bank account payout in India. The agreement will enable bank account holders in India to receive cross-border money transfers instantly using UPI IDs. It will benefit millions of Indian citizens to seamlessly receive money from across the world.
State Bank of India	Indian Army	State Bank of India (SBI) has renewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army to offer benefits to all serving as well as retired army personnel and their families through its Defence Salary Package (DSP) Scheme. The MoU was signed in the presence of AG Lt. Gen. Harsha Gupta in New Delhi. Under this MoU, SBI will offer enhanced complimentary personal accidental insurance (Death) cover, air accidental insurance (Death) cover, permanent/partial disability covers.
IndusInd Bank	Samunnati	India's largest agri-tech enterprise, Samunnati, has entered into a co-lending agreement with IndusInd Bank to expand credit accessibility for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) across India. Under the co-lending agreement, Rs.15 crore will be disbursed as an initial amount to farmer collectives. The Headquarters of IndusInd Bank is Mumbai, Maharashtra.
Liberty General Insurance	CSC (Common Service Centres) e-Governance Services India	Liberty General Insurance signed a partnership agreement with CSC (Common Service Centres) e-Governance Services India under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to strengthen insurance penetration in rural areas across India by selling insurance products through the CSC network.
National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)	Udemy Business	National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) signed a partnership agreement with Udemy Business, to encourage innovative learning and skill development for employees of NPCI. The 3-year partnership with Udemy Business will offer courses on in-demand skills such as tech, domain, behavioural, and leadership skills to all NPCI employees.
Karnataka Gramin Bank	Care Health Insurance Ltd	To market health insurance products for customers of the bank across 22 districts of Karnataka. Under the partnership, the bank focuses on its rural customers by covering maximum

		<p>people, including farmers, artisans and rural population under health insurance.</p> <p>The headquarters of Karnataka Gramin Bank (KGB) is Ballari, Karnataka.</p>
Central Bank of India	U GRO Capital	<p>Central Bank of India signed a co-lending agreement with U GRO Capital, MSME lending fintech platform. The agreement will provide INR 1000 crore formal credit to underserved MSMEs at affordable rates across all product categories of U GRO Capital. Under this partnership, it is aimed to disburse up to INR 1000 crore to U GRO Capital's varied programmes like Pratham, Sanjeevani, Saathi, GRO MSME and Machinery financing.</p> <p>The Headquarters of Central Bank of India is Mumbai, Maharashtra.</p>
European Investment Bank (EIB)	Government of India	<p>The Government of India (GoI) signed an agreement with European Investment Bank (EIB) for a Finance Contract for the first tranche loan of Euro 250 million for Agra Metro Rail Project, Uttar Pradesh (UP). The Project is working under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (UPMRCL) is the implementing agency.</p>
KfW Development Bank	REC Limited	<p>REC Limited (Rural Electrification Corporation Limited) signed an agreement with KfW Development Bank. The agreement aimed to avail an Official Development Assistance (ODA) term loan worth USD 169.5 million under the Indo-German bilateral partnership. Both organisations will jointly undertake various projects in Power sector & Renewable Energy (RE) projects.</p> <p>The headquarters of KfW Development Bank is Frankfurt, Germany.</p>
Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)	West Bengal	<p>To develop the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) ecosystem in the state. According to the MoU, a project management unit (PMU) of SIDBI will work with the state government.</p> <p>The Headquarters of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) is Lucknow, Uttarpradesh.</p>
NSDL Payments Bank	Indipaisa	<p>Indipaisa signed a partnership agreement with NSDL Payments Bank to launch Financial Technology (Fintech) solutions targeting India's 63 million Small & Mid-sized Enterprise (SME) sector to empower SME owners & operators provide facilities and services that help them grow businesses, comply with government tax laws and build a sustainable future.</p> <p>The Headquarters of NSDL Payment Bank is Mumbai, Maharashtra.</p>
HDFC Life	South Indian Bank	<p>HDFC Life signed a bancassurance (Bank-Insurance) agreement with South Indian Bank to enable customers of the South Indian Bank to avail HDFC Life's life insurance products and services to the customers of South Indian Bank. HDFC Life is targeting to provide the customer with innovative products and superior levels of services through the physical and digital routes.</p> <p>The Headquarters of South Indian Bank is Thrissur, Kerala.</p>

HDFC Bank	India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)	To offer banking services to over 4.7 crore customers of IPPB in semi-urban and rural areas. The agreement offers various citizen-centric services with increased digital technologies. The Headquarters of HDFC Bank - Mumbai, Maharashtra.
Bank of Maharashtra (BoM)	MAS Financial Services Limited	The Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has signed a strategic co-lending partnership with MAS Financial Services Limited, a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC), to offer loans to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) borrowers. The partnership is subject to compliance laws including applicable guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
Federal Bank	Schwing Stetter (India) Ltd	A subsidiary of Schwing GMBH, Germany, one of the largest manufacturers of Concrete and Construction equipment in India. The MoU would enable both Federal Bank and Schwing Stetter to offer customised financial solutions to their customers. The Headquarters of Federal Bank is Aluva, Kerala.

OTHER BANKING NEWS

FIRST Private Infinite: India's 1st Standalone Metal Debit Card launched by IDFC FIRST Bank

IDFC FIRST Bank launched India's first standalone metal debit card or black card namely 'FIRST Private Infinite' in partnership with Visa. It is crafted from hybrid metal with details printed in silver. It is a lifetime free card to cater the customers of the bank's FIRST Private program. The program offers an unrivalled banking and investment experience to customers and comes with a range of exceptional investment, banking, lifestyle and wellness benefits.

ADB got Rs.15 Crore Grant from JFPR to Improve Urban Primary Health care in India

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has received a grant of around Rs.15 crore (USD 2 million) from the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR). The fund will be used to enhance urban primary healthcare usage across India. The aim of the financial service is to strengthen the Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC) system in urban areas across India.

SEBI sets up 7-member ALERTS Committee headed by Madhabi Puri Buch

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has set up an Advisory Committee for Leveraging Regulatory and Technology Solutions (ALERTS) to enhance technological capabilities and explore suitable technology solutions for the early detection of market anomalies. ALERTS, is a 7-member committee headed by Madhabi Puri Buch, former whole-time member of SEBI and has experts from various technology domains as members.

SEBI Restructures its Advisory Committees on Secondary Markets, Mutual Funds, Corporate Bonds

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has restructured its advisory committees of below

- ✓ **Secondary Market Advisory Committee (SMAC):** 17 Members & Chairperson – Madhabi Puri Buch. Zerodha's co-founder and chief executive officer (CEO) Nithin Kamath were newly inducted members of the panel.
- ✓ **Advisory Committee on Mutual Funds:** 4-members & Chairperson – Usha Thorat. Navi Asset Management Company MD and CEO Saurabh Jain, Morningstar India MD Aditya Agarwal and The Hindu Business Line consultant editor Aarati Krishnan as new members of the committee.
- ✓ **Corporate Bonds and Securitization Advisory Committee (CoBoSAC) :** 23-members & Chairperson – The Committee would be headed by G Mahalingam, former Whole Time Member, SEBI.

- ✓ **Information Systems Security Committee (ISSC):** 5 members & Chairperson – The committee would be headed by Prof H Krishnamurthy, Principle Research Scientist, IISC Bangalore.

SEBI Board approves Changes to IPOs & Preferential Issues

The board of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (**SEBI**) under the Chairmanship of Ajay Tyagi have taken following decisions during the virtual meeting.

- ✓ The Board approved the proposal to amend various aspects of regulatory framework under the **SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2018 (ICDR Regulations)** and consequential amendment to **SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015**, as applicable. These will be based upon the public consultation process on the proposals recommended by the Primary Market Advisory Committee (PMAC).
- ✓ The Board approved a proposal to introduce provisions in the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (LODR Regulations).

The Board approved amendment to SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds-AIF) Regulations, 2012, to introduce Special Situation Funds (SSF), a sub-category under Category I AIF, which will invest only in stressed assets.

Agriwise Finserv & Central Bank of India enters Co-lending partnership for Agri-Loan

Disbursals

Agriwise Finserv Limited, an agri-focussed Non-Banking Financial Corporation (NBFC), has entered into a co-lending agreement with Central Bank of India for agri-loan disbursal to underserved & unserved rural customers of India. The agreement ensures the loan at affordable interest rates as per the RBI directive for the farmer, agri and allied community in a simple, transparent and speedy manner.

DBS Bank India Introduces an Industry-First Digital & Paperless Trade Financing Solution

DBS Bank India has introduced a paperless proposition for the financing of domestic invoices by buyers and sellers and also the first paperless domestic trade financing transaction with **Lincon Polymers Pvt Ltd** to reduce processing turn-around time and for efficient business.

- ✓ The bank has completed its first end-to-end digital Purchase Invoice Finance (PIF) transaction for Lincon Polymers Pvt. Ltd.
- ✓ DBS bank has introduced a completely digital and innovative payments solution in partnership with Transport Corporation of India Limited (TCIL).
- ✓ The Indian headquarters of Singapore based DBS bank is Mumbai, Maharashtra.

SBI Listed USD 650-million Green Bonds on India INX and LuxSE

State Bank of India (SBI) listed its USD 650-million green bonds simultaneously on the India International Exchange (India INX) and the Luxembourg Stock Exchange (**LuxSE**). This dual listing is in line with 2021's topic of the World Investor Week (WIW), '**sustainable finance**', as indicated by the regulatory body International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA).

Kotak Mahindra Bank Collaborates with Worldline for Easy EMI Services

Kotak Mahindra Bank announced a partnership with Europe-based payment and transactional service firm, Worldline to enable Equated Monthly Installment (EMI) payments via Kotak debit cards in India. The Kotak debit card EMI is available to all consumers, retailers, fashion and electronic products to pay instalments easily using Worldline Point of Sale (POS) terminals.

Federal Bank launches Feature-Rich Savings Scheme for Women – ‘Mahila Mitra Plus’

Private sector lender Federal Bank launched an exclusively feature-rich savings bank product for women named “**Mahila Mitra Plus**”. They provide a set of features for easy financial planning and investments for women.

- ✓ The Headquarters of Federal Bank is Aluva, Kerala.

ICICI Bank Partners with Flipkart to Offer Instant Overdraft Facility

ICICI Bank partnered with Flipkart, an e-commerce platform, to offer an instant and digital overdraft (OD) facility of up to 25 lakh to individual sellers and businesses registered on Flipkart. The OD is renewable on an annual basis, depending on the repayment track records of the seller.

SBI Selected Intellect Wealth Qube for its Digital Wealth Transformation

State Bank of India (SBI) has selected Intellect Design Arena Limited (Intellect Design)’s Intellect Wealth Qube, a Digital Wealth Management suite, for its digital wealth management transformation agenda. SBI chose Intellect’s digital wealth, contextual and composable platform to accelerate business expansion and improve operational efficiencies through Straight-through Processing (STP).

BoM, NPCI tie up to launch RuPay Credit Card

Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has tied up with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to launch its 1st credit card on card payment network RuPay, named ‘**BoM Platinum RuPay Contactless Credit Card**’. The benefits of the credit card include reward points for every Rs 100 spent, fuel surcharge and the card also have card liability cover wherein customers will have zero liability post reporting of fraud.

Federal Bank entered into Bancassurance Partnership with Star Health Insurance

In December 2021, Federal Bank entered into a Bancassurance partnership with Star Health and Allied Insurance Co Ltd as a corporate agent to provide health insurance products for the Bank’s 8.90 million customers across India. The Bank’s customers can avail benefits of Star Health’s retail products and group affinity products through the bank’s various distribution channels which help the customers to address their complete financial needs under one roof.

IPPB and NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited collaborated for Doorstep Bill Payments Service

India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) partnered with NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited (NBBL) to facilitate pan India doorstep bill payments service for IPPB and non-IPPB customers. NBBL is a wholly-owned subsidiary of National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). The platform enables customers to pay bills for various utilities and other recurring services.

NABARD Projects 12% increase in Assam’s Credit Potential to INR 36,292 Cr for FY23

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) projected a 12% increase in credit potential of Assam to INR 36,292 crore for the 2022-23 financial year (FY). The amount will be used as a base for preparation of the annual credit plan for priority sector lending (PSL) for FY23. According to a report titled **State Focus Paper for 2022-23** released by the NABARD, around 52% of the total projected credit potential is estimated for the agriculture and allied activities, and 36% for the MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) sector.

BoB Launches Wearable Payment Solution – Bob World Wave

Bank of Baroda (BoB) in partnership with **National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI)** launched bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem.

- ✓ A bob World Wave wearable device will allow customers to monitor their Saturation of Peripheral Oxygen (SpO2), body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure.
- ✓ The device will provide contactless payments of up to **Rs. 5,000 in all Near-Field Communication (NFC)** enabled **Point of Sale (PoS)** devices and also enable payments above Rs.5000 using the PIN.

SBI Cards launches Fitness-Focused Credit Card – ‘SBI Card PULSE’

SBI Card, India's largest pure-play credit card issuer, launched the **first-of-its-kind fitness** & wellness-focused credit card – **‘SBI Card PULSE’**. The Card is designed with unique features and benefits to complement cardholder's with benefits towards health and wellness. The SBI Cards provides an annual membership fee of Rs.1,499 that has been launched on Visa Signature platform.

Axis Bank Tie up with Swift to Provide Digital Banking Solution

Axis Bank is working with new digital services from provider **Swift** to provide a comprehensive digital solution to clients. The bank is integrating with different digitisation initiatives by government bodies and service providers to extend an end-to-end service to business clients.

- ✓ Axis bank's B2B (business-to-business) digitisation efforts are being supported by Swift, a cooperative of global banks that acts as an intermediary between banks and sets standards.

Equitas SFB, Cholamandalam MS Partners to Launch Women-centric Health Insurance Policy

Equitas Small Finance Bank (SFB) partnered with Cholamandalam MS General Insurance to launch **Chola Sarva Shakti**, a women-centric health insurance policy to secure women against health conditions and to empower Indian women with good health and finances.

PhonePe launches tokenization solution – PhonePe SafeCard

PhonePe, a digital payments major, launched **PhonePe SafeCard** which is a tokenization solution for online debit and credit card transactions. This supports all major card networks such as Mastercard, Rupay and Visa. PhonePe has become the 1st payments platform to tokenize cards on Visa, Mastercard and Rupay card networks.

Pine Labs Partners with AU Small Finance Bank for EMI Offerings

Pine Labs, a merchant commerce platform, has partnered with AU Small Finance Bank, to enable the bank's credit cardholders to avail equated monthly instalments (EMI) offers. The Partnership offers EMI at the point of sale (PoS) and converts their customer's regular purchase into interest-free EMIs across the over 2 lakh merchant base of Pine Labs, pan India.

CSB Bank, Clear ties up to Launch ITR e-filing Facility for NRI customers

Catholic Syrian Bank Limited (**CSB Bank Limited**) has tied up with **Clear (formerly ClearTax)**, an online tax filing platform, to launch an online, and free of cost ITR (Income Tax Return) e-filing facility for its NRI (Non-Resident Indian) customers. This collaboration will reduce customers' efforts and time for tax filing.

- ✓ The headquarters of CSB Bank Limited is Thrissur at Kerala.

Union Bank Partners with Home First Finance to Offer Home Loans

Union Bank of India (UBI) has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with Home First Finance Company India Ltd (HomeFirst) to offer home loans to customers at competitive interest rates. HomeFirst will retain a minimum of 20 percent of the loan while 80 percent will be retained by UBI.

- ✓ The headquarters of Union Bank of India is Mumbai, Maharashtra.

ESFBL Became the Banking Partner of the Government of Maharashtra

Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited (ESFBL) has empanelled as the banking partner of the state government of Maharashtra with an aim to offer its services to employees of the State Government. This partnership will enable the ESFBL to distribute salaries and allowances to the existing employees apart from making provision of pension to pensioners.

NSE Launches 'NSE Prime' to Raise Corporate Governance Standards

National Stock Exchange (NSE) launched a new corporate governance initiative named, 'NSE Prime', which the NSE listed companies can adopt voluntarily. The listed companies that voluntarily choose to be a part of NSE Prime must satisfy pre-defined norms on an ongoing basis, monitored by the NSE. An NSE Prime company needs at least 40 percent public shareholding as against 25 percent under the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) rules.

UAE committed \$100 Billion for Investment and Infrastructure creation in India

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Ministry of Commerce and Industry chaired an interaction with the heads of Indian industry and Export Promotion Councils in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It was held to discuss global expansion opportunities for Indian businesses through business platforms and infrastructure offered by the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

- ✓ During the meeting it was revealed that UAE has committed \$100 billion for investment and infrastructure creation in India.

Notably, in FY22 India will achieve a \$400 billion export target for the first time.

Oriental Insurance categorised as Public Shareholder in Axis Bank

Axis Bank announced the approval to reclassify The Oriental Insurance Company Ltd (OICL) from promoter category to public category shareholder in the bank. At present, OICL holds a 0.16 per cent stake in Axis Bank. According to the bank, it received a request from OICL dated September 7, 2021, holding a 0.16 per cent stake in the bank, to reclassify it from promoter to public shareholder.

- ✓ The Headquarters of the Axis Bank is Mumbai, Maharashtra.

PNB Entered into 4th Co-lending Arrangement with Lendingkart to Improve Credit Flow to Unserved

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has entered into the 4th co-lending arrangement with Lendingkart Finance Limited (**Lendingkart**) as a part of its efforts to align with the reforms of the Indian Government reform agenda and to improve the credit flow to the unserved and underserved sector of the economy. The partnership under this co-lending arrangement will result in significant disbursement under Priority Sector Lending.

- ✓ The Headquarters of Punjab National Bank (PNB) is New Delhi, Delhi.

IndusInd Bank in partnership with NPCI to offer cross-border payments via UPI

IndusInd Bank has partnered with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for offering real-time cross-border remittances to India using UPI (**Unified Payment Interface**) IDs for its Money Transfer Operator (MTO) partners.

- ✓ With this initiative, IndusInd Bank has become the first Indian bank to go live on Cross Border Payments/NRI Remittances.
- ✓ The Headquarters of IndusInd Bank is Mumbai, Maharashtra.

RBL Bank Extends Co-branded Credit Cards Partnership with Bajaj Finance for 5 years

RBL Bank partnered with Bajaj Finance Ltd (BFL) for the extension of the partnership of co-branded credit cards for 5 years till December 2026. The Bank had entered into a partnership with Bajaj Finance in 2018 launching a series of co-branded credit cards.

- ✓ The RBI has also appointed Rajeev Ahuja (current executive director of the bank) as interim standing director and CEO succeeding Vishwavir Ahuja.
- The headquarters of RBL Bank is Mumbai, Maharashtra.

IndusInd Bank launches 'Green Fixed Deposits' to support UN-SDGs

IndusInd Bank launched Green Fixed Deposits (FDs) where the deposit proceeds will be used to finance projects and firms supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs). With this, the bank has entered the list of few global banks which offer integrating SDG into a regular FD product. These FDs will be offered to both retail and corporate customers.

Central Bank of India & NPCI Jointly Launches RuPay Debit Card for Corporates

Central Bank of India has partnered with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to launch 'RuPay Business Platinum Debit Card' for corporates.

- ✓ **Domestic** – The card offers an ATM withdrawal limit of Rs.1 lakh along with a purchase of up to Rs.3 lakh at Point on Sale (POS) or E-Commerce.
- ✓ **International** – The card users can also withdraw up to Rs. 75,000 at ATMs abroad and perform purchases globally worth up to Rs. 3 lakh at Point On Sale (POS) or E-Commerce and international online merchants.

FINANCE NEWS

Paytm Money tie-up with PMS Bazaar and Launches PMS Marketplace for HNI Investors

Paytm Money, the wholly-owned subsidiary of Paytm, has partnered with PMS Bazaar and launched a Portfolio Management Services (PMS) marketplace for its High Net-worth Individual (HNI) investors. PMS Bazaar is a Mumbai-based PMS advisory start-up that devises investment strategies.

KreditBee, Mswipe Join Hands to Offer 'Cardless EMI' at Retail Stores

KreditBee, a Fintech lending platform, partnered with Mswipe to offer fully digital '**cardless EMI**' (Equated Monthly Installment) at leading retail stores to expand offline presence and enable purchases of more than Rs.5 crores per month. Under '**cardless EMI**', KreditBee offers 'pay later' options for purchases of up to 1 Lakh, which can be converted into EMI in a range of 3 to 12 months.

Paytm Partners with AWS to Offer Startup Toolkits for Entrepreneurs

Paytm, a leading digital ecosystem for consumers and merchants, has partnered with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to offer Paytm Startup Toolkit with exclusive payment services to early-stage Indian startups. Paytm will help entrepreneurs to grow businesses with payment, distribution, and growth solutions who are operating in India in the AWS Activate.

Aditya Birla Health Insurance Launches Activ Health Essential Plan for Senior Citizens

Aditya Birla Health Insurance Co. Ltd. (**ABHICL**), the health insurance subsidiary of Aditya Birla Capital Limited (**ABCL**) has launched a new affordable health solution plan named '**Activ Health Essential**' to meet the special health need of senior citizens.

PayPhi: 1st certified tokenization service for NTS to support tokenization of RuPay cards

On the lines of the guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in September 2021 regarding tokenization of cards during online transactions, NPCI announced the launch of NPCI Tokenization system (NTS). In this regard, PayPhi, Phi Commerce's API (Application programming interface) first digital payments platform, became the first certified tokenization service for NTS supporting tokenization of RuPay cards.

- ✓ The headquarters of NPCI is Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Number of ATMs in India Stood Over 2.13 Lakh

Finance Ministry announced that around 2.13 Lakh Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) have been installed across India by the end of September 2021. Out of 2.13 lakh ATMs, 4 percent of ATMs are installed in rural and semi-urban areas. According to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), scheduled commercial banks have installed 2,13,145 ATMs till September 2021.

Kotak Mahindra MF Launches India's First Nifty Alpha 50 ETF

Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company (Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund) launched India's first-ever Nifty Alpha 50 Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) named **Kotak Nifty Alpha 50 ETF**. Kotak's Nifty Alpha 50 ETF is an open-ended scheme that will track the performance of 50 stocks listed with the National Stock Exchange (NSE) with high Alpha's in the last one year. Alpha is also referred to as 'excess return', which measures the return earned by a stock above or below demanded by the market for its risk class.

Aviva Life Insurance Launches Life Insurance Plan Nivesh Bima

Aviva Life Insurance, a private insurance company, has launched Aviva Nivesh Bima, a non-linked, non-participating, individual savings life insurance plan providing guaranteed money back at every 5th policy year, in addition to a lump sum payout at maturity. It also offers features such as fixed benefit pay-out on maturity or death, limited premium paying term, and an option to enhance the coverage through an add-on accidental death benefit, along with tax benefits.

Kotak General Insurance partners Vasai Vikas Sahakari Bank to offer Insurance Solutions

Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company Ltd (Kotak General Insurance), the wholly-owned subsidiary of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd, and Vasai Vikas Sahakari Bank Ltd has entered into a partnership to provide the bank's customers access to a range of insurance solutions.

- ✓ Under this agreement, Vasai Vikas Sahakari Bank Ltd. will offer Kotak General Insurance's comprehensive suite of general and health insurance products to its customers across its network of 21 branches.

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Launched '#Care4Hockey' Campaign

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, a leading private general insurer in India has launched its '#Care4Hockey' Campaign to elevate field Hockey's recognition in India. The company has partnered with Padma Shri (2020) Rani Rampal, Indian Women's Hockey Team Captain, who will be the face of the campaign. '#Care4Hockey' is a one of its kind campaigns which aims to support the development of Hockey in India from the grass-root level.

LIC Introduced Individual Savings Life Insurance Plan – 'Dhan Rekha'

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has introduced a new Non -Linked, Non-Participating, Individual Savings Life Insurance Plan named '**Dhan Rekha**'. The plan will offer special premium rates for female lives and it is also allowed for the third gender. The minimum sum assured under this plan is Rs.2 lakh and there is no limit for the maximum sum assured.

FSS & CSB Bank launches Hyperlocal Banking Services to Boost Financial Inclusion

Financial Software and Systems (FSS), a globally leading provider of integrated payment products and a payments processor, and CSB Bank, one of the oldest private sector banks in India, have partnered to deliver hyperlocal banking services to financially underserved segments. CSB Bank and FSS plan to open 1,000 Smart Cash franchisees in semi-urban and rural areas across India to expand financial services adoption among underserved segments.

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance signs the UN's Principles of Responsible Investing

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance (IPRULIFE), became the first Indian insurance company to sign United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI), to demonstrate commitment towards the environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues. IPRULIFE has also recently launched the 'Sustainable Equity Fund', an ESG-focused fund to maintain sustainability.

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance launches 'Health Prime' Rider

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance launched the 'Health Prime' wellness rider, which can be availed by its customers who are registered with the health insurance & personal accident policies of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance. It will provide a total wellness ecosystem and encourage a preventive rather than curative approach.

IFSCA Sets up Panel for Creating Framework for Transfer of Stressed Loan

The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) set up a committee for creating a framework for the transfer of stressed loans from domestic lenders to financial institutions. Former executive director of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) G Padmanabhan will chair the committee along with expertise in banking and legal firms.

Edelweiss General Insurance, PhonePe Partners to Offers Digital Motor Insurance

Edelweiss General Insurance (EGI) has partnered with PhonePe, a fintech firm in the digital payments space, to offer quick and easy, digital motor insurance products to all its customers. The partnership offers PhonePe customers simple, end to end digital solutions in the motor insurance segment.

Mastercard Partners with Google Pay on Tokenisation for Card-Based Payments

Mastercard and Google announced a tokenization method that enables Google Pay users to safely transact using their Mastercard credit cards and debit cards. Android users of Google Pay can scan and pay across all Bharat QR-enabled merchants, tap-and-pay, and make in-app transactions through their Mastercard debit and credit card.

ICICI Lombard ties up with Clove Dental to offer OPD, Dental Insurance

ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company promoted by ICICI Bank (Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India) has collaborated with Clove Dental to offer dental insurance. The offering will be covered under the OPD (Out Patient Department) benefit and will be available on a cashless basis to customers.

- ✓ This partnership will provide oral health support to Clove Dental's consumers that will encompass all necessary dental treatment expenses under the OPD benefit of ICICI Lombard.

Paytm Partners with MoneyGram for International Fund Transfer

Paytm Payments Bank has partnered with MoneyGram, a peer-to-peer remittance company to enable international fund transfer directly to Paytm Wallet. Under the Partnership, MoneyGram users abroad can now transfer money to any full Know Your Customer (KYC)-compliant Paytm wallet. This is MoneyGram's first mobile wallet partnership in India.

BOB Financial and Indian Navy Launch Co-Branded Credit card

BOB Financial Solutions Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda, and the Indian Navy have launched a co-branded credit card for navy personnel. The credit card will be offered on the RuPay platform and will be equipped with contactless features.

- ✓ **Eligibility:** A navy personnel up to the age of 64 years will be eligible to choose from 3 variants of the co-branded credit card.

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launches "ICICI Pru iProtect Return of Premium"

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launched a new term plan 'ICICI Pru iProtect Return of Premium'. It offers 105 % return of the premium paid at age of 60 or 70 years or on policy maturity. The new policy is auto-adjustable the life cover based on the changing life-stages of the insured customers and It offers an option to take cover against 64 critical illnesses.

IRDAI Relaxes Current Account Criteria for Insurance Intermediaries

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) announced that insurance intermediaries and their entities can maintain current accounts in various banks to meet regulatory requirements and reinsurance business. In August 2020, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had instructed banks to not to open current accounts for customers who have already availed credit facilities in the form of cash credit or overdraft from the banking system.

- ✓ Later, RBI permitted banks to open particular accounts which are under various directions of different regulatory departments, without any restrictions.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

GDP & GROWTH RATE

ORGANIZATION	YEAR	RATE
India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)	Q2 FY22	8.3% The rating agency, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) expects India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the Second Quarter of Financial Year-2022 (Q2 FY22) at 8.3 percent and in FY22 at 9.4 percent. Workplace mobility in Q1 FY22 was 26 percent lower than the baseline and 16 percent lower year-on-year than the baseline at FY21. The government's capital expenditure (capex) grew 51.9 percent in Q2 FY22 as against 26.3 percent in Q2 FY21.
National Statistical Office (NSO)	Q2FY22	8.4% National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the second quarter (July-September) of 2021-22 (Q2FY22), both at Constant (2011-12) and Current Prices. As per the estimates, India's GDP in Q2FY22 grew by 8.4% as compared to 7.4% contraction (-7.4%) in Q2FY21 . Also, the Indian economy is expected to grow 6.5-7% in 2022 .
OECD	FY22	9.4% Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) decreased India's growth forecast to 9.4% for FY22 from 9.7% estimated in September 2021. It has projected the Indian economy to grow at 8.1% in FY23, and moderate to 5.5% in FY24.
S&P Global Ratings	FY22	9.5% S&P Global Ratings has retained the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast of India unchanged at 9.5 percent for the Financial year 2021-22 (FY22) and 7.8 percent for the year ending FY23. GDP growth projection of India was revised for FY24 to 6 percent from 5.7 percent

		<p>estimated earlier. The Indian economy had shrunk by 3 percent in FY21 as pandemic induced restrictions affected the business activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ According to the State Bank of India (SBI) research report, Ecwrap, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is likely to grow more than 9.5 Percent in FY22 (higher than the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) estimate of 9.5 percent).
DBS Group Research	FY23	<p>7%</p> <p>As per the report released by DBS Group Research named, 'India 2022 Outlook: Shifting to a higher gear', India's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth forecast in FY23 was increased to 7 percent year-on-year (y-o-y) (6.5 percent at the Calendar year 2022) from its earlier projection of 6 percent. The bank has maintained India's FY22 (full-year) forecast at 5 percent y-o-y. The 7 percent y-o-y growth rate in FY23 will be amongst the fastest in its Asia-10 universe. It expects India's current account deficit (CAD) to increase to 1.5 percent (-1.5%) of GDP in FY22 from a 0.9 percent surplus in FY21.</p>
Fitch Ratings	FY22	<p>8.4%</p> <p>Fitch Ratings slashed India's economic growth forecast in financial year 2021-22 (FY22) to 8.4 percent and raised the growth projection to 10.3 percent for FY23, compared October, 2021 ratings projections of 8.7 percent (FY22) and 10 percent (FY23). In the December report, India's GDP grew 11.4 percent in the Q2 FY22 over April-June quarter of FY22 on a seasonally adjusted basis. Economy has contracted 4 percent in the April-June quarter in FY22 over the fourth quarter of FY21.</p>
Information and Credit Rating agency (ICRA)	FY22 & FY23	<p>9%</p> <p>The Information and Credit Rating agency (ICRA) projected India's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 9 percent each in FY22 & FY23 despite the uncertainty developed by the Omicron variant of Covid-19. The Agency is expecting the Cost Price Inflation (CPI) to an average of 4.5-5.0 Percent in FY23 from 5.5 Percent in FY22. The current account deficit is also projected to increase in Q3 FY22. The net loss to the Indian economy (due to COVID-19) during FY 2021-23 is estimated at Rs 39.3 lakh crore, in real terms.</p>

ECONOMY NEWS

India's recovery projected to be higher than other BRICS Nations: BRICS Economic Bulletin 2021

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the 2nd edition of BRICS Economic Bulletin 2021 which is prepared by the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) Research Group with members from BRICS central banks. The CRA Research Group is responsible to enhance research, economic analysis and surveillance capacity of the BRICS.

- ✓ This bulletin has addressed the theme of **'Navigating the Ongoing Pandemic: The BRICS Experience of Resilience and Recovery'**.

Gujarat with 15.9% Manufacturing Growth became India's Largest Manufacturing Hub: RBI Data

In accordance with the data by Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Gujarat has surpassed Maharashtra to become India's leading manufacturing hub. It's Gross Value Addition (GVA) in manufacturing grew 15.9% annually between FY12 to FY20. In terms of manufacturing, Maharashtra is followed by Tamil Nadu with a GVA of Rs 3.43 lakh crore at 3rd spot, Karnataka (4th) at Rs 2.1 lakh crore, and Uttar Pradesh-UP (5th) at Rs 1.87 lakh crore.

- ✓ The worst performers among states in manufacturing are Rajasthan with average annual growth rate of 3.8%, Telangana (5.5%) and Andhra Pradesh (6.9%).

CIFT is Awarded with Future Refrigeration India Project - 'INDEE+'

The Kochi based Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR), Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) has been awarded a project on 'Future Refrigeration India' named 'INDEE+', aimed at heading the fuel transition in the seafood sector. This project is coordinated by Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). The Project was highlighted at 26th International Climate Conference workshop on 'Future Refrigeration project' held at CIFT, Glasgow, Scotland.

ADB Trims Developing Asia's Growth Forecasts over Omicron Risks

Asian Development Outlook Supplement Report of December 2021, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has trimmed the growth forecasts for developing Asia for 2021-2022 to reflect the economic impact and uncertainty caused by the new Omicron COVID -19 variant. ADB marks the **2021 Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** growth projection of developing Asia to 7 percent, down from its earlier projection of 7.1 percent (September 2021), and 2022 growth to 5.3 percent, down from 5.4 percent.

IMF Announces Global Debt Record as \$226 Trillion in 2020

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has announced that the Global debt raised a record **\$226 trillion in 2020** as the world was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic and a deep recession. Global debt rose by 28 percentage points to 256 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020. IMF's latest Global Debt Database figures the 2020's debt as the largest 1-year debt surge since World War II.

GOI declares Soya Meal as an Essential Commodity up to June 2022 with Stock Limit

Central Government has notified the order under the Essential Commodities Act to declare 'Soya Meal' as an Essential Commodities up to 30th June 2022 by amending the Schedule of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, to cool down the domestic prices of Soya Meal. As India's Soya meal is produced from non-genetically modified sources it is in high demand in the world markets.

Wholesale price inflation spikes to 12-year high of 14.23% in November 2021

As per Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India's annual wholesale price index (WPI) inflation rises to 12-year high to 14.23% in November 2021 as compared to last year due to base effect. As per Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India's annual wholesale price index (WPI) inflation rises to 12-year high to 14.23% in November 2021 as compared to last year due to base effect.

- ✓ This WPI inflation is dominated by the prices of mineral oils, basic metals, crude petroleum, natural gas, chemicals and food products.

India's Green Energy Economy Gets \$7.27 Billion FDI since 2014-15

India's green energy industry received foreign direct investment (FDI) worth \$7.27 billion from 2014-15 till June 2021, According to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), out of \$7.27 billion FDI, \$797.21 million was received during 2020-21. India's renewable energy programme is driven by private sector investment. As per REN21 Renewables 2020 Global status Report, during 2014 -2019

renewable energy programmes and projects in India attracted an investment of \$64.4 billion (\$11.2 billion has been invested in 2019 alone).

CEBR's World Economic League Table 2022: India to become 3rd largest economy in 2031; China to be 1st

As per the **Centre for Economics and Business Research's (CEBR) World Economic League Table 2022**, India was predicted to become the 6th largest economy (by overtaking France) in 2022 and become the 3rd largest economy in 2031. The annual league table also predicted that China will overtake the US to be the largest economy in 2030 (two years later than the forecast in World Economic League Table 2021).

The world economy is set to surpass \$100 trillion for the first time in 2022. The World Economic League Table 2022 shows the economic forecasts for 191 countries to 2036.

BUSINESS NEWS

RedBus launches Rail Ticketing Service – 'redRail' in Partnership with IRCTC

Online bus ticketing platform redBus has collaborated with Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation (**IRCTC**) to launch 'redRail', a rail ticket booking service that can be accessed through the redBus mobile app.

RIL partnered with TA'ZIZ to form Chemical Production JV Named "TA'ZIZ EDC & PVC"

India Based Reliance Industries Ltd (**RIL**) partnered with **Abu Dhabi Chemicals Derivatives Company RSC Ltd (TA'ZIZ)** to form the new chemical production Joint Venture (JV) named "TA'ZIZ EDC & PVC" in the TA'ZIZ Industrial Chemicals Zone in Ruwais, **UAE (United Arab Emirates)**. Both the companies will invest more than \$2 billion in a chemical production facility.

- ✓ The JV will construct and operate a chlor-alkali, **ethylene dichloride (EDC)** and polyvinyl chloride (**PVC**) production unit. These chemicals will be produced for the first time in the UAE.
- ✓ It is also RIL's first investment in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region.

BPCL Collaborates with BARC to boost Green Hydrogen Production

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (**BPCL**) collaborated with Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (**BARC**) to boost Alkaline Electrolyser technology for Green Hydrogen production. This is a first of its kind initiative to support India's commitment to achieve renewable energy targets and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. **India has set a target towards zero-emission cars by 2040.**

Meta & CBSE Expand Partnership to Enable 1 Crore Students to Embrace Immersive Tech

Meta (formerly Facebook) is set to expand its partnership with the Central Board of Secondary Education (**CBSE**) to provide a **curriculum** on **digital safety** and **online well-being** and Augmented Reality (**AR**) for around **1 crore college students and 10 lakh educators** across India over the next 3 years. This was announced by Mark Zuckerberg, Founder and CEO of Meta at Meta's Fuel for India 2021. **This is in line with the vision of the Indian government to Universalize Education.**

Akasa Air Unveiled its Symbol 'The Rising A' & Tagline 'It's Your Sky'

India's new Airline, '**Akasa Air**', operated by **SNV Aviation Private Limited** and backed by billionaire **Rakesh Jhunjhunwala**, has unveiled its **logo "The Rising A"** and its aircraft livery. The airline also unveiled its tagline "**It's Your Sky**", which highlights the brand's promise to embrace everyone and to create an inclusive environment for all Indians.

- ✓ **Brand colours:** 'Sunrise Orange' and 'Passionate Purple' reflect the airline's warm, youthful, and respectful nature.

DRDO Selected Paras Defence for Handing Over Technology of Border Surveillance Systems

Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO) has selected Paras Defence & Space Technologies Ltd as one of the companies for handing over technology of border surveillance systems developed by Instruments Research & Development Establishment (IRDE) and DRDO.

This technology has been transferred by a licensing agreement for transfer of technology (ToT) for border surveillance Systems entered between Paras Defence, IRDE and DRDO.

MoU's & AGREEMENTS

MoU's BETWEEN COUNTRY

COUNTRY	MoU's WITH	FIELD / PURPOSE
India	Vietnam	Anurag Thakur, Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) with Nguyen Manh Hung, Minister of Information and Communication, Government of Vietnam, to enable collaboration in the field of digital media and strengthen the partnership between India and Vietnam.

MoU's WITH STATES

STATE	MoU's WITH	FIELD / PURPOSE
Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO)	Dassault Systemes	Dassault Systemes signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) to set up The Tamil Nadu Center of Advance Manufacturing (TANCAM) at the TIDEL Park, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. A first of its kind Center of Excellence (CoE) in India, TANCAM will work as a Center of Excellence (CoE) in India and will provide a dedicated IT (Information Technology) engineering ecosystem to support the MSME (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises) sector and students across Tamil Nadu.
Madhya Pradesh	Walmart & Flipkart	Walmart and its subsidiary Flipkart has signed a MoU with the Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of Madhya Pradesh (MP) to create an ecosystem of capacity building for MSMEs in MP. Under this MoU, Walmart, Flipkart and MSME Department will assist MSMEs to digitize their business and enable them to sell their products through online retail. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This initiative comes under the Walmart Vriddhi Supplier Development Programme (Walmart Vriddhi), delivered by knowledge partner Swasti, which aims to train around 50000 Indian MSMEs with business skills to become successful as suppliers to Walmart, sellers on global market place platforms like Flipkart.
Karnataka	UNDP	Department of Youth Empowerment & Sports, Government of Karnataka has signed a Letter of Understanding (LoU) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as a part of the State-level initiative 'Code-Unnati' to improve

		the access to entrepreneurship and employment opportunities among the youths, including women.
Tamil Nadu's (TN) Health and Family Welfare Department	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	<p>A Record of Discussions (RoD) has been inked between the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Tamil Nadu's (TN) Health and Family Welfare Department for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) in TN project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Under this project there will be strengthening of managerial and technical capabilities of health personnel with respect to NCD prevention and control. <p>The project will initiate in Q4FY21 and will be aligned with the Tamil Nadu Urban Health Care Project.</p>
Odisha	UNCDF	<p>An agreement has been inked between the state government of Odisha and the United Nations Capital Development Fund's (UNCDF), a Global Centre for Financial Health, to launch Mission Shakti Living Lab empowering women economically and drive gender equality. It was virtually signed by Sujata Karthikeyan, Mission Shakti commissioner; and Preeti Sinha, UNCDF executive secretary.</p>
Andhra Pradesh	UN-FAO & ICAR	<p>An agreement on Technical Cooperation Project has been inked by Andhra Pradesh (AP) Government with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN-FAO) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to help the state farmers in adopting a sustainable agriculture food system. It helps to strengthen the capacities of the state government in the agriculture sector.</p>
Rajasthan	Rays Power Infra	<p>Rajasthan government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Rays Power Infra to build an avant-garde PV Photovoltaic (PV) Power Station (commonly called solar power plant) and to generate 500 MW of green electricity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This MoU is an instrumental step towards an eco-friendly future. <p>The MoU was finalized during the ongoing Dubai Expo, to reduce traditional electricity consumption derived from non-renewable sources.</p>
Maharashtra	Tata Motors Limited	<p>Tata Motors Limited, one of India's largest commercial vehicle manufacturers, has signed a MoU with the state government of Maharashtra through the Industries, Energy and Labour Department to support the establishment of a Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility (RVSF) in Maharashtra.</p>
Jammu and Kashmir	University College Birmingham (UCB)	<p>The Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) government signed a MoU with University College Birmingham (UCB) at India Global Forum, held in Taj Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The aim of an MoU is to achieve skill development of students in</p>

		a variety of different subject areas and levels and to provide opportunities in teaching and research fields.
Rajasthan	HOP Electric Mobility	HOP Electric Mobility, an Electric Vehicle (EV) maker, signed a preliminary pact with the Rajasthan Government to set up an EV Manufacturing plant in Jaipur, Rajasthan to strengthen the non-polluting transportation system (e-mobility) with the help of futuristic technology and efficient Research & Development (R&D).

MoU's BETWEEN ORGANIZATION

ORGANIZATION	MoU's WITH	FIELD / PURPOSE
Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)	Oppo's Indian arm	An agreement has been inked between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Chinese smart devices maker Oppo's Indian arm to strengthen the Research and Development (R&D) of the NavIC messaging service , an Indian satellite navigation system. NavIC, an acronym for Navigation with Indian Constellation, aims to provide a user-friendly platform.
Ministry of Defence	Indian Institute of Teacher Education (IITE), Gandhinagar	Ministry of Defence (MoD) has entered into a MoU with the Indian Institute of Teacher Education (IITE), Gandhinagar to facilitate training for 800 teachers of Sainik Schools . The MoU is signed for 5 years with effect from January 2022. Under the partnership, around more than 800 teachers from all Sainik Schools will be trained through courses named 'Gurudiksha' and 'Pratibaddhta' .
Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)	Indian Army	Signed a contract worth Rs 471.41 crore in New Delhi for the refurbishment of IGLA-1M missiles . After the Refurbishment, the missile will get a fresh lease life of ten years. IGLA-1M missiles were introduced by the Soviet Union in 1986, the IGLA-1M is an improved version of Igla man-portable missile system.
NMPB	CSIR-CIMAP	National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), under the Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy signed a MoU with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, (CSIR-CIMAP), lucknow to collaborate in promoting the production of Quality Planting Material (QPM) of medicinal plants. The implementing agencies include, State Medicinal Plant Boards, State Horticulture Departments, Regional-cum-facilitation centres across India.
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India has signed a MoU, operational for a period of 5 years (2021-26), to strengthen the waste management sector in India under the Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0) . This collaboration is in the backdrop of the 75th year of India's independence, the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav , with UNDP

		supporting us with the set up and operationalization of 75 Swachhata Kendras across the country.
Paytm	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Paytm signed a MoU with the Directorate of General Training (DGT) , Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, to train 6000 individuals for 3 years in Fintech Industry. The trainees will undertake a six-month programme that is designed by Paytm in consultation with the DGT. The collaboration is part of DGT's Flexible-MoU (Flexi-MoU). The Headquarters of Paytm Group – Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd (ONGC)	Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)	To enhance Environment, Social & Governance (ESG) Projects and to strengthen footprint in renewables, especially solar. The MoU was signed by ONGC Chairman & Managing Director (MD), Subhash Kumar, and SECI MD, Suman Sharma in New Delhi. The MoU deals with the cooperation for undertaking renewable energy projects including solar, wind, solar parks, Electric Vehicles value chain, green hydrogen and storage.
RailTel	CSC (Common Service Center) e-Governance Services India Limited	To provide services to increase broadband penetration in rural/ semi urban areas for minimising the digital divide. The MoU was signed during the one day workshop on ' CSC Empowering Citizens under Digital India ' as part of Iconic Week Celebration under 'AzadikaAmritMahotsav' at Siri Fort Auditorium, New Delhi. Ajay Sawhney, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity) inaugurated the workshop. RailTel is one of the largest neutral Telecom Service and ICT (Information Communication Technology) solutions providers in India.
Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA)	THDCIL	The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA), under the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy has signed a MoU with the THDC India Limited (THDCIL) , to provide financial and technological support to develop renewable energy (RE) projects. Under this MoU, IREDA will undertake techno-financial due diligence of the renewable energy and energy efficiency and conservation projects for THDCIL. The IREDA has also signed a MoU with Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Limited (BVFCL), under the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers to provide techno-financial expertise to develop RE energy projects and fundraising.
IIT-Delhi	Indian Air Force (IAF)	To support requirements towards indigenous solutions in various weapon systems. The MoU was signed by Air Vice Marshal Samir V Borade, Deputy Senior Maintenance Staff Officer, Headquarters Maintenance Command, IAF, and M R Ravi, Head of Department for Mechanical Engineering at IIT-Delhi. Under the MoU, The IAF has identified key focus areas involving development of technology and finding indigenous solutions towards sustenance of various weapon systems.

Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL)	Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI)	Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL) has signed a purchase agreement with the Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) to supply 4667 Megawatt (MW) of green power. This is the world's largest green power purchase agreement (PPA). This agreement is in line with India's objective to accelerate India's renewable energy footprint as well as to promote domestic manufacturing under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat programme.
Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)	Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND), Ministry of Finance	Signed a formal MoU for data exchange on an automatic and regular basis. It is on the line of vision of MCA and FIU-INDIA to harness data capabilities to ensure effective enforcement. This MoU will also fulfill the Government's vision of minimum government, maximum governance. There will be sharing of specific information such as suspicious transactions, KYC (Know Your Customer) related details and consolidated financial statements of companies registered in the country.
National Cadet Corps (NCC)	National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)	A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between National Cadet Corps (NCC) and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to reuse plastic wastes collected by NCC cadets during Puneet Sagar Abhiyan and other cleanliness activities in country-wide road construction by NHAI. As a part of MoU, IITs (Indian Institutes of Technology), NIITs (National Institute of Information Technology), and NGOs (Non-governmental organizations) are also approached for their cooperation in recycling and utilisation of the plastic wastes collected.
NITI Aayog	United Nations (UN) World Food Program (WFP)	National Institution for Transforming India, known as NITI Aayog has signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) with the United Nations (UN) World Food Program (WFP) for mainstreaming of millets and supporting India in taking lead globally in knowledge exchange using the opportunity of 2023 as International Year of Millets. ✓ The SoI focuses on strategic and technical collaboration between NITI Aayog and WFP to strengthen climate-resilient agriculture for enhanced food and nutrition security in India. NITI Aayog, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) has launched the first AgriTech Challenge cohort for its Agri-tech program that aims to help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.
Food and tech platform Innoterra	NABFOUNDATION	To develop farmer clusters through its products and services. NABFOUNDATION is a not-for-profit organization of the National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD). The services will be provided in selected clusters over the next two years that will increase farm incomes over 3-5 years.

Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Limited (GACL)	GAIL (India) Limited	Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Limited (GACL) and GAIL (India) Limited (formerly Gas Authority of India Ltd.) signed a MoU for setting up of 500 Kilo Litre Per Day (KLD) capacity Bioethanol plant in Gujarat and for cooperation in other business areas of mutual interest. This MoU was signed on the lines of the roadmap launched by Prime Minister (PM) of India Narendra Modi for 20% Ethanol Blending in Petrol by 2025 in order to reduce import of crude oil.
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OTHER MoU's IN CONTENT FORMAT

Gujarat Signed **12 MoUs** as a Part of **Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2022**

Government of Gujarat has signed 12 MoUs committing an investment of around Rs.14003 crore in the presence of Gujarat Chief Minister(CM) Bhupendra Patel in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The MoUs are signed as a precursor to the 10th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit(VGGS) 2022. The MoUs were signed by Rajiv Gupta, Principal Secretary, Industries department of Gujarat government and industry representatives.

Rajasthan govt signs 145 MoUs & LoIs during Invest Rajasthan Roadshow in New Delhi

Rajasthan Government signed 145 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and Letters of Intent (LoIs) worth over Rs.79,000 crore during '**Invest Rajasthan Roadshow- Exploring Investment Opportunities in Rajasthan**' in New Delhi. These include MoUs attracting proposed investments worth around Rs.69,000 crore and LoIs for investments totaling worth Rs 10,099 crore.

- ✓ The roadshow was organized by the Government of Rajasthan in partnership with industry body CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) to highlight the business and growth opportunities in Rajasthan.

PMI to WTO inks MoU with CTIL & CTEI for Capacity Building, Research in International Trade Law

A tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Permanent Mission of India (PMI) to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Geneva, Switzerland, Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL), Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), New Delhi, and the Centre for Trade and Economic Integration of The Graduate Institute, Geneva (CTEI) in Geneva.

Purpose – The purpose of MoU is to collaborate towards research and capacity-building in the field of international trade law and policy.

Series of MoUs under chairmanship of the Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways

A series of memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed during the National Conference on Investment Opportunities in Highway, Transport and Logistics, which was held in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The MoU was signed under the chairmanship of the Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Nitin Gadkari.

MoUs includes setting up of Multi-Modal Logistics Parks (MMLPs), MoU signed between the Government of Maharashtra and Tata Motors, MoU Signed between Government of Maharashtra and CERO, and MoU signed among MoRTH, IIT Madras and MapmyIndia.

India's EAM S.Jaishankar & Tajikistan's FM Sirojiddin Muhriddin Signs Agreements on Diplomatic Training

In December 2021, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar met Tajikistan foreign minister Sirojiddin Muhriddin who was on an official visit to India from 18 to 20 December 2021 to attend the 3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue.

- ✓ They have signed agreements on diplomatic training and program of cooperation.
- ✓ Both of them exchanged views on expanding bilateral cooperation in energy, connectivity, trade, security and capacity building.

SEBI Signs EMMoU of International Organization of Securities Commissions

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has signed the **Enhanced Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (EMMoU)** of the **International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO)**. **Purpose** - To have a suitable cooperation arrangement, the EMMoU was introduced by IOSCO to expand the range of enforcement powers that signatories may use to safeguard the integrity and stability of markets, protect investors and deter misconduct and fraud.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

APPOINTMENTS

NATIONAL

PERSON NAME	APPOINTED AS	ENTITY / PLACE	KEY NOTES
General Manoj Mukund (MM) Naravane	Chairman	Chiefs of Staff Committee	The Chief of Army Staff, General Manoj Mukund (MM) Naravane, was appointed as the chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (CoSC). The CoSC comprises the chiefs of the Army, Navy, and the Air Force. He succeeded General Bipin Rawat, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) who passed away in an accident in Tamil Nadu. MM Naravane was a 27 th Chief of the Army Staff in 2019.
Unsoo Kim	Managing Director (MD)	Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL)	Hyundai Motor Company (HMC) has appointed Unsoo Kim as the Managing Director (MD) of Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), starting from 1st January 2022. He will replace Seon Seob Kim (SS Kim), who will lead the Global Operations Division in Hyundai headquarters in Seoul, South Korea.
Atul Dinkar Rane	Director-General	BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited	Senior DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) Scientist Atul Dinkar Rane has been appointed as the Director-General (DG) of the BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited, Which manufactures the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile. He was a part of the core team of BrahMos Aerospace, since its foundation as a joint venture with Russia.
H O Suri	Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance	Private sector IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance appointed H O Suri as new Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) effective October 1, 2021. Earlier, Suri was the financial advisor,

			head, internal audit & legal of the IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance Company. Suri is a chartered accountant by profession and started his professional journey in 1982 with IFFCO, the world's largest fertiliser manufacturer in the Cooperative Sector.
Harjinder Singh	Chef de Mission	India	The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) appointed Harjinder Singh as the ' Chef de Mission ' of the Indian contingent for the upcoming Winter Olympics 2022 that will be held from 4-20th February in Beijing, China. Harjinder Singh, currently serves as the General Secretary of Indian Ice Hockey Association.
Alka Upadhyaya	Chairperson	National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)	Alka Upadhyaya, IAS officer (1990 batch) of Madhya Pradesh cadre appointed as Chairperson of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH) by the Government of India. She succeeded Giridhar Aramane, who was given additional charge of the Chairperson of NHAI after Sukhbir Singh Sandhu steps down. Other appointments: i. Sanjay Bandopadhyay, AS, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), has been appointed as the Chairman of the Inland Waterways Authority of India. ii. Sundeep Kumar Nayak has been appointed as Director-General, National Productivity Council, Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade.
Pradip Shah	Chairman	National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd (NARCL)	The founder of IndAsia Fund Advisors, Pradip Shah appointed as the Chairman of National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd (NARCL) and Managing Director of Aditya Birla Asset Reconstruction Company (ABARC), Sanjay Jain appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of India Debt Resolution Company Ltd (IDRCL). Diwakar Gupta, former managing director of State Bank of India (SBI), also appointed as Chairman of IDRCL.
Sambit Patra	Chairman and part time Non-Executive Director	India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)	Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokesperson and leader Sambit Patra was appointed as the Chairman and part time Non-Executive Director of India Tourism Development

			Corporation (ITDC) by the Appointment Committee of Cabinet (ACC) for the next 3 years. Prior to this, Sambit Patra was working as an independent director of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).
Ittira Davis	Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (SFB)	The Board of Directors of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (SFB) appointed Ittira Davis as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for a period of 3 years. The bank has also appointed Rajesh Kumar Jogi, Harish Devarajan and Umesh Bellur as additional directors. Ittira Davis is succeeded by former MD and CEO Nitin Chugh.
Sanjiv Mehta	President	FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) is set to appoint Sanjiv Mehta, the Chairman & Managing Director of Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL), as its New President after the conclusion of FICCI's 94 th Annual General Meeting on 18 th December 2021. Currently, Sanjiv Mehta also serves as the Senior Vice President of FICCI and will be succeeding Uday Shankar, the current President of FICCI.
Atul Kumar Goel	Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Punjab National Bank (PNB)	Atul Kumar Goel was appointed as the Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Punjab National Bank (PNB). The appointment comes after the approval from the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). Atul Kumar Goel will serve as PNB chief until December 31, 2024. He will succeed Mallikarjuna Rao, the incumbent MD & CEO of PNB, who will retire on 31st January 2022.
Vasudevan Pathangi Narasimhan (PN)	Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited (ESFBL)	The Board of Directors (BoD) of Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited (ESFBL) reappointed Vasudevan Pathangi Narasimhan (PN) as the Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for three years (from July 23, 2022 to July 22, 2025). Vasudevan PN is currently serving as the MD and CEO of the bank. Earlier he was working as the MD of Equitas Holdings Limited.

INTERNATIONAL

PERSON NAME	APPOINTED AS	ENTITY / PLACE	KEY NOTES
Eva Magdalena Andersson	Prime Minister	Sweden	The 54 years old former Finance Minister of Sweden, Eva Magdalena Andersson from the Social Democratic Party (SDP) became 1 st female Prime Minister (PM) of Sweden. Sweden's Parliament is known as Riksdag. Sweden is the last Nordic country to get a female Prime Minister.
Adama Barrow	President	Gambia	Won the second term as President during Gambia's presidential election by achieving over 53% votes from 50 of 53 constituencies. He defeated his main challenger Ousainou Darboe who won 27.7% of vote.
Iris Xiomara Castro Sarmiento	President	Honduras	Iris Xiomara Castro Sarmiento, a presidential candidate, won the Presidential election of Honduras, after defeating her close competitor, Nasry Asfura in the General Election. She will succeed previous President Juan Orlando Hernandez. With this victory, Xiomara Castro became the 1 st female president of Honduras.
Gabriel Boric	President	Chile	Gabriel Boric, 35-year-old, won Chile presidential elections, to become the youngest-ever President elect of Chile. He defeated his opposition Jose Antonio Kast in the elections. He will become the youngest president in Chile's history.
Karl Nehammer	Chancellor	Austria	Karl Nehammer was sworn in as Austria's chancellor by Alexander Van der Bellen, President of Austria in a ceremony in Vienna, Austria. He is succeeding the career diplomat Alexander Schallenberg who took charge as chancellor in October 2021. He is the 3 rd person to hold the role of Austria's Chancellor in the last two months.
Parag Agrawal	Chief Executive officer (CEO)	Twitter	The board of directors of Twitter has decided to appoint Indian American, Parag Agrawal, the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of Twitter, as the new Chief Executive officer (CEO) of Twitter. He was appointed following the resignation of Jack Dorsey, the co-founder of Twitter, from the post of CEO. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bret Taylor, a member of the board of Directors, Twitter, has been named as Independent Chair of the board succeeding Patrick Pichette.

Gita Gopinath	First Deputy Managing Director (FDMD)	IMF	Indian-American and the first female Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Gita Gopinath is promoted as the IMF's First Deputy Managing Director (FDMD) serving under IMF Chief Kristalina Georgieva. She will succeed FDMD Geoffrey Okamoto who is set to be relieved from IMF. She hails from Kannur, Kerala.
Olaf Scholz	Chancellor	Germany	The Parliament of Germany has appointed Olaf Scholz (63) as the 9 th post-World War II Chancellor of Germany succeeding Angela Dorothea Merkel who retires from her services after 16 years (since 2005) of tenure as Chancellor. The ceremony for the same took place at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany.
Catherine Russell	Executive Director	UNICEF	United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appointed Catherine Russell as the Executive Director of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Russell will succeed Henrietta Fore, who resigned in July 2021. Russell, a lawyer, has worked in Democratic politics since the mid-1980s. Catherine Russell is an assistant to US President Joe Biden and she also heads the White House Office of Presidential Personnel.

BRAND & CAMPAIGN AMBASSADORS

PERSON NAME	BRAND / CAMPAIGN	KEY NOTES
Naomi Kawase	UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador	UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Director-General Audrey Azoulay appointed Japanese film director Naomi Kawase as the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Cultural and Creative Industries. She has been recognised for her commitment to culture and creativity at the service of the development of more just societies, especially for girls and women, and of her support for the objectives of UNESCO.
Sanjay Dutt	Brand Ambassador	The Arunachal Pradesh (AP) Government has signed Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt as brand ambassador and award-winning filmmaker and branding expert Rahul Mittra as brand advisor of the occasion of their golden jubilee celebrations, marking the 50th year of the naming of the state. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sanjay Dutt launched a media campaign for the month-long celebrations, from 20th January to 20th February, 2022 at the Mechuka valley of AP's Shi-Yomi district.

		The Chief Minister of AP Pema Khandu and State Assembly Speaker Pasang Sona Dorjee also participated in the launch.
Smriti Mandhana	Brand Ambassador	GUVI, an Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) incubated startup, has signed Indian Women's cricketer Smriti Mandhana as its brand ambassador. As the brand ambassador of GUVI , Smriti Mandhana will be the face of GUVI and feature across the online campaigns of GUVI aimed to strengthen the importance and scope of technological education & information technology (IT) skills. She will create awareness about technological education among everyone, especially among women.
Salman Khan	Covid vaccination Ambassador	The Maharashtra Government has appointed Veteran Bollywood Actor Salman Khan as the Covid vaccination ambassador of the state with an intent to tackle vaccine hesitancy among the Muslim dominated areas of Maharashtra and to encourage people to get both dose of COVID vaccine.
Ravindra Jadeja	Brand Ambassador	Bangalore based innovative, fast-growing fintech, Kinara Capital signed the Indian cricketer Ravindra Jadeja, as its official brand ambassador on the occasion of the company's 10 th anniversary. Kinara Capital provide loan service to India's MSMEs. Till date, Kinara Capital has disbursed 70,000 collateral-free loans.
Jasprit Bumrah	Brand Ambassador	Unix, an Indian Mobile Accessories manufacturing brand , has signed Indian Cricket Fast Bowler Jasprit Bumrah as its Brand Ambassador to increase visibility of their products. Owners of Unix – Naresh Jain, Imran Kagalwala, Sandeep Bafna and Krunal Bafn were present during the official appointment.
Neeraj Chopra and PV Sindhu	Brand Ambassadors	In December 2021 BYJU'S announced a 2 year partnership with Olympic medalists Neeraj Chopra and PV Sindhu as the brand ambassadors for Disney BYJU'S Early Learn app . Javelin thrower, Neeraj Chopra is a Gold medallist and Badminton player, PV Sindhu is a Bronze medallist from 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
Rishabh Pant	State Brand Ambassador	Uttarakhand Chief Minister (CM) Pushkar Singh Dhami appointed Indian cricketer Rishabh Pant as the ' State Brand Ambassador ' with the aim of encouraging the youth of the state towards sports and public health. Rishabh Rajendra Pant is a 24 year old middle order wicket-keeper batsman for India, who was born in Roorkee, Uttarakhand.
Vijay Raaz and Varun Sharma	Brand Ambassadors	EaseMyTrip.com (Easy Trip Planners Ltd), an online travel company of India has appointed bollywood

		actors Vijay Raaz and Varun Sharma as its brand ambassadors. This is the first time for EaseMyTrip to appoint any brand ambassador. EaseMyTrip founded by Nishant Pitti and Rikant Pitti in 2008 was started as the Business-to-Business (B2B) portal and entered into the business to consumer (B2C) segment in 2011.
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COUNTRY AMBASSADORS

PERSON NAME	COUNTRY	KEY NOTES
Dr Anupam Ray	United Nations(UN) Conference on Disarmament(CD) in Geneva, Switzerland	<p>Senior diplomat Dr Anupam Ray, a 1994 batch of Indian Foreign Service(IFS) officer, has been appointed as India's next permanent representative(PR)/Ambassador to the United Nations(UN) Conference on Disarmament(CD) in Geneva, Switzerland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ He is currently serving as the joint secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs(MEA). ✓ He replaces Dr Pankaj Sharma, a 1991 batch IFS officer who has been serving as the Ambassador/Permanent Representative to the UN on Disarmament since 2018. <p>Dr Pankaj Sharma has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Mexico.</p>

OTHER APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Former CEC Shri Sunil Arora joins Board of Advisers for IDEA

The former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora has joined the board of advisers for the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (**IDEA**), Sweden based organization. A 15-member board of advisers is assisted by IDEA, those members are eminent personalities or experts from a wide variety of backgrounds.

PV Sindhu Re-elected as **Member of BWF's Athletes' Commission** for 2nd term till 2025

Former World Champion and India's 2-time Olympic medallist shuttler **PV Sindhu (Pusarla Venkata Sindhu)** was re-elected as a member of the Badminton World Federation (BWF)'s Athletes' Commission for a 2nd term till 2025. She is among the 6 appointed members of the Commission.

- ✓ PV Sindhu was first elected as a member of the BWF's Athletes' Commission in 2017. She is the only member who stood for re-election.

Vishwavir Ahuja Steps down as the MD & CEO of RBL Bank; **Rajeev Ahuja** takes over

The board of the RBL Bank has accepted to proceed with the medical leave of Vishwavir Ahuja, the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer(CEO) of RBL Bank Ltd, the erstwhile Ratnakar

Bank Ltd. **Vishwavir Ahuja** will step down from the post of MD & CEO and go on leave with immediate effect.

- ✓ Rajeev Ahuja, Executive Director of the RBL Bank has been appointed as the interim managing director & CEO of the RBL Bank, with immediate effect, subject to regulatory and other approvals.
- ✓ RBI to appoint Yogesh Dayal, chief general manager of RBI, **as an additional director on the board of RBL Bank** for a period of 2 years till 23rd December 2023 or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

AWARDS

AWARDS IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL SERVICE, SCIENCE & BRAVERY

AWARD NAME	AWARD WINNER	FIELD	KEY NOTES
'Asom Baibhav' 2021 Award	Ratan Tata	Social Service	On the occasion of Asom Divas or Assam Day, the Chief Minister (CM) of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma conferred the prestigious ' Asom Baibhav' 2021 award to Ratan Tata, Chairman of TATA Trusts for contributing towards cancer care services in Assam. It is the highest civilian award of Assam. Assam day is celebrated on 2 December to commemorate the rule of Chalong Sukapha.
Mother Teresa Memorial Awards (MTMA) for Social Justice 2021	-	Social Justice	Harmony Foundation hosted the 17 th annual Mother Teresa Memorial Awards (MTMA) for Social Justice 2021 and felicitated the winners. The award was given by Dr Abraham Mathai, the founder chairman of the foundation. The winners are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dr Anil Prakash Joshi (The environmentalist, who was conferred upon the Padma Bhushan in 2021, Vidyut Mohan (the winner of the Earth shot Prize), Ridhima Pandey (young environmental activist from Uttarakhand), Tulsi Gowda (A Padma Shree awardee), Aadya Joshi (Recipient of the Children's Climate Prize 2020), Paani Foundation – Awarded for the mission to create a drought-free Maharashtra, and Subojit Mukherjee – Awarded for his efforts to amplify the green cover in and around Mumbai

			The other recipients of the award include – Vinisha Umashankar (youth environmental activist); Jamuna Tudu (for preserving the forests of Jharkhand); WeForest; Pollution Coalition.
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AWARDS IN THE FIELD OF SPORTS

AWARD NAME	AWARD WINNER	FIELD	KEY NOTES
Ballon d'Or award or Golden Ball Award	Lionel Andrés Messi (Lionel Messi)	Sports	2021 marks the 65 th edition of the Ballon d'Or Ceremony which was held in Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris, France. Argentina's Lionel Andrés Messi (Lionel Messi), who plays as a forward for Paris Saint-Germain has won the Ballon d'Or award or Golden Ball Award for the record 7 th time and Barcelona's Alexia Putellas has won the Women's Ballon d'Or award or Ballon d'Or Féminin Award . Italy and PSG goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma has won the 2021 Yashin Trophy for the best goalkeeper. Click here
SJFI Medal 2021	Sunil Manohar Gavaskar	Sports	Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) has decided to honour former Indian Cricketer and cricket commentator Sunil Manohar Gavaskar with its prestigious ' SJFI Medal 2021 ' at SJFI Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Guwahati, Assam. A Vinod, the deputy Editor(Sports) with The Hindu, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala became SJFI's new President. Click here
Best Female Debut	Avani Lekhara	Sports	Indian shooter Avani Lekhara, who has created history by winning India's first Gold medal in Shooting at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics, won the " Best Female Debut " honour at the 2021 Paralympic Sport Awards. The Awards were announced by the International Paralympic Committee. She became the 1st Indian woman to win 2 Paralympic medals in a single edition of the Paralympic Games. Click here
Knighthood	Lewis Hamilton	Sports	British racing driver Lewis Hamilton, who has won the Formula one(F1) Championship 7 times has been honoured with Britain's Knight Bachelor, for Services to Motorsport. Lewis Hamilton received Knighthood from Charles, The Prince of Wales, in a ceremony at England. Hamilton is the 4 th F1 driver to receive the knighthood, the honorary title Sir in Britain after Jack Brabham(Australian), Stirling Moss and Jackie Stewart.

OTHER IMPORTANT AWARDS

AWARD NAME	AWARD WINNER	FIELD	KEY NOTES
UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards	Delhi	Cultural Heritage Conservation	Nizamuddin Revival Project , India's project on the holistic urban revitalisation of the historic Nizamuddin Basti community in New Delhi. Delhi has won the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2021 under 2 categories: Award of Excellence and Special Recognition for Sustainable Development. 9 projects from 6 countries (Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand) had been selected for the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2021.
Bhutan's highest civilian award	Narendra Modi Prime Minister (PM) of India	-	On the occasion of Bhutan's 114th National Day (17th December 2021) , The Kingdom of Bhutan has honoured Narendra Modi, Prime Minister (PM) of India with Bhutan's highest civilian award Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo also known as Order of the Dragon King (Druk Gyalpo) . PM Modi becomes the first foreigner to receive the coveted award. ✓ King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck conferred the award upon PM Modi. The Druk Gyalpo is the official title of the head of state of Bhutan, meaning Dragon King in Dzongkha to recognise those who have devoted a lifetime of service to Bhutan and the people of Bhutan.
2021's 'Global Entrepreneur of the Year' Award	Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE)	-	Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) conferred the 2021's 'Global Entrepreneur of the Year' Award in Business Transformation on Kumar Mangalam Birla, chairman Aditya Birla Group. He was awarded with other entrepreneurs during the event that was held in Dubai, UAE. He was conferred with the award for his extraordinary leadership during the pandemic period. KM Birla is the 1st Indian industrialist to receive this prestigious award. Other personalities who were awarded in 2021: ✓ Elon Musk (Global Entrepreneur of the Year-Immigrant Entrepreneur)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Jeff Bezos (Global Entrepreneur of the Year-First Generation) ✓ Satya Nadella (Global Entrepreneur of the Year-Entrepreneurial CEO) ✓ Techstars (Best Global Accelerator for Startups) MIT (Global University Promoting Student Entrepreneurship)
Dr M S Swaminathan Award	V Praveen Rao	Agriculture Research	V Praveen Rao, Vice-Chancellor (VC) of Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU) wins the 7th Dr M S Swaminathan Award for the period 2017-19. It is a biennial national (every 2 year) award that was presented by Retired ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) Employees Association (RICAREA) and Nuziveedu Seeds Limited. It carries a cash prize INR 2 lakh and a citation. The Selection Committee, headed by former ICAR Director General, RS Paroda has decided to select V Praveen Rao for the award recognising his contributions in the fields of 'agricultural research, teaching, extension and administration'.
Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF (New India Foundation) Book Prize 2021	Dinyar Patel	Book	A biography titled ' Naoroji: Pioneer of Indian Nationalism ', authored by Dinyar Patel and published by Harvard University Press selected as the winner of the 4th Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF (New India Foundation) Book Prize 2021 . The book marked the life events and legacy of Dada Bhai Naoroji. It also contains historical backgrounds of India's National Movement during the 19 th century.
AMS's Ciprian Foias Award	Nikhil Srivastava	Mathematics	Indian-American Mathematician Nikhil Srivastava nominated for American Mathematical Society (AMS) for the first Ciprian Foias Award in Operator Theory. Along with Nikhil Srivastava, who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, Adam Marcus (Switzerland) and Daniel Spielman (United States) are the other two recipients.
Jnanpith Award	Nilmani Phookan Jr & Damodar Mauzo	Literature	Assamese poet Nilmani Phookan Jr & Konkani novelist Damodar Mauzo won the country's highest literary award, the Jnanpith award for their outstanding

			contribution to literature. Assamese poet Nilmani Phookan Jr won the 56 th Jnanpith Award and Konkani novelist Damodar Mauzo won the 57 th Jnanpith Award. Damodar Mauzo is 77 years old, from Majorda, Goa has written many well-known books and his books have been translated into several Indian languages.
2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize	Neena Gupta	Young Mathematician	Professor Neena Gupta, a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in Kolkata, West Bengal has been awarded the 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from developing countries. The award recognized her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra. With this, she became the third woman to receive the Ramanujan Prize after Sujatha Ramdorai, in 2006 and Brazil's Carolina Bhering de Araujo in 2020.
Golden Peacock Environment Management Award (GPEMA) 2021	Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)	Steel Sector	The Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), awarded with the prestigious Golden Peacock Environment Management Award (GPEMA) 2021 in the Steel Sector by the Institute of Directors (IOD). SAIL received this award for the 3rd consecutive year. Golden Peacock Environment Management Award is a prestigious award that was instituted by the World Environment Foundation in 1998.
United Nation (UN) Women's Award	Divya Hegde	Leadership Commitment	Divya Hegde, an Indian Climate Action Entrepreneur from Udupi, coastal Karnataka, has won the United Nation (UN) Women's Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP) Awards ceremony. She has been recognised for her sustained efforts in advancing gender equality through climate action efforts.
Person of the Year 2021	Alia Bhatt	-	People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India has named Indian Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt as the 'Person of the Year' 2021 to celebrate her work in supporting the animal-friendly fashion industry and her advocacy for dogs and cats in need. Alia Bhatt has invested in Phool.co, an Indian

			Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur-backed biomaterial startup, that develops 'fleather' – bio-degradable vegan leather.
Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award 2021	Viral Sudhirbhai Desai	Climate Change	Viral Sudhirbhai Desai, an industrialist from Surat, who is popularly known as the Greenman or green man of Gujarat has been honoured with the Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award 2021 . Among the 28 personalities from 11 countries who were honoured with this award, Viral Desai was the only Indian to win the honour for climate change. The winners of the 8 th Edition of the "Bharat Gaurav Awards" Lifetime achievement award were felicitated at Atlantis, The Palm Island, Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) with the Bharat Gaurav Samman by Sanskruti Yuva Sansthan.
Digital Innovation of the Year Award	Jindal Global University (JGU)	-	O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) won the ' Digital Innovation of the Year Award ' in the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Awards 2021 for creating a free, cloud-based application to help schools and universities manage data. JGU was the only Indian University to be shortlisted for the "Digital Innovation of the Year". The university was awarded under the 'Technological or Digital Innovation of the Year category' for its transformative work in the last 2 years.
Most Effective Bank-Fintech Partnership Award	Vayana Network & Federal Bank	-	Vayana Network, one of India's largest trade finance platforms, and Federal Bank, a leading Private Sector Bank have been awarded the 'Most Effective Bank-Fintech Partnership: Agile and Adaptable' at the IBSi-Global Fintech Innovation Awards 2021. The award was conferred in recognition of Vayana Network's partnership with Federal Bank making Supply Chain Finance at ease.

Most Innovative Best Practice	HDFC Bank	-	HDFC Bank, an Indian banking and financial service company has selected under ' Most Innovative Best Practice ' at the coveted Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Digital Transformation Award 2021 or CII DX Award 2021. It will be recognized for the HDFC's efforts in world class financial inclusion in Village Level Executive (VLE) centres along with Government of India's Common Service Centres (CSC).
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AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS IN CONTENT FORMAT

Anju Bobby George wins Woman of Year Award from 2021 World Athletics

The former long jump legend from India, Anju Bobby George from Kerala won the award for 'Woman of the Year' 2021 from World Athletics. The award ceremony was held virtually on the World Athletics YouTube channel and Facebook page. She won a bronze medal in long jump at the World Championship 2003 and became the first Indian athlete to win a medal in a World Championship in Athletics jumping 6.70m.

Other Awards :

i. World Athletes of the Year at the World Athletics Awards 2021 – Olympic champions Elaine Thompson-Herah of Jamaica and Karsten Warholm of Norway.

ii. Jean-Pierre Durand World Athletics Photograph of the Year – Ryan Pierse's photograph of the women's high jump qualifying at the Tokyo Olympic Games.

- This year's award is dedicated to the memory of Jean-Pierre Durand, one of the sport's most prolific photographers who died in October 2021.

Title	Name	Category	Country
Female Rising Star	Athing Mu	Athletics	United States
Male Rising Star	Erriyon Knighton	Athletics	United States
Member Federations Award	Federacion Costarricense de Atletismo (Costa Rica)	Federation	Brazil
Inspiration Award	Mutaz Barshim and Gianmarco Tamberi	-	Qatar and Italy
President's Award	Peter Diamond, Executive Vice President of NBC (National Broadcasting Company) Olympic programming	Broadcasting	United States
Coaching Achievement Award	Bobby Kersee	Coach	United States

Viktor Axelsen, Tai Tzu Ying named 2021 BWF Male & Female Player of the Year

Denmark's Viktor Axelsen and China's Taipei's Tai Tzu Ying were named Male and Female player of the year 2021 respectively by the Badminton World Federation (BWF). It was the first season-ending award in this category for both Viktor Axelsen and Tai Tzu Ying — the All England champions of 2020.

Other awards:

Category	Name
Most improved player of the Year	Lee Yang and Wang Chi-Lin

Pair of the Year	Greysia Polii and Apriyani Rahayu
Para Badminton Pair of the Year	Lucas Mazur and Faustine Noel
Female Para Badminton Player of the Year	Leani Ratri Oktilla
Male Para Badminton Player of the Year	Qu Zimo
Eddy Choong Most Promising Player	Kunlavut Vitidsarn
Special mention	Kevin Cordon

WTB Award 2021: Australia's Ashleigh Barty won the WTB Player of the Year for 2nd time

Women's Tennis Association(WTB)'s World No.1 Ashleigh Barty, Australian professional tennis player, has won the **2021 WTB Player of the Year Award**. This is her second of the same. WTB announced the winners of the WTB Player Awards 2021 as voted by the members of the international media that recognise the outstanding performance from the current season.

Winners of the 2021 WTB Awards:

Category	Winner
WTB Player of the Year	Ashleigh Barty(Australia)
WTB Doubles Team of the Year	Barbora Krejckikova (Czech Republic) Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic)
WTB Most Improved Player of the Year	Barbora Krejckikova (Czech Republic)
WTB Newcomer of the Year	Emma Raducanu(United Kingdom)
WTB Comeback Player of the Year	Carla Suárez Navarro(Spain)

70th Miss Universe: India's Harnaaz Sandhu Crowned Miss Universe 2021

21 years old Indian Actor and Model, Harnaaz Sandhu from Chandigarh, Punjab, has been crowned Miss Universe 2021 at the 70th Edition of the Miss Universe Competition held in Eilat, Israel. Harnaaz Sandhu became the 3rd Indian to be crowned Miss Universe after Sushmita Sen, the 1st Indian to win Miss Universe (1994) and Lara Dutta (Miss Universe 2000).

Elon Musk named Time Magazine's 'Person of the Year' 2021

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Tesla & SpaceX, Elon Musk named **'Person of the Year 2021'** by Time magazine. He took over the title from US President Joe Biden & Vice President Kamala Harris, who received the title in 2020. In April 2021, NASA granted Elon Musk's rocket company SpaceX an exclusive contract to put United States (US) astronauts on the moon for the first time since 1972.

Merriam-Webster Named 'Vaccine' as 2021 Word of the Year

Merriam-Webster, America's most trusted online dictionary, has chosen **'Vaccine'** as the 2021 word of the year. The word of the year is chosen by data that states the significant increase in lookup at Merriam-Webster.com in the past 12 months.

- ✓ Lookups for the 'Vaccine' increased 601% year-over-year from 2020 and were up 1048% from 2019. The terms vaccine and vaccination are derived from **Variolae vaccinae (smallpox of the cow)**, the term devised by Edward Jenner. He coined the word vaccine from the Latin word 'vacca' for cow.
- ✓ **'Pandemic'** was the Merriam-Webster dictionary's word of the year 2020.

India's ESAF SFB gets Honorable Mention in Best Bank for Women Entrepreneurs: 4th Global SME Finance Awards 2021

The **4th Global SME Finance Awards 2021**, constituted by the United States (US)-based SME Finance Forum, conferred Honorable mention in the Best Bank for Women Entrepreneurs category on the Thrissur, Kerala (India) based ESAF Small Finance Bank (SFB) Limited. These awards were organized by International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, and the SME Finance Forum and endorsed by the G20's (Group of Twenty) Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPII).

DBS Bank India Won Two Awards at ET BFSI Excellence Awards 2021

DBS Bank India was awarded at the **ET BFSI Excellence Awards 2021**. The bank has won two awards – for the 'DBS Rapid (Real-time API)' solution in the 'Innovative API/Open Banking model' category and for 'Intelligent Banking' in the 'Best Digital Customer Experience initiative' category.

- ✓ The award is an initiative of The Economic Times, ET BFSI Excellence Awards, and honours the best innovations & practices implemented by the Banking Financial Services & Insurances (BFSI) industry in a dynamic and competitive environment.

President Ram Nath Kovind Presented 'President's Standard' to Indian Navy's 22nd Missile Vessels Squadron

Ram Nath Kovind, President of India, presented the '**President's Standard**' to the 22nd Missile Vessel Squadron of the Indian Navy, which is also known as the Killer Squadron at the ceremonial parade held at the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, Maharashtra. The year 2021 also marks the 50 years of inception of the Missile Vessel Squadron, also known as Killers.

- ✓ The President's Standard is the highest honour bestowed by the President, the Supreme Commander, to a Military unit in recognition of the Service rendered to the nation.

IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea to Indian Navy, ICG & Master

IMO awarded Certificate of Commendation for the year 2021 to the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and Master along with crew members of tugboat Ocean Bliss. **IMO** has established an annual award to provide international recognition for individual's and team's exceptional bravery at sea. They were awarded for exceptional and courageous efforts towards the rescue operation of M/T New Diamond ship that was caught in fire at the Sri Lankan Coast.

Architect Balkrishna Doshi to be honoured with the Royal Gold Medal 2022

Indian architect Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi (94) has been named for the **Royal Gold Medal 2022** which is one of the world's highest honours for architecture. The announcement for the same was made by Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Notably, worked under Le Corbusier (Designed Chandigarh) and Louis Kahn, he is a pioneer of modernist and brutalist architecture in India. He is also an awardee of Padma Shri and the Padma Bhushan.

Karnataka Bank gets 2 DigiDhan Awards by MeitY for Highest BHIM-UPI Transactions

Karnataka Bank has been conferred with two DigiDhan awards instituted by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). The awards were given during Digital payment Utsav in New Delhi. The award recognized banks for achieving the target with the highest percentage in BHIM-UPI transactions under the private sector bank category consecutively for two years 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Bank of Baroda achieves top position in Digital Payments for 2020-21

Bank of Baroda (BoB) grabbed the top spot in overall digital transactions among large banks for FY20-21. It was felicitated by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (**MeitY**) at the Digital

Payments Utsav which was held to commemorate 75th anniversary of Independence of India. BoB has been conferred with five DigiDhan awards for FY 2019-20 & 2020-21 in various categories.

HDFC Life Wins the 'Best Governed Company Listed Segment: Large Category'

HDFC Life, one of India's leading life insurance companies has won the 'Best Governed Company Listed Segment: Large Category' at the 21st edition of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) National Awards for Excellence in Corporate Governance. The award was presented by Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah.

Emma Raducanu named as BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2021

2021 US Open Women's Singles Champion, Emma Raducanu(World Rank: 19), a British professional tennis player has been voted as the BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2021.It was held in MediaCityUK, Salford, England.

The other award winners of 2021 BBC Sports Personality 2021 are

- ✓ Team of the Year 2021: England men's football team
- ✓ World Sport Star of the Year 2021: Rachael Blackmore
- ✓ Young Sports Personality of the Year 2021: Sky Brown
- ✓ Unsung Hero 2021: Sam Barlow
- ✓ Lifetime Achievement Award 2021: Simone Biles
- ✓ Coach of the Year 2021: Gareth Southgate
- ✓ Helen Rollason Award 2021: Jen Beattie

SUMMITS, EVENTS & CONFERENCE

SUMMITS

SUMMITS	VENUE	KEY POINTS
Summit for Democracy	Virtual Mode	Prime Minister Narendra Modi has participated in the closed-door virtual Summit Session of the 1 st summit for democracy which was convened by United States President Joe Biden.India was among the 12 countries invited to attend the Summit for Democracy Leaders' Plenary Session. The summit focuses on challenges and opportunities facing democracies and will provide a platform for leaders to announce both individual and collective commitments, reforms, and initiatives to defend democracy and human rights at home and abroad.
India Water Impact Summit (IWIS) 2021	NMCG office, New Delhi and IIT Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh	The 6th edition of the India Water Impact Summit (IWIS) 2021 was organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), and Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (c-Ganga) in a hybrid mode. Physically it was held at NMCG office, New Delhi and IIT (Indian Institutes of Technology), Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The theme of the summit is 'River Resources Allocation "Planning and Management at the Regional Level'. It was inaugurated by Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) along with Rajiv Ranjan Mishra, Director General NMCG; and Dr Vinod Tare, Founding Head, c-Ganga.

J&K Real Estate Summit- 2021-Unlocking Opportunities	Convention Centre, Jammu	The government of Jammu and Kashmir(J&K) hosted the first-ever 'J&K Real Estate Summit- 2021-Unlocking Opportunities' at the Convention Centre, Jammu, J&K.The summit is in line with the efforts to connect J&K to mainstream India. J&K Government signed MoUs Worth Rs 18,300 crore at the Summit. Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has E-launched the 'Auction of Assets Portal', Affordable Rental Housing Complexes Scheme at Sunjwan, Jammu, J&K RERA portal, Housing Schemes and J&K Housing Mission Portal during the summit.
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EVENTS

EVENTS	VENUE	KEY POINTS
International Film Festival of India (IFFI)	Goa	<p>52nd edition of the Asia's oldest and largest film festival, International Film Festival of India (IFFI), held in Goa with support of Directorate of Film Festivals (under Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and the Entertainment Society of Goa, Government of Goa.It was conducted in hybrid mode to showcase the excellence of film art and filmmakers from all over the world while boosting creativity and cultural exchange.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Anurag Singh Thakur, announced that Hema Malini, Actor, Member of Parliament from Mathura, UP and Prasoon Joshi, Lyricist and Chairperson, CBFC (Central Board of Film Certification) were the Indian Film Personality of the Year Award for 2021. <p>Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award - Hungarian film director Istevan Szabo and American film director, producer, screenwriter and actor Martin Scorsese have been conferred with the award. Click here</p>
Joint Cyber Drill 2021	-	International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) operating under the Ministry of Communications conducted a four-day virtual event 'Joint Cyber Drill 2021'. It was conducted for the Critical Network Infrastructure (CNI) operators of India 2021.The CNIs are the systems, assets and networks that are essential to ensure the security of a country.
InFinity Forum	Virtual Mode	Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated a thought leadership forum on FinTech, ' InFinity Forum '.The event was hosted by International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) , under the aegis of the Government of India in collaboration with GIFT City and Bloomberg.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Indonesia, South Africa and the United Kingdom were the partner countries in the 1st edition of the Forum.
Indian Ocean Dialogue	Virtual Mode	<p>India hosted the 8th Edition of the Indian Ocean Dialogue virtually with the assistance of the Indian Council for World Affairs and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Secretariat. The Dialogue comprises 4 Sessions which focuses on the Health, Education, Development and Trade sectors that ensures digital inclusion and bridging the digital divide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The dialogue was jointly hosted by the External Affairs Ministry and Indian Council of World Affairs. <p>Theme – Post Pandemic Indian Ocean: Leveraging Digital Technologies for Health, Education, Development and Trade in IORA Member States.</p>

CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE	VENUE	KEY POINTS
Indian Ocean Conference	Abu Dhabi	<p>Union Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Ministry of External Affairs (EAM) visited Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE) to attend the 5th Indian Ocean Conference on December 4-5, 2021. The theme of the conference was 'Indian Ocean: Ecology, Economy, Epidemic'. The Conference is chaired by Sri Lankan President, Gotabaya Rajapaksa & Vice Chairs are S. Jaishankar, Vivian Balakrishnan, Sayyid Badr Bin Hamad Bin Hamoud Al Busaidi.</p>
All India Mayors' Conference	Uttar Pradesh	<p>Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India virtually inaugurated the All India Mayors' Conference held at Pt Deendayal Upadhyay Trade Facilitation Centre in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh (UP). Around 120 mayors from different states attended the conference held in Varanasi (also known as Kashi).</p> <p>The theme of the conference was 'New Urban India'.</p>

COMMITTEES & MEETINGS

COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE NAME	COMMITTEE HEAD	KEY NOTES
3-member committee	-	Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment announced the formation of a 3-member committee to review the annual income criteria for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) reservations in job and central education institutes. The committee will now review the Rs 8 lakh family annual income ceiling for EWS to apply for 10 percent reserved seats in central education institutes and government jobs. The 3 members of the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ajay Bhushan Pandey – Former Finance Secretary ✓ Prof VK Malhotra – Member Secretary, ICSSR (Indian Council of Social Science Research) Sanjeev Sanyal – Principal Economic Advisor to the Indian government (Member Convenor).
Five-Member Committee	Vivek Joshi	On 26th December 2021 The Government of India (GoI) has decided to constitute a 'five-member' committee to look into the demand for withdrawal of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act – AFSPA in Nagaland. The committee which was headed by under Vivek Joshi, the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India would submit its recommendations within 45 days.

MEETINGS

MEETING NAME	VENUE	KEY POINTS
India-EU (European Union) Energy Panel	-	9th India-EU (European Union) Energy Panel held which was co-chaired by Reenat Sandhu, the Secretary of India's Ministry of External Affairs (West), and Ms. Mechthild Worsdorfer, Deputy Director-General for Energy, European Commission (EC). During the meeting both sides agreed on a detailed work programme 2021-2023, to implement the 2016 India-EU Clean Energy and Climate Partnership.
Meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue	New Delhi	The 3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue was held in New Delhi from 18th to 20th December 2021 under the chairmanship of Dr S Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister (EAM) of India. The Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

		<p>participated in the 3rd Meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue.</p> <p>The Ministers of Central Asian countries have agreed to hold the next meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue in 2022.</p>
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COMMITTEES & MEETINGS IN CONTENT FORMAT

Central govt. sets up 2 Sub-Committees to lower Crop Insurance Premium under PMFBY

The Central government has appointed 2 sub-committees with separate groups of experts to lower crop insurance premium under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (**PMFBY**).

- ✓ **1st Committee** - It is a ten-member committee under scientist KR Manjunath of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- ✓ **2nd Committee** - This committee is headed by Saurabh Mishra, joint secretary in Ministry of Finance. Other members of this panel include Apoorva Tatia of Reliance General, Alok Shukla of Munich Re, Azad Mishra of HDFC Ergo, Siddhesh Ramasubramanian of AIC.

Government Expands SCALE Committee with 3 New Members

The government has expanded the Steering Committee for Advancing Local Value-Add and Exports (SCALE committee) by adding three new members from different industries. They are Manish Sharma, Panasonic India Chairman and CEO, Vikram S Kirloskar, Toyota Kirloskar Vice-Chairman, and Jalaj Dani, Asian Paints co-promoter and Chairman Addverb Technologies.

- ✓ The SCALE Committee is formed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, working closely with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under Ministry's guidance.

INDEX

RANKING

INDEX / SURVEY NAME	RELEASED BY / CONDUCTED BY	KEY NOTES
Worldwide Cost of Living Index 2021	Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU)	<p><u>Top 3 Most Expensive Cities:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tel Aviv, Israel 2. Paris, France 3. Singapore, Singapore <p>According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Worldwide Cost of Living Index 2021, Tel Aviv, Israel has become the most expensive city in the world to live in 2021. Paris, France and Singapore jointly to occupy the second spot with Zurich and Hong Kong at the fourth and fifth spots respectively. Syria's Damascus was ranked as the world's cheapest city. Click here</p>
World Cooperative Monitor (WCM) Report	World Cooperative Monitor (WCM)	<p><u>Top 3 Turnover / GDP Per Capita:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IFFCO, India 2. Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. India 3. Zen-Noh, Japan <p>The Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) has been ranked 'number one Cooperative' among the top 300 cooperatives in the</p>

		<p>world in 2021 edition of the 10th Annual World Cooperative Monitor (WCM) report, under the Agriculture and food industries section, withholding its position from 2020 edition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2021 WCM report is published by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) and European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises (Euricse). <p>World's 1st Nano Urea Introduced by IFFCO for the farmers across the World. Click here</p>
Top 100 arms-producing and military services companies, 2020	SIPRI	<p>As per the report of Swedish think-tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) titled 'Top 100 arms-producing and military services companies, 2020', 3 Indian defence manufactures companies such as Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Indian Ordnance Factories, and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) ranks among the top 100 manufacturers globally. The HAL, ranked 42nd, and BEL, ranked 66th, Indian Ordnance Factories ranked 60th Click here</p>
India Skills Report (ISR) 2022	Wheebox	<p>Top 3 States with Highest Employability:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maharashtra with 66.1% 2. Uttar Pradesh with 65.2 3. Kerala with 64.2 <p>As per the 9th edition of India Skills Report (ISR) 2022, released by Wheebox, Maharashtra has retained the top position in the list of states with the highest pool of employable talent followed by Uttar Pradesh and Kerala.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The theme of ISR 2022 – 'Rebuilding and Reengineering the Future of Work'. <p>States with Maximum Hiring Activity: Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu are the 3 states that have a higher job demand. Click here</p>
Asia Power Index 2021	Lowy Institute	<p>India ranked 4th most powerful country out of 26 countries. India is one of 18 countries in Asia to trend downward in its overall score in 2021. The top 10 countries for overall power in the Asia-Pacific region are the US, China, Japan, India, Russia, Australia, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand. Click here</p>
International Institute for Management Development (IMD) 2021 World Talent Ranking	IMD World Competitiveness Center	<p>India has ranked 56th in the report and it evaluates the ability of the economies in developing, attracting and retaining talent. The IMD World Talent Ranking 2021 shows the overall ranking for 64 economies. In the Peer Group Ranking – Asia – Pacific, India have ranked 12th. Switzerland tops the ranking followed by Sweden in 2nd and Luxembourg in 3rd. Click here</p>

Global Health Security (GHS) Index 2021	GHS	<p>As per the Global Health Security (GHS) Index 2021, the world's average overall GHS Index score was reduced to 38.9 (out of 100) in 2021, from a score of 40.2 in the GHS Index, 2019. India ranked 66 out of 195 countries with an overall Index score of 42.8 and along with a change of -0.8 from 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The United States of America (USA) ranked 1st on the index with a score of 75.9 followed by Australia and Finland. ✓ The 2021 GHS Index assesses countries across 6 categories, 37 indicators, and 171 questions.
List of the World's 100 Most Powerful Women 2021	Forbes	<p>Finance Minister (FM) of India, Nirmala Sitharaman has ranked 37th on the Forbes' list of the World's 100 Most Powerful Women 2021 or 18th Edition of Forbes' list of the World's 100 Most Powerful Women. She was ranked 41st on the list in 2020. India's seventh woman billionaire and the wealthiest self-made billionaire, Falguni Nayar, founder and CEO, Nykaa was ranked 88th on the list.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MacKenzie Scott, 3rd richest woman in the world, philanthropist, author and ex-wife of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos was topped. <p>Kamala Harris, the first woman and the first person of colour (Black) to become the Vice President of the United States of America was ranked 2nd on the list.</p>
List of most powerful women in India 2021	Fortune	<p>Top 3 Rank:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nirmala Sitharaman (62), Union Ministry, Ministry of Finance 2. Nita Ambani (58), Reliance Foundation Chairperson and Goodwill Ambassador 3. Soumya Swaminathan (62), Chief Scientist, World Health Organization (WHO). <p>Fortune India released the list of most powerful women in India 2021 in which 28th Finance Minister of India Nirmala Sitharaman (62), Ministry of Finance & Ministry of Corporate Affairs ranked 1st. She is followed by Reliance Foundation Chairperson and Goodwill Ambassador Nita Ambani (58) in 2nd position, and Soumya Swaminathan (62), Chief Scientist, World Health Organization (WHO) at 3rd.</p>
2021 Global Spam & Scam Report	-	<p>5th edition of "2021 Global Spam & Scam Report", which lists the Top 20 Countries Affected by Spam Calls in 2021, India has moved up in rankings from 9th in 2020 to 4th in 2021 due to a significant increase in sales and telemarketing calls.</p>

		With 32.9 spam calls per user per month, Brazil has retained its title as the most spammed country in the world for the 4 th year, followed by Peru and Ukraine.
Global Unicorn Index 2021	Hurun Research Institute	<p>As per the Global Unicorn Index 2021 report released by the Hurun Research Institute, India ranked at third (by adding 33 'unicorns') in 2020 by displacing the United Kingdom (UK) to the 4th spot. In 2020, India ranked at the 4th spot. US, China comprise 74% of unicorns: The United States (US) and China still continue to bag the top two ranks in the list by adding 254 and 74 unicorns, respectively.</p> <p><u>Top 3 Company:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ByteDance, China 2. Ant Group, China 3. SpaceX, US. Click here
2019 Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs) Report	World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)	<p>World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has published its latest Report titled "2019 Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs) Report", compiled based on decisions received by WADA before 31 January 2021. India ranked 3rd among dope violators in the world with 152 (17 per cent of the world total) ADRVs.</p> <p>Russia tops the list with 167 ADRVs, followed by Italy with 157 ADRVs. Brazil (78) and Iran(70) has ranked 4th and 5th respectively.</p>
Good Governance Index 2020-21 (GGI 2021)	Amit Shah	<p>On December 25 2021, on the occasion of Good Governance Day, Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah released the Good Governance Index 2020-21 (GGI 2021) which was a biannual exercise prepared by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).</p> <p>Gujarat has topped the composite ranking in the GGI covering 10 sectors 58 indicator index followed by Maharashtra and Goa.</p> <p><u>Top 3 Ranking in Group A:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gujarat 2. Maharashtra 3. Goa Click here
State Health Index for 2019-20 was released in the report titled 'Healthy States, Progressive India	NITI Aayog	<p>4th edition of NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog's State Health Index for 2019-20 was released in the report titled 'Healthy States, Progressive India'. The report has been prepared by NITI Aayog, with technical assistance from the World Bank (WB). This edition of the report measured and highlighted the overall performance and incremental improvement of states and UTs (Union territories) in health outcomes as well as their overall status over the period 2018-19 (base year) to 2019-20 (Reference year).</p> <p>Overall Performance ranking from 2018-19 to 2019-20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana are top 3 performers among larger states.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mizoram, Tripura, and Sikkim are the top 3 performers among smaller state. ✓ Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Chandigarh, and Lakshadweep are top performers. <p>Categorization on Incremental Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ UP, Assam and Telangana are the top three ranking states among larger states. ✓ Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Nagaland are the top 3 states among Smaller States. <p>Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir-J&K, and Lakshadweep are the top performers among UTs. Click here</p>
Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) 2021	-	<p>Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) ranked 1st & recognized as the Most Innovative Educational Institute in India in the 3rd edition of Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) 2021. It is for the 3rd consecutive year that IIT Madras has been recognized. IIT Madras won in the 'CFTIs (Centrally Funded Technical Institutions)/Central University/Institute of National Importance (Technical)' category. ARIIA 2021 classified participating institutions into two major categories; Technical and Non-technical. Click here</p>

REPORTS

REPORT NAME	SUBMITTED BY	KEY NOTES
World Inequality Report 2022	World Inequality Lab, Paris-based organization	Highlights - India stands out as a 'poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite'. In 2021 the top 10 percent and top 1 percent of the Indian population hold 57 percent and 22 percent of total national income respectively, whereas the share of the bottom 50 percent has gone down to 13 percent.
World Malaria Report 2021	WHO	Globally there were an estimated 241 million malaria cases and 627000 malaria deaths in 85 malaria-endemic countries in 2020, increasing from 227 million in 2019. Globally, India accounts for 1.7 percent of malaria deaths in 2020. As per the report, India was the only high-burden country to have sustained a reduction in the disease burden.
Preventing a lost decade: Urgent action to reverse the devastating impact of COVID-19 on children and young people	UNICEF	On the occasion of the 75 th anniversary of the UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) , UNICEF released a report titled "Preventing a lost decade: Urgent action to reverse the devastating impact of COVID-19 on children and young people". The report states that children were most affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic, making this the biggest threat to progress for children in our 75-year history.

State of Inequalities – HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria	World Health Organization (WHO) and the Global Fund	The report stating that the poorest, least-educated and rural subgroups remain vulnerable to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Tuberculosis (TB) and malaria. The report takes a look at 32 health indicators from 186 countries on HIV, TB and malaria.
Quarterly Bulletin (January-March 2021) of Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)	National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)	In the urban areas, Pan-India, a total number of 5,601 FSUs- First Stage Units (UFS- Urban Frame Survey blocks) have been surveyed during the January – March 2021. The survey has done based on four indicators such as Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Unemployment Rate (UR), and Current Weekly Status (CWS)...Click here for key highlights of Survey. Click here
Designing the Future of Dispute Resolution- the ODR Policy Plan for India	NITI Aayog	National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog released a report on Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) namely ' Designing the Future of Dispute Resolution- the ODR Policy Plan for India ' which states a futuristic model for speedy access to justice. For the initiation of ODR, NITI Aayog constituted a committee in 2020 to formulate an action plan for ODR. It is headed by Justice (Retd) Arjan Kumar Sikri as its Chairman. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ODR is aimed at resolving disputes outside of the court system through arbitration, mediation, and negotiation. Mainly, it is the use of technology to resolve disputes. It proposed measures at three levels viz. Structural Challenges, Behavioral Challenges, and Operational Challenges, to address the challenges in adopting ODR.
Waste-wise Cities: Best practices in municipal solid waste management	NITI Aayog and Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)	On 6th December NITI (National Institute for Transforming India) Aayog and Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) released a report titled ' Waste-wise Cities: Best practices in municipal solid waste management ', a comprehensive knowledge on India's solid waste management. It was released by NITI Aayog vice chairperson Rajiv Kumar, CEO Amitabh Kant and special secretary K Rajeswara Rao, along with Sunita Narain, director general, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).
Global Trade Report	UNCTAD	As per the Global Trade update report (November 2021) of UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and

		Development), the Global trade is expected to increase by 23 percent to reach about US\$ 28 trillion in 2021, when compared to 2020. Click here
World Migration Report 2022	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	<p>International Organization for Migration (IOM) of the United Nations launched the 11th edition of its flagship publication, the World Migration Report 2022, which states that the global international migration has increased from 84 million globally in 1970 to 281 million in 2020, the proportion of the international migrants has increased from 2.3% to 3.6% of the global population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The report features the regular data collection by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). <p>World Migration Report 2020, the 10th edition of the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) flagship publication won gold in the online category and silver for PDFs in the 2021 International Annual Report Design Awards (IADA) competition.</p>
State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2021-22	Reserve Bank of India	Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its annual report namely 'State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2021-22' on the theme 'Coping with the Pandemic: A Third-Tier Dimension'. The report states that combined debt-to-GDP (Gross Domestic Product) ratio of states is expected to remain at 31% by end-March 2022, which is worryingly higher than the target of 20% to be achieved by 2022-23 (FY23). Click here
Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Panchayati Raj Institutions	Giriraj Singh	Giriraj Singh, the Union Minister of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, launched a report titled – ' Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Panchayati Raj Institutions ' that was prepared by an Expert Group constituted by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The report has various guidelines to attain SDGs, which will act as a roadmap for developments in Panchayats.
Reports on current status on Country level (secondary & tertiary level) and district level emergency and injury care in India	National Institute of Transforming India (NITI Aayog)	National Institute of Transforming India (NITI Aayog) released two comprehensive reports titled – Reports on current status on Country level (secondary & tertiary level) and district level emergency and injury care in India. These reports were launched in the presence of Dr V K Paul, Hon'ble Member (Health) NITI Aayog

		<p>and Dr Rakesh Sarwal, Additional Secretary, and other dignitaries.</p> <p>These studies were carried out by the department of Emergency Medicine, Jai Prakash Narayan Apex Trauma Centre (JPNATC), All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), New Delhi in collaboration with NITI Aayog.</p>
The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery	World Bank (WB) collaboration with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund).	The Present generation of students risks losing USD 17 trillion (higher than the 2020 estimation of USD 10 trillion) in lifetime earnings in present value, or about 14 percent of today's global GDP (Gross Domestic Product) due to COVID-19-related school closures.
State of the World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture – Systems at breaking point Synthesis report 2021 (SOLAW 2021)	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	<p>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched the State of the World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture – Systems at breaking point Synthesis report 2021 (SOLAW 2021), which highlights the worsening state of the earth's soil, land and water resources and the challenges it poses for feeding a global population which is expected to reach 10 billion by 2050.</p> <p>✓ The central theme of SOLAW 2021 is "Systems at breaking point".</p> <p>SOLAW 2021 is a collaborative effort led by the Land and Water Division of FAO in collaboration with several divisions/units at FAO.</p>
Coal 2021 Analysis and forecast to 2024	International Energy Agency (IEA)	<p>The Overall global coal demand is expected to grow by 6 percent in 2021 with coal consumption to 7,906 million tonnes (Mt) and is set to rise to 8,025 Mt in 2022, the highest level ever.</p> <p>✓ The global coal power generation is expected to increase by 9 percent in 2021. Coal consumption increase in 2021 is from three countries viz China, India, and the United States.</p> <p>The overall continued increase assumes that global GDP rises at a compound average annual growth rate (CAAGR) of 4 percent from 2022 to 2024. Click here</p>
Women and girls left behind: Glaring gaps in pandemic responses	UN Women	In accordance with the report by United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women aka UN Women titled ' Women and girls left behind: Glaring gaps in pandemic responses ', women were

		significantly less likely to report receiving pandemic-related cash relief from governments or non-profits. The report compiled and analysed the results of Rapid Gender Assessment surveys (RGA) from April 2020-March 2021, which include 58 countries across all regions.
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RANKING & REPORTS IN CONTENT FORMAT

Telangana tops in the Implementation of SPMRM

Telangana has secured 1st place among the 34 states and Union Territories(UTs) that implement the Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM), followed by Tamil Nadu and Gujarat respectively.

- ✓ In the Ranking of the Cluster, the Ryakal cluster of Sangareddy and the Jukkal cluster of Kamareddy in Telangana has secured the 1st and 2nd position respectively.
- ✓ This mission was launched in 2016 by Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India with an aim to develop the rural areas by providing them with economic, social and physical infrastructure facilities.

Maharashtra tops the list of states with Maximum Number of Beneficiaries assisted under ABRY

Central Government released the list of states with maximum number of beneficiaries to be assisted under Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY), as of December 4, 2021. The information was provided by the Minister of State (MoS) Rameswar Teli, Ministry of Labour & Employment in a written reply to Lok Sabha.

- ✓ The list has been topped by Maharashtra with 6,49,560 new employees in 17,524 Beneficiary Establishments (Estts.).
- ✓ Maharashtra is followed by Tamil Nadu (5,35,615 New Employees) at 2nd position, and Gujarat (4,44,741 New Employees) at 3rd.

EAC-PM Released Report on the State of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in India

Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) released the report on the State of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in India which highlights the importance of early education years in the overall development of a child. The report was prepared by the Institute for Competitiveness. The report underlines the role of well-planned early interventions like the National Education Policy (2020) and the NIPUN Bharat guidelines in leading to long-term improved learning outcomes.

ACQUISITION & MERGERS

PNB to pick up 9.5% stake in ONDC Ltd

Punjab National Bank (PNB) will become the promoter of Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) limited by investing over 9 % (~9.5 %) stake in the company. ONDC is yet to be incorporated by the Companies Act 2013. For the acquisition of less than 10 % shareholding, regulatory approval is not required. PNB will have 9.5 % equity capital in the ONDC or INR 25 crore, whichever is lower.

LIC got Approval from RBI to hike stake up to 9.99% in IndusInd Bank

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has received approval from the RBI (Reserve Bank of India) to increase its stake to 9.99 per cent in IndusInd Bank of the total issued and paid-up capital of the private sector lender. The approval will be valid for 1 year i.e. up to December 8, 2022. At present, LIC holds a 4.95 percent stake in the IndusInd Bank.

SMALLCAP World Fund Increased its Stake in IIFL Finance to 5.1863%

SMALLCAP World Fund, Inc., has increased its stake in IIFL Finance Limited, a leading finance & investment services company in India from 4.2473% to 5.1863% through the open market. The acquisition of about 35.61 lakh shares at Rs 300 apiece, translating into a deal value of Rs 106.85 crore was made on 9th December 2021.

Fairfax Group, backed by Prem Watsa, an Indian-Canadian billionaire, has divested a 3.2% stake in IIFL Finance for Rs 365 crore through an open market transaction.

CCI Approves Acquisition of Air India stake by Tata Sons

Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved acquisition of 100% shareholding in Air India Limited (AI), Air India Express Limited and 50% shares in Air India SATS (AISATS) by Talace Private Limited. Talace Private Limited is a wholly-acquired subsidiary of Tata Sons.

SBI acquires Minority Stake in JSW Cement for INR 100 crore via CCPS

State Bank of India (SBI) acquired a minority stake (less than 50 percent) in JSW Cement Limited for an investment of INR 100 crore through Compulsory Convertible Preference Shares (CCPS). The SBI is working as a strategic investor at JSW Cement and has invested in the company through CCPS. The conversion of CCPS into common equity will link with the JSW Group to provide valuation determined at the time initial public offering (IPO).

IOCL Acquires 4.93 Percent Stake in Indian Gas Exchange

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (**IOCL**) acquired a 4.93 percent equity share in Indian Gas Exchange (**IGX**) Limited, the country's first automated national level gas exchange. IGX is envisaged to play an important role to facilitate achieving the government's target of increasing the share of natural gas in India's energy basket from the current 6.5 per cent to 15 per cent by 2030.

CCI Approved Acquisition of 16.94% Stake in IRB Infrastructure by Bricklayers Investment

Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of up to **16.94% equity** share capital of IRB Infrastructure Developers Limited (IRB) by Bricklayers Investment Private Limited, controlled by GIC Investor under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002.

- ✓ This combination relates, GIC Investor's proposed the acquisition of up to 16.94% of the share capital of IRB on a fully diluted basis and non-fully diluted basis through subscription of new shares issued by way of preferential issues on private placement.
- ✓ CCI has approved the acquisition of a controlling stake in Forbes Enviro Solutions Limited (FESL), a subsidiary of Eureka Forbes Limited by Lunolux Limited (**LL**) under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002.

HSBC Asset Management Acquired LTIM from L&T Finance Holdings

HSBC Asset Management (India), an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of HSBC Holdings PLC has acquired L&T Investment Management (LTIM), an investment manager of the L&T Mutual Fund (MF) from L&T Finance Holdings Limited for USD 425 million, about Rs 3187 crore. HSBC Asset Management has entered into an agreement with LTFH to fully acquire LTIM.

DEFENCE

EXERCISE

EXERCISE NAME	VENUE / PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES	KEY NOTES
EKUVERIN	Kadhdhoo Island, India and Maldives	The 11 th edition of joint military exercise EKUVERIN between India and Maldives was scheduled to be held at Kadhdhoo Island, Maldives in December 06 to 19, 2021. The meaning of Ekuverin is 'Friends' in the Dhivehi language. The exercise has been conducted since 2009.
MILAN 2022	Indian Navy	Rear Admiral Sanjay Sadhu, Chief Staff Officer(Technical), Eastern Naval Command(ENC) launched the official website of the forthcoming Multinational Naval Exercise - MILAN 2022, a biennial multilateral naval exercise hosted by the Indian Navy. The theme of MILAN 22 is 'Camaraderie, Cohesion, Collaboration'.
PANEX-21	Maharashtra	On December 20-22, 2021, the 3 rd edition of multi-national – multi-agency exercise, PANEX-21 , was organized at Pune (Maharashtra) to develop capabilities in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations among BIMSTEC nations. BIMSTEC is an acronym for Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. It is an international organisation of seven South Asian and Southeast Asian nations comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand. The inaugural address for this exercise was delivered by Lt Gen Jai Singh Nain, Army Commander, Southern Command at Armed Forces Medical College, Pune.

TESTING

MISSILES NAME	TESTING LOCATION	FEATURES
Tsirkon/Zircon cruise missile	White Sea	The Russian navy successfully test fired the Tsirkon/Zircon cruise missile , a hypersonic missile, in the White Sea, a southern inlet of the Barents Sea, northwest coast of Russia. The Admiral Gorshkov frigate launched the Zircon cruise missile which struck the practice target at 400 kilometers (215 nautical miles) away. This is the latest

		launch in a series of tests of Zircon, will be commissioned into the Russian navy in 2022.
VL-SRSAM	Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur	<p>India successfully test-fired the Vertically Launched Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM) from Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur off the coast of Odisha for neutralising various aerial threats at close ranges, including sea-skimming targets.</p> <p>✓ The VL-SRSAM is indigenously designed and developed by DRDO for the Indian Navy.</p> <p>The test launch was monitored by senior officials of the DRDO and Indian Navy.</p>
Air version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile	Integrated test range of Chandipur	India successfully test-fired the air version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from the integrated test range of Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha. The air version of the missile was test-fired from supersonic fighter aircraft Sukhoi 30 MK-I. The launch paved the way for serial production of air-version BrahMos missiles.
Extended Range Pinaka (Pinaka-ER) Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System	Pokhran Range	Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) has successfully tested the extended Range Pinaka (Pinaka-ER) Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System at Pokhran Range, Rajasthan. The system has been designed by the DRDO Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) laboratory, Pune (Maharashtra), and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune.
Stand-off Anti-tank (SANT) Missile	Pokhran range	Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully flight-tested the indigenously designed and developed Helicopter launched (air-launched) Stand-off Anti-tank (SANT) Missile from the Pokhran range in Rajasthan. It should be noted that it is for the first time that this was launched from a Russian origin Mi-35 helicopter gunship.
Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART)	Coast of Balasore in Odisha	India has successfully test-fired a long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART) off the coast of Balasore in Odisha. The SMART will enhance anti-submarine warfare capability far beyond the conventional range of the torpedo. The weapon system is a next-generation missile-based standoff torpedo delivery system, it is being developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the Indian Navy.
Agni Prime (Agni-P) missile	Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the Odisha coast in Balasore	Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test-fired its new generation Agni Prime (Agni-P) missile. The test was done from a defence base at Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the Odisha coast in Balasore. The Agni-P is a new generation advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles. The missile was designed and developed completely by the DRDO is accurate and effective to the point.
Pralay	APJ Abdul Kalam Island, off the coast of Odisha	On 22nd December 2021 India successfully test fired short-range, surface to surface-guided ballistic missile ' Pralay ' from APJ Abdul Kalam Island, off the coast of Odisha. Pralay

		is the solid-fuel, battlefield missile based on Prithvi Defence Vehicle from the Indian ballistic missile programme. It was developed by Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO).
Babur Cruise Missile 1B	Pakistan	Pakistan successfully test-fired an enhanced range version of its indigenously-built surface-to-surface Babur cruise missile namely ' Babur Cruise Missile 1B ' that can strike targets up to 900 kilometres from 450 km of former missile. The Babur missile is capable of engaging targets at land and sea with high precision.
Abhyas	Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur	Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the flight test of indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas, Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha. The performance of the system during the entire flight duration has been confirmed from the data captured by various Range instruments deployed.

DEALS & MoU's

IAF deploys first S-400 air defence system in Punjab sector

The Indian Air Force (**IAF**) has deployed the first squadron of the S-400 air defence missile system in the western Punjab sector which will take care of aerial threats from Pakistan and China. It was developed by Russia's Almaz Central Marine Design Bureau. The S-400 air defence system was contracted from Russia in a deal worth around Rs 35,000 crore and five squadrons would be provided to India for tackling air threats from up to 400 km.

- ✓ Indian Army will soon induct a new range of landmines viz. Nipun, Vibhav, Vishal, Prachand and Uluk which will act as the first line of defence against enemy infantry and armoured columns or terrorists trying to infiltrate into Indian territory.

ARMY, NAVY & AIR FORCE NEWS

Indian Army Received Israel's Heron Drones

The Indian Army has received the advanced Heron Drones from Israel to boost the army's surveillance capabilities. The drones will be deployed in the eastern Ladakh sector. The drones were received under the emergency procurement clause to monitor the Chinese activities in Ladakh sector.

First Ship 'Sandhayak' under Survey Vessel (Large) project for Indian Navy launched in WB

Sandhayak, the first of the four Survey Vessels (Large) Project being built for the Indian Navy (IN) was launched in Hooghly River of Kolkata, West Bengal (WB) in the presence of Minister of State (MoS) Ajay Bhatt, Ministry of Defence (MoD). It is expected to be commissioned by October 2022. These Vessels have been designed and developed by Defence Public Sector Undertaking (DPSU), Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Limited on the concept of 'Integrated Construction'.

- ✓ It was launched by Smt Pushpa Bhatt, spouse of Ajay Bhatt, by chanting invocation from Atharva Veda.

South Korean Defence Ministry unveils model for Hypersonic Weapon Prototype 'Hycore'

The Agency for Defence Development (**ADD**) under South Korea's Ministry of Defence has unveiled a model for a hypersonic weapon prototype namely '**Hycore**' through an animated video. Its testing is expected to begin in 2022.

Hycore is a ground-launched cruise missile with two-stage solid-fueled rocket and scramjet engine. It has a stark resemblance to Boeing's X-51 Waverider experimental hypersonic vehicle.

Security of Offshore Assets in Visakhapatnam, AP reviewed during exercise 'Prasthan'

The security of the Offshore Development Area (ODA) in Krishna Godavari Basin on the East Coast of India in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (AP) was reviewed during exercise Prasthan, conducted on December 21-22, 2021 for a duration of 24 hours. This biannual exercise was coordinated and controlled by NOIC- Naval Officer-in-Charge (APD) from Joint Operations Centre (JOC) Visakhapatnam under the aegis of Indian Navy.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveils indigenous Multi-terrain Artillery Gun 155- BR

On the lines of Government's Make-in-India and Atmanirbhar Bharat Mission, the union minister Rajnath Singh, Ministry of Defence (MoD) unveiled indigenously built Multi-terrain Artillery Gun (MAR-G 155) – BR which is the only 155mm 39 calibre gun system mounted on 4×4 HMV (High Mobility Vehicle) in the world.

- ✓ It was unveiled in the presence of Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), Manoj Mukund Naravane.
- ✓ It is developed by Pune (Maharashtra)-based Indian MNC (Multinational Company) Bharat Forge Ltd.

DRDO Conducts Flight Demonstration of CADS

Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**) has conducted a flight demonstration of its Controlled Aerial Delivery System (CADS) by the DRDO's Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (**ADRDE**) in Agra, New Delhi. The flight demonstration is part of a series of activities organised towards the commemoration of the 75th Independence day – 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

Indian Navy's 2nd Indigenous Stealth Destroyer Sails for Maiden Sea Trials

On 19th December 2021, during the Goa Liberation day, Indian Navy's indigenous stealth guided-missile destroyer 'Mormugao' went for her maiden sea trials. This second indigenous stealth destroyer of the Project 15 B (P15B) class, is planning to be commissioned in mid 2022.

- ✓ Mormugao is being built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (**MDSL**) as part of the Project 15B destroyers and incorporates several indigenous technologies.

Indian Army gets 1st set of indigenously-built Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle

During an event in Pune (Maharashtra), the first batch of indigenously developed next-generation Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicles (AERV) has been inducted into the Corps of Engineers of the Indian Army.

The induction ceremony was one in the presence of Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Manoj Mukund Naravane.

Indian Navy Decommissions INS Khukri after 32 Years of Service

INS Khukri (Pennant number 49), the first indigenously built Missile Corvette, was decommissioned after 32 years of service at Visakhapatnam. The national flag, naval ensign, and the decommissioning pennant were lowered at sunset in the presence of Vice Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Naval Command the Chief Guest for the ceremony.

- ✓ The warship was built by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MSD) & Commissioned on 23rd August 1989 and had been part of both the Western and Eastern Fleets.

Indian Army Established Quantum Lab at MCTE, Mhow in Indore, MP

The Indian Army has established the Quantum Lab at the Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), in Military Headquarters Of War (Mhow), Indore, Madhya Pradesh (MP). The

Quantum Lab was established with the support of the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) to spearhead research and training in this key developing field. This is a part of the Indian army's development in the field of Emerging Technology domain.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

SATELLITES LAUNCHES

SATELLITE NAME	COUNTRY	PURPOSE
Zhongxing-1D	China	China launched a new communications satellite named Zhongxing-1D from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in Sichuan Province, China. Zhongxing-1D is also known as ChinaSat-1D. The satellite was launched by a Long March-3B carrier rocket and entered the planned orbit successfully. This rocket is regarded as the mainstay of the Chinese space programme since 1970. It was developed by the China Academy of Space Technology (CAST).
Shijian-6 05	China	China successfully launched a new group of satellites Shijian-6 05 into space from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China for space exploration and new technology tests. The satellites were launched by a Long March-4B rocket which marked the 400th mission of Long March series carrier rockets.
Inmarsat-6 F1	Japan	Japan has launched Inmarsat-6 F1 , a communication satellite, through a Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' (MHI) H-IIA204 rocket from Japan's Tanegashima Space Center that will enter geostationary orbit, about 22,240 miles (35,790 kilometers) above earth. It is developed by the London-based company Inmarsat as a part of its next-generation satellite broadband service.
'Ziyuan-1 02E' or 'five-meter optical satellite 02'	China	China National Space Administration (CNSA) stated about China's launch of a new satellite with a high-resolution camera that can take pictures of the ground with a resolution of 5 meters. The satellite, named 'Ziyuan-1 02E' or 'five-meter optical satellite 02' was launched by a Long March-4C rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in north China's Shanxi province.
James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)	US	NASA's (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), an infrared telescope, launched through the ArianeSpace's heavy-lift Ariane 5 rocket from the European Space Agency's (ESA) spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana, on South America's northeast coast. It is named after James Edwin Webb, one of the architects of the Apollo Moon programme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The telescope is an international collaboration led by NASA in partnership with the European space agency (ESA) and Canadian Space Agency (CSA). ✓ NASA chose India among seven countries for a pre-launch briefing three days ago on its website about the mission. Lucknow-born Hashima

		<p>Hasan, Nasa's JWST Deputy Program Scientist, represented India.</p> <p>NASA also chose a painting by schoolgirl Gaurilakshmi to highlight among other children's artwork at the launch of the telescope.</p>
Angara-A5/Persey rocket	Russia	<p>Russia has successfully launched its 3rd and final demonstration flight of the Angara-A5/Persey rocket from the state test cosmodrome of the Russian Defence Ministry – Site 35/1 Plesetsk cosmodrome, Mirny, Arkhangelsk Oblast, Russia. The Angara is being developed and built by the Khrunichev State Research and Production Space Center in Moscow, Russia. This marks the 3rd launch of the rocket after its maiden launch in 2014.</p>

OTHER SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY NEWS

NATIONAL

KUFOS to Join Research Project under NASA-ISRO Collaborative Programme

Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (**KUFOS**), Kochi, Kerala, is set to join the research project backed by the Space Application Centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (**ISRO**) under the (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) NASA-ISRO collaborative programme. KUFOS is selected as one of the nodal agencies in South India to implement the project.

INTERNATIONAL

NASA Launched Laser Communications Relay Demonstration & UVSC Pathfinder

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (**NASA**) launched the new Laser Communications Relay Demonstration (**LCRD**) and the NASA-U.S. Naval Research Laboratory Ultraviolet Spectro-Coronagraph (**UVSC**) Pathfinder from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida, United States (US). The payloads were launched aboard the Space Test Program Satellite-6 on a **United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket** as a part of the U.S. Space Force's Space Test Program 3 mission.

- ✓ Indian-origin physician Anil Menon, a lieutenant colonel at the US Air Force, has been selected as one of the 10 candidates of NASA's 2021 Astronaut Candidate Class.

NASA launches X-ray space telescope to unlock secrets of black hole

NASA launched its new Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer (**IXPE**) **X-ray space** telescope to unlock the secrets of extreme cosmic objects and To determine the radiation processes of specific cosmic X – ray sources. It was launched into orbit by SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, United State(US). The project is a collaboration between NASA and the Italian Space Agency.

Russia Launched 1st Versatile Nuclear-Powered Icebreaker 'Sibir' to Boost India's Arctic Plans via NSR

Russia has launched its first in the series Project 22220 versatile nuclear-powered icebreaker known as '**Sibir**', which will support the growing fleet of icebreakers to keep the Northern Sea Route open for year-round shipping through the Arctic and enable a wider presence of India in the arctic region. Project 22220 nuclear-powered icebreakers are the most powerful and the largest in the world.

SPORTS

CRICKET

India Wins Test & T20 Series Against New Zealand; Ajaz Patel bowls Historic 10 Wicket Test Innings

Indian Cricket Team has made a historic sweep win against the New Zealand team that visited India for 3 match T20 (Twenty-20) series & a 2 match Test series. India defeated New Zealand with a 372-run difference in the 2nd Test to claim a 1-0 series win. Previously, India also defeated New Zealand in the T20 series by a 3-0 win.

- ✓ **India** secures 3-0 T20 Series win against New Zealand. **Player of the Series** – Rohit Sharma (India), for scoring 159-runs from the 3 matches.

Indian Men's team has won the 2 match Test series against New Zealand by 1-0, winning the 2nd match after ending up with a draw in the 1st. **Player of the Series** – Ravichandran Ashwin (India), for taking 14-wickets.

Veteran Indian spinner 'Harbhajan Singh' announced Retirement from All Forms of Cricket

The senior Indian off-spinner, Harbhajan Singh announced retirement from all forms of cricket. Major boost in his international career was when he snapped 32 wickets in three Tests, including a hat-trick, against Australia in March 2001. Harbhajan was the 1st Indian Cricketer to take Hat-trick wickets in Test.

- ✓ Singh was conferred the Padma Shri in 2009 and he was fondly called as 'Bhajji'.

New Zealand's Ross Taylor Confirms Retirement from International Cricket

Senior cricket player of New Zealand, Ross Taylor announces to retire from international cricket after playing in the Two-Test series against Bangladesh and his last ODIs (One Day Innings) against Australia and the Netherlands in March 2022. Ross Taylor was the World's 1st player to play 100 international matches in all 3 formats of cricket.

BADMINTON & TENNIS

BWF World Championships 2021: Kidambi Srikanth Becomes 1st Indian Male Shuttler To win Silver Medal at BWF World Championships

Kidambi Srikanth (India) made history by becoming the **1st Indian shuttler** to win a silver medal in the men's singles at the **Badminton World Federation (BWF) world** championships. He achieved this feat against Singapore's Loh Kean Yew in the finals of Men's Singles in the BWF World Championships 2021 (officially known as the Total Energies BWF World Championships 2021) held in Huelva, Spain.

- ✓ This is also the first time that a Men's (Loh Kean Yew) player from Singapore has won gold Medal at the BWF World Championships.
- ✓ India's Lakshya Sen & Denmark's Anders Antonsen won the Bronze Medal in the Men's Singles in BWF World Championships 2021.

Highlights of 2021 BWF World Championships

2021 Badminton World Federation (BWF) World championship (officially known as the Total Energies BWF World Championships 2021), an annual tournament was Palacio de los Deportes Carolina Marin ,Huelva, Spain. Kidambi Srikanth has won India's first medal at the 2021 World Championships.

Winners of Bwf World Championship:

Category	Winner	Runner
Men's Singles	Loh Kean Yew (Singapore)	Srikanth Kidambi (India)

Women's Singles	Akane Yamaguchi (Japan)	Tai – Tzu Ying (Chinese Taipei)
Men's Doubles	Takuro Hoki & Yugo Kobayashi (Japan)	He Jiting & Tan Qiang (China)
Women's Doubles	Chen Qingchen – & Jia Yifan (China)	Lee So-hee & Shin Seung-Chan (South Korea)
Mixed Doubles	Dechapol Puavaranukroh & Sapsiree Taerattanachai (Thailand)	Yuta Watanabe & Arisa Higashino (Japan)

BWF Ranking Men's Singles: India's Kidambi Srikanth Ranked 10th, Lakshya Sen Ranked 17th; Viktor Axelsen Tops

As on December 21, 2021, Indian badminton player Kidambi Srikanth has re-entered the top 10 in the Badminton World Federation (**BWF**) world rankings. He moved up 4 spots and secured the 10th position in the ranking. He won the silver medal (men's singles) in the 2021 BWF World Championship and became the first Indian man to achieve the feat.

- ✓ The ranking is topped by Viktor Axelsen of Denmark followed by Kento Momota of Japan and Anders Antonsen of Denmark in 2nd and 3rd spot.

Indian Shuttler PV Sindhu Won Silver at HSBC BWF World Tour Finals 2021; S.Korea's An Se-Young Won Gold

Indian Shuttler and 2-time Olympic medalist **Pusarla V Sindhu (PV Sindhu)**, world's number 7, won the silver at the 2021 Badminton World Federation (BWF) World Tour Finals, officially known as the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals 2021, the final tournament of the Women's Singles 2021 BWF World Tour.

- ✓ **An Se Young of South Korea(S.Korea)** has won the **HSBC BWF World Tour Finals 2021** Women's Singles title defeating PV Sindhu.
- ✓ **Denmark's Viktor Axelsen**, world's number 1, 1 Men's Single title defeating Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn.
- ✓ **Japan's Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi** won the Men's doubles.
- ✓ **South Korea's Kim So-yeong and Kong Hee-yong** won the Women's doubles title.

Saurav Ghosal won Malaysian Open Squash Championships 2021

Indian Squash player Saurav Ghosal won the Malaysian Open Squash Championships 2021, defeating Colombia's Miguel Rodriguez in the men's singles final held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He became the 1st Indian to win the Malaysian Open Squash Championships.

Davis Cup Finals 2021: Russia beats Croatia to win title

2021 Davis Cup Finals title was clinched by Russia after defeating Croatia. It was **Russia's third Davis Cup title** after 2002 and 2006. Russia won for the 1st time in 15 Years after its last victory in 2006. Russia equalled Czech Republic and Germany in joint sixth place on the all-time winners' list.

- ✓ Andrey Andreyevich Rublev was named the Most Valuable Player of the tournament.

ATHLETIC & FOOTBALL

Bangladesh Won the SAFF U19 Women's Football Championship 2021

Bangladesh Under-19 Women's Football team won the **South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) U-19 Women's Football Championship 2021** defeating India (runner ups). Mohammad Zahid Ahsan Russel, State Minister for Youth and Sports, Bangladesh Presented the prizes as the Chief Guest.

- ✓ SAFF U-19 Women's Football Championship 2021 hosted by Bangladesh was held at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Shipahi (BSSS) Mostafa Kamal Stadium, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Shahada Akter Ripa of Bangladesh, who scored the highest number of Goals (5) was honoured with the Most Valuable Player of the Game Award.

BOXING, WRESTLING & WEIGHTLIFTING

India wins 16 Medals in 2021 Commonwealth Weightlifting Championship & 1 Gold in World Weightlifting Championship

On 17th December 2021 India concluded the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 with 16 medals, including 4 golds held at Tashkent, Uzbekistan while Bindyarani Devi was India's only medallist at the World Weightlifting Championships 2021, that was also held parallelly at Tashkent. Bindyarani Devi won the Gold Medal in the 55 kg Clean & Jerk event.

- ✓ India ended the Commonwealth championships with **16 medals – 4 Gold, 7 Silver, and 5 Bronze** with 19 representatives in different categories participating in commonwealth games 2021.

AIBA Adopted Comprehensive Set of Governance Reforms; Changed its Acronym to 'IBA'

The International Boxing Association (AIBA) Extraordinary Congress 2021 adopted a comprehensive set of governance reforms developed by independent experts and changed its acronym from AIBA to IBA.

The new acronym marks a new chapter in the sport's history focused on upholding the highest standards of integrity and ensuring every boxer has the chance for a fair fight.

OTHER SPORTS NEWS

India wins 41 medals at Asian Youth Para Games

On 8th December 2021 at Indian para-athletes claimed 41 medals, with 12 gold, 15 silver, and 14 bronze, at 4th Asian Youth Para Games (AYPG), Asia's biggest event that was held in Riffa, Bahrain. The event is organized by the National Paralympic Committee (NPC) of Bahrain.

- ✓ **9 Para Sports played** - Para athletics, Para badminton, boccia, goalball, Para powerlifting, Para swimming, Para table tennis, Para taekwondo, and wheelchair basketball.

Lewis Hamilton Wins inaugural edition of Saudi Arabian GP

Mercedes Driver Lewis Hamilton (Britain) won the inaugural edition of Saudi Arabian Grand Prix (GP), by surpassing Max Verstappen (Netherlands) in the event held at the 30-kilometer (18.6-mile) coastal resort area in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, which is scheduled to be held on 12th December, is the last race of '2021 Formula One World Championship', which will decide 2021's Winner.

- ✓ Reema Juffali, has been appointed as an ambassador for the first edition of the Saudi Grand Prix, under the Formula 1 (F1) World Championship. Reema Juffali is the 1st Female F1 driver of Saudi Arabia.

Argentina beat Germany to lift 12th Men's FIH Junior Hockey World Cup 2021 in Odisha

Argentina junior men's hockey team defeated Germany by 4-2 in the final of the **2021 Men's FIH Hockey Junior World Cup (WC) or 12th edition of the Men's FIH Hockey Junior WC** to clinch their second Junior Men's Hockey WC title at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

World Chess Championship 2021-Magnus Carlsen wins his 5th Title Defeating Ian Nepomniachtchi

Norway's Magnus Carlsen, the defending Champion won his 5th World Chess Championship after defeating Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi in 2021's World Chess Championship that was organised by **FIDE (the International Chess Federation)** at Dubai, UAE.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen wins Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2021

Red Bull's **Max Emilian Verstappen (24)** from The Netherlands clinched the **Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2021** by defeating Mercedes' Lewis Carl Davidson Hamilton of the United Kingdom (UK) at the Yas Marina Circuit on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

- ✓ With this, Max Verstappen won his first Formula One (F1) World Driver Championship.
- ✓ Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2021 was the 22nd and final round of the 2021 F1 World Championship.

India Wins Bronze in Men's Hockey Asian Champions Trophy 2021

Indian Men's Hockey team under the Captaincy of Manpreet Singh won a bronze medal in the Men's Asian Champions Trophy Hockey tournament 2021 in Dhaka, Bangladesh after defeating Pakistan. Tournament Held at – Mawlana Bhashani Hockey Stadium, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Men's Asian Champions Trophy Hockey Trophy 2021 was won by South Korea and silver by Japan.

WADA restores accreditation to India's National Dope Testing Laboratory

On 23rd December 2021, The World Anti-Doping Agency (**WADA**) restored the accreditation of National Dope Testing Laboratory (**NDTL**) in accordance with the International Standard for Laboratories (**ISL**), which had been suspended since August 2019. This reinstatement allows NDTL to resume its anti-doping activities, including the analyses of urine and blood samples.

This accreditation helps to boost India's efforts to achieve the highest global standards of excellence in sport.

Indian Skier – Aanchal Thakur wins Bronze at FIS Alpine Skiing Competition

Ace Indian skier Aanchal Thakur has won a Bronze medal at the **FIS Alpine Skiing Competition** in Montenegro. Aanchal has become the first Indian Ski athlete to win two medals at international level. She is also the 1st Indian to win a medal in the International Ski competition, when she won Bronze in 2018.

Pankaj Advani wins 2021 National Billiards Title

In Dec. 2021 Pankaj Advani defended his National Billiards Title. It became his 11th National Billiards after defeating Dhruv Sitwala at the 88th National Billiards and Snooker Championships 2021 final in Bhopal, MP. Also, This is his 35th in overall title.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

BOOK NAME	AUTHOR	KEY NOTES
'1971: Charge of the Gorkhas and Other Stories	Rachna Bisht Rawat	<p>Published by - Penguin Random House India (PRHI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A new book that unearths true stories of the 1971 Indo-Pak war, '1971: Charge of the Gorkhas and Other Stories', was released on 10th December 2021. <p>The book includes, from the story of the flight lieutenant who went missing after his plane crashed inside Pakistan to the 'last khukri attack' in modern military history.</p>
The Midway Battle: Modi's Roller-coaster Second Term	Gautam Chintamani	<p>Published by - Bloomsbury India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The book mentioned about the political scenario of India. It marks the second tenure of the current Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi.

		<p>✓ The Midway Battle shed light on the various legislations like the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, triple talaq, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as well as farming laws.</p> <p>Vice President releases Book on 'Public Service Ethics' by Shri Prabhat Kumar</p> <p>The VP M Venkaiah Naidu released a book titled 'Public Service Ethics- A Quest for Naitik Bharat' authored by Prabhat Kumar, former Governor of Jharkhand and former Cabinet Secretary. It was published by IC Centre for Governance, at Upa-Rashtrapati Nivas, New Delhi. The book highlights the multiple dimensions element of human character, the practice of ethical principles as a way of life.</p>
At Home In The Universe	Bala Krishna Madhur	<p>Published by - Bookworld Enterprises of Mumbai</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The book was released by R.C. Sinha, IAS (Rtd), advisor to the Ministry of Road Development in Mumbai, Maharashtra. ✓ The book is the autobiography of B K Madhur, a former Chief Executive Officer at DHFL Property Services Ltd, and one of the key personalities in establishing Dewan Housing. <p>The book consists of early life hardships, experience and life lessons of the author.</p>
Watershed: How We Destroyed India's Water and How We Can Save It	Mriduala Ramesh, the founder of Sundaram Climate Institute	<p>Published by - Hachette India</p> <p>Mriduala Ramesh is the author of "The Climate Solution" and she writes regularly on climate issues. She is also a member of the board of trustees of World Wildlife Fund(WWF), India, and chairperson of the board of governors at the National Institute of Technology, Andhra Pradesh(AP).</p>
Pride, Prejudice and Punditry	Dr.Shashi Tharoor, Former union minister and Lok Sabha Member of Parliament.	<p>Published by - Aleph Book Company.</p> <p>It was launched in Hyderabad, Telangana. There are ten sections in this book, each devoted to a particular topic such as modern Indian history, Indian Politics etc.</p>
Raj Kapoor: The Master at Work	Rahul Rawail	<p>Published by - Bloomsbury India</p> <p>Vice President of India, M Venkaiah Naidu released the book during the Raj Kapoor's 97th birth anniversary. The vice president described the book as a "labour of love and dedication".</p>
Principles and Practice of Oncology	Released by Jagadish Mukhi	<p>The book is based on 'Oncology' - the study of cancer.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Governor of Assam, Jagdish Mukhi released a book titled 'Principles and Practice of Oncology' at the Raj Bhavan. The book is published by Director of Dr B Borooah Cancer Institute, Dr Amal Kataki and faculty members of the Guwahati based institute.
Rewinding of First 25 years of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	S.S Oberoi, the former adviser at the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The book was launched by Ajay Prakash Sawhney, Secretary of MeitY. The book consists of life experience, challenges working as an advisor under the MeitY. S. S. Oberoi is a adviser in the Department of Electronics (DoE).
Gandhi Topi Governor	Dr Yarlagadda Lakshmi Prasad	<p>Published by - Emesco Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The M Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President(VP) of India released the Telugu book. The book chronicles the life of Barrister Idpuganti Raghavendra Rao. ✓ Idpuganti Raghavendra Rao was a prominent freedom fighter, Legislator and the Governor of the Central Provinces in the British Administration. <p>Dr Yarlagadda Lakshmi Prasad received Padma Shri in 2003 for literature and Education.</p>
The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh: How Yogi Adityanath Changed UP Waala Bhaiya' abuse to a Badge of Honour	Shantanu Gupta	<p>Published by - Garuda Prakashan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The book underlines the journey of Yogi Adityanath, from being born in Uttarakhand to becoming a Nath Panthi saint, to CM of Uttar Pradesh. <p>It also highlights the transformation of UP in various aspects like law and order, connectivity, education, health infrastructure, etc under the tenure of Yogi Adityanath.</p>
India's Ancient Legacy of Wellness	Dr Rekha Chaudhari	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The book was launched on the occasion of World Digital Day (WDD) celebration. The book highlights how important it is for human beings to be close to nature which helps to revive and recharge to do productive work.
Sahakar Sandarbha	Released by Amit Shah	Union Home Minister, Amit Shah released a book titled 'Sahakar Sandarbha' at the convocation ceremony of Vaikunth Mehta National Cooperative Management Institute (VAMNICOM) in Pune, Maharashtra. The book highlights various sectors of cooperative governance and its need for expansion in the field of agriculture and rural areas.
Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021	Released by Narendra Singh Tomar	Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has released the book. The book is a compilation of all the spices statistics such as area, production, productivity,

		export, import, price and value of the output of various spices produced in the country. The book was published by the Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development (DASD), Under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoAFW).
The Turnover Wizard – Saviour of Thousands	Arup Roy Choudhury	An autobiography of Arup Roy Choudhury , the former Chairman and Managing Director(CMD) of NTPC Limited and NBCC (India) Limited. Published by - HP Hamilton Limited ✓ M Venkaiah Naidu, Vice-President (VP) of India, released the book and it consolidates Arup Roy Choudhury's learnings from life and brings out the management lesson from his life.
The Modi Gambit: Decoding Modi 2.0	Sanju Verma, an economist and the BJP National Spokesperson	Published by - Gaurav Book Centre Pvt Ltd The book features the various achievement in the last 2 years of Prime Minister(PM) Narendra Modi's 2nd term as PM of India. The foreword of the book is written by Padma Shri Mohandas Pai and the Afterword is written by ace journalist, Anand Narasimhan, Managing Editor at CNN News 18.
Glimpses of a Pioneer's Life Journey' by V L Indira Dutt	Dr V L Indira Dutt, Chairperson and Managing Director(CMD) of KCP Group, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu	M Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President (VP) of India, launched the book and it is based on the life of Late Velagapudi Lakshmana Dutt(V.L. Dutt), the former Chairman of KCP Group. He was an industrialist, philanthropist and visionary.

OBITUARY

NATIONAL

PERSON NAME	FIELD	BORN PLACE	KEY NOTES
General Bipin Rawat	Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of Indian Armed Force	Uttarakhand	India's most senior defence official died in a helicopter crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu.Gen Rawat was on board an Indian Air Force (IAF) Mi17 V5 helicopter from Russia along with his wife Madhulika Rawat, and 11 other defence personnel. While IAF Group Captain Varun Singh is the lone survivor in the crash.
Konijeti Rosaiah	Former governor of Tamil Nadu (TN)	Andhra Pradesh	Konijeti Rosaiah, the former governor of Tamil Nadu(TN) and former Chief Minister(CM) of the Unified State of Andhra Pradesh (AP) has passed away at the age of 88 in Hyderabad, Telangana.

			Birth Detail - 4 th July 1933 at Vemur, Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh (Undivided).
L. Jalappa	Veteran leader of the Indian National Congress (INC) and the former Union Minister of Textiles	Karnataka	Passed away in Kolar, Karnataka. ✓ Birth Detail - 19 th October 1925 in Bengaluru, Karnataka. The Government of Karnataka honoured him with the D Devaraj Urs Award in 2015 for his contribution to the field of education and development.
Nanda Kishore Prusty (Nanda Sir)	Padma Shri awardee who is a well-known teacher	Odisha	Padma Shri awardee who is a well-known teacher from Odisha, Nanda Kishore Prusty (Nanda Sir), passed away at Bhubaneswar, Odisha. ✓ Birth Detail - Kantira village in Jajpur district, Odisha. Awards - He was conferred with the Padma Shri award for his contributions in the field of education.
Dr Mamballaikalathil Sarada Menon	India's 1st woman Psychiatrist and the longest-serving head of the Institute of Mental Health	Karnataka	Padma Bhushan Dr Mamballaikalathil Sarada Menon, India's 1st woman Psychiatrist and the longest-serving head of the Institute of Mental Health has passed away in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. She was born in a Malayali family in Mangaluru, Karnataka. She was honoured with Padma Bhushan in 1992 for social works.
Sirivennela Chembolu Seetharama Sastry	Telugu film lyricist and Padma Shri awardee	Andhra Pradesh	Passed away at the age of 66 years in Hyderabad Telangana. ✓ Birth Detail - May 20 th , 1955 in Anakapalle village in Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh. He launched his first song in the film, 'Janani Janmabhoomi' directed by K Viswanath.
Vinod Dua	Senior journalist	New Delhi	Passed away at the age of 67 years in Delhi's Hospital. In 1996, he became the first electronic media journalist to receive the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award. ✓ Birth Detail - March 11, 1954 in New Delhi. Awards: Padma Shri for Journalism in 2008. RedInk Award for his lifetime achievement in journalism (2017).

KS Sethumadhavan	Legendary Malayalam filmmaker	Kerala	<p>Passed away at the age of 90 years in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.</p> <p>✓ Birth Detail – He was born in 1931 in Palakkad district of Kerala.</p> <p>He has won 10 National Film Awards, 9 Kerala State Awards among others.</p>
Mahendra Prasad	Member of Parliament (MP) in Rajya Sabha from Bihar	Bihar	<p>Passed away at the age of 81 years after suffering from prolonged illness. Currently, he represents the Janata Dal(United) party of Bihar in the Rajya Sabha. Mahendra Prasad was born on 8 January 1940 in Govindpur, Bihar. His name was often prefixed with “King”, as he remained in the Rajya Sabha continuously since 1985 except for brief gaps.</p>

INTERNATIONAL

PERSON NAME	FIELD	BORN PLACE	KEY NOTES
Martin J Sherwin	American scholar of atomic weapons	USA	<p>Passed away in Washington, DC, The United States of America (USA).</p> <p>✓ Birth Place - New York, USA.</p> <p>He won the 2006 Pulitzer Prize in Biography with Kai Bird for the book ‘American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer’, the first full-scale biography of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the father of the atomic bomb. He was also a Pulitzer Prize Juror for 2009 Biography.</p>
Richard Rogers	Pritzker Prize-Winning British-Italian Architect	Italy	<p>Passed away at his residence in London, The United Kingdom(UK). He was born in Italy in 1933. He received the Pritzker Prize, known as the Nobel Prize of Architecture, in 2007.</p> <p>He received the Knight Bachelor in 1991 and he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II. He was the architect of the new World Trade Center (3 World Trade Center) in New York City, United States, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, France and the Millennium Dome in London, UK.</p>
Archbishop Desmond Tutu	Nobel Peace Prize laureate and a veteran of South Africa’s struggle against white minority rule	Transvaal	<p>Died at the age of 90 in Cape town. He won the Nobel Peace prize in 1984 in recognition of his non-violent opposition to South Africa’s brutal apartheid regime. He chaired a Truth and Reconciliation Commission which was set up to unearth atrocities committed.</p> <p>He was born in Klerksdorp, Transvaal, who spent most of his life in Cape Town and led numerous marches and campaigns to end South Africa’s struggle.</p>

Karolos Papoulias	Former President of Greece	Greece	Passed away at the age of 92 years. He served as President of Greece for 2 terms, from 2005 to 2015 under his PASOK party. Birth Detail - 4 June 1929 in Ioannina, Greece.
Edward O. Wilson also known as "modern-day Darwin"	US (United States) scientist, professor and author	US	Passed away at the age of 92 in Massachusetts, US. He was born in Birmingham, Alabama, U.S. He was fondly called as "the father of sociobiology" and "the father of biodiversity" for his environmental advocacy, and his secular-humanist and deist ideas pertaining to religious and ethical matters.

IMPORTANT DAYS

OBSERVED DATE / WEEK	DAYS	KEY NOTES
October 16, 2021	World Spine Day	<p>Annually observed across the globe on October 16th to create awareness about spinal health and spine disorders among individuals and stakeholders associated with spine care. The day also highlights the burden of spinal pain and disability around the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The 16th October 2021 marked the celebration of the 10th World Spine Day. <p>The theme of 2021's World Spine Day campaign is "BACK2BACK" which reflects the need to reset and refocus on spinal pain and disability as part of the global burden of disease.</p>
November 30, 2021	United Nations(UN)'s Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare	<p>Annually observed across the globe on November 30th as a tribute to the victims who lost their lives or suffered due to chemical warfare. The day also reaffirms the commitment of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to eliminate the threat of chemical weapons and promote peace, security, and multilateralism.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To assess the progress made towards preventing the use of Chemical weapons. <p>To renew the commitment to achieve a world free of chemical weapons.</p>
December 1, 2021	Indigenous Faith Day	<p>Arunachal Pradesh celebrated 1 December as 'Indigenous Faith Day' to preserve and promote indigenous faith and traditional practices of tribal communities of the state. The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh</p>

		<p>Brigadier Dr B D Mishra (Retd) and Chief Minister (CM) Pema Khandu attended the celebration in Itanagar (Capital of Arunachal Pradesh). Indigenous Faith Day is celebrated on 1st December since 2013. December 1st is to be the birth anniversary of Golgi Bote Talom Rukbo, who is called as the father of the indigenous faith.</p>
December 1, 2021	World AIDS (Acquired ImmunoDeficiency Syndrome) Day	<p>Annually observed across the globe on 1st December to create awareness about HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), a major public health issue that affects millions of people across the globe. HIV is a virus that attacks the body's immune system, specifically the white blood cells called CD4 cells.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The red ribbon is the universal symbol of awareness and support for people living with HIV. ✓ United Nations(UN), United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), & World Health Organization(WHO) observes World AIDS Day 2021 under the theme "End inequalities. End AIDS". <p>According to hiv.gov, the theme of World AIDS Day 2021 is "Ending the HIV Epidemic: Equitable Access, Everyone's Voice".</p>
December 1, 2021	Border Security Force (BSF) Raising Day	<p>The Border Security Force(BSF) of India annually celebrates the BSF raising day on 1st December to mark the day on which the BSF, India's First Line of Defence, came into existence in 1965. The 1st December 2021 marks the observance of the 57th BSF Raising Day. BSF is a paramilitary force charged with guarding India's land border during peacetime and preventing transnational crime.</p>
December 2, 2021	United Nations (UN)'s International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	<p>Annually observed across the globe on 2nd December to eradicate the contemporary forms of slavery which includes, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, child labour, forced marriage, and forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict. The 50 for Freedom campaign is promoting ratification and implementation of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Forced Labour Protocol. So far 50 Member States have ratified the Forced Labour Protocol.</p>

December 2, 2021	National Pollution Prevention Day or National Pollution Control Day	Annually observed across India on 2 nd December to honour and memorialize the people who have lost their lives or suffered in the 1984 Bhopal Gas Calamity, which is also referred to as the Bhopal gas tragedy or Bhopal disaster. The day also aims to create awareness about the importance of pollution control acts. 2 nd December 2021 marks the 37th anniversary of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy.
December 2, 2021	World Computer Literacy Day	Annually observed on December 2 nd to create awareness about computers and to encourage the development of technological skills among people especially children and women in India. The day also aims to create awareness and drive digital literacy in underserved communities across the globe.
December 3, 2021	United Nations (UN)'s International Day of Persons with Disabilities	Annually observed across the globe on 3 rd December to create awareness about the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. The day also aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, The theme of International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021 is "Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world."
December 4, 2021	United Nations (UN)'s International Day of Banks	Annually observed across the globe on 4 th December to recognize the vital role of the banking systems in the UN Member States in contributing to the improvement of their standard of living. The day also recognises the potential of multilateral development banks and other international development banks in financing sustainable development. 4 th December 2021 marks the observance of the 2 nd International Day of Banks.
December 4, 2021	Indian Navy Day	Annually observed across India on 4 th December to commemorate the victory of India Navy's Operation Trident, launched during the 1971 Indo-Pak war and to pay homage to the martyrs who lost their lives in the line of duty. ✓ The day reaffirms the Indian Navy's commitment to preserve, protect and promote India's maritime interest. The theme of 2021 Indian Navy Day is ' Swarnim Vijay Varsh ', which highlights

		the 50th anniversary of the victory of the Indian armed forces in the 1971 Indo-Pak War.
December 5, 2021	United Nations(UN)'s World Soil Day(WSD)	<p>Annually observed across the globe on December 5th to highlight the importance of healthy soil and to advocate the sustainable management of soil resources. The day also coincides with the birth anniversary of H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the King of Thailand, who sanctioned the event of World Soil Day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ World Soil Day 2021 and the 2021 campaign "Halt soil salinization, boost soil productivity" aims to raise awareness by addressing the challenges in soil management to improve soil health. ✓ The Nigeria Institute of Soil Science (NISS) has won the King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award (WSDA) 2020. Lydie-Stella Koutika, a soil scientist from the Republic of the Congo has won the Glinka World Soil Prize in 2021.
December 5, 2021	United Nations(UN)'s International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development	<p>Which is commonly referred to as the International Volunteer Day(IVD) is annually observed across the globe on 5th December to create awareness about the important contribution of volunteer service and encourage more people to offer their service as volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The day is marked and supported by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme. <p>The theme of International Volunteer Day 2021 is "Volunteer now for our common future".</p>
December 6, 2021	Mahaparinirvan Diwas	<p>Annually observed across India on 6th December to mark the death anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, who died on 6th December 1956 in Delhi. He is fondly remembered as "Babasaheb" and 'The Father of Indian Constitution'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 6th December 2021 marks the observance of the 65th Mahaparinirvan Diwas. <p>The 2021 Mahaparinirvan Diwas is observed as a part of the commemoration of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.</p>
December 6, 2021	Maitri Diwas/Divas or friendship day	India and Bangladesh will jointly observe Maitri Diwas/Divas or friendship day on

		<p>December 6 in New Delhi (India) and Dhaka (Bangladesh). 6th December, 2021 marks the 1st Maitri Diwas of India and Bangladesh. It was decided to commemorate 6 December as Maitri Diwas when Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi attended the 50th National Day of Bangladesh on 26 March 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ India had recognised Bangladesh on 6 December 1971 and it was one of the first countries to establish bilateral diplomatic ties with Bangladesh.
December 7, 2021	United Nations(UN)'s International Civil Aviation Day(ICAD)	<p>Annually observed across the globe on December 7th to create awareness about the importance of international civil aviation towards the social and economic development of the states and its importance in creating a globally transit network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The theme of ICAD 2021 is "Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development". <p>The theme of ICAD 2020 – 2023 will be "Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development".</p>
December 7, 2021	Armed Forces Flag Day	<p>Annually observed across India on 7th December to honour the martyrs and the armed force personnel who fought and continue to fight to protect the honour of the country. The flag day highlights the commitment of the public to look after the soldiers who were affected by the war, Veer Naris and the families of the martyrs who lost their lives in the line of duty.</p> <p>Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF) was instituted in 1993, by the amalgamation of the following into one fund named as "Armed Forces Flag Day Fund".</p>
December 8, 2021	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Charter Day	<p>Annually observed on December 8th to mark the signing of the SAARC Charter in 1985 that established the regional group – SAARC. The 8th December 2021 marks the observance of the 37th SAARC Charter Day. The charter was signed by the Leaders of SAARC Countries Heads of State or Government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the First SAARC Summit held in Dhaka, Bangladesh.</p>
December 8, 2021	261 st ASC Raising Day	<p>Army Service Corps (ASC), oldest and the largest administrative service in the Indian Army, celebrates the 261st ASC Raising Day</p>

		on 8 th December 2021. Army Service Corps (ASC) was established by the East India Company (EIC) in 1760 as a part of the administrative components of the EIC's armies in the Bombay, Madras and Bengal Presidencies.
December 9, 2021	United Nations (UN) International Anti-Corruption Day	Observed annually on 9th December to raise awareness of corruption and of the role of the UN convention on combating and presenting corruption. The UN has set up a Global Task Force on Corruption to reinforce a One-UN approach to support in combating corruption. ✓ Theme of 2021 - "Your right, your role: say no to corruption". The theme highlights the resources that were not available for the vulnerable and needy sections of the world due to corruption despite the COVID-19 pandemic.
December 9, 2021	International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime	2021 marks the 73rd anniversary of the adoption of the 1948 'Genocide Convention' by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). This was the 1 st Human Rights Treaty adopted by the UNGA.
December 10, 2021	United Nations (UN) Human Rights Day 2021	Observed annually on December 10, as the Day marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1948 to raise awareness about people's social, cultural, and physical rights and to ensure the welfare of everyone. ✓ The Theme - 'Equality - Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights' The theme relates to 'Equality' and Article 1 of the UDHR - All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
December 11, 2021	United Nations (UN)'s International Mountain Day	Annually observed across the globe on 11 th December to create awareness about the importance of preserving the mountains across the globe. ✓ The theme of International Mountain Day 2021 is "Sustainable mountain tourism". United Nations General Assembly(UNGA) has declared the year 2002 as the "International Year of Mountains".
December 11, 2021	UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) Day	Annually observed across the globe on 11 th December to create awareness on saving children's lives, defending their rights and helping them to fulfil their potential from

		childhood to adolescence. The UNICEF Day 2021 marks the 75 th anniversary of the foundation of UNICEF. UNICEF was originally known as the “ United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) ” started as a temporary relief fund of the United Nations and it is entitled to use the UN logo.
December 12, 2021	United Nations (UN)’s International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day)	Annually observed across the globe on 12 th December to create awareness about the need for strong and resilient health systems and Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The day also signifies the unprecedented momentum and global commitment to achieving Health for All by 2030. The theme of UHC Day 2021 is “Leave No One’s Health Behind: Invest in health systems for all.”
December 12, 2021	United Nations (UNs) International Day of Neutrality	Annually observed globally on 12 th December to promote neutrality among countries and to lay emphasis on raising awareness levels in public about the value of neutrality in international relations. Article 2 of the UN charter also permits the member states to settle their disputes by peaceful means.
December 12, 2021	82 nd Nupi Lal Day or Nupi Lal Memorial Day	State of Manipur observed the 82nd Nupi Lal Day or Nupi Lal Memorial Day to commemorate the 2 Nupi Lals of 1904 and 1939, the 2 historic movements led by the women of Manipur against mass exploitation and the famine triggered by the British. The day, also known as Nupree Lal Day or Nupi Lan day , pays homage to the sacrifices made by the brave mothers of Manipur. Nupi Lan, which translates to ‘ women’s war ’ in English, is an important movement in the history of Manipur.
December 14, 2021	National Energy Conservation Day	Annually observed across India on 14 th December to create awareness about the importance of energy conservation and the benefits of replacing non-renewable resources with renewable energy. The day is annually organised by the Ministry of Power. The first ever National Energy Conservation Day was celebrated on 14 th December 1991.
December 16, 2021	Vijay Diwas	Annually observed across India and Bangladesh on December 16 th to commemorate the victory of Indian armed forces against Pakistan in the 1971 Indo Pak War, also known as the 1971 Liberation War

		<p>and pays tribute to the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for nation. 16th December 2021 marks the celebration of the 50th Vijay Diwas (Swarnim Vijay Diwas), the Golden Jubilee of the 1971 Liberation War, the 50th anniversary of India's victory over Pakistan.</p> <p>Bangladesh celebrates the 16th December as 'Bijoy Dibos' (Day of Victory) to mark its formal independence from Pakistan.</p>
December 17, 2021	International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers	<p>Annually observed across the globe on 17th December to focus attention on the hate crimes committed against sex workers across the globe. The day has empowered the workers to come together against discrimination and remember the victims of violence. 'Red Umbrella' is the symbol for sex workers' rights across the globe.</p>
December 18, 2021	United Nations (UN)'s International Migrants Day	<p>annually observed across the world on December 18th to increase the interest of the international community on effective and full protection of the human rights of the migrants. The day also aims to ensure that migrants' rights are not violated and are protected equally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The year 2021 marks the 70th anniversary of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), established in 1951. <p>The theme of International Migrants Day 2021 is "Harnessing the Potential of Human Mobility".</p>
December 18, 2021	United Nation's (UN) World Arabic Language Day	<p>The annual United Nation's (UN) World Arabic Language Day was observed on the theme 'Arabic Language, a bridge between civilisations'. This day honors the Arabic language, which is spoken by over 400 million people globally and celebrates the cultural diversity of the Middle Eastern region. As per UNESCO, Arabic first emerged in the northwest of the Arabian Peninsula.</p>
December 18, 2021	Minorities Rights Day	<p>Annually observed across India on 18th December to create awareness on the Constitutionally-assured rights of religious minorities and aims to uphold the right to freedom and equal opportunities for the ethnic minorities in India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The day also highlights the need to eliminate all forms of discrimination against minorities.

		The day is annually celebrated by the National Commission for Minorities (NCM).
December 20, 2021	United Nations(UN)'s International Human Solidarity Day	Annually observed across the globe on 20th December to create awareness about the importance of solidarity, a socio-ethical and political concept, which states that it is fair and just that benefits and obligations are shared between members of society. The day commemorates the establishment of the World Solidarity Fund on 20th December 2002.
December 21, 2021	Corps Day	<p>The Judge Advocate General (JAG) or JAG Department, the legal wing of the Indian Army celebrated its 38th Corps Day on 21st December 2021. JAG Corps Day is annually celebrated on 21st December to mark the day on which the Bill for Army Act was introduced in the Parliament (21st December 1949).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The post of Judge Advocate General (JAG) in India is held by a Major General, who is the legal and Judicial Chief of the Army. <p>Current JAG(army)– Major General Praveen Kumar.</p>
December 22, 2021	National Mathematics Day	<p>Annually celebrated across India on 22nd December to mark the birth anniversary of renowned Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, who was born on 22nd December 1887 in Erode, Madras Presidency, British India (now Tamil Nadu). This year marks the 134th birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanuja.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The day is observed to highlight the importance of mathematics in the development of the nation and to honour the works of Srinivasa Ramanujan. <p>2021 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize was awarded to Dr Will Sawin of Columbia University, United States of America (USA).</p>
December 23, 2021	Kisan Diwas or National Farmers' Day	Annually observed across India on 23 rd December to commemorate the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, the 5 th Prime Minister of India (1979-1980). He was born on 23 rd December 1902 at Noorpur in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh(UP). He is popularly known as the "champion of India's peasants". The Kisan Diwas 2021 marks the 119 th birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh.

December 23, 2021	National Siddha Day	<p>Annually observed across India on 23rd December to create awareness about the Siddha system of medicine. The day is annually organised by the Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) on the eve of the birthday of Siddhar Agathiyar, which falls during the Ayilyam star in the Tamil month of Margazhi. In 2021, the Siddha Day falls on 23rd December 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The year 2021 marks the celebration of the 5th Siddha Day. <p>The theme of the 5th Siddha Day is "Strength of Siddha in Communicable Diseases".</p>
December 24, 2021	Bharatiya Grahak Diwas or National Consumer Day	<p>Annually observed across India on 24th December to create awareness about consumer rights and responsibilities. The day also commemorates the enactment of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, which received assent from the President of India on 24th December 1986.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The National Consumer Day is also known as National Consumer Rights Day. ✓ The theme of National Consumer Day 2021 is "Consumer – Know your Rights". <p>World Consumer Rights Day is annually observed across the world on 15th March to create awareness about the power of consumers and their rights.</p>
December 25, 2021	Good Governance Day	<p>Annually observed across India on 25th December to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the former Prime Minister (PM) of India, who was born on the same day in 1924 in Gwalior, Gwalior State (now Madhya Pradesh), British India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 25th December 2021, the '8th Good Governance Day' marks the 97th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. ✓ On 24th December 2021, the eve of Good Governance Day, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched the 'Azadi@75 Star Rating Protocol of Garbage Free Cities (GFC)- Toolkit 2022', a governance tool of waste management. <p>Good Governance Week was celebrated from 20th to 25th December 2021 with the motto of taking good administration down to the</p>

		villages. The theme of Good Governance Week is "Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur" .
December 27, 2021	United Nations (UN)'s International Day of Epidemic Preparedness	Annually observed across the globe on 27 th December to create awareness about the importance of the prevention of, preparedness for and partnership against epidemics. 27 th December 2021 marks the observance of the 2nd International Day of Epidemic Preparedness . Aim - To raise awareness, the exchange of information, scientific knowledge and best practices, quality education, and advocacy programmes on epidemics at the local, national, regional and global levels as a measure to prevent and respond to epidemics.

APPS & WEB PORTAL

APP & WEB NAME	LAUNCHED BY	PURPOSE
PNB Pride-CRMD module tool	Punjab National Bank	An android-based application for differently-abled employees to monitor and effectively follow up with the special mention account (SMA) borrowers. The Pride-CRMD module has built-in TalkBack software that allows the visually impaired to access the system freely and to interact with customers by tapping on their phones. ✓ The Headquarters of Punjab National Bank (PNB) is New Delhi, Delhi.
mPAY – Delight'	J&K Bank	R K Chhibber, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) Bank launched its revised and refurbished mobile banking app named 'J&K Bank mPAY – Delight' for the public. The features of the app include Account Details (Deposit and Advances), Fund Transfer, Bill Payments & Donations, Deposit Details, Credit Card Module, App Settings, Service Requests, Positive Pay System and Bharat Bill Pay which enables the users to make payment for various utilities like electricity hospitals, insurance and others.
Call Your Cop	T John Longkumer	T John Longkumer, Director-General of Police (DGP) Nagaland, launched the Nagaland Police's mobile app named 'Call Your Cop' at the Police headquarters (PHQ) in Kohima, Nagaland to enable all the citizens, especially those who are under stress, to get in touch with the police. The app was developed by the Police Headquarters CID branch in collaboration with Excellogics Tech Solutions Pvt Ltd, Nagaland.

Hamar Apan Budget	Hemant Soren	<p>Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren launched a web portal named 'Hamar Apan Budget' and a mobile application (app) prepared by the state finance Department from the Chief Minister's residential office in Ranchi.</p> <p>Through this portal, the general public of the state can share their suggestions for the 2022-23 budget. The public could use the hyperlink https://finance.jharkhand.gov.in/budgetvichar to register oneself on 'Hamar Apan Price range Portal'.</p>
Banadhikar App	Tripura Govt.	<p>Union Minister Giriraj Singh, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) along with Minister of State (MoS) MoRD Fagga Singh Kulaste virtually launched the National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS) and Banadhikar App at the Tripura State Secretariat in Agartala. With this, Tripura became the first Indian state in the country to introduce the Banadhikar App.</p> <p>Banadhikar is a GPS-based mobile application for the demarcation of forest 'patta' (land rights) for the landless indigenous people under the Forest Rights Act, 2006.</p>
LokpalOnline	Lokpal	<p>Lokpal Chairperson Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurated a digital platform for the complaints management from anywhere called 'LokpalOnline' for Indian citizens. LokpalOnline is a web-based portal hosted on National Informatics centre (NIC) Cloud which has been developed on an Open Source Technology for the management of complaints against public servants filed under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013.</p>
Unnati	Rakesh Asthana	<p>Rakesh Asthana, Police Commissioner of Delhi launched an e-learning platform 'Unnati', under the Delhi Police's flagship scheme 'YUVA' at the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) Auditorium, New Delhi, Delhi.</p> <p>Unnati is an e-learning and certification initiative by the Delhi Police-South West District to help educate youths and impart skill training to school dropouts from the weaker sections of society.</p>
Vikas Portal	Giriraj Singh	<p>On the lines of Central Government's Gati Shakti Mission, on December 16, 2021, Union Minister Giriraj Singh, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) launched MIS (Management Information System) portal namely 'Vikas Portal' for rankings of States/Union Territories (UTs) in Land Acquisition Projects under RFCTLARR Act, 2013.</p> <p>✓ RFCTLARR is an acronym for Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land</p>

		<p>Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement.</p> <p>The awards will be conferred upon top 3 States and top 3 districts by capturing the data, figures, and speed of the development in the country.</p>
ASIGMA	Indian Army	<p>The Indian Army, launched a contemporary messaging application named 'ASIGMA' (Army Secure IndiGeneous Messaging Application). It is a new generation web-based application developed entirely in-house by a team of officers of the Corps of Signals of the Army.</p> <p>It works as an alternative to Army Wide Area Network (AWAN) messaging application which has been in service for the past 15 years.</p>
Chalo mobile application	Aaditya Thackeray	<p>On 21st December 2021 Maharashtra Tourism and Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray launched Chalo mobile application (app) and Chalo smart cards to facilitate digital and advance purchase of Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) bus tickets. Chalo mobile app will allow passengers to buy online bus tickets and have access to bus passes through e-wallet.</p>
Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam portal	Manohar Lal Khattar	<p>The Chief Minister (CM) of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar, launched the 'Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam portal' and announced to set up the Atal Park & Smriti Kendra in Gurugram, Haryana. The event was organised on the occasion of Good Governance Day – the birth anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee & Madan Mohan Malviya. 25th December is celebrated as the Good Governance Day every year.</p>
Gujarat Epidemic Response Management Information System (GERMIS)	Bhupendra Patel	<p>Gujarat Chief Minister (CM) Bhupendra Patel launched a Health Service Management Centre (HSMC) for monitoring various national and state-level health schemes. CM also launched the website of the Gujarat Epidemic Response Management Information System (GERMIS) in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.</p> <p>Objective of HSMC – To monitor the benefits received under various government schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (PMJAY), Mukhyamantri Amrutam (MA) scheme, nutrition-related schemes, maternal and child health schemes.</p>

ENVIRONMENT

New Butterfly species found in Sikkim's Dzongu District

Zographetus Dzonguensis, a new butterfly species, a indigenous Lepchas of Sikkim was found in the Namprickdang area, Noom Panang Village in upper Dzongu, North District, Sikkim.

- ✓ **Published in** - 'Zootaxa'.
- ✓ The team of researchers who discovered the species has proposed 'Chocolate-bordered Flitter' as the English name for its chocolate coloured border around both the wings.

ITBP Names Ladakh Mountain as 'Norbu Wangdu Peak' After Mountaineer Norbu Wangdu

Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)'s mountaineering team Shikhar scaled two unnamed 6000 meters (m) high mountains in Eastern Ladakh and named one of them as 'Norbu Wangdu Peak' (6,250 metres), dedicated it to the late ITBP's mountaineer & Head Constable, Nurbu Wangdus from Ladakh, who died during an avalanche in Gangotri-1, Uttarakhand, in October 2019.

GA Questions Asked in Exams

- [GA Questions asked RRB PO Mains Exam – Sept 25](#)
- [GA Questions asked IBPS Clerk Mains Exam – Feb 28](#)
- [GA Questions asked IBPS RRB Clerk Mains Exam – Feb 20](#)
- [GA Questions asked IBPS PO Mains Exam – Feb 4](#)
- [GA Questions asked in RRB PO Mains Exam 2021 – Jan 30](#)
- [GA Questions asked in SBI PO Mains 2021 – Jan 29](#)
- [SBI Clerk Mains 2020](#)
- [IBPS RRB Officer Scale II GBO Exam 2020](#)
- [RBI Assistant Mains 2020](#)
- [GA Questions Asked in IBPS Clerk Mains Exam 2020 – 90% Questions Covered by AC](#)
- [GA Questions asked in SBI PO 2019 Main Exam](#)
- [GA Questions asked in SBI Clerk Main Exam 2019](#)
- [GA Questions asked in IBPS PO Main Exam 2019](#)
- [GA Questions asked in RBI Grade B Prelims Exam 2019](#)
- [GA Questions asked in IBPS RRB Clerk Mains Exam 2019](#)
- [GA Questions asked in IBPS RRB PO Mains Exam 2019](#)

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Suggestions & Feedback are welcomed

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