



Current Affairs Supplement

March 2021

Registered/ Corporate Office

DELHI

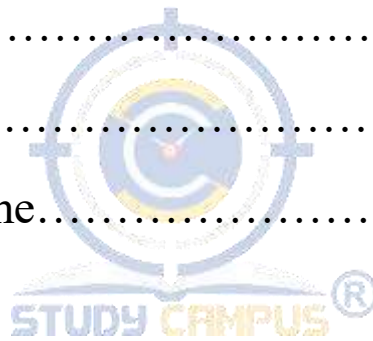
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National

ISRO Successfully Launches Amazonia-1 & 18 other Satellites from Sriharikota

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched 1 primary satellite 'Amazonia-1' & 18 co-passenger satellites from India (5) & USA (13) from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR (SDSC-SHAR), Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. The satellites were launched using Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C51 (PSLV-DL Variant).



- PSLV C-51/Amazonia-1 mission is the **1st Dedicated PSLV Commercial Mission** for NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), which is the ISRO's commercial arm (setup in 2019).
- This is ISRO's 1st Launch of 2021. It has launched 14 Missions in 2021.
- With this India has totally launched 342 Foreign satellites from 34 countries.

MapmyIndia integrated with Co-WIN portal to Locate COVID-19 Vaccination Centres

MapmyIndia has been integrated with India's official vaccination registration portal – 'Co-WIN' (COVID Vaccine Intelligence Network) to enable users to locate nearby COVID-19 vaccine centres.

- Using the portal, Users can insert their current location or enter their address, pin code, or eolocation of interest to check nearby vaccination centres.
- The feature will be available on MapmyIndia's app & also Co-WIN portal.
- The 2nd Phase of COVID-19 Vaccinations started on March 1, 2021, in order to make the vaccination effort easier MapmyIndia has put all COVID-19 vaccine centres across India on MapmyIndia's maps.

Integration of 'Aarogya Setu' & Co-WIN Portal

In February, 2021 India had integrated COVID-19 Tracing App 'Aarogya Setu' & Co-WIN portal to enable users to download Vaccination certificates after they have received at least one dose of COVID-19 Vaccination.

About MapmyIndia:

MD, Chairman – Rakesh Verma

Headquarters – New Delhi



MoHUA releases Rankings for Ease of Living Index 2020 & Municipal

Performance Index 2020 Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) released the Final Rankings of Ease of Living Index (EoLI) 2020 & Municipal Performance Index (MPI) 2020 through an online event.

- For the purpose of ranking, both EoLI 2020 & MLI 2020 categorized the rankings of Cities (including cities under Smart Cities Program) & Municipalities under 2 categories based on their population – **Million+ Category** & **Less than Million Category**.

- Around 111 cities participated in the assessment which was conducted in 2020.
- It is the **1st time** that MPI is being undertaken in India it was launched as an accompaniment to the EoL Index.

Rankings ELI 2020

Rank	Ease of Living Index 2020			
	Population Million+		Population Less than Million	
	City	Score	City	Score
1	Bengaluru (Karnataka)	66.7	Shimla (Himachal Pradesh)	60.9
2	Pune (Maharashtra)	66.27	Bhubaneswar (Odisha)	59.85
3	Ahmedabad (Gujarat)	64.87	Silvassa (Dadra & Nagar Haveli)	58.43

Rankings MPI 2020

Rank	Municipal Performance Index 2020			
	Population Million+		Population Less than Million	
	Municipality	Score	Municipality	Score
1	Indore (Madhya Pradesh)	66.08	New Delhi MC	52.92
2	Surat (Gujarat)	60.82	Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh)	51.69
3	Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh)	59.04	Gandhinagar (Gujarat)	51.59

China regains its position as India's Largest Trading Partner

Despite the bloody border conflict in 2020, ban on hundreds of Chinese mobile apps and restrictions in investment, China with \$75.9 billion regained its spot as the Largest Trading Partner of India. China is closely followed by the USA and UAE as the 2nd and 3rd largest Trading Partners of India. 51% of the total imports from China were accounted for by the purchase of Heavy Machineries. It is to be noted that in 2019 China was India's largest trading partner with \$85.5 billion trade and slipped to 2nd spot only in 2020 with \$77.7 billion trade.

UP CM Launches 'Path Pradarshak' Free Coaching Facility for Competitive exams

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched 'Path Pradarshak' free coaching facility for Competitive exams under the 'Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Yojana'. Under the initiative, students will be provided free assistance by IAS & Provincial Civil Service officers for the preparations.

Merger of Rajya Sabha TV & Lok SabhaTV; Replaced by Sansad TV

The merger of Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV has been finalised and it is replaced by the single banner, **Sansad TV**. This is an attempt to cover beyond the proceedings of the two houses and feature the functions of parliament and Parliamentarians when the houses are not in session. The merger is effective from **1st March 2021**.

Ravi Capoor Retired IAS officer of 1986 batch has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Sansad TV.



- The merger was the result of the decision of the Rajya Sabha Chairman, **Venkaiah Naidu** and Lok Sabha Speaker, **Om Birla**
- A committee headed by former Prasar Bharati Chairman **Surya Prakash** was formed to work out integration of the two channels.

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India's first 'World Skill Center' in Bhubaneswar

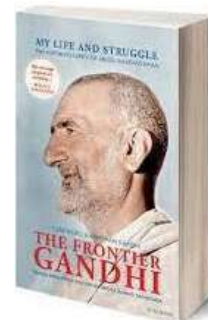
Odisha Chief Minister, **Naveen Patnaik** inaugurated the India's first **World Skill Center(WSC)**, an advanced skill training institute at Mancheswar, Bhubaneswar at the budget of **Rs 1342.2crore**, under Odisha Skill Development Project with the assistance of Asian Development Bank and ITE Education Services (ITEES), Singapore, the knowledge partner.

World Skill Center (WSC):

- The center aims to provide advanced skill training to the youth of the state and prepare them for competing at Global level
- WSC is the 18-storey state-of-the-art building with a helipad and is now the tallest structure in the State.
- The center is built over an area of 4.5 lakh sq ft under budget of Rs 1342.2crore along with Asian Development Bank for cost sharing.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Autobiography "The Frontier Gandhi: My Life And Struggle" to be Published in English

The autobiography of **Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan**, popularly known as the "Frontier Gandhi" & fondly known as **Bacha Khan or Badshah Khan**, titled "The Frontier Gandhi: My Life and Struggle" is set to be published in **English** by the publishing house **Roli Books**. This will be his first autobiography in English. The book was translated into English by **Imitiaz Ahmad Sahibzada**, former Pakistani civil servant and author.



- The **foreword** of the book is written by historian **Rajmohan Gandhi**, Grandson of Gandhi and
- The book was originally written in **Pashto** and published in 1983.

Note:

The earlier account of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's life in English was a collection of his interviews and was not his autobiography.

About the book:

- The book by Ghaffar Khan brings out the life events and personalities of the independence movement.
- The book accounts the sacrifices and efforts that resulted in the Independence of India.

About Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan:

- Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan who was also known as Bacha Khan, Badshah Khan and Fakr-e-Afghan was born in Utmanzai, Northwest Frontier Province, British India in 1890.
- He was one of the close associates of Mahatma Gandhi.
- He led the Khundai Khidmatgar (**Servants of God**) movement from 1930 to 1947.

PM Narendra Modi Virtually Inaugurated 'Maitri Setu' Bridge between India and Bangladesh Over Feni River

Prime Minister(PM) **Narendra Modi** Inaugurated the 'Maitri Setu' (India-Bangladesh Friendship Bridge) virtually between India and Bangladesh over Feni River at Sabroom in south **Tripura**. During the event he also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for eight other infrastructure projects together worth ₹ 3,518 crore.



- Maitri Setu Bridge is 1.9 Km long, which Connects Tripura, India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh.
- National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd constructed the Bridge at a project cost of Rs. 133 Crores.
- PM, Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for setting up an Integrated Check Post at Sabroom. The Check Post will be constructed by the Land Ports Authority of India at an estimated cost of about Rs. 232 Crores.

AS Panneerselvan authored a new book titled “Karunanidhi: A Life”

Readers’ editor at The Hindu, **AS Panneerselvan** authored a new book titled “**Karunanidhi: A Life**”, a book about the 8-decade political career of **Muthuvel Karunanidhi**. The foreword of the book was written by N. Ram, former editor in chief of The Hindu.

The book was published by **Penguin Viking**.

About the book:

- i. The book is about Karunanidhi, the writer turned politician who served as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for **5 terms** and the leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (**DMK**) for over five decades.
- ii. The book features his controversial political career as the regional leader and his contribution to the tamil history, literature and culture.

About AS Panneerselvan:

- i. A S Panneerselvan the readers editor of **The Hindu** has served as its internal ombudsman since 2012.
- ii. He is an adjunct professor of Asian College of Journalism, Chennai.
- iii. He is also a board member of Organization of News Ombudsmen and Standards Editors representing Asia.

UP Gets 8th Airport at Bareilly; Became 1st State to have highest Number of Airports

Bareilly Airport became the **8th Airport** of Uttar Pradesh(UP). The **Trishul Military Airbase** has been upgraded as the **Bareilly Airport** for commercial flight operations under the Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (**RCS-UDAN**) of the Government of India.



- UP became the first state of India to have the highest number of Airports.

Note:

Currently UP has 8 functional airports namely Lucknow, Agra, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Prayagraj, Kanpur, Hindon and Bareilly.

Highlights:

- i. Bareilly became the **56th Airport** to be operationalized under the UDAN scheme.
- ii. Trishul Military Airbase, Bareilly owned by the Indian Air Force and the land were handed over to the Airport Authority of India(AAI).
- iii. The Government of India has sanctioned Rs.88 crores under the UDAN Scheme for the development of the interim civil aviation operation.

First Flight of Bareilly Airport:

i. On 8th March 2021, On the occasion of the International women's Day **Hardeep Singh Puri**, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Civil Aviation flagged off the first flight with **all women crew** to Bareilly Airport from Delhi Airport.

ii. The first flight of Bareilly airport was operated by **Alliance Air**, which was awarded the Delhi bareilly route under UDAN-4 bidding process 2020.

About UDAN Scheme:

In October 2016, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, **Jayant Sinha** launched Regional Connectivity Scheme Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik(UDAN), under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Indian Railways Integrated Rail Madad Helpline '139'

Indian Railways has integrated all railway helplines into a single number '139', which is now the main 'Rail Madad' Helpline, for quick grievance redressal and enquiry mechanism during train journeys for passengers.

Indra Nooyi, Former CEO of PepsiCo, to Publish her Memoir Titled "My Life in Full: Work, Family and Our Future"

Padma Bhushan awardee Indra Nooyi, the former CEO of PepsiCo is set to publish her memoir titled "My Life in Full: Work, Family and Our Future". The book is set to be published by Portfolio books on September 28. The book will feature both the personal and professional life of Indra Nooyi.

**About the book:**

i. The book features the life of Indra Nooyi from her childhood in India to her life at Yale University as an immigrant to her life as a person of colour in the elite corporate world.

ii. The book also features her work-life balance between being a mother of 2 and working at PepsiCo.

About Indra Nooyi:

i. Indra Nooyi, an Indian American, worked at PepsiCo for around 24 years.

ii. She served as the CEO and Chairman of PepsiCo for 12 years from 2006 to 2018.

iii. She stepped down as CEO of PepsiCo in October 2018 and in February 2019 she gave up her seat on the board.

iv. She has been serving as the Board member of Amazon.com Inc since 2019.

v. She was honoured with **Padma Bhushan** in **2007** for trade and Industry.

Gautam Adani Becomes World's Biggest Wealth Gainer in 2021; Beats Jeff Bezos & Elon Musk

Adani Group chairman **Gautam Adani** become the World's Biggest Wealth Gainer in 2021, ahead of Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, and Tesla CEO, Elon Musk as per the recent Bloomberg Billionaires Index. Gautam Adani gained USD 16.2 billion & was followed by Google Co-founder Larry Page, who gained 14.3 billion USD



- As per Bloomberg Billionaires Index, now he became the **26th richest person** in the world.
- Adani, a first-generation entrepreneur added a total of USD 16.2 billion to his net worth which has now jumped to USD 50 billion.
- Adani has been rapidly expanding his conglomerate, adding ports, airports, data centers and coal mines in India, and also proceeding with his Carmichael coal project in Australia.
- The shares of some of Adani's group including Adani Total Gas have almost doubled while Adani Enterprises increased 90%, Adani Transmission Ltd gained 79%. Adani Power and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zones Ltd gained more than 50%.

General Bipin Rawat releases the new book, "Battle Ready for 21st Century"

On 17th March 2021, India's **Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat** along with Former Chief of the Army Staff, Gen Deepak released a book, "**Battle Ready for 21st Century**" at Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS). The book was co-edited by Lt Gen **AK Singh**, Distinguished Fellow CLAWS & Brigadier **Narender Kumar**, a visiting Fellow CLAWS.



- The book **methods to strategically manage border conflict in future** in all possible fronts- Land, Air, water, cyber & cognitive domains to avoid war.
- Foreword of the book was written by Arun Prakash, former Naval Chief.
- Former Chief of the Army Staff Gen NC Vij and Prof Gautam Sento have commented on the book to identify the need for building capabilities.
- The book critically examines India's past history of wars and the urgent need for capacity building to prevent accidental wars.

Supreme Court refuses to stay sale of New Set of 'Electoral Bonds'

A Supreme Court bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde refused to stay the sale of a **new set of electoral bonds**, the new set of electoral bonds are scheduled to come out for sale between April 1-10, 2021.

- NGO Association for Democratic Reforms had filed a petition seeking ‘Stay’ on the new set of Electoral Bonds due to upcoming elections in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam, Pondicherry & West Bengal.
- The voting for State elections begin on March 27 & counting of votes will be held on May 2.
- The Electoral Bonds Scheme began in 2018 and continued in 2019 & 2020.

Electoral Bonds Scheme

It was introduced with the Finance Bill (2017) and notified in 2018 as the ‘Electoral Bond Scheme 2018’.

- It is a **financial instrument** for making donations to political parties.
- Range of Bonds – INR 1, 000 – INR 1 crore (no maximum limit). The bonds can be purchased either digitally or through cheque.
- **State Bank of India (SBI)** is the only bank which is authorized to issue & encash these bonds.
- Validity – The bonds donated to political parties must be encashed within **15 days** through the party’s verified account.
- Eligibility for receiving bonds – Any party registered under section 29A of the **Representation of the Peoples Act, 1951** and has secured at least 1% of the votes polled in recent General/Assembly elections are eligible to receive electoral bonds.

President Ram Nath Kovind gives Assent to 3 Major Bills

President Ram Nath Kovind gave his Assent to 3 Major Bills passed by the Indian Parliament. They are National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) Bill, 2021, The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021, The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2021.

National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) Bill, 2021

It aims to establish the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) as the principal Development Financial Institution (DFI) for Infrastructure financing in India.

- To be set up as a corporate body with authorised share capital of **One Lakh Crore Rupees & INR 20, 000 crores** as equity & INR 5,000 crore as grant.
- It will provide grants worth **INR 5, 000 Crore** to NBFID by the end of the first financial year.
- The Central Government will own 100% shares of Institution which will subsequently be reduced up to 26%.

The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021

It amends the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991.

- The Bill provides that the term ‘**Government**’ referred to in any law made by the Legislative Assembly will **imply Lieutenant Governor (LG)**.
- It gives power to the LG to make rules in matters which fall outside the purview of the elected government in Delhi.

The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2021

It amends the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (which regulates the mining sector in India).

Objective – To Reform the Mining sector in India.

- The act provides for **removal of distinction** between captive and merchant mines.
- It empowers the Central Government to issue directions regarding composition & utilization of funds maintained by the District Mineral Foundation.



International

Hillary Clinton partners with Louise Penny to co-write 'State of Terror' Mystery novel

Former United States Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton is co-writing a mystery novel called 'State of Terror' with Louise Penny, a Canadian author. The novel is slated to be released on October 12, 2021. It will be jointly released by Clinton's Publisher, Simon & Schuster & Louise Penny's St. Martin's Press.

JPMorgan & GomSpace successfully test World's First Bank-led Blockchain Transaction in Space

Denmark based GomSpace and US-based JPMorgan Chase & Co have successfully tested the World's First Bank-led Blockchain Transaction in Space (IOD – in-orbit demonstration) using Danish space firm GomSpace's **GOMX-4 Satellites**. The Transactions were executive through smart contracts on a blockchain network, established between satellites orbiting the earth.



Outcomes

- The successful test would enable a peer-to-peer DvP ('data versus payment') satellite marketplace in the long term.
- It will also allow data transfers between satellites against payments.

About GomSpace:

CEO – Niels Buus

Headquarters – Aalborg, Denmark

India, Pakistan agree to observe '2003 Ceasefire Agreement'

India & Pakistan agreed to strictly observe the '2003 Ceasefire Agreement' along the Line of Control (LoC) with effect from the midnight of February 24/25, 2021. It was announced by the two countries after discussions between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGsMO) of both Countries.

- With this both countries will abide by all agreements on **ceasefire** along the Line of Control (LoC) & sectors of the International Border to achieve mutually beneficial & sustainable peace along the borders.

About the 2003 ceasefire agreement:

The ceasefire agreement was reached in November 2003, four years after the Kargil War along the entire stretch of the India-Pakistan frontier.

- It facilitated the opening of the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalkot routes, paving the way for bus and truck services linking the two Kashmirs for the first time in six decades and encouraging cross-LoC contacts, exchanges, travel, and trade.
- The ceasefire also enabled India to complete the construction of a fence near the LoC to prevent Pakistan's infiltration of terrorists into Kashmir, a project that it had begun a couple of decades earlier but had to suspend due to Pakistan's artillery fire.

What is the need of agreeing to 2003 ceasefire agreement?

- The agreement comes in the wake of over 5000 instances of Cross Fire Violations (CFVs) along the Line of Control (LoC) and other areas in Jammu and Kashmir, resulting in 46 fatal casualties in 2020 like Pulwama attack & Balakot Operation by India & Pathankot airbase attack in 2016 followed by attack at the garrison in Uri and the Indian response with a surgical strike along the border.
- In order to reduce these kind of attacks in the border & to enhance peace between the countries, 2003 ceasefire agreement were agreed to follow by both the nations.
- During the Parliament session in February, Union Minister of State for Home, G Kishan Reddy stated that a total of 10, 752 cases of ceasefire violations have taken place along India's Border with Pakistan in the last 3 years.
- Due to this, 72 security personnel & 70 civilians have been killed.
- The agreement is expected to improve the security situation on the ground in Kashmir. Because After signing the 2003 ceasefire agreement, there were no single bullet sound in the border of India-Pakistan till 2006.

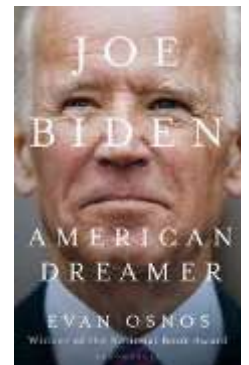
Note – In February, 2021, Lieutenant General **B. S. Raju** was appointed as the new Director General of Military Operations (DGMO), he is expected to take charge in March or April, 2021. He will succeed Lt General Paramjit Singh.

Evan Osnos's New Book "Joe Biden: American Dreamer" a Biography of Joe Biden

National Book Award Winner **Evan Osnos** has authored a new Book "**Joe Biden: American Dreamer**" a biography of American President, Joe Biden that features both the personal and public life of Joe Biden. The book is published by **Bloomsbury Publishing**.

About the Book:

- The author portrays President Joseph R. Biden Jr. as a man who has sustained a 50-year political career and became the President and a man who is marked with deep personal losses.
- The book captures the characters and features of the presidential election.
- The book features the revealing conversation between Joe Biden and others, including former President Barack Obama, Cory Booker, Amy Klobuchar, Pete Buttigieg, progressive activists, advisers, opponents, and his family members.



About Evan Osnos:

- Evan Osnos worked as a staff writer in The New Yorker covering politics and foreign affairs.
- He has worked for the Chicago Tribune as Beijing bureau chief, he has also worked in the Middle East, reporting from Iraq.

Books:

- His book "Age of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth, and Faith in the New China," based on his 8-year life in Beijing won the **2014 National Book Award**. The book was also a finalist for the Pulitzer prize.
- He has also authored the book "Joe Biden: The Life, the Run, and What Matters Now." published in 2020.

Awards:

He was a part of the team (staff of Chicago Tribune) that won the **2008 Pulitzer Prize** for investigative reporting.

India’s position downgraded to ‘Partly Free’ in Freedom in the World 2021 report

According to the ‘Freedom in the World 2021: Democracy under Siege’ released by US based Think Tank Freedom House, India has scored 67 and its position has been downgraded to ‘Partly Free’ from ‘Free’ in 2020. India’s ranking has also fallen to **88** (from 83) out of 211 countries.

- The ‘most free countries’ with a score of 100 are Finland, Norway & Sweden.
- Least Free Countries with a score of 1 are Tibet & Syria.
- This is the **1st time** since 1997 that India has been downgraded to ‘partly free’. India’s score has decreased from 71 (in 2020).
- Freedom House is largely funded through USA government grants and is actively tracking the course of democracy since 1941.

Country	Score	Status
India	67	‘Partly Free’
Finland, Sweden, Norway	100	‘Most Free’
Tibet, Syria	1	‘Least Free’

Ghana becomes 1st Country to receive COVAX vaccines through UN Initiative

6,00,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine made by the Serum Institute of India, were offered to Ghana under the vaccine deployment initiative of the United Nations (UN), making it the 1st country in the world to receive COVAX vaccines. Already 92 countries in the lower & middle income group have signed to the UN backed COVAX programme. COVAX is planning to distribute 2 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines by 2021.



India ranked 121st & Singapore retains 1st Rank in the 2021 Economic Freedom Index

India with a score of 56.5 was ranked 121 (category – ‘Mostly Unfree’) in the ‘2021 Index of Economic Freedom’ (27th Annual Edition) released by **The**



Heritage Foundation. Singapore topped the list for the 2nd time in a row followed by New Zealand & Australia.

- This is the 1st time that the index has been published after the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Around 184 Countries have been covered in the Index; the Period of study is from July 2019 – June 2020.
- For the 1st time, The Heritage Foundation has **excluded Hong Kong** from its rankings. Hong Kong had topped the Index for 25 out of 27 years (1995-2019).
- Overall, the Global Economy remains ‘Moderately Free’ in the 2021 Index. The Global Average of economic freedom remained unchanged at **61.6** for the second year in a row (highest average score in Index history).

Rank	Country	Overall Score	Category
121	India	56.5	Mostly Unfree
1	Singapore	89.7	Free
2	New Zealand	83.9	Free
3	Australia	82.4	Free

About The Heritage Foundation:

President – Kay C. James

Headquarters – Washington DC., USA

India emerges as 5th attractive Growth Destination, US Tops List: PwC's Global CEO Survey

According to PwC's (PricewaterhouseCoopers) **24th Annual Global CEO Survey**, India emerged as the **5th** most attractive growth destination in the world. India has slipped one position to 5th, after being surpassed by the United Kingdom which took the 4th Position.

The USA emerged as the Number one market favored by CEOs over the next 1 year followed by China, Germany.

- The survey covered 5, 050 CEOs in 100 Countries & Territories including India.
- Japan took the 6th position overtaking Australia.
- 76% of CEOs expect the global economic recovery to improve in 2021.z

Position	Country
5	India
1	USA
2	China
3	Germany

About PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC):

Chairman – Robert E. Moritz

Headquarters – London, UK

1st Ever Leader-Level Summit of QUAD Countries held virtually

On March 12 2021, The First-ever Leader-Level Summit of 4 QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) countries – India, Japan, USA & Australia took place virtually.



Participants

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi
- US President Joseph Biden
- Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison
- Japan Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga

Major Announcements

- The 4 Countries agreed to work towards an 'open' & 'free' Indo-Pacific region.
- Proposals for setting up 3 Expert Working Groups in areas of Vaccines, emerging technology & Climate were cleared.
- They agreed to produce **1 Billion doses** of COVID-19 vaccines across Asia by 2022 to fight the pandemic. It would be funded by US & Japan, while Australia will contribute in logistical aspects.

India's Regime type has turned into 'Electoral Autocracy' – Swedish Democracy Report 2021

According to the 'Autocratization Turns Viral: Democracy Report 2021' released by Swedish-based V-Dem (Varieties of Democracy) Institute states



that India's regime type has turned into 'Electoral Autocracy' in 2020 from 'Electoral Democracy' in 2010. Hungary & Turkey have also been demoted as 'Electoral Autocracy'.

- India has registered a 23%-point drop on the **Liberal Democracy Index (LDI)** scale marking one of the most dramatic shifts among all countries in the world over the past 10 years.
- Based on the LDI Index, the top 3 democratic countries in the world are Denmark, Sweden & Norway.
- Liberal Democracies have declined over the past decade (2010-20) from 41 countries to 32 countries.
- This is the **5th Annual report** from the V-Dem Institute and is based on a data set of 202 countries.

About V-Dem Institute:

Director – Staffan I. Lindberg

Location – Gothenburg, Sweden

US becomes India's 2nd Biggest Oil Supplier overtaking Saudi Arabia; Iraq Tops

According to trade data released by Reuters, the United States surpassed Saudi Arabia as India's 2nd Biggest Oil Supply in February, 2021. Iraq continues to be India's Largest supplier despite a **23% decline** in purchases to a five-month low of 867, 500 BPD (Barrels Per Day).



- India's imports from America increased to 48% to a record 545, 300 BPD in February, 2021 accounting for 14% of India's overall imports last month
- Saudi Arabia slipped to No.4 Position for the 1st time since January 2006. Nigeria rose to 3rd Position and UAE slipped to 5th Position.
- Totally, India shipped 3.92 million BPD of Oil in February, 2021 (decline of 18% from January).

Fact

India is World's Third Largest Oil Importer & Consumer (after USA, China)

Position	Country
1	Iraq
2	USA
3	Nigeria

About Reuters:

Reuters is an International News Organization owned by Thomson Reuters

President – Michael Friedenberg

Headquarters – London, UK

World's Most Powerful Supercomputer "Fugaku" by Japan, Now Fully Operational

"Fugaku" the Japanese supercomputer that topped the Top500 list for 2 consecutive years is now **fully operational**. The supercomputer that was **developed for 6 years** by Japanese scientific research institute **RIKEN and Fujitsu** was **used in projects to combat COVID-19 pandemic**. Japan's Research Organization for Information Science and Technology (RIST) has selected 74 projects that will use the supercomputer in FY2021. This will work towards the **Japanese government's vision of an ultra-smart Society 5.0**.

**India 3rd Most Polluted Country, Delhi Most Polluted Capital City : IQAir Report**

According to the '2020 World Air Quality Report' released by IQAir (Swiss Air Technology Company), India was the 3rd Most Polluted Country in the World in 2020 after Bangladesh & Pakistan. Delhi was the most polluted Capital City for the 3rd consecutive time it was followed by Dhaka (Bangladesh) & Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia).



- In the case of **World's most polluted cities, Hotan of China** came first followed by India's Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh) & Bulandshahr (Uttar Pradesh).
- The rankings are based on annual average PM 2.5 (Particulate Matter) of the year 2020. It covered 106 Countries.

Most Polluted Countries in 2020

Rank	Country	PM
3	India	51.9
1	Bangladesh	77.1
2	Pakistan	59.0

Italy joins ISA under the amended ISA Framework Agreement

Italy joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA) (also known as International Agency for Solar Policy and Application (IASPA)) after signing the amended **ISA Framework Agreement**. Vincenzo de Luca, Ambassador of Italy to India signed the Italian membership to the ISA.



- The new ISA Framework Agreement came into force on January 8, 2021.
- Under the new amended framework, the membership of ISA is open to all member states of the United Nations. Previously, it was open to countries that were partially or entirely located within the Tropics.
- The signed copies of the agreement were received by an additional secretary (ER) as representative of MEA. MEA is the depositary of the ISA Framework Agreement.

International Solar Alliance

It was launched by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi & the then-French President Francois Hollande ahead of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference or COP21 in Paris.

- It is an alliance of over 121 countries.
- At present 73 countries have signed and ratified the ISA Framework Agreement.

India Ranked 139 out of 149 in UN World Happiness Report 2021, Finland Tops

India with a score of 3.819 has been ranked 139 out of 149 countries in the ‘World Happiness Report 2021’ an publication of United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. The rankings were topped by Finland (tops for the 4th time).



- This is the **9th World Happiness Report** and is based on surveys conducted during the time period of **2018-20**.
- It ranks the world’s 149 countries on “**how happy their citizens perceive themselves to be**”.
- The results of the report based on the Gallup World Poll.
- The least happy countries were Afghanistan (149), Zimbabwe (148) & Rwanda (147).
- Apart from Afghanistan (149), all neighbouring countries ranked higher than India.

Ranking Based on Past 3 Years(2018-2020):

Country	Ranking	Points
India	139	3.819
Finland	1	7.842
Denmark	2	7.620
Switzerland	3	7.571

Maggie O’Farrell’s ‘Hamnet’ won the NBCC award for fiction

Irish-British novelist, **Maggie O’Farrell**’s novel ‘**Hamnet**’, an imagined take on the death of Shakespeare’s son from the bubonic plague, has won the National Book Critics Circle(NBCC)’s award 2020 for the fiction category.

Every year at March National Book Critics Circle awards are given to honour literature published in the **United States** in six categories—autobiography, biography, criticism, fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.

- About ‘Hamnet’ – This novel explores the impact of Shakespeare’s son, Hamnet’s illness and death on his family
- The novel has also won the United Kingdom’s Women’s Prize for Fiction

NBCC Awards 2020 for Other categories':

- Non-fiction – Tom Zoellner’s “Island on Fire: The Revolt That Ended Slavery in the British Empire”
- Biography – Amy Stanley’s “Stranger in the Shogun’s City: A Japanese Woman and Her World”
- Autobiography – Cathy Park Hong’s “Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning”
- Poetry – Francine j. Harris’s “Here Is the Sweet Hand”
- Criticism – Nicole R. Fleetwood’s “Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration”

About National Book Critics Circle(NBCC):

Establishment – April 1974

Organization Location -New York, United States

President – David Varno

Overview of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s 2-day visit to Bangladesh

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Bangladesh from March 26-27, 2021 at the invitation of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. During the meeting, PM Narendra Modi participated in major events such as



- Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Independence of Bangladesh. PM Modi was the **Guest of Honour** at the event.
- ‘Mujib Barsho’ – Celebrations of Birth Centenary of the Father of Bangladesh – Bangabandhu ‘Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’.
- Event for celebrating 50 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India & Bangladesh.

Key Events

- India conferred Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020 on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
- The leaders launched a new passenger train ‘**Mitali Express**’ connecting Dhaka- New Jalpaiguri (West Bengal).
- PM Narendra Modi reiterated India’s commitment and efforts to conclude the **Teesta Water-Sharing pact**.
- It was decided to commemorate 6th December every year as Maitri Diwas.

Defence

France Conducts “AsterX” its 1st Military Exercise in Space

France started its 5-day long Military Exercise in Space to analyse its ability against attacks on its Satellites & other defence equipment. The exercise was codenamed as “AsterX”, on the memory of its 1st satellite launched in 1965. Alongside the French Space Forces Command, the new US Space Force and German space agencies also participated in the space exercise.



- i.”AsterX” is the 1st Space Military Exercise of France & also the 1st among European Countries.
- ii.The exercise consists of 18 simulated events that are conducted from an operations room.

About France:

President – Emmanuel Macron

Capital – Paris

Indo-French Military Exercise – “Shakti”

Indo-French Air Exercise – “Desert Knight”

Indo-French Naval Exercise – “Varuna”

IAF to participate in Multinational Air Exercise ‘Desert Flag VI’ in UAE for the 1st time

For the First Time, Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in the Annual Multinational Large force employment warfare exercise ‘Desert Flag VI’ held at the Al-Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates. The exercise is hosted by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Air Force from March 3-27, 2021.

- It is the 1st time that IAF is participating in a multilateral exercise in the Gulf Region.
- **Participating Countries** – Bahrain, France, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and USA.
- **Observers** – Greece, Jordan, Kuwait & Egypt.

Objective of the Exercise

- To provide operational exposure to Participating forces
- Training the forces to undertake Simulated Air Combat operations in a controlled environment.

About Indian Air Force (IAF):

Chief of the Air Staff – Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria

Headquarters – New Delhi

INS Karanj, India's 3rd Scorpene Class Submarine Commissioned at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai

The Indian Naval Ship (INS) **Karanj**, India's 3rd **Scorpene class** submarine was commissioned into the India Navy at the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, Maharashtra. The Ship was commissioned in the presence of Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh and Navy Chief Admiral (Retired) VS Shekhawat, the commanding officer of earlier INS Karanj (1971 Indo Pak War).



- The INS Karanj, a class of diesel-electric attack submarines designed by the Naval Group of France, was constructed at the **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited** under the Make in Indian Program.

Additional Info:

i. A total of 6 Scorpene submarines are built under **Project 75**, The Indian Navy has previously inducted 2 scorpene Class submarines namely, **INS Kalvari** (December 2017) and **INS Khanderi** (September 2019) from the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.

ii. The trials of **Vela** (May 2019) and **Vagir** (November 2020) are underway and the construction of the 6th submarine **Vagsheer** is in progress.

Indian Navy Deploys Women Officers On Warship After 23 Years

On 8th March 2021, International Women's Day, For the first time in 23 years since 1998, the Indian Navy has deployed 4 women officers onboard its warships. 2 of the 4 officers were posted on the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya and the other 2 were deployed on the tanker ship INS Shakti.

- The women officers were first posted on the maritime force vessels in 1998 and the decision was reversed due to logistical and other reasons.
- Recently Indian Navy has posted Lieutenant Commander Karabi Gogoi as the first women defence attache abroad in Moscow, Russia.

India commissions 'INS Dhruv' Nuclear Missile Tracking Vessel; Becomes 5th Country in the World

India commissioned its Ocean Surveillance & Nuclear Missile Tracking Vessel called '**INS Dhruv**' (codenamed as **VC 11184**), with this it became the 5th Country after USA, France, Russia & China to possess such a Tracking vessel. It was constructed at **Hindustan Shipyard Ltd, Visakhapatnam** under the Make in India initiative at an ~ cost of INR 725 Crore.



- It is one of the Largest Warships to be built at an Indian Yard.
- It was originally commissioned into the Indian Navy in a secret manner in October 2020.

Developed by

- Joint Crew of National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO), the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Navy.
- It will also be operated by NTRO, DRDO and the Indian Navy.

About the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO):

Chief – Anil Dhasmana

Head Office – New Delhi

Established – 2004

Pakistan test-fires Nuclear-capable Ballistic Missile ‘Shaheen-1A’

Pakistan conducted a successful flight test of ‘Shaheen 1-A’ (Hatf IV) a Nuclear capable Surface-to-Surface ballistic missile. It has a range of 900 Kilometres.

- The test was aimed at re-validating various design and technical parameters of the weapon system including the Advanced Navigation System.
- The missile is jointly designed and developed by the Joint venture of **NESCOM** (National Engineering & Scientific Commission) & the National Defence Complex (**NDC**).

Fact

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) report, Pakistan was ranked 10th in the Global list of Major importers during the period 2016-20.

India & US Navies conduct ‘PASSEX’ in Bay of Bengal

The navies of India & United States conducted a 2-day Passage Exercise ‘PASSEX’ in Bay of Bengal (Eastern Indian Ocean Region) from March 28-29, 2021. For the 1st time, Indian Air Force (IAF) fighters also took part in the exercise.



- Indian Navy deployed its warship ‘**Shivalik**’ & Long-range maritime patrol aircraft **P8I** in the ‘PASSEX’ exercise. The US navy was represented by USS Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group.
- The participation of Indian Air Force (IAF) fighters in the exercise, gave IAF an opportunity to practice air interception & air defence with the US Navy.

Indian Navy to participate in French Naval Exercise for 1st time

- Indian Navy is set to be part of the French Naval Exercise ‘**La Perouse**’ scheduled to take place in April, 2021 at Bay of Bengal. It is the **1st time** that Indian Navy will be participating in the French naval exercise.
- Other participating countries include Australia, Japan and the USA (which are QUAD member countries).

Appointments or Resign/Retired

Jaideep Bhatnagar Appointed as the Principal DG of PIB; takes over from Kuldeep Singh Dhatwalia

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting appointed **Jaideep Bhatnagar**, 1986-batch Indian Information Service (IIS) officer as the Principal Director General(DG) of Press Information Bureau(PIB).



- On **1st March 2021**, he took over as the Principal DG from the incumbent **Kuldeep Sing Dhatwalia**, who superannuated on 28th February 2021.
- He has been serving as the Director General, News Services Division of All India Radio(AIR) since August 2020.

About Jaideep Bhatnagar:

- Jaideep Bhatnagar has served in the Prasar Bharati as West Asia Correspondent.
- He has also served as the Head of the Commercial, Sales and Marketing Division in Doordarshan.
- He has served at various capacities in PIB for around 6 years.

Mary Kom Appointed as Chairperson of AIBA Champion & Veterans Committee

On 1st March 2021, the International Boxing Association(AIBA) has appointed 6-time Boxing World Champion **Mary Kom** (37 years old) as the new **chairperson** of the **AIBA Champion and Veterans Committee**. She was elected by the mail vote of the Board Member of AIBA.

Olympic medalist **Michael Philip Carruth** of **Ireland** was appointed as the Vice Chairperson of the committee by the board of directors.



- The AIBA Champion and Veterans Committee was formed in December 2020.
- It consists of boxing veterans across the globe and champions who have achieved significant results.

About Mary Kom:

- Chungneijang Mary Kom Hmangte (**Mary Kom**) became the **first Indian Female athlete** to win the gold medal in the 2018 Commonwealth games and 2014 Asian Games.
- She won the Bronze medal at the London Olympic Games held in 2012.
From 2001 to 2019, she has won 6 gold, silver and bronze medals at the 8 AIBA World Boxing championships.
- She was the only female pugilist (professional boxer) to become the world champion for 6 times and to win a medal in each of the 7 world championships.

Honours:

- In 2016, the President of India (Pranab Mukherjee) nominated Mary Kom as a member of the **Rajya Sabha**, the upper house of the Indian parliament.
- The government of Manipur honoured her with the title "**Meethoi Leima**".

About AIBA:

President– Umar Kremlev

Headquarters– Lausanne, Switzerland

Ajai Malhotra Became the 1st Indian Chairperson of the Advisory Committee of UNHRC

Ajai Malhotra has become the **first Indian** to be elected as the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). His **3-year** term on the committee will expire on **30th September 2023**.

The Advisory Committee is a body of **18 independent experts** serving as a think-tank to the United Nations Human Rights Council.



- Ajai Malhotra was a member of Indian Foreign Service from 1977 till his retirement as an Ambassador of India to Russian Federation on 30th November 2013.
- He has served as the Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York from 2005 to 2009.

Tirath Singh Rawat Sworn in as the New CM of Uttarakhand; Trivendra Singh Rawat resigned as CM

Tirath Singh Rawat, Members of Parliament (Lok Sabha), was sworn in as the **9th** Chief Minister (CM) of Uttarakhand following the resignation of **Trivendra Singh Rawat** on 9th March 2021 following the unease over his governance. Tirath Singh Rawat's term as the CM will end before the assembly polls in March or April 2022.

i. Tirath Singh Rawat was elected as the New CM at the meeting of the legislature party held on 10th March 2021.

Thomas Bach Re-elected as President of IOC until 2025

The Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) re-elected **Thomas Bach** for an additional term of **4 years** as the **President** of IOC until **2025**.

His current term as the President of IOC will finish on the closing day of the Tokyo Olympic Games on **8th August 2021** and his second term as the President will start on 9th August 2021 and will conclude in **2025**.



- He was the only candidate of the IOC presidential election which was held during the 137th IOC session held in Athens.
- At the 2013 IOC session held in Buenos Aires, Tomas Bach former olympian and a fencing champion was first elected as the president of IOC for a term of 8 years.

About Thomas Bach:

i. Thomas Bach of Germany won the team gold medal at the 1976 Summer Olympics held in Montreal, Canada.

ii. He was born on 29 December 1953 in Würzburg, Germany.

2020 Tokyo Olympic Games:

- i. 2020 Summer Olympics also known as Tokyo 2020 are set to take place from July 23-August 8, 2021 in Tokyo, Japan.
- ii. Originally it was scheduled to take place from 24 July to 9 August 2020, the event was postponed in March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

GP Samanta Appointed As The New CSI For A Term Of 2 Years

GP Samanta, an advisor in the Department of Statistics and information management(**DSIM**), Reserve Bank of India(**RBI**) was appointed as the **4th Chief Statistician of India(CSI)** for a term of **2 years**. Samanta replaces **Dr. Kshatrapati Shivaji**, a 1986 batch IAS officer who has been the CSI since September 2020.

- The CSI will also hold the post of the Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation(**MoSPI**).
- In addition to the function of Secretary of MoSPI, the CSI will also be the head of the National Statistical Organisation and Secretary of the National Statistical Commission.
- The new chief statistician will also be in charge of formulating the National Policy on Official Statistics which is under preparation.

Responsibilities of CSI:

- i. Preparation of vital economic data like national accounts that encompass gross domestic product along with macroeconomic indicators like industrial production, retail inflation and the employment-unemployment numbers through the Periodic Labour Force Survey.
- ii. The Annual Survey of Industries, Economic Census, Consumer Expenditure Survey and other surveys on agricultural households are also under the domain of CSI.

About GP Samanta:

- i. In August 2010, RBI felicitated GP Samanta with **Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis award** for the year **2006** for her contribution to quantitative economics. The award was instituted by the **Indian Econometric Society**.
- ii. The research interests of GP Samanta include inflation and monetary policy issues, economic modelling, forecasting, derivatives and risk management, financial risk modelling etc.

World Bank Economist Deepak Mishra Appointed as Director & Chief Executive of ICRIER

Deepak Mishra the lead Economist and Practice Manager at the World Bank was appointed as the new **Director and Chief Executive** of the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations(**ICRIER**), the economic think Tank of India.

Deepak Mishra will take over as the Director and Chief Executive from **Rajat**

Kathuria, who has been serving as the Director and Chief Executive of ICRIER since 1st September 2012.



About Deepak Mishra:

- i. Deepak Mishra a native of Odisha has served as the World Bank's Country economists of India based in Delhi from 2001 to 2004.
- ii. He has worked closely with the government of India and also with other states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Punjab.
- iii. Prior to his appointment in the World Bank, he has worked at Tata Motors, Federal Reserve Bank and University of Maryland.
- iv. He has published various research, the journal of international economic national sessions.

About Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations(ICRIER):

Chairman– Pramod Bhasin

Headquarters– New Delhi

ACC Appoints MA Ganapathy IPS as DG of NSG & Kuldiep Singh as DG of CRPF

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the appointment of **M. A. Ganapathy**, as the Director-General(DG) of National Security Guard(NSG). **Kuldiep Singh** has been appointed as the **DG of Central Reserve Police Force(CRPF)**.

- M. A. Ganapathy Succeeds Outgoing DG, S S Deswal. Kuldiep Singh Succeeds AP Maheshwari.

Appointment of M.A.Ganapathy:

- i. He was the 1986 batch Indian Police Service(IPS) officer of the Uttarakhand Cadre.
- ii. He was serving as the DG of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security(BCAS).
- iii. He will be serving as DG of NSG from the date of joining to **29th February 2024**, the date of his superannuation or till further orders.
- iv. Indo Tibetan Border Police(ITBP) Director-General S S Deswal has held the additional charges as the DG of NSG since the superannuation of A K Singh, DG of NSG on 30th September 2020.
- v. Prior to S S Deswal, Anup Kumar Singh served as the Director General of NSG. Anup Kumar Singh succeeds Sudeep Lakhtakia.

Appointment of Kuldiep Singh:

- i. Kuldiep Singh, 1986 batch IPS officer of West Bengal cadre has been appointed as the DG of Central Reserve Police Force(CRPF).
- ii. He was serving as the Special DG of CRPF, with additional charge as the DG of CRPF since the superannuation of Dr AP Maheshwari IPS, DG of CRPF on 28th February 2021.
- iii. He will be serving as the DG of CRPF from the date of joining to 30th September 2022, the date of his superannuation or until further orders,

Saurabh Garg Appointed as CEO of UIDAI; Sanjeev Kumar Appointed as Chairman of AAI

On 25th March 2021, as a part of the Bureaucratic reshuffle, the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment of **Saurabh Garg**, as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). **Sanjeev Kumar** appointed as Chairman of Airports Authority of India (AAI).

**Saurabh Garg Appointed as CEO of UIDAI**

- He succeeds **Ajay Bhushan Pandey** as the CEO of UIDAI.
- Saurabh Garg, 1991 batch IAS officer from Odisha cadre was serving in his cadre state Odisha.
- He has been appointed in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.

Sanjeev Kumar Appointed as Chairman of AAI

Sanjeev Kumar, a 1991 batch IAS officer of Maharashtra cadre was appointed as the Chairman of Airports Authority of India (AAI).

- He is appointed in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.
- He has taken up the position which was served by Anuj Aggarwal as the Interim Chairman. Before Anuj Agarwal appointment, **Arvind Singh** served as the Chairman of AAI.

Other appointments:

Atish Chandra, a 1994 batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre, the joint secretary of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.

Govt Extended the Term of K. VijayRaghavan as PSA for One Year Till April 2022

On March 25, 2021, The official order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training stated that the government has extended the term of **K. VijayRaghavan** as Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) for one more year.

- K. VijayRaghavan, 67, was appointed as PSA in 2018, after retiring as Secretary, Department of Biotechnology. His contract ends on April 2 but has now been extended until April 2022.
- He was conferred with the **Padma Shri** award in 2013.

About The office of Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA):

- **Establishment:** The office of the PSA to the Government of India was established in November 1999 by the cabinet secretariat.
- **Aim:** The office aims to provide pragmatic and objective advice to the prime minister and cabinet on matters related to science, technology and innovation with a focus on the application of science and technology in critical infrastructure, economic and social sectors in partnership with the government departments, institutions and industry.

Honours/ Awards

Mukesh Ambani becomes 8th Richest in the World, Elon Musk tops the list: Hurun Global Rich List 2021

According to Hurun Global Rich List 2021, Chairman of Reliance Industries (RIL), Mukesh Ambani with a wealth of USD 83 Billion (~ INR 6 Lakh Crore) became the 8th Richest Person in the World. The List was topped by **Elon Musk** (CEO of Tesla), Jeff Bezos (CEO of Amazon) & Bernard Arnault (CEO of LVMH-Louis Vuitton).



- In the Hurun Global Rich List 2020, Mukesh Ambani was ranked 9th.
- Hurun Global Rich List 2021 is the 10th Year of ranking. It ranked 3, 228 Billionaires from 2, 402 companies & 68 countries.
- Elon Musk took the number 1 spot for the 1st time and at the age of 49 years is the youngest to take the No.1 spot.

Youngest Indians

- Apoorva Mehta of Instacard & Nikhil Kamath of Zerodha (both 34 years) became the youngest Indian Billionaires with a net worth of USD 1.7 Billion.

India climbs to 3rd spot

India Climbed to 3rd Spot in the Hurun Global Rich List 2021 with 209 Billionaires (out of which 177 live in India, 32 Indian Origin). China came 1st followed by the USA.

ASIA

Zhong Shanshan (Founder of Chinese Bottle Water Maker – Nongfu Spring) with USD 85 Billion became Asia's Richest person, followed by Mukesh Ambani.

About Hurun Report:

Chairman and Chief Researcher – Rupert Hoogewerf (Hu Run)

Headquarters – Shanghai, China

5 Indian-Origin personalities & 1 Indian Activist feature in TIME Magazine's Annual List of 100

5 Indian-origin personalities & 1 Indian Activist have been featured in the 2021 TIME100 Next (TIME Magazine's 100 emerging leaders list). The 5 Indian origin personalities are Vijaya Gadde (Chief Legal Officer of Twitter), Rishi Sunak (Britain's Finance Minister), Apoorva Mehta (Founder & CEO of Instacart), Shikha Gupta (Executive Director of Nonprofit 'Get Us PPE') & Rohan Pavuluri (Founder of Nonprofit 'Upsolve'). Bhim Army Chief Chandra Shekhar Azad is the sole Indian activist who has been named in the list.



Overview of 78th Golden Globes Awards 2021 held from Los Angeles and New York City

- i. The **78th Golden Globes Awards 2021** took place in a Hybrid Format on 28th February 2021. It was the first bi-coastal ceremony, filmed from Los Angeles and New York City, United States of America(USA) hosted by **Amy Poehler** from Beverly Hills, Los Angeles and **Tina Fey** from New York's Rainbow Room.
- ii. The 78th Golden Globes was produced by **Dick Clark productions** in association with the **Hollywood Foreign Press Association(HFPA)**.
- iii. **2021 Golden Globe Ambassadors: Satchel Lee** and **Jackson Lee**, children of filmmakers and three-time Golden Globe Nominee Spike Lee and his wife Tonya Lewis Lee, philanthropist.
- iv. **Nomadland** by Chinese Female director **Chloé Zhao** won the Best Pictures Drama and **Chloé Zhao** won the Best Director Motion Picture. Chloe Zhao became the **first Asian woman** and only the **2nd woman** to win the best director award after **Barbra Streisand** who won the award for "Yentl." in **1984**.
- v. **The Crown**, a television series, has the highest nominations for any tele series and it has won in 4 categories (Best Drama Series, Best Television Actress, Best Television Actor, Best Supporting Actress).

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2021

The Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival (DPIFF) Awards 2021 were announced. DPIFF was introduced to commemorate the Father of Indian Cinema Dadasaheb Phalke. DPIFF In-House Partners are We Work, Silly Monks, Spanrig, OY Event, North India Fashion Week, Krishna Kunj Productions. Late Actor Sushant Singh Rajput was awarded the 'Critics Best Actor' award for his performance in the movie 'Dil Bechara'. The full list of awards can be accessed here.



Tamilisai Soundararajan Honoured with the Top 20 Global Women of Excellence Award – 2021

A Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry, **Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan** was conferred with the **Top 20 Global Women of Excellence award – 2021** through video conference from USA. The award was presented by the USA on the recommendation of a Multi Ethnic Advisory Task Force, **headed by US Congressman Danny K. Davis**.

Note- Vice President of the USA **Kamala Harris**, was also one among the recipients in the 9th Edition of Top 20 Global Women of Excellence award.

i. **Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan** holds the portfolio of **Governor of Telangana & Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry** (Currently under President Rule).

ii. **Governors of States are appointed** based on the provision of **Article 153**.

About Puducherry:

Total Lok Sabha Seats – 1

Total Legislative Assembly Seats – 33

Chess Player Koneru Humpy Won 2nd Edition of BBC ISWOTY 2020

Padma Shri **Koneru Humpy**, a 33-year-old chess player from Andhra Pradesh(AP) won the 2nd edition of the **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the year (BBC ISWOTY) 2020**. The award was given based on the public vote in which Koneru Humpy won against sprinter Dutee Chand, airgun shooter Manu Bhaker, wrestler Vinesh Phogat, and hockey captain Rani Rampal.



- **Tim Davie**, the director-general of BBC who hosted the virtual award ceremony announced the winners of the award.

Other Awards:

i. Lifetime Achievement Award – received by Anju Bobby George, the only Indian athlete to have won a world championship medal in the long jump in 2003.

ii. Emerging Player of the Year award – received by Olympian **Manu Bhaker**, an airgun shooter. This award category was newly added and it was announced by English Cricketer Ben Stokes.

About Koneru Humpy:

i. Koneru Humpy became the youngest female grandmaster in 2002 at the age of 15, the record was broken by Hou Yifan of China in 2008.

ii. She won the World Rapid Chess Championship title in December 2019.

iii. She won the 2020 Cairns Cup, the elite level tournament for female players.

Awards:

i. She was honored with the Arjuna Award in 2003.

ii. She received the 4th Highest civilian award the **Padma Shri** in 2007 for sports.

About BBC Indian Sportswoman of the year:

BBC Indian Sportswoman of the year was launched in 2019 to celebrate the achievements of women and girls in sports and highlight the issues and difficulties faced by them in India.

PV Sindhu, Badminton Player, won the inaugural BBC Indian Sportswoman of the year award 2019.

Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou wins 2020 Ibrahim Prize

Niger's President **Mahamadou Issoufou** has won the **2020 Ibrahim Prize** (\$5 million award) for Achievement in African Leadership, who is the sixth recipient.

- The prize was introduced by Sudanese billionaire **Mo Ibrahim's foundation** in 2006, which is awarded on criteria of good governance, democratic election and respect of terms limits.

Odisha Forest Officer, Sasmita Lenka, Became First Indian to Receive UN's 2020 Asia Environmental Enforcement Award



Sasmita Lenka, Divisional Forest Officer, Athagarh Forest Division, Odisha received the United Nations's 2020 Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards under the category Impact and Gender Leadership. She became the **first Indian** to receive the award.

The 2020 theme of the **5th** edition Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards “**Fighting Transboundary Environmental Crimes**”.

- **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau of India** won the award under **Innovation** category for initiating the operation WILDNET-II to deter traders and to bring offenders to justice.
- The awards recognises the excellence in enforcement by government officials and institutions or teams combating transboundary environmental crime.
- The award was presented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in partnership with UNDP, UNDOC, the secretariat of CITES, INTERPOL and World Customs Organization.

63rd Annual GRAMMY Awards (2020): Taylor Swift, Billie Eilish Received Top Honours

i. On 14th March 2021, The 2021 GRAMMY Awards officially known as the **63rd Annual GRAMMY Award (2020)** was presented over the hybrid ceremony. The award recognised the recordings released between 1st September 2019 and 31st August 2020. **Trevor Noah**, an award-winning comedian from South Africa hosted the 63rd Annual Grammy Awards from Staples Center in downtown Los Angeles, United States.

ii. The awards were presented under 83 categories and the 63rd Grammy Awards for Best Immersive Audio Album will be announced next year in addition to the 64th Grammy nominations.

iii. American Singer and Songwriter **Taylor Swift** won the award for the Best Album of the year for her album “**Folklore**”.

iv. American pop star, **Billie Eilish O’Connell** won the record of the year award for her song “**Everything I Wanted**”.

v. **Beyonce** won 4 awards and broke the record of most ever Grammy wins by female artists with 28 Grammys.

About Grammy Awards:

The Grammy Awards are presented by the **Recording Academy** since **1958**.

The award recognises and celebrates excellence in the music community.

Amitabh Bachchan Honoured with FIAF Award 2021



i. Indian Actor **Amitabh Bachchan** received the **FIAF Award 2021** by the International Federation of Film Archives (**French: Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film, FIAF**), an international organization of film archives and museums across the globe over a virtual award ceremony hosted from Mumbai, Maharashtra.

ii. The award was bestowed upon him by former FIAF Award recipients and filmmakers **Martin Scorsese** and **Christopher Nolan**.

iii. Amitabh became the **first Indian** to receive this award.

iv. The FIAF Award was introduced in 2001 and the inaugural award was presented to American Martin Scorsese.

About FIAF:

President– Frédéric Maire

Secretary-General– Michael Loebenstein

Headquarters– Brussels, Belgium

Govt conferred Gandhi Peace Prize 2020 to Sheikh Mujibur Rehman and for 2019 to Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said

The Union government conferred Gandhi Peace Prize to the Late Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of **Oman** for the year 2019 and to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, for the year 2020.

- The Jury of Gandhi Peace Prize is chaired by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi

Key points:

- Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said, the visionary leader of Oman who died in January 2020 was conferred with the **Gandhi peace prize 2019** for recognizing his outstanding contributions for social, economic and political transformation through non-violent and other Gandhian methods
- Sheikh Mujibur Rahman the “Father of the Nation” of Bangladesh conferred with **Gandhi peace prize 2020** for recognizing his fraternal relations between India and Bangladesh and, promoting peace and non-violence in the Indian subcontinent.

About Gandhi Peace Prize:

- The Government of India (GoI) launched the International Gandhi Peace Prize in 1995 on the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Gandhi.
- The award is open to all people regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex.
- The award carries an amount of Rs 1 crore, a citation, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/ handloom item.

Overview of 67th National Film Awards for the year 2019

On March 22, 2021, the **67th edition** of annual National Film Awards was announced, it bestows honours on films and artists for the year 2019.

The National Film Awards are given out by the **Directorate of Film Festivals**, an organisation which comes under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.



i. The awards are categorised in **three sections** –

- Feature Films,
- Non-Feature Films &
- Best Writing on Cinema.

ii. The awards were announced by Jury heads – N. Chandra, Chairman, Central Panel, Shri Arun Chaddha, Chairman, Non Feature Films Jury, Shaji N Karun, Chairman, Most Film Friendly State Jury & Saibal Chatterjee, Chairman Best Writing on Cinema Jury.

iii. Feature and Non-Feature Films certified by **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)** between 1 January 2019, and 31 December 2019, were eligible for the film award categories.

Notable Awards



- Best Non-Feature Film – An Engineered Dream (Hindi Film)
- Best Feature Film – Marakkar-Arabi Kadalinte-Simham (Malayalam)
- Best Children’s Film award – Kastoori (Hindi)
- Best Arts and Culture Film – Shrikshetra-Ru-Sahijata (Odia)
- Most Film Friendly State – Sikkim (Medal – Rajat Kamal)
- Best Cinematography – Gireesh Gangadharan for Malayalam film Jallikattu

About Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC):

Chairperson – Prasoon Joshi

Head Office – Mumbai, Maharashtra

HDFC Bank has adjudged the ‘India’s Best Bank for SMEs’ at the Asiamoney Best Bank Awards 2021

On March 25, 2021, HDFC Bank, was adjudged the ‘India’s Best Bank for Small and Medium Enterprises(SMEs)’ at the **Asiamoney Best Bank Awards 2021** of Asiamoney for the transformation of its Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) business.

HDFC Bank’s Contribution towards MSMEs:

- HDFC's advances to MSMEs as of December 31, 2020, is about **Rs2.02 trillion** (\$28 billion) which is **38%** higher than in 2019.
- It has a compound annual growth rate of **23%** for the past six years, making it India's second-largest bank for MSME lending.
- The bank's MSME-related non-performing asset (NPA) ratio was **0.7%** in December 2020, which is down from 1.33% in March 2020 and 1.16% in March 2019.
- Asiamoney Best Bank Awards 2021 is awarded by Asiamoney to identify banks that have excelled across a range of core banking activities over the past 12 months in India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Uzbekistan.

Hindi Writer Prof. Sharad Pagare Honoured with Vyas Samman 2020

i. Established Hindi writer **Professor Sharad Pagare** from Madhya Pradesh has been chosen as the recipient of the prestigious **Vyas Samman 2020** for his historic novel titled "**Patliputru ki Samragi**".

ii. The 2020 Vyas Samman is the 30th Vyas Samman presented by KK Birla Foundation.

iii. The novel – "Patliputru ki Samragi" was printed in the year 2010.



About Vyas Samman:

Vyas Samman is an annual award initiated by the KK Birla Foundation in 1991.

The award honours the outstanding work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen published during the past 10 years.

The award consists of Rs.4 lakh cash award along with citation and a plaque.

Mahinder Giri, Range Officer of RTR Became the Only Asian to Win International Ranger Award

i. Ranger **Mahindra Giri** of Rajaji Tiger Reserve (**RTR**) became the only ranger from Asia to win the prestigious New **International Ranger Award** for his efforts towards reducing the human-wildlife conflict in and around the RTR and his role in trigger translocation exercise from Corbett Tiger Reserve to RTR.

ii. The award was announced for **10 professionals** across the globe by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (**IUCN**) and World Commission on Protected Areas (**WCPA**).

iii. The International Ranger Award was created by IUCN and WCPA in collaboration with International Ranger Federation, Global Wildlife Conservation and Conservation allies in 2020.

About International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN):

Director General– Dr Bruno Oberle

Headquarter– Gland, Switzerland

Dr. Vivek Murthy, Indian American Physician sworn in as US Surgeon General

Indian American Physician, **Dr. Vivek Murthy**, (43 years old) sworn in as the **21st Surgeon General** of the United States of America. This is his 2nd time as Surgeon General of the US. Previously In 2013, nominated by Former President Obama he held the position as the **19th** Surgeon General. He was the **youngest** ever to hold the office at the age of 37.



- He was sworn in by Xavier Becerra, Secretary of Health and Human Service.
- As the surgeon general he will be advising President Biden on the COVID-19 pandemic and the government's leading voice on public health.



Sports

Wrestling: Vinesh Phogat wins Gold Medal at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers & Coaches Memorial Tournament

Indian Wrestler Vinesh Phogat won the Gold Medal in the **Women's 53 Kg Category** of XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial Tournament held at Kyiv (also known as Kiev), Ukraine. She defeated Vanesa Kaladzinskaya of Belarus in the Final.



- The Event was held from February 26-28, 2021 and was organized by United World Wrestling.
- Vinesh Phogat has already qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics (to be held in July, 2021) after winning Bronze at the 2019 World Championships.
- She is the only Indian Woman Wrestler to have qualified for the Tokyo Games.

About United World Wrestling:

President – Nenad Lalovic

Headquarters – Corsier-sur-Vevey, outside of Lausanne, Switzerland

Odisha to host 2021 edition of Hero Indian Women's League Football

On 28th February, 2021 the All India Football Federation (AIFF) has announced that the 2020-21 edition of Hero Indian Women's League Football tournament will be hosted by Odisha state. The event was postponed in 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic. Exact dates of the event are not yet finalised.

Note: India will host 2 International Women's Football events in 2022.

- Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Women's Asian Cup – 2022
- FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup – 2022

i. To regain the On-field sporting, Indian Senior team has undergone a 2-month long training camp starting from December 1, at Goa.

ii. 3 International Matches were played against Serbia, Russia & Ukraine at Turkey.

Indian shuttlers Varun Kapur & Malvika Bansod wins 2021 Uganda International titles

On 28th February 2021, Indian Shuttlers Varun Kapur & Malvika Bansod won the 2021's Uganda International Badminton's Men's & Women's Singles Titles that was held from 25th to 28th of February, 2021, at Lugogo Indoor Stadium, Kampala, Uganda.

i. The 4-day long tournament was scheduled in February with a prize amount of USD 10,000.



ii. In Finals of the Men's Singles Category, Varun Kapur defeated Sankar Muthusamy. In finals of Women's Singles category, Malvika Bansod defeated Anupama Upadhyaya.

About Badminton Association of India:

President – Himanta Biswa Sarma

Founded – 1940

About Badminton World Federation (BWF):

It's the Governing body of Badminton recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Founded – 1934

Headquarters – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

President – Poul-Erik Høyer Larsen

Pollard becomes third batsman to hit six 6s in an over in international cricket

West Indies limited-overs format skipper Kieron Pollard became the third batsman in the history of international cricket after Herschelle Gibbs (South Africa) and Yuvraj Singh (India) to hit six 6s in an over. He achieved the feat in the first T20I of the three-match series against Sri Lanka here at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua.

VIVO regains IPL Title Sponsorship

Chinese smartphone maker, **VIVO**, regained its **Title Sponsorship in 2021's edition of Indian Premier League (IPL)**. Previously, in **2018 VIVO** acquired the **title sponsorship of IPL for 5 years at a cost of Rs. 2,199 crores**, ie; 440 crores per year. Due to the backlash of Chinese products in 2020, VIVO took a temporary break from the IPL's title sponsorship, which was acquired by **Dream11 at 50% cost of Rs. 222 crores for 2020 edition**.

Boxing: India bags 10 Medals at 35th Boxam International Tournament 2021

India's 14-member Boxing Contingent bagged 10 Medals (1 Gold, 8 Silver, 1 Bronze) at the 35th Edition of the 2021 'Boxam' Elite International Tournament held at **Castellon de la Plana, Spain**. The event took place from March 1-7, 2021.

- Around 127 boxers from 4 Confederations & 17 countries participated in the event.
- It is hosted by the **Spanish Boxing Federation**.
- Manish Kaushik clinched the Gold Medal in the men's 63 Kg category.
- Six-time World Champion MC Mary Kom (51Kg) clinched the Bronze Medal in the women's 51 Kg category boxing.



Winner	Category	Medal
Manish Kaushik	Men's 63 Kg	Gold Medal

Badminton: PV Sindhu clinches Silver Medal at YONEX Swiss Open 2021

Indian Shuttler PV Sindhu clinched the Silver Medal in the 2021 Swiss Open Super 300 (Officially known as Yonex Swiss Open 2021) after she was defeated in the final by Spain's **Carolina Marin**. The tournament took place at St. Jakobshalle in Basel, Switzerland, from March 2-7, 2021.

Swiss Open

- The 2021 Swiss Open was the 1st tournament of the 2021 BWF (Badminton World Federation) World Tour.
- It is organized by Swiss Badminton & sanctioned by the BWF.

Winners

- Men's Singles – Viktor Axelsen (Denmark)

Cricket: India retains Anthony de Mello Trophy by Defeating England in 2020-21 Test Series

The Indian Cricket Team defeated England in the 4th Test Match held at Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, Gujarat to win the Match & consequently the 2020-21 Test series by 3-1. With the win, India has yet again retained the **Anthony de Mello Trophy**.



- **Player of the Series** – Ravichandran Ashwin
- The Anthony de Mello Trophy is awarded to the winner of the England-India Test Cricket series held in India. The trophy was already with the Indian Team as they had won the Test Series held in 2016-17.
- Having won the series, India has now qualified for the World Test Championship finals to be held at Southampton's Ageas Bowl Stadium, UK (shifted from Lord's Cricket Ground due to Pandemic) from June 18-22, 2021. India will play New Zealand in the finals.

Narendra Modi Stadium – World's Largest Cricket Stadium

The World's Largest Cricket Stadium at Motera, Ahmedabad, Gujarat was renamed Narendra Modi Stadium (the previous name was Sardar Patel Cricket Stadium) and was inaugurated by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind. It is owned by the Gujarat Cricket Association.

**Records & Highlights****Ishant Sharma**

- Became the 6th Indian to take 300 wickets in Tests
- Became the 2nd Indian Fast Bowler to play 100 Tests

Ashwin, Beaumont Win ICC Player of Month Awards for February

International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced India's Ravichandran Ashwin as the ICC men's player of the month (February) and England's Tammy Beaumont as the ICC Women's Player of the Month for February 2021.

Wrestling: India bags 8 Medals at Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series 2021 held in Rome, Italy

The 14-member Indian Wrestling Contingent bagged 8 medals (2 Gold, 1 Silver, 5 Bronze) at the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series 2021 held at Rome, Italy from March 4-7, 2021. The series was conducted for the categories of Freestyle, Greco-Roman & Women Wrestling.

- Around 26 Countries participated in the Tournament which was organized by the United World Wrestling (UWW).

Winner	Category	Medal
Bajrang Punia	Men's 65 Kg (Freestyle)	Gold
Vinesh Phogat	Women's 53 Kg	Gold

Bhavani Devi becomes 1st Indian Fencer to qualify for 2020 Tokyo Olympics

Chadalavada Anandha Bhavani Devi who hails from **Tamil Nadu** became the 1st ever Indian Fencer to qualify for an Olympics. She was assured of qualification for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics after Hungary lost to South Korea in the Quarter-finals of Team event of 2021 Fencing Sabre World Cup being held at Budapest, Hungary.



- Bhavani Devi will be a part of the **women's individual sabre** event at Tokyo 2020 & She qualified through the **Adjusted Official Ranking (AOR)** Method.
- 2 Individual spots were available for grabs for the Asia-Oceania region based on World Rankings as of April 5, 2021. She is **ranked 45th** & hence occupied one of the two available slots based on the ranking.
- Bhavani Devi, a Sabre Fencer is also an 8-time National Champion.
- The Tokyo Olympics 2020 is set to take place July 23, 2021 – August 8, 2021.

Fact

Competitive Fencing is one of the 5 activities which have been featured in every modern Olympic Games (since 1896), the other four being athletics, cycling, swimming & Gymnastics.

Mithali Raj becomes 1st Indian & 2nd International Woman Cricketer to score 10, 000 International Runs

Mithali Raj became **1st Indian Woman Cricketer** & 2nd International Women Cricketer (after England's **Charlotte Edwards**) to score 10, 000 runs in International Cricket across all 3 formats of Cricket.

- She achieved the record during the 3rd ODI Between India & South Africa Women's team which took place on March 12, 2021 at Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium, Lucknow.
- Mithali Raj has scored 6, 974 runs from 212 One Day Internationals (ODI); 2, 364 runs from 89 T20 Internationals & 663 runs in 10 Test matches.
- Mithali Raj hails from Rajasthan; she made her debut for India in June 1999.

1st to reach 7, 000 runs

- She became the **First Woman Cricketer to complete 7, 000 runs** in Women's ODI cricket.
- She reached the milestone in her 213th Match, which was the 4th ODI of the 5-match series against South Africa at Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium, Lucknow.



Rawalpindi's KRL Stadium renamed after Shoaib Akhtar

The cricket authorities in Rawalpindi has renamed historic KRL Stadium in Rawalpindi, Pakistan as Shoaib Akhtar Stadium to honour Akhtar for his services to Pakistan cricket for years.

Mumbai Cricket Team Wins 2021's Vijay Hazare Trophy; Prithvi Shaw-1st player to Score 800 runs in Single Edition

Mumbai cricket team won the 2021's Vijay Hazare Trophy in the finals against Uttar Pradesh, where the captain of Mumbai, **Prithvi Shaw** became the **1st player to score 800 runs in a single edition**. Previously, Mayank Agarwal held the highest run scorer record with 723 runs from the 2018 edition. In the same match, Uttar Pradesh batsman, **Madhav Kaushik**, scored **158 runs** recording the **highest runs scored** by a batsman in the **tournament's final**.



Cricket: India wins the 2020-21 Paytm T20I series against England

The Indian Cricket Team defeated England in the 5th T20I Match held at Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, Gujarat to win the Match and consequently the 2020-21 Paytm T20I series by 3-2.

- Player of the Series – **Virat Kohli**.
- All 5 matches took place at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- India had already won the Test Series by 3-1.

Records & Highlights

- Virat Kohli became the 1st Cricketer to score 3,000 runs in T20 Internationals.
- Rohit Sharma became the 2nd Indian after Virat Kohli to complete 9000 runs in T20 Cricket.

India Legends won 1st edition of 2020-21 Road Safety World Series T20 against Sri Lanka Legends

India Legends cricket team won the **1st Edition of the 2020-21 Road Safety World Series T20** tournament against Sri Lanka Legends in the Finals. Tillakaratne Dilshan, captain of Sri Lanka Legends won the Player of the series. Sachin Tendulkar was the captain of India Legends.

- 7 Countries Participated in the series viz, India Legends, Sri Lanka Legends, South Africa Legends, West Indies Legends, England Legends, Bangladesh Legends, Australia Legends.
- The 2020-21 Road Safety World Series T20 cricket tournament was organized by the **Road Safety Cell of Maharashtra** to raise awareness about road safety.

India beats England in 3-match ODI series; Kohli 3rd captain to lead India in 200 International Matches

In the recently concluded 3-match One Day International (ODI) Series between India & England which was hosted by India, Indian Cricket team under the captaincy of Virat Kohli won the series in a thrilling 2-1 lead.

- England opener **Jonny Bairstow** was awarded the Player of the Series.
- India-England series sets world record for most sixes hit 63 in a 3-match ODI series. The record was previously held by New Zealand and Sri Lanka as both teams had hit a combined of 57 sixes.

Note- India also won the 5-match T20 International Series with England in the same tour with a 3-2 victory.

i. In this match, **Virat Kohli** became the 3rd Indian Captain to lead Indian side in 200 International matches.

[MS Dhoni in 332 matches & Mohammad Azharuddin in 221 matches]

ii. Virat Kohli became India's captain in all-formats in January 2017.

Lewis Hamilton wins 2021 Bahrain Grand Prix of Formula One

Mercedes Driver Lewis Hamilton (Great Britain) won the 2021 Bahrain Grand Prix (officially known as Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2021) held at Bahrain International Circuit, Sakhir, Bahrain on March 28, 2021.

- Red Bull Racing's driver Max Verstappen (Netherlands) finished 2nd in the race, while Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas (Finland) finished 3rd in the race.
- The victory was Hamilton's 96th Formula One Victory.
- The Bahrain Grand Prix is the **inaugural GP of the 2021** Formula One World Championship.
- The Formula One World Championships are organized by Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA)



Obituaries

Nand Kumar Singh Chauhan, Lok Sabha Member from Khandwa MP, Passed Away at 69

Nand Kumar Singh Chauhan, of Bharatiya Janata Party(**BJP**), 6 time Lok Sabha member from Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh(**MP**), who was suffering from COVID-19 infection passed away at the age of 69 in Gurugram, Haryana. He was born on 8th September 1952 in Shahpur, Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh.



About Nand Kumar Singh Chauhan:

- i.**Nand Kumar Singh Chauhan started his career as a politician from Shahpur Municipal Council in 1978
- ii.**He was later elected to the State Assembly of Madhya Pradesh and served as a member of legislative from 1985 to 1996.
- iii.**He was first elected to the Lok Sabha in 1996 and later re-elected in 1998, 99, 2004, 2014 and 2019

Muthoot Group Chairman, M.G. George Muthoot Passed Away at 71

On 5th March 2021, Mathai George George Muthoot (**MG George Muthoot**), Chairman of **the Muthoot Group** passed away at the age of 71 in New Delhi. He was born in November 1949 in Kozhencherry, Pathanamthitta district of Kerala.

About MG George Muthoot:

- i.**MG George Muthoot joined the family business: The Muthoot group as an office assistant and became the managing director in 1979.
- ii.**He took over the Muthoot group as the Chairman in 1993.
- iii.**Under his leadership the Muthoot Finance Limited became the largest gold financing company in India and the first ever Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) to join the Rs.1000 crore net profit club.

Highlights:

- i.**He was listed as the 26th richest man in India by Forbes in 2020. He was one of the 6 Malayalees who were featured on the list.
- ii.**He served as a member of the National Executive Committee Member of FICCI.
- iii.**He is also a member of the Kerala State Council.
- iv.**He is the Lay trustee of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.

Awards:

He has received various awards which includes, Lifestyle Icon of the Year, Skoch Financial Inclusion Award, Golden Peacock Award for Excellence in Business Leadership, Corporate Governance, HR and CSR, NRI Bharat Samman Award.

French Billionaire MP Olivier Dassault Died In Helicopter Crash At Age 69

On 7th March 2021, French Billionaire and Member of French National Assembly, **Olivier Dassault** of Les Republicains party died in a helicopter crash in Normandy, France at age 69. Olivier Dassault the heir of Dassault Groupe (Dassault Aviation, Le Figaro etc) was born on 1st June 1951 in Boulogne-Billancourt, France. He was the son of businessman and politician **Serge Dassault**.



Important Days with theme

National Science Day 2021 – February 28

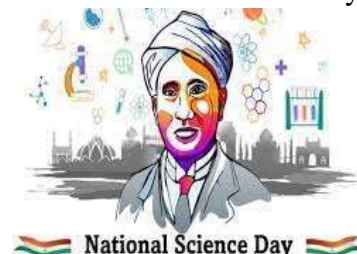
i. National Science day is annually observed across India on **28th February** to commemorate the discovery of ‘**Raman Effect**’ by Indian Physicist Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman(**CV Raman**) for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.

ii. The First National Science Day was observed on **28th February 1987**.

iii. The celebrations and events of the National Science Day 2021 are organised by the National Council for Science Technology Communication (NCSTC), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science and Technology.

iv. The theme of the National Science Day 2021 is “**Future of Science and Technology and Innovation(STI): Impact on Education, Skills and Work**”.

v. Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Science and Technology released the first ever National S&T Databases on S&T Awards in India and Indian Origin Academicians Abroad at the National Science Day event.



World Wildlife Day 2021 – March 3

i. United Nations(UN)’s **World Wildlife Day** is annually observed across the globe on **3rd March** to celebrate the wild fauna and flora across the globe and to create awareness about conservation of wildlife.

ii. The events of the world Wildlife day are organised by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (**CITES**) **Secretariat** in collaboration with the organizations in the United Nations system.

iii. World Wildlife day 2021 on **3rd march 2021** is celebrated under the theme “**Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet**”.

The **first** World Wildlife Day was observed on **3rd March 2014**.

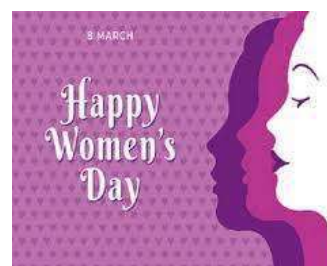
iv. The United Nations General Assembly(UNGA) adopted a resolution on **20 December 2013** at its 68th session and proclaimed the 3rd March of every year as the UN World Wildlife Day.

International Women’s Day 2021 – March 8

i. United Nations(UN)’s **International Women’s Day (IWD)** is annually observed across the globe on **8th March** to recognise the achievements of the women regardless of their nation, ethnic, language, culture, economic or political.

ii. The International Women’s Day on **8th March 2021** celebrates the efforts of the women and girls across the globe towards shaping an equal future and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

iii. The theme of International Women’s Day 2021 is “**Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world**”.



iv. The Grant Thornton, a global accounting firm has published the “Women in Business 2021 Report”. Globally, **India ranks 3rd** with the percentage of women in senior management in India at around **39%** where the global average of women in senior management is 31%.

International Day of Mathematics 2021 – March 14

i. **International Day of Mathematics (IDM)** is annually observed across the globe on **14th March** to celebrate the beauty and importance of mathematics and its essential role in everyone’s life. The day also marks the birth anniversary of renowned mathematician and physicist **Albert Einstein** and death anniversary of theoretical physicist **Stephen Hawking**.

ii. The theme of the International Day of Mathematics **2021** is “**Mathematics for a Better World**”.

iii. The International Day of Mathematics is led by the International Basic Sciences Programme (**IBSP**) and the **International Mathematical Union**.

iv. Prior to the recognition of UNESCO in 2019, The International Day of Mathematics was observed as **Pi Day**. The first pi day was observed on **14th March 1988** which was organised by Physicist Larry Shaw.

World Consumer Rights Day 2021 – March 15

i. **World Consumer Rights Day** is annually celebrated across the globe on **15th March** to highlight the power of consumers and their rights for a fair, safe and sustainable marketplace for everyone.

ii. The world Consumer Rights day is coordinated by **Consumers International**, the membership organisation for consumer groups across the globe.

iii. The theme of World Consumer Rights Day 2021 is “**Tackling Plastic Pollution**”.

iv. The campaign under “tackling plastic pollution” will create awareness and encourage consumers across the globe to adopt and promote sustainable practices.

v. In 1983, the Consumer International portal decided to proclaim the 15th March as World Consumer Rights Day.



National Vaccination Day 2021 – March 16

i. The **National Vaccination Day**, also known as National Immunisation Day, is annually observed across India on **16th March** to create awareness about the importance of vaccination. The government of India aims to raise awareness about the vaccination against poliovirus and other deadly viruses.

ii. The National Vaccination day 2020 aims to eradicate both polio and the COVID-19.

iii. The day was first observed on **16th March 1995**, the day on which the **Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme** became operational.

iv. On 16th January 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the COVID vaccination in India.

International Day of Happiness 2021 – 20th March

i. The United Nations (UN)'s **International Day of Happiness**, annually observed across the globe on **20th March**, is dedicated to the importance of happiness in people's life.

The first International day of happiness was observed on **20th March 2013**.

ii. The theme of the International Day of Happiness 2021 is **“Keep Calm. Stay Wise. Be Kind”**.

iii. The 2021 International Day of Happiness campaign theme is **“Happiness For All Forever”**.

iv. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution A/RES/66/281 on **28th June 2012** and proclaimed the **20th March** of every year as the **International Day of Happiness**, starting from 2013.

v. The world happiness fest annually organizes the 6-day Happiness Celebrations from 18th March to 23rd March as World Happiness Week.

**World Water Day 2021 – 22nd March**

i. The United Nations (UN)'s **World Water Day** is annually observed across the globe on **22nd March** to enhance the focus on the importance of freshwater and to create awareness about the global water crisis. The day also raises awareness about the 2.2 billion people across the globe who are living without access to safe water.

ii. The main aim of World Water Day is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) **6: Water and Sanitation for all by 2030**.

iii. The theme of World Water Day 2021 is **“Valuing water”**. The theme of 2021 is about “What water means to people and its true value and how to protect the water, the vital resource”.

iv. UNESCO Partners with United Schools Organisation (USO) of India and **Toonz Media** group for a water conservation awareness programme for students.

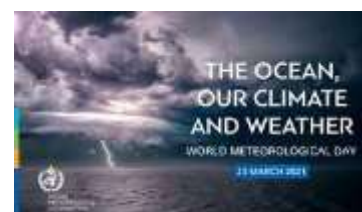
v. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the **“Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain”** campaign over a virtual platform in which the Ministry of Jal Shakti signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the government of Uttar Pradesh for starting the **Ken-Betwa Link project**.

World Meteorological Day 2021 – 23rd March

i. The United Nations (UN)'s **World Meteorological Day** is annually observed across the world on 23rd March to create awareness about the importance of the role of people and their behaviour in protecting the Earth's atmosphere.

ii. The day showcases the contribution of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services towards the safety and wellbeing of society.

iii. World Meteorology Day 2021 is a registered activity of the **United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)**.



iv. The theme of World Meteorological Day 2021 is “**The ocean, our climate and weather**”.

v. The day marks the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), an intergovernmental body on 23rd March 1950.

About World Meteorological Organisation:

Secretary-General– Petteri Taalas

Headquarters– Geneva, Switzerland

Members – 193 member countries and territories (including India)

Shaheed Diwas or Martyr’s Day observed annually on 23rd March

Government of India, annually observes the **23th of March as Shaheed Diwas or Martyr’s day** to honour the 3 young freedom fighters- **Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru**. The **90th death anniversary** of the 3 youngsters was **observed on 21st March 2021**.



Note- 30th January, the death anniversary of **Mahatma Gandhi** is also observed as Martyr’s day.

i. 3 youngsters, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, Shivaram Rajguru along with support from Chandrasekar Azad threw bombs over the Central Legislative Assembly on April 8, 1929.

ii. During their hanging Bhagat Singh made the historic slogans “Inquilab Zindabad”, which later became the slogan of India’s armed struggle.

