

**December 2021**

# **BOLT**

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## Banking & Finance

### 1. ADB approves USD 125 million loan for water supply, sanitation projects in Uttarakhand

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a loan of USD 125 million (around Rs 938 crore) for water supply and sanitation projects in Uttarakhand.

The funds will be utilised to improve access to quality water supply and sanitation services in the Himalayan state.

Under this project, 136 kilometres of water pipe system will be constructed. Uttarakhand CM:- Pushkar Singh Dhami; Governor:- Gurmit Singh.

### 2. RBI imposes Rs2 cr penalty on two Payment System Operators for regulatory violation

The RBI fined Tata Communications Payment Solutions (TCPSL) Rs 2 crore and Appnit Technologies Pvt Ltd (ATPL) Rs 54.93 lakh for failing to comply with orders given under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. (PSS Act).

These were offences of the type specified in Section 26(6) of the PSS Act, notices were sent to the entities.

### 3. Airtel Payments Bank names Pinak Chakraborty as new Chief Information Officer

Airtel Payments Bank has appointed Pinak Chakraborty as its new Chief Information Officer.

He will be leading Airtel Payments Bank's overall technology strategy & be responsible for digital innovation and transformation of products and services.

Prior to joining the Bank, he was heading product engineering for PayMaya, a fintech based out of the Philippines. Airtel payment bank:- MD & CEO:- Anubrata Biswas; COO :- Ganesh Ananthanarayanan.

### 4. RBI imposes Rs. 1 crore penalty on Union Bank of India

The RBI has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs.1 cr on the Union Bank of India for violating certain provisions related to the sale of stressed assets and reporting of frauds.

This action is based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance & is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank with its customers.

Rajkiran Rai G, MD, and CEO, Union Bank of India.

### 5. RBI new norms likely to increase NBFCs bad loans by one-third

The RBI's clarification on non-performing advances (NPAs) accounting is likely to increase NPAs by around one-third for non-banking finance companies as per domestic rating agency India Ratings and Research

impact on provisioning could be modest, given NBFCs are using Indian Accounting Standards & generally for higher rated NBFCs, provision policy is more conservative

### 6. IDFC FIRST Bank debuts India's first standalone metal debit card

IDFC FIRST Bank announced the launch of FIRST Private Infinite, the country's first-ever standalone metal debit card, in partnership with Visa.

FIRST Private Infinite is a lifetime free card designed specifically for customers who are part of the Bank's FIRST Private program, a premium savings and wealth offering. CEO: V.

Vaidyanathan Headquarters: Mumbai

### 7. PNB launches android app for differently-abled employees

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched PNB Pride-CRMD module tool, an android-based application for differently-abled employees, to monitor and effectively follow up with the special mention account (SMA) borrowers.

SMA accounts are stressed loans recognized early, enabling banks to initiate timely remedial actions, and preventing such borrowers from slipping to NPA. NPA:- Non performing Assets.

### **8. ICICI Bank offers instant overdraft facility to sellers registered on Flipkart**

ICICI Bank has partnered with Flipkart to offer an instant and completely digital overdraft (OD) facility of up to ₹25 L to individual sellers & businesses registered on the e-commerce platform.

Enabled by API integration, the partnership helps sellers to avail an OD from the Bank instantly in a process from application to sanction to disbursement, that is entirely digital.

### **9. In pact with NPCI, CUB launches 'On-the-Go' wearable keychain for debit card customers**

City Union Bank (CUB), in collaboration with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and its manufacturing partner Sshaasai, has announced the launch of RuPay On-the-Go contactless wearable keychain for its debit card customers.

Currently, the keychain will be linked to the operative account of the customers. N Kamakodi, MD & CEO, City Union Bank.

### **10. RBI Monetary Policy: Repo rate unchanged at 4% for the 9th consecutive time**

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) kept the repo rate unchanged at 4 per cent for the ninth consecutive time while maintaining an 'accommodative stance' as long as necessary.

The reverse repo rate too was kept unchanged at 3.35 percent.

The Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and bank rate also remained unchanged at 4.25 percent.

### **11. Number of ATMs in country at over 2.13 lakh, says Finance Ministry**

The number of ATMs across the country stood at over 2.13 lakh by the end of September this year, and over 47 per cent of these are in rural and semi-urban areas.

According to the RBI data, scheduled commercial banks have installed 2,13,145 ATMs (automated teller machines) up to September 2021. In addition to this, 27,837 White Label ATMs (WLA) were also installed.

### **12. UPI-based payment products to be launched for feature phone users: RBI**

The RBI governor Shaktikanta Das announced that UPI-based payment products will be launched for feature phone users. Also enhanced the transaction limit to Rs. 5L from Rs. 2 L for UPI payments for RBI's Retail Direct scheme & IPO offering applications. RBI's Retail Direct scheme facilitates investment by individuals into government securities by opening gilt securities.

### **13. Paytm Payments Bank receives Scheduled Bank status from RBI**

Paytm Payments Bank Limited, an associate entity of Paytm, has received Scheduled Bank status from RBI and has been included in the 2nd Schedule to the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.

As per RBI Act 1934, banks satisfying the central bank that its affairs are not being conducted in a manner detrimental to the interests of its depositors are included in the 2nd schedule. Satish Kumar Gupta, MD & CEO of Paytm Payments Bank Ltd.

### **14. RBI grants approval to LIC to up stake in IndusInd Bank to nearly 10%**

Private bank IndusInd Bank announced that the RBI has given approval to Life Insurance Corporation to increase stake in the bank to nearly 10%. The RBI approval is subject to compliance with the direction on 'Prior Approval for Acquisition of Shares and Voting Private Sector Banks' as well as regulations of the Sebi and any guidelines or regulations. LIC holds 4.95% of the total issued and paid-up capital of the bank.

### **15. SEBI extended the deadline till April 1, 2022 for implementing the risk management framework for mutual funds.**

SEBI extended the deadline till April 1 next year for implementing the risk management framework for mutual funds as well as the two-tier structure for benchmarking of certain categories of schemes. Meanwhile, the watchdog has come out with guidelines on the usage of

pool accounts by mutual funds as well as norms for investment in the Bills Re Discounting Scheme (BRDS). The implementation was to come into force from January 1, 2022.

#### **16. RBI enforces 20-digit LEI for cross-border deals above Rs 50 crore**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) made Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) mandatory for cross-border transactions for capital or current account transactions of Rs 50 crore and above, from October 1 next year.

The LEI is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions worldwide to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems.

#### **17. Karnataka Bank bags two DigiDhan award from MeitY**

Karnataka Bank has been conferred with two DigiDhan awards instituted by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. The bank received these awards for achieving the target with the highest percentage in BHIM-UPI transactions under the private sector bank category consecutively for two years ' 2019-20 and 2020-21.

#### **18. India Post Payments Bank enables recurring payments via NPCI Bharat Bill Pay platform**

IPPB and NPCI Bharat BillPay announced the facilitation of doorstep cash-based assisted bill payments across India. The platform will enable bill payments, utility, and other recurring services for non-IPPB customers as well. The service is expected to benefit millions of unbanked and underserved customers in remote locations with access to doorstep payment solutions. Bharat Bill Pay is a wholly-owned subsidiary of National Payments Corporation of India.

#### **19. Bank of Baroda launches bob World Wave, a wearable payment solution**

Bank of Baroda (BOB) has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) to launch bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem.

A bob World Wave wearable device will allow customers to monitor their SpO2, body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure.

#### **20. LIC launches Dhan Rekha plan**

The Life Insurance Corporation of India has launched a new non-linked, non-participating, individual savings life insurance plan called Dhan Rekha, it offers special premium rates for female lives.

The plan is also allowed for the third gender adding that all benefits under the plan are fully guaranteed. The minimum sum assured under this plan is '2 lakh. There is no limit for maximum sum assured.

#### **21. Bank of Baroda signs MoU with Centrum Housing Finance**

Bank of Baroda has signed a MoU with Centrum Housing Finance (CHFL) for sourcing and financing housing loan borrowers under co-lending model.

With this tie-up the bank will be able to penetrate deep into markets in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities at competitive rates.

Bank of Baroda would be able to garner housing loan business to the extent of '1,000 crore in one financial Year.

#### **22. Axis, Swift tie up to digitise trade banking**

Axis Bank is integrating different digitisation initiatives by government bodies and service providers to extend an end-to-end service to business clients.

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

#### **23. ADB approves \$112 million loan for Assam Skill University**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved \$112 million loan for Assam to strengthen skill education & training through establishment of Assam Skill University (ASU).

It will also support the design and delivery of industry-aligned and flexible skills education & training programs, including cutting-edge digital skills programs, career development programs & services.

#### **24. Cabinet approves incentive scheme to promote RuPay Debit Cards, low-value BHIM-UPI transactions**

The Union Cabinet approved an incentive scheme worth ' 1,300 crore to promote RuPay Debit Cards and low-value (up to '2,000) BHIM-UPI transactions (person to merchants-P2M) in the country.

The scheme has been formulated in compliance with the Budget announcements (FY 2021-22) by the Government to further boost digital transactions in the country.

#### **25. Pilgrims to Kartarpur gurdwara can carry up to Rs 11,000: RBI**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) permitted Indians as well as OCI card holders going on pilgrimage to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur, Pakistan through the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor to carry up to Rs 11,000 in rupees or US dollars, lower than the usual limit of Rs 25,000.

The 4 km-long corridor provides visa free access to Indian Sikh pilgrims to visit the Darbar Sahib. The Kartarpur corridor was reopened last month.

#### **26. RBI imposes penalty on PNB, ICICI Bank**

The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a penalty of Rs 1.8 crore on Punjab National Bank and Rs 30 lakh on ICICI Bank for deficiencies in regulatory compliance.

In both cases, penalties were based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and were not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their customers.

#### **27. ADB cuts India's GDP growth forecast for 2021-22 to 9.7%**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has revised India's GDP growth forecast for 2021-22 downwards to 9.7 per cent from 10 per cent projected in September 2021. It has cited supply chain issues as the major reason for the downgrade.

The bank has retained GDP growth forecast for 2022-23 at 7.5 per cent as it expects domestic demand to normalise.

#### **28. ICICI Prudential Life is first insurer to sign UN pact on ESG issues**

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has become the first Indian insurance company to commit to environment, social and governance (ESG) issues by being a signatory to the United Nations supported Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI).

The company is now integrating ESG factors into its investment management framework.

#### **29. RBI authorises RBL Bank to collect indirect taxes**

RBL Bank has been authorized by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), based on recommendation from the Controller General of Accounts, Ministry of Finance and Government of India, to collect indirect taxes on behalf of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC). The bank had recently been authorised to collect direct taxes on behalf of the Central Board of Direct Tax

#### **30. IFSCA sets up panel for creating framework for transfer of stressed loan**

International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) sets up committee for creating framework for transfer of stressed loans from domestic lenders to financial institutions in IFSC. Former executive director of RBI G Padmanabhan would be chairing committee along with representative from law firm & other market with expertise in banking & legal issues.

#### **31. NSDL e-Governance Infrastructure rebranded as Protean eGov Technologies**

India's one of the leading IT-enabled solutions companies, NSDL e-Governance Infrastructure Ltd, has rebranded as 'Protean eGov Technologies Ltd.' Protean eGov's new brand reflects the company's aim of being a global leader in ICT and e-Government reform and transformation.

Suresh Sethi, MD and CEO, Protean eGov Technologies Ltd.

### **32. SBI acquires minority stake in JSW Cement for Rs 100 crore**

The State Bank of India (SBI) has acquired a minority stake in JSW Cement Limited, part of USD 13 billion JSW Group. The PSU Banking behemoth has invested Rs 100 crore in the company via compulsorily convertible preference shares (CCPS). The SBI transaction with JSW Cement comes close on the heels of the Rs 1,500 cr investments made by two global private equity investors. This capital infusion will support JSW Cement's capacity expansion from current 14 MTPA.

### **33. Bank of Baroda achieves top position in Digital Payments for 2020-21**

Bank of Baroda (BOB) has announced it has won the top position in overall digital transactions amongst large banks for FY20-21.

The bank showed the exceptional growth of digital payment transactions achievement and was felicitated by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Govt. of India at the Digital Payments Utsav. Hasmukh Adhia (Chairman); Sanjiv Chadha (MD & CEO of BOB).

### **34. Mastercard, Google Pay offer tokenisation for card-based payments**

Mastercard and Google announced the rollout of tokenisation for Google Pay users, who will be able to make hassle-free transactions using their Mastercard credit and debit cards. Through tokenisation, Mastercard cardholders will be able to make payments through a secure digital token without having to share their credit / debit card details such as card number, expiry date.

### **35. CSB Bank has been empanelled as Agency Bank by the RBI**

CSB Bank has been empanelled as 'Agency Bank' by the Reserve Bank of India.

This appointment will allow CSB Bank to undertake general banking business of the central and state governments which may be entrusted by the RBI.

It will also enable bank to handle a broad range of transactions related to government business, such as, TDS, GST, stamp duty, registration, etc.

### **36. RBI imposes penalty on One Mobikwik Systems, Spice Money**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of '1 crore each on payment system operators One Mobikwik Systems Private Ltd. and Spice Money Ltd. for deficiencies in regulatory compliance. The two entities had not complied with the directions issued by the Reserve Bank on net-worth requirement for Bharat Bill Payment Operating Units (BBPOUs).

### **37. Corporate-promoted NBFCs can have 15% stake in banks, with increase in cap**

Corporate houses, which are not allowed to own a bank, can now pick up 15 per cent stake in commercial banks through their non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).

### **38. IndusInd Bank partners with NPCI to offer cross-border payments via UPI**

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

IndusInd Bank has become the first Indian bank to go live on UPI for Cross Border Payments/NRI Remittances.

### **39. IndusInd Bank announces launch of 'green fixed deposits'**

IndusInd Bank has announced the launch of 'green fixed deposits', whereby the deposit proceeds will be used to finance projects and firms supporting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A green deposit is a fixed-term deposit for investors looking to invest their surplus cash reserves in environmentally friendly projects. These deposits will be offered to both retail & corporate customers.

### **40. Axis Bank is second largest in PoS machines**

Axis Bank has become the second-largest merchant-acquiring bank in the country, leapfrogging two spaces during 2021 by installing over two lakh card-swipe machines during the year.

This is part of the bank's 'Axis One' strategy where it approaches the customers offering its entire gamut of products instead of a standalone service.

#### **41. Vayana Network And Federal Bank Bag The 'Most Effective Bank-Fintech Partnership' At IBSi-Global Fintech Innovation Awards 2021**

Vayana Network, one of India's largest trade finance platform, and Federal Bank, a leading Private Sector Bank have been awarded the 'Most Effective Bank-Fintech Partnership: Agile and Adaptable' at the IBSi-Global Fintech Innovation Awards 2021.

The award was conferred for automating and simplifying Supply Chain Finance.

#### **42. Banks' gross NPAs may rise to 9.5% in September 2022: RBI report**

The gross non-performing asset (GNPA) ratio of scheduled commercial banks is likely to increase to 9.5 % in September 2022 from 6.9 % in September 2021 in a severe stress scenario.

In the report, the central bank noted that the scheduled commercial banks would, however, have sufficient capital, both at the aggregate & individual levels, even under stress conditions.

#### **43. Western Union, NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) ink MoU to enable Inbound Bank Account Payouts in India**

Western Union, a global leader in cross-border, cross-currency money movement & payments, & NPCI International Payments Ltd, the International arm of National Payment Corporation of India, have signed a MoU to enable real-time bank account payouts in India.

It will help the customers in India to receive international money transfers in real time into their bank accounts.

#### **44. SBI Card, Paytm Join Hands For Card Tokenisation To Protect Cardholders' Data**

SBI Cards and Payment Services has tied up with Paytm for card tokenisation to protect data of the cardholders.

SBI Card has collaborated with Paytm to enable cardholders to tokenise their cards on devices and make payments through Paytm.

This card tokenisation facility is available only on Android NFC (near field communication) devices.



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## Economy

### 1. GST collection for November 2021 reported at Rs 1.31 lakh crore; second highest since roll out

Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections grew 25% year-on-year to Rs 1,31,526 crore in November, surpassing October's Rs 1.30 lakh crore mop-up.

Tax collections from import of goods also contributed to the numbers, which were 43% higher, while revenues from domestic transactions, including import of services, were 20% higher compared to November 2020.

### 2. WhatsApp gets NPCI nod for doubling payments user base

Facebook-owned messaging platform WhatsApp has been granted permission to double its user base for the payments service to 40 million by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

WhatsApp has a total user base of 400 million and the development will help the platform compete better with entrenched rivals like Google Pay and Phone Pe. ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank & SBI acting as WhatsApp's payment service provider.

### 3. India's GDP to grow 9.1% in 2022: Goldman Sachs

Wall Street brokerage Goldman Sachs has estimated India's GDP growth at 9.1 percent in 2022.

After India's economy contracted by a sharp 7 percent in 2020, Goldman Sachs pegged the economy to grow at 8 percent in 2021 and 9.1 percent in 2022.

It earlier estimated India's economic growth to 11.1 percent in fiscal year to March 31, 2022.

### 4. Grofers rebrands as Blinkit

E-grocery unicorn, Grofers has rebranded itself as Blinkit.

The rebranding comes just months after Grofers pivoted to 10-minute groceries earlier in August 2021 and initially launched the service across the top 12 Indian cities.

Grofers had recently attained unicorn status or \$1 billion in valuation.

Grofers founder: Albinder Dhindsa

### 5. Wholesale inflation surges to 14.23% in November, highest in current series

Producers' inflation based on the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) reached an all-time high in the current series at 14.2 per cent in November. This is the eighth successive month of double digits WPI (mainly due to hardening of prices of mineral oils, basic metals, crude petroleum and natural gas).

Wholesale Price-based Index (WPI) inflation base year is 2011-12.

### 6. LogiXtics: Unified Logistics Interface Platform hackathon launched to crowdsource ideas to benefit logistics industry

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has launched the Unified Logistics Interface Platform's (ULIP) hackathon 'LogiXtics' to crowdsource more ideas which will benefit the logistics industry. The ULIP Hackathon was launched by Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog.

### 7. Govt's advance tax collection rises 54% to Rs 4.60 lakh crore in FY22

According to the finance ministry, advance tax collection increased by 53.50 percent to Rs 4.60 lakh crore so far this fiscal year, indicating a recovery in the economy. Direct tax collections for 2021-22, as of December 16, show that net collections are at Rs 9.45 lakh crore compared to Rs 5.88 lakh crore over the year-ago period, representing an increase of 60.8 percent.

### 8. NHAI toll revenue to jump to Rs 1.40 lakh cr in 3 yrs

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari predicted toll revenue of the NHAI will soar to Rs 1.40 lakh crore per annum in the next three years from Rs 40,000 crore per annum currently. Addressing an

event here, the Road Transport and Highways Minister said that there is a huge opportunity for investors in India's infrastructure sector as the traffic density is rising every year.

### 9. SEBI's total income down 15% to Rs 813 crore in 2019-20

Capital markets regulator SEBI's total income declined by 15 per cent to Rs 813 crore in 2019-20 mainly due to a drop in earnings from fees and subscription.

According to the annual accounts of SEBI made public, the total expenditure of the regulator rose to Rs 588.14 crore for the year ended on March 31, 2020, from Rs 492.34 crore in the previous fiscal. However, other income rose to Rs 18.15 crore from Rs 17.44 crore.



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## National

### 1. India will have nine nuclear reactors by 2024

The nation will have nine nuclear reactors by 2024 and a new nuclear project, the first in northern India, will come up 150 kms away from Delhi in Gorakhpur of Haryana, the government informed the Rajya Sabha.

By 2024, India will have nine nuclear reactors plus 12 new additional ones which were approved during the Covid times with a capacity of 9000 MW.

### 2. UP: I&B Minister Anurag Thakur inaugurates Earth Station of Doordarshan Kendra in Gorakhpur along with three FM stations

Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated Earth Station of Doordarshan Kendra in Gorakhpur. Three FM stations of All India Radio in Etawah, Lakhimpur Kheri, and Bahraich districts were also inaugurated at this juncture virtually.

### 3. Union Minister Giriraj Singh inaugurates National Generic Document Registration System and Banadhikar mobile app in Tripura

In Tripura, Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Giriraj Singh along with Minister of State Faggan Singh Kulaste inaugurated the National Generic Document Registration System and Banadhikar mobile application through virtual mode. CM Tripura: Biplab Kumar Deb Capital: Agartala Governor: Satyadev Narayan Arya

### 4. Government Okays 100% Stake Sale In Central Electronics Limited

Government has cleared sale of its entire 100 per cent stake in Central Electronics Limited (CEL), a state-owned engineering company, to Nandal Finance and Leasing Private Limited for ' 210 crore, a statement issued by the finance ministry. The "winning bid of Rs 210,00,60000" was placed by Nandal Finance and Leasing Private Limited Ashwini Vaishnaw - Union Minister Meity

### 5. UP becomes 1st state in the country to fully vaccinate over 5 crore people

UttarPradesh has become the 1st state in the country to fully vaccinate over 5 crore people were One-third of the state's eligible population is now fully vaccinated. The most populous state has also administered over 75% of its eligible population with the first dose of the Covid vaccine. Uttar Pradesh Governor - Anandiben Patel

### 6. Himachal Pradesh becomes first state in country to vaccinate its entire eligible population

Himachal Pradesh has become the first state to fully vaccinate 100 per cent of its adult population against COVID-19. As many as 53,86,393 eligible adults have been administered the second dose, he said, adding Himachal Pradesh was also the first state to achieve the 100 per cent first dose vaccination of adult population by the end of August. Chief Minister - Jai Ram Thakur Capital: Shimla

### 7. PM Modi launches projects worth Rs 18,000 cr in Dehradun

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of various projects worth around Rs 18,000 crore in Dehradun, reaffirming his government's commitment to develop modern infrastructure in the country.

This includes the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor (from Eastern Peripheral Expressway Junction to Dehradun), among others Governor: Gurmit Singh Chief minister: Pushkar Singh Dhama

### 8. MoS IT launches India's first indigenous server Rudra

Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Friday launched the first indigenous server, Rudra, developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).

The server design can be used for manufacturing classical standalone commercial server.

### **9. AgNext, Nafed tie-up to digitise quality assessment of Arunachal organic kiwis**

AgNext Technologies has partnered with NAFED to digitise quality assessment for organic kiwis grown in Arunachal Pradesh. The Arunachal Pradesh Agriculture Marketing Board had launched the organic kiwis in New Delhi along with NAFED as a marketing partner under the 'One district, One Product' scheme.

AgNext will be using artificial intelligence-based technology.

### **10. MeitY releases strategy on blockchain for its adoption in govt systems**

The electronics & IT ministry has released a national strategy on blockchain for adopting the technology in government systems especially for e-governance services.

The ministry has adopted a multi-institutional approach for the national blockchain framework, which includes C-DAC for research & development of the framework.

### **11. DPIIT has initiated the first ever Development of 'Indian Footwear Sizing system' in consultation with CLRI**

DPIIT has initiated the first-ever Development of 'Indian Footwear Sizing system' in consultation with Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI) to identify the footwear size ranges required to cover the need of the local population for footwear and to define proportions and rules of constructing shoe lasts required for providing well-fitting and healthy footwear. The Department has approved an expenditure of Rs.10.80 crore to complete this project.

### **12. NCW Launches a Pan-India Capacity Building Programme 'She is a Changemaker' for Women in Politics**

To improve the leadership skills of grassroots women political leaders, the National Commission for Women (NCW) launched a pan-India capacity building program, 'She is a Changemaker' for women representatives at all levels, gram panchayats to parliament members and political workers including office bearers of National/State political parties. The program was launched by Ms. Rekha Sharma, Chairperson, NCW.

### **13. PM Narendra Modi inaugurates Rs 9,800-crore Saryu Nahar National Project**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Rs 9,800-crore Saryu Nahar National Project at Balrampur in Uttar Pradesh. The project was pending for the past 40 years. The project began in 1978, but due to issues like lack of continuity of budgetary support, interdepartmental coordination, and adequate monitoring, the project was delayed. In 2016, the project was brought under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana.

### **14. PM Modi to inaugurate Kashi-Vishwanath Dham project in Kashi**

Prime Minister will inaugurate phase-1 of the Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham project, which is constructed at a cost of Rs 339 crore. PM Modi laid the foundation stone for this project on March 8, 2019.

The corridor was conceptualized to create an accessible pathway to connect the pilgrimage site to banks of the Ganga river. A total of 23 buildings will be inaugurated in Phase 1 Varanasi is Prime Minister's Parliamentary constituency.

### **15. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates Swarnim Vijay Parv commemorating 50 years of India's victory in 1971 war**

Rajnath Singh inaugurated 'Wall of Fame -1971 Indo-Pak War' at the inaugural ceremony of 'Swarnim Vijay Parv'.

Swarnim Vijay Parv is an event commemorating the valour & professionalism of the Armed Forces and their contribution to the liberation of Bangladesh in the Indo-Pak 1971 war, at India Gate Lawns in New Delhi on December 12, 2021.

Event marks culmination of year-long celebrations of 50 years of India's victory in 1971.

### **16. Delhi-Dehradun Expressway: NGT gives go-ahead, forms 12 member panel**

The National Green Tribunal allowed the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor Expressway and formed a 12 member committee to ensure no damage is caused to the environment by

unscientific muck dumping or obstruction of animal corridors on the Ganeshpur-Dehradun Road (NH-72A) stretch.

NGT directed the NHAI to deposit '1 crore in a separate account for research of Sal regeneration. NHAI - National Highway Authority of India

### **17. IIT Roorkee signs MOU with Inland Waterway Authority of India for stabilization of navigational channel along the Ganga River**

IIT Roorkee signed an MOU with Inland Waterway Authority of India (IWAI), Noida for stabilization of the navigational channel at 17 locations along a stretch of the Ganga river from Varanasi to Sahibganj, NW-1.

Professor Z. Ahmad, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Roorkee, was the signatory to the agreement on behalf of IIT Roorkee.

### **18. National Energy Conservation Day : December 14**

National Energy Conservation Day is observed on December 14, every year.

The day focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promotes efforts towards saving energy resources.

The Government of India has set up the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) on 1st March 2002 under the provision of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.

### **19. US Fashion Brand "Patagonia" Chooses Khadi Denim for its Apparels**

US-based world's leading fashion brand, Patagonia, is now using handcrafted Khadi Denim fabric for making Denim apparels. Patagonia, through textile major Arvind Mills, has purchased nearly 30,000 meters of Khadi Denim Fabric worth Rs. 1.08 crore from Gujarat. Khadi Denim is the only handcrafted Denim fabric in the world.

### **20. National Helpline 14566 launched to redress complaints of atrocities against SCs/STs**

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has initiated a National Helpline Against Atrocities (NHAA).

The helpline is available round the clock on toll-free number '14566' across the country in Hindi, English and regional languages of different states/UTs.

It is also available as a web based self-service portal.

Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment :- Dr. Virendra Kumar.

### **21. Power available for 22 hours/day in villages, 23.5 hours in cities, says Minister R K Singh**

Union Power Minister R K Singh said that electricity is available for about 22 hours per day in villages and 23.5 hours in cities across the country.

The availability of power in rural and urban areas has increased tremendously in comparison to 2014, he said while addressing a function to mark the National Energy Conservation Day.

### **22. Centre develops blueprint for Maritime Vision 2030 focusing on lower logistics costs to achieve \$5 trillion economy by 2025**

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways has prepared a blueprint - Maritime India Vision 2030 (MIV 2030), to ensure coordinated & accelerated growth of India's maritime sector in the next decade with the objective of driving India to the forefront of the Global Maritime Sector.

India is aiming to increase the supply chain efficiency & lower logistics costs. India to achieve its well-defined goal of being a USD 5 trillion economy by 2025.

### **23. Tata Builds Submersible Power Substation to Ease Congestion in Delhi**

Power utility Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited, which supplies electricity to over 7million people in North Delhi, has installed a 'first-of-its-kind' submersible power substation in Gujranwala Town, New Delhi, to augment the power infrastructure of its operational area.

The equipment is suitable for water submersion duty.

#### **24. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh launches Rashtriya Ekta Geet composed by NCC Cadets in 22 languages**

Rajnath Singh launched 'Rashtriya Ekta Geet' composed by the National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets in 22 languages on the theme of National Integration during the grand finale of 'Vijay Shrankhla aur Sanskrityon ka Mahasangam' campaign in New Delhi. The mega event was conducted by NCC as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

#### **25. North India's first Centre of Entrepreneurship in Medi Electronics and Health Informatics to start operations in Lucknow**

Union Minister of State, Ministry of Electronics and IT, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar shall inaugurate North India's maiden Centre of Entrepreneurship - 'MedTech' at SG - PGI, Lucknow. It shall provide state of the art facilities to Startups in the field of Medi electronics and health informatics providing impetus to the startup culture.

#### **26. India- Vietnam signs 'Letter of Intent' for enhanced cooperation in the Postal Sector**

Minister of State for Communications, held a bilateral meeting with the delegation from Vietnam. In line with the comprehensive strategic and economic partnership and growing relations between the Republic of India and Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Ministers of the two countries signed a 'Letter of Intent' for enhanced cooperation in the Postal Sector.

#### **27. Total length of national highways up at 140,937 km till Nov-end: Gadkari**

The total length of national highways (NHs) in the country has increased from about 91,287 km in April 2014 to about 1,40,937 km till the end of November this year, during 2014-15 to the end of November 2021, projects for about 82,058 km have been awarded.

#### **28. CCI approves acquisition of shareholding in Air India by Tata Sons**

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved acquisition of a shareholding in Air India by Talace Private Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Sons.

The regulator also approved stake acquisition by Talace in Air India Express and Air India SATS Airport Services along with the acquisition of shares in Air India. Civil aviation minister JyotiradityaScindia.

#### **29. Parliament passes NDPS (Amendment) Bill**

Parliament passed a bill to rectify errors that had crept into the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, with Rajya Sabha giving its nod to it.

The Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Bill-2021 was passed by Lok Sabha.

The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Ordinance was promulgated on September 30, 2021.

Rajya Sabha passed the bill by a voice vote.

#### **30. BPCL tie-up with Bhabha Atomic Research Centre for producing green hydrogen**

India's 3rd largest refiner Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd has tied up with the country's nuclear research institute for an electrolyser technology for green hydrogen as it seeks to achieve net zero emissions by 2040. India is aiming to reach net zero emissions by 2070 and wants to raise the share of renewables in its energy mix to 50% by 2030 from 38% currently. At present Indian companies import electrolyser plants.

#### **31. Niti Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission Unveils Vernacular Innovation Programme**

With an ambition to empower innovators & entrepreneurs across the country, Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog has come up with the Vernacular Innovation Program, which will enable innovators and entrepreneurs in India to have access to the innovation ecosystem in 22 scheduled languages by the Centre. This will help in overcoming the barriers of language & empower innovators. CEO of Niti Aayog, Amitabh Kant.

### 32. Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed Akasa Air unveils its brand logo

Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed Akasa Air revealed its much-anticipated brand identity with the unveiling of its 'Rising A' symbol and tagline, 'It's Your Sky'.

The airline is wearing a 'Rising A' symbol to represent 'the spirit of flying, the aim of height and the pursuit of dreams.'

Belson Coutinho, Co-Founder and Chief Marketing & Experience Officer, Akasa Air. Vinay Dube, Akasa Air Founder, MD and CEO.

### 33. Amit Shah Launches Good Governance Index 2021; Gujarat Tops, UP Shows 'Incremental Growth'

Gujarat has topped the composite ranking in the Good Governance Index (GGI), followed by Maharashtra and Goa while Uttar Pradesh showed an incremental growth of 8.9 per cent in the indicators launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the occasion of the Good Governance Day.

As many as 20 states have improved their composite GGI scores in 2021. Delhi has topped the union territories category composite ranking.



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## International

### 1. Cambridge Dictionary names 'perseverance' Word of the Year 2021

Perseverance, a word which captures the undaunted will of people across the world to never give up, despite the many challenges of the last 12 months, is Cambridge Dictionary's Word of the Year 2021.

Perseverance has been looked up more than 243,000 times on the website in 2021, the first time it has made a noticeable appearance. NASA's Perseverance Rover made its final descent to Mars on 18 February

### 2. UNGA grants Observer Status to International Solar Alliance

The United Nations General Assembly has granted Observer Status to the International Solar Alliance (ISA), according to India's Permanent Ambassador to the UN, T S Tirumurti.

The ISA was conceived as a joint effort by India and France to mobilise efforts against climate change through the deployment of solar energy solutions.

### 3. Dubai world's first govt to become 100% paperless: Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan

Emirate's Crown Prince, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, has announced, pointing at savings of 1.3 billion Dirham (USD 350 million) and 14-million-man hours.

All internal, external transactions and procedures in the Government of Dubai are now 100 per cent digital and managed from a comprehensive digital government services platform.

### 4. United Arab Emirates becomes first country to transition to 4.5 day work week

UAE has announced to change its existing five-day workweek to a 4.5 day starting Jan 1, becoming world's first country to make employee-friendly transition as part of its efforts to improve productivity and work-life balance.

According to new schedule, Monday to Thursday work timings would be from 7.30 am - 3.30 pm, followed by a half day on Friday from 7.30 am - 12.30 pm. Capital: Abu Dhabi; Currency:- Dirham.

### 5. Malta becomes first European nation to approve cannabis for personal use

Malta became the first European country to allow limited cultivation and possession of cannabis for personal use, following a vote in parliament.

The Netherlands also has a liberal attitude towards cannabis, allowing the sale of small quantities in a policy aimed at managing crime and health risks, though officially it is illegal. Founded in 1566, Valletta is Malta's capital city.

### 6. President Kovind inaugurates landmark Kalibari temple in Dhaka

President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the reconstructed Ramna Kali temple in Ramna, a part of the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka where the landmark Suhrawardy Udyan is located.

The temple was destroyed by Pakistani forces during their Operation Searchlight in March 1971, the brutal crackdown that led to the genocide & the Bangladesh War of Liberation.

### 7. World's first SMS sold as NFT for \$150,000 at Paris auction house

The world's first SMS has been sold as a non-fungible token (NFT) for \$149,729 ('132,680) at auction in Paris. Reading "Merry Christmas," the message was sent by British programmer Neil Papworth from his computer on December 3 1992 to Richard Jarvis, then director of UK telecommunications company Vodafone.



## Sports

### **1. Saurav Ghosal beats top seed Miguel Rodriguez to become 1st Indian to win Malaysian Open squash championships**

Saurav Ghosal made history as he became the 1st Indian to win the Malaysian Open Championships after beating Miguel Rodriguez in the men's singles final.

Ghosal had defeated V Crouin of France 3-0 in the semifinal after crushing L Serme & M Gamal by the same scoreline in the quarterfinals & pre-quarterfinals respectively.

He beat Miguel Rodriguez 11-7, 11-8, 13-11 in final.

### **2. India's Ananya Bansal wins Silver at Asia Youth Paralympic Games in Bahrain**

India's Ananya Bansal won the country's first silver medal in shotput in the F-20 category at the Asia Youth Paralympic Games in Manama, Bahrain yesterday.

Ananya Bansal is an athlete with an intellectual impairment. Deepa Malik, the President of the Paralympic Committee of India lauded Ananya for her performance in the showpiece event.

### **3. India vs NZ: New Zealand's Ajaz Patel creates history; Becomes 3rd bowler in Test cricket to claim all 10 wickets in an innings**

New Zealand spinner Ajaz Patel achieved the rarest of rare feats as he took all 10 wickets to fall in India's first innings in Mumbai. Ajaz Patel became only the third player in the history of Test cricket to do so. He joins England's Jim Laker and former Indian captain Anil Kumble to dismiss 10 opposition players in an innings. Ajaz ended with figures of 10 wickets for 119 runs in 47.5 overs.

### **4. Indian hockey teams to compete in 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games, says CWG Federation**

India has reversed its decision to pull out its hockey teams from next year's Birmingham Commonwealth Games and will compete in the multi-sport quadrennial event 'if they qualify', as per Commonwealth Games Federation.

The Birmingham CWG is scheduled to be held from July 28 to August 8 next year while the Asian Games are starting on September 10. Union Sports Minister - Anurag Thakur

### **5. Viktor Axelsen, Tai Tzu Ying named BWF Male and Female Player of the Year**

Denmark's Viktor Axelsen and Chinese Taipei's Tai Tzu Ying were named male and female player of the year respectively by the Badminton World Federation (BWF).

Starting from the Barcelona Spain Masters in February 2020, world number one Axelsen made 10 out of 11 finals and won seven of them including the Olympic gold in Tokyo this summer.

### **6. Russian Tennis Federation beats Croatia to win Davis Cup after 15-year wait**

Daniil Medvedev guided the Russian Tennis Federation to the Davis Cup Finals title against Croatia in Madrid.

Andrey Rublev earlier had beaten Borna Gojo in straight sets to put the Russians ahead at the Madrid Arena.

Russia's other Davis Cup title was in 2002. Croatia also was seeking its third title after triumphs in 2005 and 2018. Davis Cup Founder: Dwight F. Davis; Most titles: United States; (32 titles).

### **7. Manu Bhaker wins air pistol gold at national championship**

Olympian Manu Bhaker asserted her class by winning the women's air pistol gold in the 64th National shooting championship at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad.

After qualifying in the fifth place with 576, the 19-year-old Manu dominated the final, except when the eventual silver medallist Shri Nivetha briefly snatched the lead.

### **8. Hamilton wins Formula 1's Saudi Arabian Grand Prix 2021**

Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) takes victory in pulsating race at Jeddah. Hamilton took his third consecutive victory in the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix to draw level on points with Max Verstappen in the title race.

### **9. UK, Canada and Australia announce diplomatic boycott of 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics after US**

United Kingdom, Canada and Australia have joined the US-led diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing over concerns about human rights in China.

New Zealand has confirmed it will not send officials to Beijing mostly because of the coronavirus pandemic, but it also voiced concern over human rights issues in China.

### **10. Norway's Magnus Carlsen wins FIDE World Chess Championship**

Reigning world chess champion **Magnus Carlsen** of Norway defended his title and won the FIDE World Championship in Dubai.

He beat Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia, securing the one point he needed to cross the seven point threshold to win the global tournament held at Dubai's Expo 2020 this month in the United Arab Emirates.

Carlsen clinched his fifth world championship title. Carlsen wins 60% of the 2 million-euro prize offered by the championship.

### **11. Olympian Arvind Singh wins gold in Asian Rowing C'ship at Ban Chang, Thailand.**

India's Arvind Singh won the gold in the Lightweight Men's Single Sculls at the Asian Rowing Championship beating his opponents with a time of 7:55.942s.

India ended the championship on a strong note, winning two gold and four silver medals.

In lightweight men's double sculls, Ashish Phugat and Sukhjinder Singh won a silver with a timing of 7:12.568s

### **12. Chandeeep Singh wins India's first ever medal at Para World Taekwondo Championships**

Para-Athlete Chandeeep Singh has bagged Silver medal at Para World Taekwondo Championships and became first Para Athlete from J&K to achieve such a great place at World level.

He won the medal in the Men's plus 80 kg event at the 9th Para World Taekwondo Championships held at Istanbul in Turkey from 9th to 12th December 2021.

### **13. Max Verstappen of Netherlands wins Abu Dhabi GP, beats Lewis Hamilton to become new F1 world champion**

Red Bull's Max Verstappen took his first Formula One title, denying rival Lewis Hamilton a record eighth, with a last-lap overtake to win a season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix at the Yas Marina Circuit.

Hamilton's Mercedes team secured the constructors' championship for an unprecedented eighth successive year.

### **14. VVS Laxman takes over as NCA chief**

Former India batter VVS Laxman began his stint as the new head of the National Cricket Academy. VVS Laxman has replaced Rahul Dravid, who left the top job at NCA to join the senior national men's cricket team as its head coach.

He was also directly involved with the Indian developmental teams which include India A, India Under-19, India Under-23 teams.

### **15. AIBA rebrands itself as IBA, eyes boxing's reinstatement in 2028 LA Olympics with reforms**

The International Boxing Association has changed its acronym from AIBA to IBA, promising to adopt a set of governance reforms so as to keep the sport's inclusion at the 2028 Olympics.

Boxing, weightlifting and modern pentathlon were all left off the initial list of sports for the 2028 Los Angeles Games and were asked to make changes by the International Olympic Committee.

#### **16. BCCI Announces The Formation Of Differently-Abled Cricket Committee**

Disability cricketers have welcomed the decision of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to form a Differently Abled Committee for the differently abled cricketers.

On the basis of the recommendation of the Justice Lodha committee, a board of three former disabled cricketers was being awaited for the last several years. The Proposal was approved by BCCI headed by president Sourav Ganguly & secretary Jay Shah

#### **17. David Warner, Hayley Matthews bag ICC's Player of the Month award for November**

Australia opener David Warner and West Indies all-rounder Hayley Matthews were voted the ICC Players of the Month for November.

Warner, nominated for the ICC Men's Player of the Month award alongside Pakistan's Abid Ali and New Zealand's Tim Southee, emerged victorious with the most votes, following his crucial role in Australia's triumph in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021

#### **18. India's HansiniMathan Rajan beats Tokyo Olympics' youngest athlete to win ITTF title**

India's HansiniMathan Rajan defeated Syria's Hend Zaza, the youngest athlete of this year's Tokyo Olympics, to win the girls singles event at the 2021 ITTF Hopes and Challenge table tennis tournament in Amman. Playing in the U-12 category, the reigning cadet national champion outplayed Zaza. Parth Prabhakar was India's entry in the boys singles event which was won by Iran.

#### **19. BWF World Championships 2021 Final : Kidambi Srikanth bags historic silver, goes down fighting to Loh Kean Yew**

India's shuttler Kidambi Srikanth scripted history, as he became the first male player from the nation to win a silver medal beating Singapore's Loh Kean Yew in BWF World Championships at Carolina Marin Stadium in Huelva, Spain.

It was the first final of the division for both nations, and Singapore becomes the fifth nation to win gold in the men's singles at the Worlds. Lakshya Sen, from India, bagged a bronze medal.

#### **20. Beijing Winter Olympics: Harjinder Singh appointed as India's Chef de Mission**

The Indian Olympic Association of India (IOA) has appointed Ice Hockey Association of India's general secretary, Harjinder Singh, as the Chef de Mission of the country's contingent for the upcoming 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

Singh was the Chef de Mission of the Indian contingent for the 23rd Winter Olympic Games too, which was held in Pyeongchang, South Korea in 2018.

#### **21. Anahat Singh becomes first Indian girl to win Jr Squash Open in US**

13-year-old Delhi girl Anahat Singh became the first Indian to win the prestigious US Junior Squash Open at the Arlen Spectre Centre in Philadelphia.

Anahat won the title in the Under-15 category, beating Jayda Marei from Egypt 11-9, 11-5, 8-11, 11-5. Earlier, in the semifinals, she had beaten US national champion Dixon Hill 11-8, 11-9, 11-5.

#### **22. Asian Champions Trophy: India beat Pakistan 4-3 to win bronze, Korea lift title**

India beat Pakistan 4-3 in a pulsating third-fourth place contest to clinch the bronze medal at the Asian Champions Trophy men's hockey tournament. It was India's second win over Pakistan in the tournament after having beaten them 3-1 in the round-robin stages. The Indian team took the lead in the very first minute through vice-captain Harmanpreet Singh before Sumit (45th), South Korea emerged as the champions after beating Japan 4-2.

### **23. James Anderson becomes the first batter in history to stay not-out in a Test inning 100 times**

On the third day of play in the pink-ball Test at the Adelaide Oval, Anderson created a unique record with the bat. In fact, he became the first player to achieve this feat in the history of the sport.

After staying unbeaten on the crease as England were bowled out for a meager 236 runs, Anderson became the first batter to stay not-out in a Test inning 100 times. Courtney Wash is second on the list having stayed unbeaten 61 times.

### **24. World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has restored the accreditation of the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL)**

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has restored the accreditation of the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL), which was suspended in 2019 because of its failure to comply with global standards. The NDTL can resume testing with immediate effect. India is currently third in the WADA's global list of dope violators, led by Russia.

### **25. Anchal Thakur becomes first Indian to win two international skiing medals with bronze at Montenegro**

Indian skier Anchal Thakur won her second international medal in alpine skiing at the FIS Alpine Ski Competition in Kolasin in Montenegro, keeping alive her hopes of qualifying for the next year's Winter Olympics in Beijing.

Anchal won third place in the giant slalom section of the FIS Alpine Ski Competition. Montenegro is a Balkan country ;Capital: Podgorica; Currency: Euro.

### **26. Bangladesh win SAFF U 19 Women's Championship**

Bangladesh Under-19 Women's team defeated India by 1-0 to lift the SAFF U-19 Women's Football Championship in Dhaka.

Shaheda Akter Ripa of Bangladesh scored the maximum number of goals in the tournament. She was given the 'most valuable player' of the game award.

### **27. Pankaj Advani wins his 11th National Billiards title**

Ace cueist Pankaj Advani defended his national billiards title ' his 11th in the tournament ' after he defeated his PSPB teammate Dhruv Sitwala 5-2 in a best of nine games final.

Advani responded with breaks of 56 and 46 to restore parity at 1-1 after Sitwala's breaks of 64 and 42 late.

### **28. Ross Taylor announces retirement from international cricket**

Veteran New Zealand batter Ross Taylor has announced that he will retire from international cricket at the end of the ongoing domestic season. Taylor hence will play his final appearance in the second Test against Bangladesh, where he will equal Daniel Vettori's record of 112 tests for New Zealand. He will be part of the one-day international series in Australia. He is the first cricketer to play more than 100 matches for New Zealand in all 3 formats.

### **29. SA Wicketkeeper-Batter Quinton de Kock Announces Sudden Retirement From Tests**

South Africa's wicketkeeper-batter Quinton de Kock announced his retirement from Test cricket with immediate effect late.

His announcement came just hours after South Africa's 113-run defeat to India in the first Test of the three-match series.

De Kock cited his intentions to spend more time with his growing family for the timing.

## Agreements & MoUs

### 1. IREDA signs pact with BVFCL to provide techno-financial consultancy for RE projects

State-owned Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has signed a pact with Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Ltd (BVFCL) to provide its techno-financial expertise in developing renewable energy projects and fundraising.

Under the MoU, IREDA will undertake techno-financial due diligence of renewable energy, green hydrogen, green ammonia, etc. for BVFCL.

### 2. SBI, Adani Capital sign pact for co-lending to farmers

State Bank of India (SBI) has signed an agreement with Adani Capital, the non-banking finance company (NBFC) arm of the Adani Group, for co-lending to farmers for purchase of tractors and farm implement.

RBI had issued guidelines on the co-lending schemes for banks and NBFCs for priority-sector lending, to improve credit flow towards underserved sectors of the economy.

### 3. Tata Power bags India's largest solar and battery project worth Rs 945 crore from Solar Energy Corp

Tata Power Company said that its wholly owned subsidiary Tata Power Solar Systems has received Letter of Award (LoA) from Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI).

After the contract, the utility scale EPC order book of Tata Power Solar now stands at around 4.4 GW (DC) capacity with an approximate value of Rs 9,000 crore without GST. SECI project sites are located in Chhattisgarh

### 4. India, S Korea hold third Strategic Dialogue, discuss partnership in high tech, supply chain resilience

India and South Korea held the third Strategic Dialogue where the two sides discussed in-depth critical and high technologies, supply chain resistance, and ways to further enhance the Special Strategic Partnership.

The two sides identified areas of cooperation in Cyber Security and Information Technology, Maritime Security, terrorism, extremism, etc.

### 5. India Russia sign pact to deepen space cooperation

India and Russia has vowed to deepen collaboration in the space sector, including in the human spaceflight programme, and signed an agreement for cooperation in the building as well as operation of launch vehicles.

The pact was signed during the India-Russia summit held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

### 6. MoHUA and UNDP sign MoU to strengthen waste management sector in India under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Development Programme India to strengthen the waste management sector in India under the overall ambit of Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban 2.0.

Solid waste management has been a key focus of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban since its launch in 2014.

### 7. Paytm partners AWS to offer its startup toolkit for entrepreneurs

India's leading digital ecosystem for consumers and merchants, Paytm, has partnered with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to offer its startup toolkit to startups onboarded on AWS Activate, a program that offers startups free tools, resources, & more to quickly get started on AWS.

The Paytm startup toolkit is a single-stop platform that offers solutions in payments, banking, etc.

### **8. India, ADB sign 150 million dollar loan agreement to provide affordable housing for urban poor in Tamil Nadu**

India and Asian Development Bank has signed a 150 million dollar loan agreement to provide affordable housing for urban poor in Tamil Nadu.

The project is aligned with the Government's development priorities and policies on urban sector development, particularly the flagship program Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Housing for All.

### **9. ISRO, Oppo collaborate to strengthen R&D of NavIC messaging service**

The Indian Space Research Organisation has signed an agreement with Chinese smart devices maker Oppo's Indian arm to strengthen the research and development of the NavIC messaging service. The messaging service is mainly used for broadcasting safety-of-life alerts in areas with poor or no communication, particularly in the oceans.

Oppo India has its manufacturing unit in Noida and R&D centre in Hyderabad.

### **10. Ministry of Defence has entered into a MoU with Indian Institute of Teacher Education, Gandhinagar.**

Ministry of Defence has entered into an MoU with the Indian Institute of Teacher Education to facilitate training to teachers of Sainik Schools.

The MoU is a significant step towards the capacity building of teachers of Sainik Schools in terms of imparting quality education to students with Indian ethos.

### **11. Mahindra And Jio-bp Sign MoU To Work On Battery Swapping Tech And EV Solutions**

Reliance BP Mobility Limited (RBML), which operates under the brand name Jio-bp, has signed a non-binding MoU with Mahindra Group.

The two companies plan to create electric vehicle (EV) products and services, along with exploring synergies in low-carbon and conventional fuels.

Under the new MoU, Mahindra and Jio-bp will explore creating solutions on battery swapping tech.

### **12. Adani Green Energy inks pact with SECI to supply 4,667 MW renewable energy**

Adani Green Energy (AGEL) has inked a pact with state run Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) to supply 4667 MW of green energy.

The world's largest ever green power purchase agreement (PPA).

India's dual objective to accelerate India's renewable energy footprint as well as promote domestic manufacturing under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat programme.

### **13. Karnataka joins hands with UNDP to impart 21st century digital skills and improve opportunities for youth**

Karnataka's Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports has entered an LoU (Letter of Understanding) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as part of the state-level initiative 'Code-Unnati', with an aim to improve access to entrepreneurship and employment opportunities among youth including women.

UNDP is the largest UN development aid agency.

UNDP Headquartered at:- New York, USA.

### **14. SBI collected Rs 346 crore since FY18 in additional services fee on basic saving, Jan Dhan account**

The country's largest lender State Bank of India collected around Rs. 346 cr from 2017-18 up to Oct 2021 in the form of additional services to customers holding basic savings, including Jan Dhan accounts, which were beyond their free services.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana provide basic minimum facilities free of charge and without the need to maintain a minimum balance. PMJDY is a scheme introduced by the government in 2014.

### **15. India, Germany Development Bank sign 442.26 mn loan pact for Surat Metro Rail Project**

The Government of India and the Germany Development Bank - KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau) signed a 442.26 million euros loan pact for Surat Metro Rail project. The total cost of the project is 1.5 billion euros, of which KfW is financing 442.26 million euros. The project is being co-financed by French Development Agency, AFD (Agence Française de Développement).

### **16. redBus, IRCTC collaborate to launch rail ticketing service 'redRail'**

Online bus ticketing platform redBus announced its foray into rail ticketing with the launch of redRail. redBus has launched this rail ticket booking service in collaboration with IRCTC (Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation) as their authorised partner.

As an introductory offer, redRail will not levy any service fee or payment gateway charges. Prakash Sangam, CEO, redBus.

### **17. Infosys, Common Services Centres join hands to upskill 6 crore rural citizens across India**

CSC, an SPV under the Ministry of Electronics & IT, has tied up with Infosys to empower students in the age group of 10-22 yrs with digital skills through Infosys Springboard, a digital platform that helps accelerate reskilling and improves employability.

They will work together to upskill students from underprivileged communities in rural & semi-urban areas.

### **18. Airbus selects Tata Technologies as strategic supplier**

Global engineering and product development digital services firm Tata Technologies announced that it has been selected by European aerospace major Airbus as a strategic supplier. The company will become engineering, manufacturing engineering, and services strategic supplier (EMES3).

### **19. NPCI partners with Udemy Business to upskill employees**

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has announced its partnership with Udemy Business to encourage continuous learning and skill development for its employees. NPCI offers programs to build capability in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Blockchain, Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT), Advance Open Source, And a few others.

### **20. India and ADB sign \$ 350 million policy-based loan pact to improve access to urban services**

India and Asian Development Bank have signed a \$ 350 million policy-based loan to improve access to urban services by accelerating policy actions and reforms to enhance service delivery and promote performance-based central fiscal transfers to urban local bodies. The first subprogram will establish essential policies and guidelines for urban reforms at the national level.

### **21. NITI Aayog signed a Statement of Intent with United Nations World Food Program (WFP)**

NITI Aayog signed a Statement of Intent with the United Nations World Food Program (WFP). The partnership focuses on mainstreaming millets and supporting India in taking lead globally in knowledge exchange using the opportunity of 2023 as an International Year of Millets. Government of India observed 2018 as a year of millets.

### **22. Central Bank of India and U GRO Capital sign co-lending agreement**

U GRO Capital, an NSE & BSE listed, MSME lending FinTech platform, announced that it has signed a co-lending agreement with Central Bank of India.

Under this partnership, the two entities aim to disburse up to INR 10 billion to U GRO Capital's varied MSME segments under its programs like Pratham, Sanjeevani, Saathi, GRO MSME and Machinery financing, in next 12 months. Central Bank of India (nationalised bank)- under the ownership of Ministry of Finance.

### **23. Karnataka gets additional \$150 million from World Bank to provide continuous piped water supply in three cities**

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved additional financing of \$150 million to the ongoing Karnataka Urban Water Supply Modernization Project in order to accelerate the state of Karnataka's efforts to bring continuous piped water supply to the entire population in three of its cities. Junaid Ahmad, World Bank's Country Director in India.

### **24. Govt signs 140 mn euro loan agreement with KfW for energy sector reforms in Madhya Pradesh**

The Government of India (GoI) and the German development bank KfW signed agreements for a Euro 140 million reduced interest loan and Euro 2 million grant for an energy reform programme in Madhya Pradesh. The project comprises two components - implementation of smart meters and Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI); and separation of agriculture and non-agriculture feeders.

### **25. Agra Metro Rail Project: India, European Investment Bank sign contract for '250 million loan**

The financing from EIB will help to fund the construction of a 29.4 km metro corridor comprised of Corridor-1 from Sikandara to Taj East Gate (14 km) and Corridor-2 from Agra Cantt to KalindiVihar (15.4 km) in the Agra City. The Agra Metro Project will connect major tourist attractions like Taj Mahal, Agra Fort etc. EIB HQ: Luxembourg

### **26. Cabinet approves MoU between ICAI & Polish Chamber of Statutory Auditors**

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) and the Polish Chamber of Statutory Auditors (PIBR).

### **27. Cabinet clears MoU between India, Mauritius competition regulators**

The Union Cabinet has approved signing of a pact between Competition Commission of India (CCI) and Competition Commission of Mauritius (CCM). The MoU is aimed at promoting and strengthening of co-operation in competition law and policy through exchange of information, sharing of best practices and capacity building initiatives. Mauritius Capital: Port Louis, Currency: Mauritian rupee.

### **28. Prasar Bharati signs MoU with ICCR to promote Indian Culture**

Prasar Bharati and Indian Council for Cultural Relations signed a MoU for promoting Indian culture. The performances of the eminent artists associated with ICCR will be telecast on the national and International Channels of Doordarshan. This MoU will be in operation for the period of three years from December 2021 till December 2024. Prasar Bharati CEO - Shashi Shekhar Vempati

### **29. Paytm Payments Bank, MoneyGram partner to offer international remittance directly to Paytm Wallet**

Paytm Payments Bank, an associate entity of Paytm, and Nasdaq-listed MoneyGram, a global leader in digital P2P payments, have entered into a partnership to enable MoneyGram customers globally to send money in real-time to a Paytm Wallet user in India.

This is MoneyGram's first mobile wallet partnership in India. MoneyGram:- an American cross-border P2P payments & money transfer company.

### **30. SIDBI, West Bengal ink pact to boost MSME sector**

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Bengal government to develop its MSME ecosystem.

SIDBI is the country's principal financial institution engaged in the promotion, financing and development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME).

### **31. HDFC Bank ties up with IPPB to serve semi-urban, rural areas**

HDFC Bank has tied up with India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) to offer its banking services to the unbanked and underserved segments in semi-urban and rural areas.



A MoU was signed between HDFC Bank & IPPB to cater to the majority of over 4.7 crore customer base of IPPB.

About 90% of IPPB customers reside in rural areas, which may benefit from this tie-up. HDFC CEO: Sashidhar Jagdishan; Headquarters: Mumbai.



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## Schemes

### **1. National Mission on Edible Oils ' Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) launched with the aim to augment the availability of edible oil in India**

During the year 2020-21, India imported 133.5 lakh tonnes of edible oil, out of which the share of palm oil was around 56 %.

The salient features of NMEO-Oil palm include assistance for planting material, inputs for intercropping up to a gestation period of 4 years.

The total approved cost of the NMEO (Oil Palm) Scheme is ' 11,040 crore.

### **2. NEDFi Announces New Scheme Atmanirbhar Hastshilpkar Scheme for the Artisans under Ministry of Doner**

With the objective to develop the petty artisans of the North Eastern Region by providing financial assistance in the form of term loans for income-generating activities for setting up/expansion/modernization/working capital requirement and other activities related to the sector, NEDFi has introduced Atmanirbhar Hastshilpkar Scheme to the grass-root Artisans of the region. North Eastern Development Finance Corporation has its head office at Dispur, Guwahati.

### **3. Cabinet approves extension of Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin(PMAY-G) till March 2024**

PMAY-G has been granted an extension beyond March 2021 and till March 2024.

The continuation of the scheme ensures the remaining 155.75 lakh households within the overall target of 2.95 crore houses under PMAY-G will be provided assistance for the construction of pucca houses with basic amenities to achieve the objective of 'Housing for All' in rural areas. The total financial implication for the remaining construction is Rs.1,98,581 crore

### **4. Cabinet approves Ken-Betwa river linking project at cost of Rs 44,605 crore.**

A proposal of this effect was approved in the meeting of the Cabinet chaired by PM Modi.

A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) called Ken-Betwa Link Project Authority (KBLPA) will be set up to implement the project.

Under the Ken-Betwa link project, water will be transferred from Ken to Betwa river through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal linking the two rivers.

The project has a deadline of eight years.

### **5. Civil aviation ministry receives in-principle approval for setting up 21 greenfield airports across India**

The civil aviation ministry has received 'in-principle' approval for setting up 21 greenfield airports across the country, the ministry informed the parliament.

Out of these 21 airports, eight airports have been operationalized.

154 Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) airports, including 14 water aerodromes and 36 helipads, have been identified for development/upgradation.

### **6. India inducts 148 athletes, including 20 new, in list of TOPS athletes for 2024 Olympics**

A total of 148 athletes, including 20 new inductees, in seven Olympic disciplines and six Paralympic disciplines, have been identified for support under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme at a meeting of the Mission Olympic Cell of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. TOP scheme which is an attempt to provide assistance to India's top athletes. This scheme was started in 2014.

### **7. ABRY scheme: Maharashtra tops chart with maximum number of beneficiaries**

As on December 4, 2021, as many as 6,49,560 beneficiaries were recorded in Maharashtra, followed by Tamil Nadu (5,35,615), Gujarat (4,44,741) and Karnataka (3,07,164).

The government had launched ABRY to incentivize employment generation in Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) registered establishments during COVID-19 for a period from October 1, 2020 to March 31.

### **8. Cabinet Approves Incentive Schemes Worth Rs 76,000 Crore For Semiconductors**

In a bid to promote semiconductors and display manufacturing ecosystem in India, the Union Cabinet has cleared incentive scheme worth Rs 76,000 crore.

Under this initiative, the government plans to set up over 20 semiconductor design, components manufacturing, and display fabrication (fab) units in India over the six years.

### **9. CCEA okays extension of all 3 parts of PM Krishi Sinchayee Yojana till 2026**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved extension of all three components of the umbrella scheme of 'Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojna' till 2025-26 which among things will fund construction of dams such as Renukaji (Himachal Pradesh) and Lahkwar (Uttarakhand) that in turn will significantly improve water supply to capital Delhi and its adjoining areas. The extension has been approved with an outlay of Rs 93,068 cr.

### **10. Govt to launch overdraft facility of Rs. 5,000 for women SHG members under DAY-NRLM**

Nagendra Nath Sinha, Secretary, Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development will launch the overdraft facility of Rs. 5,000 to verified women SHG members under DAY-NRLM. The event will also include a 'Discourse on Rural Financial Inclusion' in which top officials from Banks and State missions will participate.

### **11. Jan Dhan accounts surpass the 44-cr mark**

The total number of beneficiaries under the Centre's financial inclusion scheme, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), has crossed the 44 crore mark.

The total number of accounts opened under PMJDY stood at 44.05 crore, with a total balance of '1,47,812 crore as on December 8.

Uttar Pradesh tops the list with highest number of accounts followed by Bihar. Since its launch in 2014, the scheme has been steadily expanding its base.

### **12. Govt approves implementation of PMKSY scheme for 2021-26**

The Cabinet approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for 2021-26. The PMKSY is an umbrella scheme, consisting of two major components being implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, namely, Accelerated Irrigation Benefits. HKKP, in turn, consists of four sub-components.

### **13. PM Modi transfers '1,000 cr to bank accounts of SHGs**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi transferred '1,000 crore to bank accounts of self help groups to benefit around 16 lakh women.

The amount was transferred under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM).

The mission aims to provide women, especially those at the grassroots, with necessary skills, incentives and resources.

### **14. Private hospitals to be tagged for being breastfeeding-friendly**

The Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) in collaboration with Association of Healthcare Providers of India (AHPI) has launched an accreditation programme that will enable hospitals to get a 'breastfeeding-friendly' tag. This programme is called 'Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)'.

### **15. Telangana tops in implementation of Rurban Mission**

Telangana stood first in the implementation of the Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM) that was launched 4 years in the past to stimulate native financial growth, improve fundamental companies and create properly deliberate clusters.

Sangareddy and Kamareddy districts stood in the primary two positions among the many 300 clusters.

Tamil Nadu and Gujarat took the second and third positions respectively.



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## Appointments & Resignations

### 1. Sambit Patra appointed chairman of India Tourism Development Corporation

Sambit Patra has been appointed as the chairman of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

IAS officer, GKV Rao will hold the post of managing director of ITDC.

The India Tourism Development Corporation is a hospitality, retail, and education company owned by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Tourism.

### 2. Pradip Shah appointed NARCL Chairman; Sanjay Jain made IDRCL chief

Pradip Shah, founder of IndAsia Fund Advisors, has been appointed chairman of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL) while Aditya Birla Asset Reconstruction Company managing director Sanjay Jain will be the chief executive of India Debt Resolution Company (IDRCL), the privately owned asset management company (AMC) mandated to resolve bad loans acquired by NARCL.

### 3. General Atlantic appoints Mastercard's Ajay Banga as Vice Chairman

Global growth equity giant General Atlantic has announced the appointment of former Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga as Vice Chairman. Banga will advise on strategic matters for the firm, its investment teams, and its portfolio of more than 165 growth companies around the world.

Banga, who will hand over the reins of Mastercard to Michael Miebach. He will assume his responsibilities with General Atlantic on January 1, 2022.

### 4. IMF appoints chief economist Gita Gopinath as first deputy MD

The International Monetary Fund appointed its outgoing chief economist Gita Gopinath as its first deputy managing director (FDMD), the second-highest position at the multilateral lending agency after that of the managing director.

Gopinath will start in her new position as FDMD on 21 January 2022 after current FDMD Geoffrey Okamoto leaves the Fund early next year.

### 5. Alka Upadhyaya appointed chairperson of National Highways Authority of India

#Alka Upadhyaya has been appointed as the chairperson of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

#Sanjay Bandopadhyay has been named chairman, Inland Waterways Authority of India.

#Sundeep Kumar Nayak has been appointed as the Director General, National Productivity Council, Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade.

### 6. OYO appoints former SBI chairman Rajnish Kumar as strategic group advisor

IPO-bound hospitality unicorn Oyo Hotels and Homes (Oyo) said that it has appointed Rajnish Kumar, former Chairman of State Bank of India (SBI) as Strategic Group Advisor.

In his role, Kumar will advise Oyo's management on short-term and long-term strategy, regulatory and stakeholder engagement, and enhancing the brand of the company globally.  
Ritesh Agarwal - founder and chairman, OYO

### 7. Neelam Rao appointed PF Commissioner

The Government has appointed Madhya Pradesh cadre IAS officer Neelam Shammi Rao as the Central Provident Fund Commissioner in the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). The ACC approved Ms. Rao's transfer from her current post, Director General (Training) in the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, to the top post of the retirement fund body.

### 8. Ujjivan Small Finance Bank appoints Ittira Davis as MD & CEO

The Board of Directors of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank appointed Ittira Davis as the MD and CEO of the bank.

Davis has been appointed as the MD and CEO for a period of 3 years from the date of approval of the RBI or such other period as may be approved by RBI.

Davis was the MD and CEO of Ujjivan Financial Services Limited from July 2018 from where he resigned in 2021.

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank headquarters- Bengaluru.

### **9. FICCI appoints Hindustan Unilever Limited Chairman, MD Sanjiv Mehta as President-Elect**

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) announced that Sanjiv Mehta, the Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) will be appointed as its President on December 18.

Mehta, presently the Senior Vice President of FICCI, will be succeeding media industry veteran Uday Shankar. Arun Chawla, Director-General of FICCI.

### **10. President Barrow wins second term in Gambia election**

Gambia, Adama Barrow comfortably won a second term in The Gambia's presidential election. Barrow obtained 457,519 votes, while Ousainou Darboe, a lawyer and long-time opponent of former President Yahya Jammeh, came in second place.

Barrow obtained the majority of the votes in 45 of the 53 electoral districts of the country, consolidating his leadership for a second term. Gambia's longtime dictator :- Yahya Jammeh (exiled).

### **11. Olaf Scholz will be sworn in as Germany's next chancellor**

Olaf Scholz is to be voted in as chancellor by the Bundestag (German federal parliament), opening a new chapter in German and European politics as the Merkel era comes to an end. He will lead a government composed of his Social Democrat party, the business-friendly Free Democrats and the Greens, a coalition of parties never tried before at the federal level in Germany. Germany's Capital:- Berlin; Currency :- Euro.

### **12. JaspritBumrah roped in as brand ambassador OnePlus wearables**

OnePlus, the global technology brand has welcomed cricketer JaspritBumrah as Brand Ambassador for its Wearables category.

The OnePlus Wearable category includes the OnePlus Watch, the first global smart wearable from OnePlus that offers a premium design, seamless connection, smart fitness tracking and an incredible battery life.

### **13. Catherine Russell appointed new UNICEF chief**

UN Secretary'GeneralAntnio Guterres announced, that Catherine Russell of the United States will become the next Executive Director of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

She is UNICEF's eighth Executive Director, and the fourth woman to lead the 20,000-person-strong agency in its 75-year history.

Ms. Russell will assume her new functions early in the new year.

### **14. Narendra Modi congratulates Olaf Scholz for being appointed Germany's new chancellor**

Olaf Scholz was appointed as Germany's new Chancellor, marking the end of former Chancellor Angela Merkel's 16 years in power. The head of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), Scholz won the secret vote in the Parliament yesterday with 395 votes to 303. This big victory came after SPD's narrow win in September's federal elections. Since 2018, Scholz has served as the finance minister.

### **15. Sunil Arora joins Board of Advisers for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance**

Former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India Sunil Arora has joined the Board of Advisers for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). The institute is assisted by a 15-member Board of Advisers that consists of eminent personalities

from various fields. Arora was the 23rd CEC of India and held office from Dec 2, 2018, to April 12, 2021. IDEA is an inter-governmental organization based in Stockholm, Sweden.

#### **16. Chanel names Indian-origin Leena Nair as new global CEO**

French fashion house Chanel named Leena Nair, an executive from Unilever, as its new global CEO, picking a consumer goods veteran to run one of the world's biggest luxury goods groups. Chanel was founded in 1910 by fashion legend Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel as a hat boutique on rue Cambon in Paris and grew to become a byword for French chic.

#### **17. Arvind Kumar joins Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) as Director General**

Arvind Kumar has joined as Director General of Software Technology of India. Software Technology Parks of India is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology Government of India. STPI is fuelling the culture of tech entrepreneurship and innovation in the country by launching 25 + Centres of Entrepreneurship in emerging technology domains.

#### **18. Mohit Jain Elected As New President Of Indian Newspaper Society**

Mr. Mohit Jain of The Economic Times has been elected President of The Indian Newspaper Society for the year 2021-22. He succeeds Mr. L. Adimoolam of Health & The Antiseptic. The 82nd Annual General Meeting of the Indian Newspaper Society ' an apex body of Publishers of Newspapers, Magazines & Periodicals in the country, was held through Video Conference.

#### **19. PV Sindhu among 6 appointed members of Badminton World Federation Athletes' Commission till 2025**

Iris Wang (USA), Robin Tabeling (NED), Greysia Polii (INA), Kim Soyeong (KOR), Pusarla V Sindhu (IND) and Zheng Si Wei (CHN) are the ones appointed as members of the BWF Athletes' Commission.

The Chair of the BWF Athletes' Commission, following a vetting process as required for all Council members, will become a member of Council until the next elections in 2025.

#### **20. Atul Dinkar Rane appointed as BrahMos Aerospace chief**

Atul Dinkar Rane has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of the BrahMos Aerospace Limited that manufactures the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.

His pioneering contributions and techno-managerial leadership has been transformative for the successful development and induction of BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile into Armed Forces. BrahMos is a medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile, Maximum speed: Mach 4.

#### **21. Pradeep Kumar Rawat appointed as India's new envoy to China**

Senior Indian diplomat Pradeep Kumar Rawat, who is well-versed in negotiating with Chinese diplomats, has appointed as India's next Ambassador to China.

Rawat's appointment comes amid the lingering border stand-off in eastern Ladakh.

Rawat is currently the country's envoy to the Netherlands. He was an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer of the 1990 batch.

#### **22. Kamlesh Gandhi appointed Co-Chairman, FIDC**

Finance Industry Development Council (FIDC), which is a representative body of asset and loan financing NBFCs, has announced fresh appointments to its board of directors. Kamlesh Gandhi, CMD of MAS Financial Services has been appointed as Co-Chairman, FIDC in addition to Umesh Revankar, CEO and MD of Shriram Transport Finance Group. Sanjay Chamria has resigned as the Co-Chairman and Director, FIDC

### **23. Mohammed bin Sulayem succeeds Jean Todt as FIA president**

Mohammed Ben Sulayem has been elected as the new president of the Fdration Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA). He succeeds Jean Todt, who retires from the role after 12 years, having served the maximum three terms possible.

### **24. RBL Bank MD, CEO Vishwavir Ahuja steps aside; Rajeev Ahuja appointed new MD**

Private lender RBL Bank has said its chief executive Vishwavir Ahuja will go on leave with immediate effect, adding that the board has appointed executive director Rajeev Ahuja as an interim replacement.

### **25. Indian-origin judge Narandran 'Jody' Kollapen appointed to South Africa's highest judicial bench**

Narandran 'Jody' Kollapen, who is Indian origin, has been appointed to South Africa's highest judicial bench, the Constitutional Court.

The appointment of 64-year-old Kollapen&Rammaka Steven Mathopo as the latest additions to the Constitutional Court after a lengthy process of public interviews. Both will take office from January 1, 2022.

Capitals: Cape Town, Pretoria, Bloemfontein. President: Cyril Ramaphosa; Currency:- rand.

### **26. EishinChihana Appointed New Chairman of Yamaha Motor India Group**

India Yamaha Motor (IYM) Pvt Ltd. has announced that EishinChihana has taken charge of the Group's India operations as its new Chairman.

He has replaced Mr. MotofumiShitara. Chihana has been associated with Yamaha Motor Company and its group companies across the globe since 1991.

He is an expert in different verticals like Sales, Marketing & Business Management.

### **27. Praveen Kumar, appointed as Director General & CEO of Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs**

Govt of India has approved the appointment of Shri Praveen Kumar, IAS, Former Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship to the post of Director General & Chief Executive Officer, Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA).

The proposal for setting up IICA was approved by Planning Commission in the year 2007. It was established in 2008 at Manesar, Haryana.

### **28. Radhika Jha appointed CEO of Energy Efficiency Services**

Radhika Jha, has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer in state-run Energy Efficiency Services (EESL). EESL is a joint venture between NTPC, Power Grid, Power Finance Corp and REC, working to promote energy efficiency in the country.

Prior to that, she was the Secretary to the CM of Uttarakhand from 2017 to 2021.

### **29. Diplomat Vikram Misri Appointed As Deputy National Security Advisor**

China expert and former Indian envoy to Beijing Vikram Misri has been appointed as the Deputy National Security Advisor (NSA) in the National Security Council Secretariat.

Misri, an expert on China's issue is a 1989 batch IPS officer will succeed Pankaj Saran. He will report to national security adviser Ajit Doval. In 2012, he was appointed the private secretary to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

### **30. RBI approves re-designation of Rajiv Anand as Axis Bank Deputy MD**

The Reserve Bank of India has approved the re-designation of Rajiv Anand as the Deputy Managing Director of Axis Bank.

Anand, joined Axis Bank in May 2013 from its asset management arm, Axis Asset Management Co Ltd, where he was the Managing Director & CEO.

Anand was appointed as a director of the bank in May 2016 and thereafter as the Executive Director (Retail Banking). Amitabh Chaudhry, is the Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of Axis Bank.



### **31. CP Goyal appointed Director-General of Forests & Special Secretary (DGF&SS)**

Indian Forest Service officer Chandra Prakash Goyal has been appointed as the Director-General of Forests & Special Secretary (DGF&SS), Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change.

Goyal, a 1986 batch IFS officer was previously the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest under Uttar Pradesh Department of Forest.

### **32. Centre appoints Atul Kumar Goel as new MD & CEO of Punjab National Bank**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Atul Kumar Goel, MD & CEO of UCO Bank, as MD & CEO of Punjab National Bank (PNB) with effect from February 1 next year.

Goel will serve as PNB chief until December 31, 2024, which is his attaining the superannuation age. Goel will replace Mallikarjuna Rao, incumbent MD & CEO of PNB.

### **33. Pankaj Sharma Appointed As India's Next Ambassador To Mexico**

Pankaj Sharma has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Mexico.

Sharma is presently Permanent Representative of India to the UN Conference on Disarmament, Geneva.

Meanwhile, Dr. Anupam Ray has been appointed as the next Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament, Geneva. Mexico's Capital: Mexico City; Currency: Mexican peso.

### **34. India To Chair Counter-terrorism Committee At UNSC In January 2022**

India will be chairing the Counterterrorism Committee in January 2022 at United Nations Security Council. The committee stands for greater significance for India, as the country has been pitching pertinent measures to evict and fight terrorism on the global platform.

The UNSC Committee on Counterterrorism will be chaired by India after 10 years. India last chaired this committee in 2012.

### **35. ITBP DG Sanjay Arora to hold SSB additional charge**

ITBP director general Sanjay Arora will hold the additional charge of another border guarding force SSB as the latter's chief Kumar Rajesh Chandra is set to retire on December 31.

Arora, a 1988-batch officer of Tamil Nadu cadre, was appointed the ITBP DG in August 2021. The SSB is primarily tasked to guard unfenced Indian borders with Nepal and Bhutan.

### **36. Vasudevan reappointed as MD, CEO of Equitas Small Finance Bank for 3 years**

Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited board of directors has approved the proposal for re-appointment of Vasudevan Pathangi Narasimhan (PN) as the MD & CEO for three years, with effect from July 23, 2022, up to July 22, 2025, subject to the RBI & shareholders' approval.

He was appointed as the MD of erstwhile Equitas Finance Limited, now a bank, with effect from July 23, 2016.

### **37. AU Small Finance Bank appoints former RBI deputy governor H R Khan on board**

AU Small Finance Bank has appointed Harun Rashid Khan as Non-Executive Independent Director (Additional Director) on the Board, for a period of three years, effective immediately.

He is a former Deputy Governor and the Executive Director at the Reserve Bank of India.

AU Small Finance started its banking operations in April 2017.

## Awards

### 1. Lionel Messi wins record seventh men's Ballon d'Or

Lionel Messi won the men's Ballon d'Or for a record-extending seventh time during the 65th Ballon d'Or ceremony at Theatre du Chatelet, in Paris.

Alexia Putellas became the third winner of the women's award for an outstanding season with Barcelona and Spain.

### 2. V Praveen Rao, selected for Dr M S Swaminathan Award for the period 2017-19

V Praveen Rao, Vice-Chancellor of Prof. Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU), has been selected for Dr M S Swaminathan Award for the period 2017-19.

The biennial national award was constituted by Retired ICAR Employees Association (RICAREA) and Nuziveedu Seeds Limited. It carries a cash prizes of '2 lakh and a citation. The award selection committee, headed by former ICAR Director-General, RS Paroda.

### 3. Dadabhai Naoroji biography wins Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021

A biography of Dadabhai Naoroji, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, by Dinyar Patel was named winner of the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021.

The winner was selected by a jury chaired by political scientist Niraja Gopal Jayal and also comprising entrepreneurs Nandan Nilekani & Manish Sabharwal and historians Srinath Raghavan and NayanjotLahi. This is the fourth edition of the prize instituted in 2018.

### 4. THE WEEK's Lakshmi Subramanian and Bhanu Prakash Chandra win IPI-India Journalism Award

Lakshmi Subramanian and Bhanu Prakash Chandra of THE WEEK have won the prestigious International Press Institute (IPI) India Award for Excellence in Journalism, 2021.

The entry selected was the story on Indians, especially women, who were trapped in refugee camps in the civil war-torn regions of Syria and Iraq.

### 5. Indian-American Mathematician Nikhil Srivastava Nominated For AMS CiprianFoias Award

The American Mathematical Society (AMS) has unanimously nominated esteemed Indian-American mathematician Nikhil Srivastava for the first CiprianFoias Prize in Operator Theory.

Along with Srivastava, who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, Adam Marcus and Daniel Spielman are the other two recipients.

### 6. Delhi's Nizamuddin Basti gets two UNESCO recognitions

Urban revitalisation and conservation efforts initiated at Nizamuddin Basti, one of the oldest and historical settlements in the national capital, has received twin UNESCO recognitions: Award of excellence 2021 for cultural heritage conservation and recognition for sustainable development.

The Nizamuddin Urban Renewal Initiative was the only award-winning entry from India.

### 7. Nilmani Phookan Jr, Damodar Mauzo win Jnanpith award for years 2020, 2021

Noted Assamese poet NilmaniPhukan won the 56th Jnanpith Award and Konkani short story writer and novelist Damodar Mauzo won the 57th Jnanpith Award for their contribution to Indian literature.

Jnanpith is the highest literary prize of India, awarded to the writers in the scheduled languages of the country.

The last Jnanpith was given to Malayalam poet Akkitham in 2019.

### 8. IIT-Kanpur Scientist Bags "Young Geospatial Scientist" Award for Developing Indian Geoid Model

Ropesh Goyal from IIT-Kanpur won the 'Young Geospatial Scientist' award in recognition of his unique contribution to developing the Indian Geoid Model & computation software.

Member of Space Commission, GOI and Former ISRO Chairman AS Kiran Kumar presented the award to Goyal during the inaugural event of the DigiSmart India 2021 conference hosted by the Geospatial World.

### **9. Indian Mathematician receives 2021 Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians**

Professor Neena Gupta, a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata, has been awarded the 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from developing countries for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.

Ramanujan Prize is given annually to an eminent Mathematician who is less than 45 years of age on 31 Dec Professor Gupta is the third woman to receive the Ramanujan Prize

### **10. Azim Premji receives Dr. Ida S. Scudder Oration award**

Azim Premji, founder chairman of Wipro Limited and founder of Azim Premji Foundation is this year's recipient of the 10th annual Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration, jointly established by Christian Medical College Vellore (CMC) and the U.S.-based Vellore CMC Foundation. The award is presented to Mr. Premji in recognition of his contributions to society. Dr. Ida S. Scudder (Dec 9, 1870 ' May 23, 1960) Founder, CMC Vellore, Vellore, India.

### **11. BV Doshi becomes first Indian to win UK's top architectural award**

Balkrishna Doshi - has been awarded the UK's top design honor: the Royal Institute of British Architects Royal Gold Medal for 2022. Already an awardee of India's top civilian honors - Padma Shri and the Padma Bhushan - Doshi also won the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2018, the first Indian to do so. His memorable designs include IIM campuses in Bangalore.

He helped Le Corbusier build the city of Chandigarh in the 1950s

### **12. Seven-time F1 champion Lewis Hamilton receives knighthood at Windsor Castle**

Lewis Hamilton picked up a new title only days after losing one on the track. The seven-time Formula One champion received a knighthood at Windsor Castle, London.

Hamilton gets the honorary title of 'Sir' after being knighted by the Prince of Wales for services to motorsports.

Three other F1 drivers have been knighted: Jack Brabham, Stirling Moss and Jackie Stewart.

Hamilton is the first to be awarded while still competing in the sport.

### **13. SAIL Receives Prestigious Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2021**

The Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL), under the Ministry of Steel has been awarded with the prestigious Golden Peacock Environment Management Award for the year 2021 in the Steel Sector by the Institute of Directors. SAIL has been the winner of this award for successive three years.

### **14. IIT Roorkee bags first position among most innovative institutions as selected by CII**

For the second year in a row, IIT Roorkee has been selected by the prestigious Confederation of Indian Industry for the Industrial Innovation Awards.

IIT Roorkee bagged the 1st position under the Most Innovative Research Institutions category this year.

The 2nd & 3rd positions have gone to IIT Madras & the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad. The awards were announced at the 27th DST-CII Technology Summit.

### **15. Kumar Mangalam Birla named 'Global Entrepreneur of the Year'**

The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley awarded the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award- Business Transformation to Mr Kumar Mangalam Birla, the Chairman of the Aditya Birla Group. Mr Birla received the award for his extraordinary leadership of a globally

diversified conglomerate during the unprecedented period of global turmoil induced by the pandemic. Mr Birla becomes the first Indian industrialist to receive this prestigious award.

#### **16. Padma Bhusan Anil Prakash Joshi, 2 others win Mother Teresa Memorial Award**

Environmentalist Dr Anil Prakash Joshi, who was conferred upon the Padma Bhushan this year, has been awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice 2021.

Vidyut Mohan, the winner of the Earthshot Prize, and Ridhima Pandey, a young environmental activist from Uttarakhand, were also the recipients of the award. The awardees were felicitated by Dr Abraham Mathai, the founder chairman of the foundation

#### **17. Anukrti Upadhyay's Kintsugi wins the Sushila Devi Award 2021 for the best book of fiction by a woman author**

Anukrti Upadhyay has won the Sushila Devi Award 2021 for the Best Book of Fiction for her novel, Kintsugi, which was published by Fourth Estate imprint. This prize has been instituted by the Shri Ratanlal Foundation.

#### **18. Greenman Viral Desai honoured with Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award**

Surat's noted industrialist Viral Desai, popularly known as Greenman for his love for the environment, has been awarded the prestigious Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award in Dubai. 22 prominent personalities from 11 nations were felicitated with the prestigious awards on occasion. But he was the only one from India to have won the honour for climate action.

#### **19. KVASU bags national award for breed conservation**

The All-India Coordinated Research Project cell at Mannuthy under Kerala Veterinary & Animal Science University (KVASU) has won the national breed conservation award 2021 for the conservation of Thalassery breed, the only registered native chicken breed in the state.

Thalassery breed is unique for its low body, egg weight & long broodiness. Its comb and wattles are characterised by red colour.



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## Ranks & Reports

### **1. Fertiliser major IFFCO ranked number one cooperative among the top 300 cooperatives in the world.**

The ranking is based on the ratio of turnover over the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, as per Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO).

The ranking is as per the 2021 edition of the 10th Annual World Cooperative Monitor (WCM) report published by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA).

IFFCO has also inched up to 60th position in overall turnover. US Awasthi, MD, IFFCO.

### **2. India amongst the most unequal countries in the world, says report**

As per the 'World Inequality Report 2022', India is among the most unequal countries in the world, with rising poverty and an 'affluent elite.'

The report highlights that the top 10% and top 1% in India hold 57% and 22% of the total national income respectively while the bottom 50% share has gone down to 13%. The share of female labour income share in India is equal to 18%. India and China experienced faster increases in private wealth than wealthy countries.

### **3. India Ranked Fourth Most Powerful Country In Asia Power Index 2021**

India has risen as the fourth most powerful country in Asia, according to a report by Lowy Institute Asia Power Index 2021. It has been ranked fourth among the 26 countries and territories in Indo-Pacific for comprehensive power.

The report has also added that the nation could have performed even better had it not been for the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the country declined by two points from 2020.

### **4. World malaria report 2021 : An in-depth update on global and regional malaria data and trends.**

According to WHO's latest World malaria report, there were an estimated 241 million malaria cases and 627 000 malaria deaths worldwide in 2020. This represents about 14 million more cases in 2020 compared to 2019, and 69 000 more deaths.

More malaria cases and deaths in 2020 linked to COVID-19 disruptions.

### **5. Indian SaaS companies are poised to reach \$30 billion in revenue: Report by Bain & Company**

Indian Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) companies are poised to reach \$30 billion in revenue, capturing 8% to 9% share of the global SaaS market by 2025, according to a new report by Bain & Company.

The report said that investments in the space increased by 170% over 2020 and are expected to reach \$4.5 billion in 2021.

India has the third-largest SaaS ecosystem globally. India now has 13 SaaS unicorns as compared to one in 2018.

### **6. World unprepared for future pandemics: Global Health Security Index 2021**

Countries across all income levels remain dangerously unprepared to meet future epidemic and pandemic threats according to the index.

USA, which was ranked first in the 2019 index, retained its position atop the rankings, with a score of 75.9, while Australia, Finland, Canada and Thailand rounded out the top five.

India with a score of 42.8 slipped 0.8 points since 2019. Index was created by Nuclear Threat Initiative & Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security

### **7. India ranks 59 on IMD World Talent Ranking Report 2021 ; Switzerland first**

India has slipped 6 places to 59 rank on a global annual list of 63 countries, due to low quality of life and expenditure on education, according to the latest edition of IMD World Talent Ranking, which was topped by Switzerland.

The ranking, which is based on the performance in three main categories -- investment and development, appeal and readiness. India is lagging behind the BRICs nations - China(42nd), Russia (47), South Africa (50).

#### **8. 90% of rural India's e-comm orders paid in cash: Study by CMS Infosystem**

In 2020, nearly two-thirds of online sales were paid in cash, up from nearly half three years ago.

This is mainly because e-tailers expanded into the country's rural areas (untapped customers), nearly 90% of the new buyers pay through the 'cash on delivery' (COD) mode, according to a study by CMS Infosystem, one of the largest cash handlers for banks in India. COD is the most used payment method for e-commerce transactions in India.

#### **9. More than 14 crore health IDs created in the country under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission: MoHFW**

As of mid-December 2021, 14,15,49,620 health IDs have been created in the country under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).

The digital health ecosystem created by ABDM supports continuity of care across primary, secondary, and tertiary healthcare in a seamless manner.

#### **10. PM Modi 8th most admired global personality, Barack Obama tops the list**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has ranked 8th on the list of the world's top 20 most admired men, in a survey carried out by data analytics company YouGov.

The list has been compiled taking feedback from 42,000 people in 38 countries, the survey company said.

PM Modi is ahead of Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan and Virat Kohli.

YouGov is a British international Internet-based market research and data analytics firm.

#### **11. Union Minister Shri Giriraj Singh launches MIS portal for rankings of States/UTs in Land Acquisition Projects**

Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Shri Giriraj Singh launched MIS (Management Information System) portal for rankings of States/UTs in Land Acquisition Projects under RFLARR Act, 2013. (Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013).

#### **12. India registers highest-ever annual FDI inflow of 81.97 billion dollars in 2020-21**

India has registered the highest ever annual Foreign Direct Investment inflow of \$ 81.97 bn in 2020-21.

FDI inflows in the last seven financial years is over \$ 440 bn, which is nearly 58 % of the total FDI inflow in last 21 financial years.

Top five countries from where FDI Equity Inflows were received during 2014-2021 are Singapore, Mauritius, USA, Netherlands & Japan.

#### **13. Reliance is India's most-visible corporate in media: Wizikey report**

Reliance Industries Ltd, India's largest corporate by revenues, profits and market value, topped 2021 Wizikey News Score ranking as India's most-visible corporate in the media.

State Bank of India is a close second on the ranking, followed by Bharti Airtel, Infosys and Tata Motors.

Wizikey's News Score is industry's first integrated metric that measures news visibility.

Reliance is ranked at No.8 on the global ranking.

#### **14. India Displaces UK To Become Third Top Nation To Host Most Valued Unicorns**

Adding 33 "unicorns" in a single year has helped India displace the United Kingdom to be third in the list of countries that are home to such enterprises valued at over \$1 billion each.

The US and China, who occupy the first two ranks, are way ahead, according to the data compiled by Hurun Research Institute.

US and China are home to 74 per cent of the unicorn universe,

### 15. Railways' 98% operating ratio not a reflection of its true financial performance: CAG

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India in its report on Railways' finances tabled in Parliament noted that the Indian Railways' operating ratio of 98.36% in 2019-2020 does not reflect its true financial performance and if the actual expenditure on pension payments is taken into account, the ratio will be 114.35 %.

Girish Chandra Murmu is the current CAG of India. The CAG report noted that against a target of 95% in the budget estimates.

### 16. NITI Aayog Releases Fourth Edition Of State Health Index

NITI Aayog released the fourth edition of the State Health Index for 2019'20. The report, titled "The Healthy States, Progressive India", ranks states and Union Territories on their year-on-year incremental performance in health outcomes as well as their overall status.

The index is being compiled and published since 2017.

### 17. India to become world's 6th largest economy by 2023

Indian economy is all set to become sixth largest economy in the world leaving French and British economy behind, says British Consultancy Cybr report.

The report says that in the year 2022, Indian economy will exceed French economy whereas it will trump British economy in 2023 and the world's economic output will exceed \$100 trillion for the first time in 2022.

### 18. The Reserve Bank of India releases the 2020-21 iteration of its report on 'Trend and Progress of Banking in India'

The consolidated balance sheet of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) expanded in size in 2020-21 despite the coronavirus pandemic and the resultant economic recession. Nascent signs of recovery are visible in credit growth in the current fiscal so far. Deposits grew by 10.1% at the end of September 2021 as compared with 11.0% a year ago.

### 19. ARIIA 2021: IIT Madras Secures Rank 1 As Most Innovative Educational Institute Of India

Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) has secured the top position as the most innovative educational institute in India.

The Ministry of Education has launched the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) and IIT Madras has bagged rank 1 for the third consecutive year.



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## Important Days

### 1. World AIDS Day 2021: December 1

The world marks AIDS Day on December 1 to highlight the work done to eliminate the epidemic. The day is also observed to extend support to those who have to live with the life-threatening condition caused by the human immunodeficiency virus.

The first World AIDS Day was observed in 1988.

The theme of World AIDS Day 2021:- 'End inequalities. End AIDS. & End Pandemics' .

### 2. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery 2021: December 2

December 2 marks the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

The day commemorates the brutal history of slavery practiced by colonial rulers of past centuries and aims to eradicate modern forms of slavery, such as trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, child labour, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict. 2021 theme is 'Ending Slavery's Legacy of Racism: A Global Imperative for Justice'.

### 3. International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021: December 3

International Day of Persons with Disabilities is a global observance celebrated every year on December 3 with a motive to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society.

This year, the theme for IDPD is 'Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world.'

### 4. Navy Day 2021: President, other leaders remember success of 'Operation Trident'

The Indian Navy is commemorating its the success of its 'Operation Trident' during the 1971 War by marking the Navy Day. On December 4, during the 1971 Indo-Pak War, the Indian Navy played a significant role in the bombing of Karachi harbour, when Operation Trident was launched. Owing to its success, since then December 4 is celebrated as Navy Day. Defense minister Rajnath Singh called Navy an 'outstanding force'

### 5. International Day Of Banks 2021: December 4

United Nations General Assembly decided to keep December 4 as International Day of Banks and it was celebrated for the first time in 2020. It was celebrated to recognise the importance of multilateral and international development banks in financing sustainable developments. It is also observed in recognition of the vital role of banking systems in Member State.

### 6. International Civil Aviation Day 2021: December 7

International Civil Aviation Day is an annual UN observation day held on December 7 in order to recognize the socio-economic and development importance of aviation and international air travel.

International Civil Aviation Day is marked every five years by the ICAO with a special anniversary theme.

2021 theme :- 'Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development.'

### 7. SAARC Charter Day being observed on December 8

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Charter Day is observed every year on 8th December. On this day in 1985, SAARC Charter was adopted in Dhaka, during the first summit of the group. This year marks the 37th Anniversary of the regional group.

The aim of SAARC members is to promote stability, peace and progress in the region.

### 8. International Anti-Corruption Day 2021: December 9

International Anti-Corruption Day is observed on December 9 to raise awareness on the importance of getting rid of corruption. The United Nations took its first step to fight against International Corruption in December 2003. The UNCAC United Nations Convention Against



Corruption was drafted on October 31, 2003. UNAC is a treaty signed by the UN member states. 2021's theme is 'Your right, your role: say no to corruption.'

### **9. Human Rights Day 2021: December 10**

Human Rights Day 2021 is observed on December 10, every year.

Every individual living on Earth has a basic right which they must be aware of.

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

2021 theme:- 'Equality, Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights.'

### **10. Vijay Diwas 2021 marks 50 years of India's victory against Pakistan in the 1971 war: 16 December**

December 16 is a day recognized to honour the valour of soldiers. Celebrated across the nation as Vijay Diwas; on this day India emerged triumphant against Pakistan in 1971 war. 93,000 Pakistani soldiers surrendered at the end of the conflict. Following India's triumph, East Pakistan, now known as Bangladesh, gained independence.

### **11. International Human Solidarity Day 2021: December 20**

December 20 is marked as the International Human Solidarity Day. It is a UN observance day that honors 'unity in diversity'.

International Human Solidarity Day aims to promote solidarity for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals including poverty eradication. The basic purpose of this day is to promote the culture of cooperation, equality & social Justice.

### **12. Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates Good Governance Week campaign 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur'**

As a part of Azaadi ka Amrut Mahotsav celebrations in the 75th Year of India's Independence, a Good Governance Week is being celebrated from Dec 20-25, 2021 with Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances as the Nodal Department.

'Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur'- a Nation-wide campaign for Redressal of Public Grievances & Improving Service Delivery. Minister of State for PMO; Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions :- Dr Jitendra Singh

### **13. National Mathematics Day: Celebrating Srinivasa Ramanujan's birthday**

India is celebrating the birthday of legendary mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan Aiyangar on December 22. The day is celebrated as National Mathematics Day or Maths Day. Ramanujan was a prodigious Indian mathematician who, despite having no formal training in advanced mathematical concepts, mastered trigonometry at the age of 12. In 2012, Government announced December 22 as National Mathematics Day.

### **14. Kisan Diwas 2021: December 23**

Kisan Diwas or National Farmers' Day is celebrated across the nation on December 23 to commemorate the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, Chaudhary Charan Singh.

In addition, the day is celebrated in honour of the contribution of Indian farmers.

In 2001, the government of India declared December 23 as National Farmers' Day. Choudhary Charan Singh, the fifth Prime Minister of India.

### **15. National Consumer Day : December 24**

December 24 is observed as the National Consumer Day or Bharatiya Grahak Diwas.

Consumers are provided protection against unfair trade practices like hoarding, fake advertisements, false gift offers and many others.

The overhauled Consumer Protection Bill, 2019 was passed by the Indian Parliament in August that year.

### 16. Union Minister for Ayush Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the 5th Siddha Day celebrations

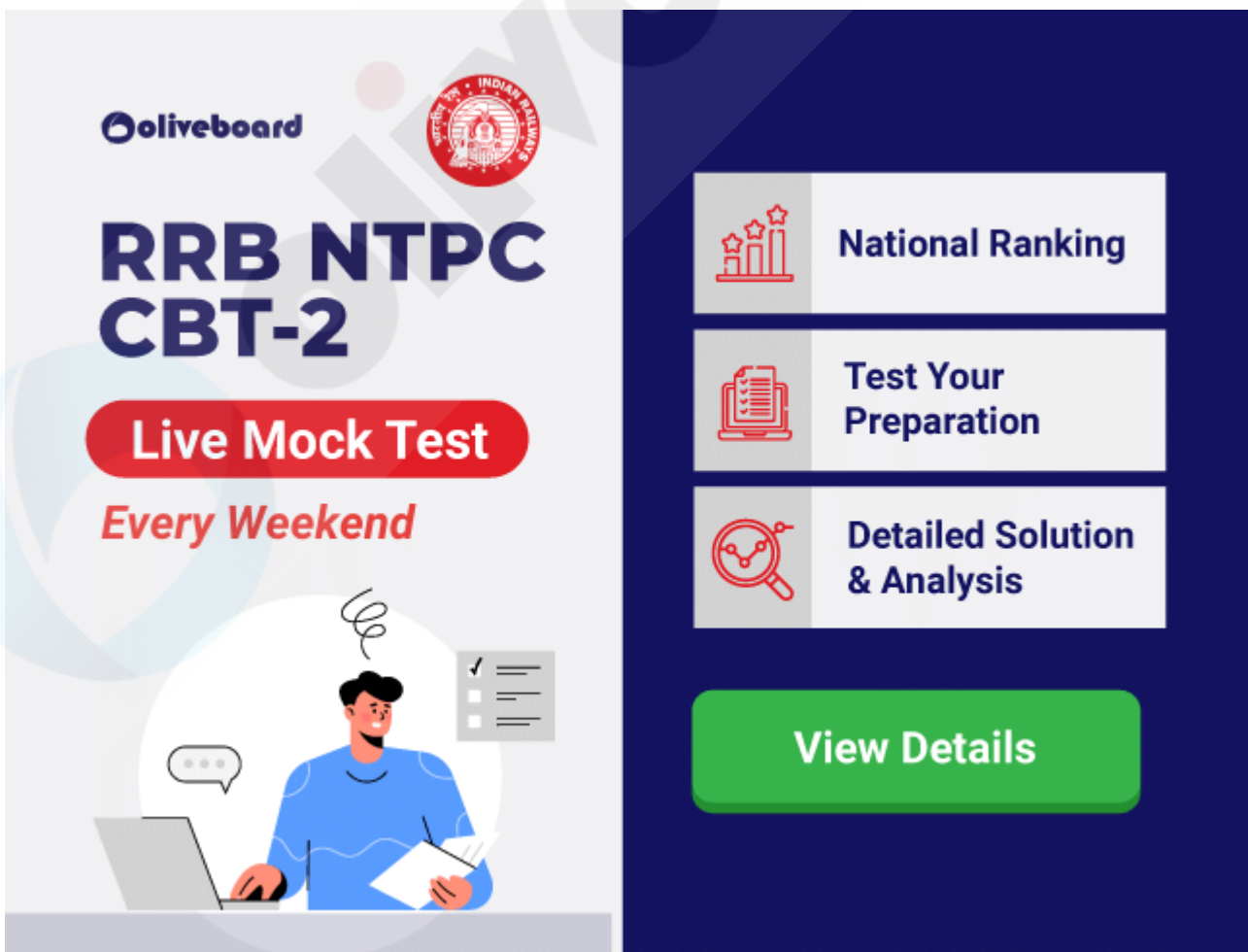
Union Minister for Ayush Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the 5th Siddha Day celebrations with the theme Strength of Siddha in communicable disease at the National Institute of Siddha NIS Tambaram Sanatorium, Chennai.

### 17. International Day of Epidemic Preparedness 2021: December 27

In a bid to prepare for future outbreaks & sensitise people about epidemics on all levels, the United Nations & World Health Organization marked December 27 as the International day for Epidemic Preparedness.

The day was first observed in 2020.

UNGA had emphasised on the need to advocate the importance of the preparedness for, prevention of & partnership against epidemics.



The advertisement features the Oliveboard logo and the Indian Railways emblem. The main text reads "RRB NTPC CBT-2" in large, bold letters, followed by "Live Mock Test" in a red button and "Every Weekend" in red. Below this is an illustration of a man sitting at a desk with a laptop, looking thoughtful. To the right, a dark blue sidebar contains three white boxes with red icons: "National Ranking" (bar chart), "Test Your Preparation" (document), and "Detailed Solution & Analysis" (magnifying glass). At the bottom of the sidebar is a green button labeled "View Details".

## Summit & Conferences

### 1. NITI Aayog organises knowledge sharing workshop on Natural Farming

As a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of progressive India, NITI Aayog is organizing a series of events from November 2021- April 2022.

The opening remark of the event was given by Dr Neelam Patel, Senior Adviser (Agriculture), NITI Aayog which was followed by an address by Ramesh Chand, Member (Agriculture).

NITI Aayog CEO:- Amitabh Kant

### 2. India joins G20 Troika, to work closely with Indonesia, Italy to ensure consistency of agenda

India has joined the G20 Troika comprising the current, previous, and incoming presidencies of the grouping, the Ministry of External Affairs.

The G20 Troika consists of Indonesia, Italy, and India.

India will assume the G20 Presidency on December 1, 2022, from Indonesia, and will convene the G20 Leaders' Summit for the first time in India in 2023.

The G20 is the international forum that brings together the world's major economies.

### 3. PM Modi inaugurates InFinity Forum thought leadership Forum on FinTech

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated InFinity Forum through video conferencing.

The event is being hosted by International Financial Services Centres Authority under the aegis of the Government of India in collaboration with GIFT City and Bloomberg. Indonesia, South Africa, and the U.K. are partner countries in the first edition of the Forum.

### 4. EAM S Jaishankar addresses 5th Indian Ocean Conference in Abu Dhabi

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed in UAE. Jaishankar is here to attend the 5th Indian Ocean Conference on December 4-5. The theme of the Indian Ocean Conference 2021 is "Indian Ocean: Ecology, Economy, Epidemic". Currency: United Arab Emirates dirham

### 5. Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman participates in G-20 Seminar on 'Recover Together, Recover Stronger'

Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman participated virtually from New Delhi in the G20 International Seminar hosted in Bali by the G20 Presidency of Indonesia.

She also underlined the importance of Inclusion, Investment, Innovation and Institutions to support the path of global recovery.

G20's theme for the year, 'Recover Together, Recover Stronger'.

### 6. EAM S Jaishankar addresses 5th Indian Ocean Conference in Abu Dhabi

In the fifth Indian Ocean Conference in Abu Dhabi, Dr. S Jaishankar has stressed the importance of respecting and facilitating freedom of navigation and overflight and unimpeded commerce in a globalized world. He stated that the consequences of China's growing capabilities are profound because of the extrapolation of its domestic seamlessness to the world outside. The theme of IOC 2021 is 'Ecology, Economy, Epidemic'.

### 7. India co-chairs Global Methane Initiative Steering Leadership Meeting

India co-chaired Global Methane Initiative Steering Leadership Meeting. The emission of methane is a big concern as it is a greenhouse gas having 25-28 times harmful effects than carbon dioxide.

Global Methane Initiative (GMI) is a voluntary Government and an informal international partnership having members from 45 countries including the United States and Canada. The forum was created in 2004.

### 8. PM Modi to address mayors' conference on New Urban India in Varanasi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate and address the All India Mayors' Conference, which is being organised in Varanasi.

The mayors from various states will participate in the conference on the theme "New Urban India". A special focus of these efforts has been the state of Uttar Pradesh, which has witnessed tremendous progress & transformation of the urban landscape. Head of municipal corporations is known as mayor.

### 9. PM hosts roundtable interaction with representatives of Venture Capital and Private Equity Funds

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi hosted a roundtable interaction with representatives of Venture Capital and Private Equity Funds at Lok Kalyan Marg. Prime Minister sought suggestions towards improving Ease of Doing Business in India, attracting more capital and furthering the reform process in the country.



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## Science & Technology

### **1. Bio-Jet Fuel Technology Developed By Dehradun-Based CSIR-IIP Gets Formal Military Certification For Use In IAF Aircraft**

Dehradun-based CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP's) home-grown technology to produce bio-jet fuel has been formally approved for use on military aircraft of the Indian Air Force.

Indian bio-jet fuel can be produced from used cooking oil, tree-borne oils, short gestation oilseed crops grown off-season by farmers, and waste extracts from edible oil processing units.

### **2. NASA's Laser Communications Relay Demonstration ' Bringing Optical Speeds to the Final Frontier**

NASA's Laser Communications Relay Demonstration (LCRD) will send data to and from ground stations and, eventually, in-space user missions over laser links.

LCRD leverages the work done in the telecommunications industry for the past several decades.

LCRD will showcase the unique capabilities of optical communications. Most NASA missions use radio frequency communications to send data to and from spacecraft

### **3. Airtel and Capgemini collaborate to develop India-specific enterprise 5G solutions**

Bharti Airtel and technology services major Capgemini have announced to collaborate on bringing India-specific, 5G-based enterprise grade solutions to the country.

Capgemini's 5G Lab within its Mumbai campus and Airtel's 5G Lab in Manesar, Haryana, will be the development hubs.

Focused on smart health and immersive remote assistance for field operations and maintenance.

5G: 5th generation mobile network.

### **4. NASA's Parker Solar Probe enters the Sun's upper atmosphere, first time in history**

Launched in 2018, the Parker Solar Probe aims to unravel the mysteries of the Sun by traveling closer to it. After three years of launching, Parker has finally arrived in the solar atmosphere.

Parker Solar Probe has flown through the Sun's upper atmosphere for the first time in history ' the corona. The probe sampled particles and magnetic fields there.

### **5. ISRO signed six agreements with four countries for launching foreign satellites during 2021-2023**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has signed six agreements with four countries for launching foreign satellites during 2021-2023. About 132 million Euros would be earned through launching of these foreign satellites on a commercial basis. ISRO-Indian space agency, founded in 1969 to develop an independent Indian space program. Its headquarters are in Bengaluru.

### **6. Airtel deploys Avanseus' AI-based predictive maintenance solution**

Bharti Airtel ('Airtel'), India's premier communications solutions provider, and Avanseus, has announced the roll-out of Avanseus' predictive maintenance ('PdM') solution across its operations.

The expansion follows the successful trial and commercial deployment of the solution across Airtel's transport, enterprise, and core networks.

### **7. WHO approves emergency use listing for Serum Institute of India manufactured Covovax**

World Health Organisation (WHO) has issued an emergency use listing for Serum Institute of India's manufactured Covovax. The move will help expand the basket of WHO-validated

vaccines against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. In a statement, WHO said, the decision will give a much-needed boost to ongoing efforts to vaccinate more people in lower-income countries.

### **8. Haryana launches new Integrated Command and Control Center under Karnal Smart City project**

Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar has opened the new Integrated Command and Control Center (ICCC) under the Karnal Smart City project. The new Command and Control Center will enable the functioning of advanced systems such as adaptive traffic control, automatic number plate recognition, detection of red-light violation and speed-violation

### **9. IIT Guwahati team develops efficient perovskite solar cells to produce electricity from sunlight**

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati researchers have developed hybrid perovskite solar or photovoltaic devices in order to produce electricity from sunlight.

These machines are highly efficient and easy to manufacture. According to officials, hybrid perovskite are easily recyclable too.

### **10. James Webb telescope, successor of Hubble, set to be most powerful observatory ever sent into space**

James Webb Space Telescope, a revolutionary instrument designed to provide mankind with the first-ever glimpse into an infant universe as it existed when the earliest galaxies are believed to have been formed.

Named after James Edwin Webb, the chief of the American space agency during most of the agency's formative decade of the 1960s.

### **11. China launches new camera satellite with 5m resolution to find resources**

The satellite, called "Ziyuan-1 02E" or "five-meter optical satellite 02," was launched by a Long March-4C rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in north China's Shanxi province.

It weighs about 2.5 kilograms and is equipped with infrared, near-infrared and hyperspectral cameras. The cameras can take full-colour panchromatic images of the Earth.

### **12. Houston COVID-19 vaccine Corbevax gets DCGI approval for use in India**

The Texas Children's Hospital (TCH) and Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) announced that Corbevax, a protein subunit Covid vaccine, has received approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) to launch it in India.

The initial construct and production process of the vaccine antigen was developed at TCH's Centre for Vaccine Development. V. G. Somani :- Drugs Controller General of India

### **13. Inmarsat Launches 'World's Most Sophisticated Communications Satellite'**

Global satellite communications company Inmarsat has launched its first next-generation satellite, known as the I-6.

Billed as the most sophisticated commercial communications satellite ever launched, the I-6 F1 is the first of seven new fully-funded Inmarsat satellites to be launched by 2024.

The satellite was launched by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries from Japan.

### **14. Russia's latest nuclear powered icebreaker to boost India's Arctic plans via Northern Sea Route**

Russia has launched a new nuclear powered icebreaker 'Sibir' (Project 22220) that will contribute to the rapidly growing fleet of lethal icebreakers to keep the Northern Sea Route open for year-round shipping through the Arctic enabling wider presence of India in the region.

Arctic region is opening new opportunities for hydrocarbons.

Russia - Chairman of Arctic council from 2021- 2023.

### 15. China launches five-year plan to become a hub of global robotics innovation

China announced a 5-year roadmap to achieve its goal of becoming a global robotics innovation hub by 2025. It aims to do this by focusing on enhancements in key areas such as control panels & servomotors.

China's Ministry of Industry & Information Technology revealed operating income from the country's robotics industry is expected to grow by around 20% per year by 2025.

### 16. 6G: Telecom department constitutes academia-driven multiple task forces

The Department of Telecommunications has formed as many as six academia-heavy task forces under the Technology Innovation Group on sixth generation technology, making industry representation only symbolic.

The department mandated immediate deliverables by March 31, 2022 that included mapping of 6G activities & capabilities worldwide.



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## Defence

### 1. Border Security Force marks its 57th Raising Day :- December 1

The BSF is celebrating its 57th Raising Day on December 1.

India's first line of defence, BSF was formed on December 1, 1965, as a unified central agency, for ensuring the security of Indo-Pakistan & Indo-Bangladesh borders and for matters connected therewith.

This year, for the first time, BSF will celebrate its raising day in the border area of Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

### 2. Lt Gen Manoj Kuma Mago to head National Defence College

Lt Gen Manoj Kumar Mago has taken over as the Commandant of National Defence College, New Delhi.

Lt Gen Mago, who hails from Ludhiana, was commanding the 10 Corps at Bathinda before being given the assignment at NDC that entails evolving a strategic culture among the country's senior-most officials of the military, the civilian bureaucracy and the Indian Police Service. He was commissioned into the 7th Battalion of the Brigade of Guards in 1984.

### 3. Centre gives approval for plan to manufacture over 5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles in Amethi

The Central government has approved a plan to produce over five lakh AK-203 assault rifles at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh's Amethi.

Uttar Pradesh is on way to become a defence manufacturing hub of India.

The 7.62 X 39mm caliber AK-203 rifles will replace in-service INSAS Rifle inducted over three decades back. Indo-Russian Rifles Private Ltd will implement this project

### 4. Joint military exercise between India and Maldives to begin at Kadhdhoo Island

The 11th edition of Exercise EKUVERIN between India and Maldives will be conducted at Kadhdhoo Island, Maldives.

The exercise will enhance synergy & inter-operability between Armed Forces of both the nations in terms of understanding transnational terrorism both on land & at sea, conducting Counter-Terrorism & Counter-Insurgency Operations, etc.

### 5. Indian Navy launches its new large survey vessel 'Sandhayak' in Kolkata

The Indian Navy launched 'Sandhayak', the first of the four large survey vessels, in Kolkata. The ship was launched by Pushpa Bhatt, spouse of Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, who was the Chief Guest at the event.

The primary role of these survey ships would be to conduct full-scale coastal & deep-water hydrographic survey of ports, harbours, navigation channels, etc.

### 6. India, Russia conclude AK-203 deal, renew 10-year pact for military cooperation

India and Russia has concluded a much awaited deal worth '5,100 crore for the joint production of more than 500,000 AK-203 assault rifles at a facility in Uttar Pradesh's Amethi district.

The deal was finalised at a bilateral meeting between defence minister Rajnath Singh and his Russian counterpart Sergey Shoigu. Two countries also renewed their military-technical cooperation arrangement for 2021- 31.

### 7. Tata Steel Deploys First Biofuel-powered Ship For Imported Raw Material Transportation

Tata Steel has deployed a ship powered by biofuel for transportation of its imported raw material. The initiative is in line with its sustainability objectives & efforts to reduce "scope 3" greenhouse gas emission in ocean trade. "Scope 3" emissions, refer to value chain emissions. The bulk carrier named Frontier Sky, owned by NYK & operated by Tata NYK Shipping Pte Ltd.



## **8. Indian Navy's 'Killers' squadron, that sunk Pakistan warships, to get President's Standard**

The Indian Navy's 22nd Missile Vessel Squadron, that bombed the Karachi Port and sunk Pakistan Navy's vessels in the 1971 war, received the President's Standard, a rare honour for its distinguished service, from President Ram Nath Kovind.

The Indian Navy was awarded the President's Colours on May 27, 1951 by the then President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

## **9. Pune to host joint military exercise with BIMSTEC countries**

Pune will host a multilateral and multi-agency exercise for the member countries of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) between December 20 and 22, which will focus on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.

A curtain raiser event for the HADR exercise titled, PANEX-21, was held in New Delhi.

## **10. SBI to sign MoU with KendriyaSainik Board**

State Bank of India (SBI) will sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with KendriyaSainik Board to support and educate the children of war veterans, ex-servicemen, and war widows.

India's largest bank will provide a grant of '1,000 per month to 8,333 war veterans' children. KendriyaSainik Board has Hon'ble Defence Minister as its President. Defence Minister of India:- Rajnath Singh.

## **11. DRDO & Indian Air Force successfully flight-test indigenous Stand-Off Anti-Tank Missile**

DRDO and Indian Air Force (IAF) flight-tested the indigenously designed and developed Helicopter launched Stand-off Anti-tank (SANT) Missile from Pokhran ranges. The missile is equipped with a state-of-the-art MMW seeker which provides high precision strike capability from a safe distance. The weapon can neutralize targets in a range up to 10 km. The SANT missile has been designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat, Hyderabad.

## **12. BrahMos air version tested, ready for serial production**

India flight-tested the air version of supersonic cruise missile BrahMos from a fighter aircraft (Sukhoi 30 MK-I) off Odisha coast paving the way for its serial production.

The 8.4 metre long BrahMos missile, the fastest in the world, can carry conventional warhead up to 300 kg. It can cruise at the supersonic speed of Mach 2.8. BrahMos is an Indo-Russian joint venture.

## **13. Extended Range Pinaka rocket system successfully test-fired**

The Pinaka Extended Range (Pinaka-ER) Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) was tested with rockets built by private sector.

Pinaka MLRS was developed by two DRDO laboratories in Pune ' Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE) and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) ' in partnership with two private sector firms, L&T and Tata Power Company Ltd.

## **14. India successfully tests long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo off Balasore coasts**

India successfully test fired a long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART) off Balasore coast in Odisha.

The weapon system is being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the Indian Navy.

The system has been designed to enhance anti-submarine warfare capability far beyond the conventional range of the torpedo.

### **15. Defence ministry ropes in IITE Gandhinagar for training of 800 Sainik School teachers.**

The Ministry of Defence has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Indian Institute of Teacher Education, Gandhinagar to facilitate training to teachers of Sainik Schools. The MoU is for the period of 5 years commencing with effect from Jan 2022 under which 800 + teachers of all Sainik Schools will be trained through courses named 'Gurudiksha' & 'Pratibaddhta'. IITE was established in 2010 by the Government of Gujarat & focuses on teacher education.

### **16. Army Chief General MM Naravane takes charge as Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee**

The government has appointed General MM Naravane, Chief of Army Staff, as the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee (Chairman, CoSC), the post which fell vacant after the sudden demise of the first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat in a helicopter crash on December 8.

CDS is the fourth and permanent member of the CoSC. Important issues related to the armed forces are handled by this committee.

### **17. India Tests SFDR Technology Critical For Development Of Long Range Air-To-Air Missiles**

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) tested its Solid Fuelled Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology for the fourth time with a demonstration flight.

The development of SFDR technology will enable India to make its own long-range air-to-air missile, which could mirror the capabilities of the best missiles in this class, like MBDA's Meteor. MBDA's Meteor, which the Indian Air Force uses on its Rafales.

### **18. HAL inks '2400 Cr deal with BEL for LCA Tejas Mk1A systems**

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited signed a five-year contract, worth '2400 crores, with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) for development and supply of 20 types systems for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Mk1A project of the Indian Air Force in Bengaluru.

LCA Tejas programme is an excellent example of synergies between Indian Defence establishments such as HAL, DRDO.

### **19. DRDO conducts flight demonstration of Controlled Aerial Delivery System**

Aerial Delivery Research & Development Establishment (ADRDE), Agra conducted a flight demonstration of Controlled Aerial Delivery System of 500 kg capacity (CADS-500). ADRDE, Agra is an R&D laboratory of Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and the flight demonstration is part of celebrating 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', commemorating 75 years of Independence.

### **20. India successfully test-fired new generation ballistic missile 'Agni-P'**

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test-fired the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni Prime' from APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha in Balasore. Capable of eliminating an enemy 5,000 kilometres away India has successfully test-fired the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni P'.

### **21. India, France discuss bilateral, regional and defence issues during third annual Defence Dialogue in Delhi**

The third Annual Defence Dialogue between India and France took place between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his French counterpart Florence Parly in New Delhi.

A wide range of bilateral, regional, defence and defence industrial cooperation issues were discussed in the annual meeting.

India -France annual bilateral Army Exercise is Shakti.

### **22. India Conducts Successful Test Of 'Pralay' Ballistic Missile Off Odisha Coast**

India has successfully test fired short-range (350-500 km), surface to surface-guided ballistic missile 'Pralay' off the Odisha coast.

The solid-fuel, battlefield missile developed by DRDO is based on Prithvi Defence Vehicle from the Indian ballistic missile programme.

The missile, launched from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island met all the mission objectives. Its payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg.

### **23. India deploys first S-400 air defence system in Punjab sector**

In a major boost to the country's air defence capabilities, the Indian Air Force (IAF) is deploying the first squadron of the S-400 air defence missile system in the Punjab sector.

The first squadron is being deployed in the Punjab sector.

The batteries of the first squadron would be capable of taking care of aerial threats from both Pakistan and China.

### **24. DRDO Successfully Conducts Flight Test of Indigenous Expendable Aerial Target 'Abhyas'**

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted a flight test of indigenously-developed high-speed expendable aerial target (HEAT) 'Abhyas' off the Chandipur coast in Odisha.

During the flight trial, a high subsonic speed trajectory at a very low altitude with high endurance was demonstrated.

### **25. BoB subsidiary and India Navy launch co-branded credit card**

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

A navy personnel up to the age of 64 years will be eligible to choose from three variants of the co-branded credit card.

### **26. INS Khukri, 1st Of The India Built Missile Corvettes, Decommissioned After 32 Years**

INS Khukri, the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, was decommissioned "after 32 years of glorious service".

The corvette was built by the Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders on August 23, 1989 and had the distinction of being part of both the Western and Eastern Fleets.

The ship solemn ceremony was held at Visakhapatnam.

### **27. Defence ministry puts restrictions on import of 351 items under staggered timeline**

The defence ministry has announced a fresh list of 351 sub-systems and components that will not be allowed to be imported under a staggered timeline beginning December next year.

It is the third list released by the ministry in the last 16 months and it comes as part of the government's overall aim to make India a hub of manufacturing of military platforms and equipment. The new initiative will save foreign exchange equivalent to around Rs 3,000 cr annually.

### **28. Army sets up quantum computing lab, AI centre at engineering institute in Mhow**

The Army, with support from the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), has recently established the Quantum Lab at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering, Mhow.

Indian Army has also established an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre at the same institution with over 140 deployments.

Chief of Army Staff General MM Naravane. The Strategic Policy Group is the first level of the three-tier structure of NSCS.

## Books & Authors

### **1. Vice President of India released the book -'Democracy, Politics and Governance' authored by Dr.A.Surya Prakash**

Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has made this assertion while releasing the English and Hindi versions of books titled 'Democracy, Politics, and Governance' authored by Dr. A. Surya Prakash, Vice Chairman, Executive Council of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and a leading commentator on parliamentary and constitutional issues and a veteran journalist.

### **2. Housing finance pioneer, B.K. Madhur's autobiography released**

'At Home In The Universe', a book that chronicles a poor boy's journey from a village in South India to the pinnacle of corporate success and personal spiritual growth spanning over six decades, has been released in Mumbai.

The book has been released by R.C. Sinha, IAS (Rtd), advisor to the Ministry of Road Development, Government of India. B.K. Madhur, former Chief Executive Officer at DHFL Property Services Ltd

### **3. 'Rewinding of First 25 years of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology' book unveiled**

The book- 'Rewinding of First 25 years of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology', narrating the first 25 years of MeitY, is authored by S S Oberoi, the former adviser at the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

S S Oberoi was the first head of the Software Development Agency and the first adviser of Information Technology. The book was launched by Ajay Prakash Sawhney, Secretary of MeitY.

### **4. The Monk Who Transformed UP: Book on Yogi Adityanath's journey released**

A new book chronicles how Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath transformed the state in various aspects like law and order, connectivity, education, health infrastructure, and overall growth.

Written by author Shantanu Gupta, "The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh: How Yogi Adityanath Changed UP WaalaBhaiya' abuse to a Badge of Honour", is published by Garuda Prakashan. The book's foreword is written by TV Mohandas Pai.

### **5. Former Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Nirmal Chander Vij releases his new book**

Gen. Vij's book, The Kashmir Conundrum: The Quest for Peace in a Troubled Land, claims to offer a 'complete picture' of the conflicts in Jammu and Kashmir, and the way forward. The book is published by HarperCollins India.

### **6. Dr. Subhas Sarkar releases the Hindi translation of Tolkppiyam**

Minister of State for Education, Dr. Subhas Sarkar released the Hindi translation of Tolkppiyam and the Kannada translations of 9 books Classical Tamil literature. Tolkappiyam is the most ancient extant Tamil grammar text and the oldest extant long work.

## Obituary

### 1. Telugu film lyricist 'Sirivennela' Seetharama Sastry passes away

Award-winning Telugu lyricist and Padma Shri awardee Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry passed away following lung cancer-related complications. He was 66.

He was also honoured with Padma Shri in 2019 for his contribution to the film world and literature. He penned songs for Swarna Kamalam, Swayamkrushi, Shrutilayalu, Swara Kalpana, Swati Kiranam, etc.

### 2. Former Andhra Pradesh CM Konijeti Rosaiah passes away in Hyderabad

Former Governor of Tamil Nadu and former Chief Minister of the unified State of Andhra Pradesh Konijeti Rosaiah passed away in Hyderabad. Rosaiah, 88 years, was one of the most senior Congress leaders and had served in the Cabinets of several Chief Ministers including K. Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy and Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy. Rosaiah had a record in placing the budgets on the floor of Assembly as Finance Minister.

### 3. Veteran journalist Vinod Dua passes away at 67

Veteran journalist Vinod Dua passed away recently. He was 67. His daughter Dua confirmed it on a social media post. Vinod Dua, one of the pioneers in Hindi broadcast journalism, worked with Doordarshan to present youth programme Yuva Manch in the mid-'70s and later with several other television news channels. He was awarded Padma Shri in 2008.

### 4. Eileen Ash, the former England Test cricketer, passed away

Ash, who was the oldest Test cricketer, made her debut for England against Australia in 1937, and played seven Tests in all, taking 10 wickets at 23, including best figures of 3/35.

Her career was interrupted by the Second World War 'she was seconded to MI6, the UK's intelligence service' and retired from the sport in 1949.

### 5. Sarada Menon, India's first woman psychiatrist, dies at 98 in Chennai

Sarada Menon, considered India's first woman psychiatrist, passed away at the age of 98 at her home in Chennai.

She has been a recipient of several awards, including the Padma Bhushan in 1992 for her work in the field of mental health.

She was born in Mangaluru, Menon graduated from the Madras Medical College and trained in psychiatry in Bengaluru's NIMHANS.

### 6. Chief of defence staff Gen Bipin Rawat dies in IAF chopper crash in Tamil Nadu

Chief of defence staff (CDS) Gen Bipin Rawat died after an Indian Air Force (IAF) chopper he was on board crashed near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu's Nilgiris district. His wife Madhulika Rawat and 11 others were also killed in the mishap, the Indian Air Force (IAF) said.

Rawat had taken over as India's first chief of defence staff (CDS) on December 31, 2019.

### 7. Gothic novel author Anne Rice passes away at 80

American gothic-fiction writer Anne Rice, best known for The Vampire Chronicles novel series, passed away at the age of 80.

Anne Rice's debut novel, published in 1976, Interview with the Vampire revolves around a vampire named Louis de Pointe du Lac, who narrates the story of his life to a reporter.

Her other works: Pandora, Violin, Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt, The Witching Hour etc.

### 8. Former SC Judge Justice GT Navavati Who Headed '2002 Godhra Riots' & '1984 Anti-Sikh Riots' Inquiry Commissions Passes Away

Former Supreme Court judge, Justice Girish Thakorlal Navavati who headed two inquiry commissions formed to probe into the 2002 Godhra Riots & 1984 Anti-Sikh Riots passed away. Justice Girish Thakorlal Navavati was 86.

He was elevated as the Judge of the Supreme Court of India with effect in March 1995 and he retired as an SC Judge in February 2000.

### **9. Legendary film-maker KS Sethumadhavan passes away**

Malayalam filmmaker KS Sethumadhavan has passed away in Chennai. Sethumadhavan received the J C Daniel Award, the highest honour in the film sector instituted by the Kerala government, in the year 2010. Besides Malayalam, he directed movies in Tamil, Telugu and Hindi.

### **10. Former Union Minister R.L. Jalappa passes away**

Veteran Politician and former Union Minister R.L. Jalappa passed away in Kolar. He served as Union Minister for Textiles in the governments headed by former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral.

### **11. Former India goalkeeper Sanath Sett dies at 91**

Former India goalkeeper Sanath Sett, who was part of the 1954 Asian Games squad, died after prolonged illness.

Known for his acrobatic saves under the bar, Seth began his journey at the Eastern Railway FC in 1949 before moving to Aryan Club in 1951.

He then moved to East Bengal in 1957 and the next year he joined their arch-rivals Mohun Bagan, where he played for six years.

### **12. Former England Test Captain Ray Illingworth Dies At 89**

Former England captain Ray Illingworth has died at the age of 89, his county, Yorkshire. He had been undergoing radiotherapy for oesophageal cancer.

Illingworth played 61 Tests for England between 1958 and 1973 and captained the country 31 times, winning 12 matches and an Ashes series in Australia in 1970-1.

### **13. Desmond Tutu, South African anti-apartheid campaigner and Nobel Peace Prize winner, dies aged 90**

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and veteran of South Africa's struggle against white minority rule, has died aged 90.

He was awarded the Nobel prize in 1984 for his role in the struggle to abolish the apartheid system.

### **14. Former Greek President Karolos Papoulias dies at 92**

Veteran Greek politician Karolos Papoulias, who served as president at the height of the economic crisis of the 2010s, died at the age of 92.

Papoulias, a longtime socialist lawmaker and minister, was close to Andreas Papandreu, the founder of the Socialist PASOK party.

He served two terms between 2005 and 2015. Greece's Capital: Athens; Currency:- Euro; President: Katerina Sakellaropoulou.

### **15. E.O. Wilson, Known as 'Father of Biodiversity,' Dies at 92**

E.O. Wilson, the former Harvard University biologist and Pulitzer Prize winner whose study of ants and human behavior made him one of the world's most influential scientists and prompted his calls for action to protect millions of species on the planet, has died. He was 92.

## Person in news

### 1. Anju Bobby George crowned Woman of the Year by World Athletics

Legendary Indian athlete Anju Bobby George has been bestowed with the Woman of the Year Award by World Athletics for grooming talent in the country and for her advocacy of gender equality.

Anju, the only Indian to have won a medal in the World Championships with a long jump bronze in the 2003 edition. Senior Vice President of the Indian Athletics Federation, Anju Bobby George.

### 2. Smriti Mandhana signs up as brand ambassador for GUVI

IT Madras incubated startup roped in Indian women's cricketer Smriti Mandhana as its brand ambassador. She will be the face of GUVI & will feature across the online campaigns to strengthen the importance & scope of technological education & IT skills.

GUVI is India's 1st vernacular Ed-tech Startup to impart tech & programming skills in preferred native languages.

### 3. PV Sindhu wins silver in BWF World Tour Finals

Indian badminton ace P V Sindhu settled for a silver medal at the BWF World Tour Finals after going down meekly against Korean teen sensation An Seyoung.

With this victory, An Seyoung became the 1st ever South Korean woman to win the season-ending title.

It was also her 3rd straight title in Bali, following wins at the Indonesia Masters and Indonesia Open.

### 4. Ash Barty named WTA Player of the Year, Raducanu wins newcomer award

World no. 1 Ash Barty was named WTA Player of the Year for the second time and U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu took the Newcomer of the Year title, the governing body of the women's game said.

Czech Barbora Krejčíková took the WTA prize for the Most Improved Player of the Year following a stellar season.

Carla Suarez Navarro was named the Comeback Player of the Year award.

### 5. Aung San Suu Kyi sentenced to four years in Myanmar prison

Myanmar's ousted civilian leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, was sentenced to four years imprisonment after being found guilty on two charges, the first verdicts in a raft of criminal cases that the country's military has brought against her since seizing power 10 months ago.

Ms. Suu Kyi, 76, was convicted of charges of incitement and violating pandemic rules. She won the 1991 Nobel peace prize for non-violent struggle for democracy & Human rights

### 6. Picked for Nasa's 2021 astronaut class, Indian origin Anil Menon is SpaceX's first flight surgeon

Nasa-turned-SpaceX flight surgeon Anil Menon is among the 10 latest trainee astronauts who will join the 2021 class of the American space agency as it plans for the first human missions to the moon in more than 50 years.

Born to Indian and Ukrainian parents and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Menon is a lieutenant colonel in the US air force.

### 7. India's Jhilli Dalabehera clinches gold medal at Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships

Indian weightlifter Jhilli Dalabehera (22 year old) has won the gold medal in the women's 49kg category at the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Dalabehera lifted the total weight of 167kg with 73kg in snatch and 94kg in clean and jerk to win the yellow metal in the 49kg category. Sanket Mahadev Sargar clinched the gold medal in the men's 55kg snatch category.

## **8. India's Harnaaz Sandhu becomes Miss Universe 2021, brings the crown home after 21 years**

Punjab-based Harnaaz Sandhu, who represented the country at the 70th Miss Universe 2021, has won the title. Harnaaz, 21, won the Miss Universe crown 21 years after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000.

At the contest held in Eilat, Israel, she beat contestants Paraguay and South Africa. Andrea Meza, former Miss Universe 2020 from Mexico, crowned Harnaaz at the event. Miss Universe is an annual international beauty pageant that is run by the United States.

## **9. Elon Musk named Time's 2021 'Person of the Year'**

Tesla Chief Executive Officer Elon Musk was named Time magazine's "Person of the Year" for 2021. Musk is also the founder and CEO of SpaceX, and leads brain-chip startup Neuralink and infrastructure firm The Boring Company.

Tesla's market value soared to more than \$1 trillion this year, making it more valuable than Ford Motor and General Motors combined. The Person of the Year signifies somebody who affected the news or our lives the most.

## **10. Sunil Gavaskar conferred with SJFI Medal**

The Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI), at its Annual General Meeting (AGM), decided to confer the prestigious SJFI Medal on legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar.

Neeraj Chopra, who won India's lone gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics, was named the SJFI Sportsman of the Year award.

The AGM elected A. Vinod (Kerala) as the new SJFI President. On 27 February 1976, Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) was formed.

## **11. US Gymnast Simone Biles Named TIME Magazine's Athlete Of The Year For 2021**

2021 Athlete of the year: Gymnast Simone Arianne Biles of the United States of America has been declared the 2021 athlete of the year by TIME Magazine.

Simone Biles has won seven Olympic medals (4 gold, 1 silver, 2 bronze). She holds the record for most gold medals by a USA Gymnast in a single Olympics.

## **12. Emma Raducanu wins BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2021**

Tennis star Emma Raducanu is the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year for 2021.

She beat Tom Daley (diver) and Adam Peaty (swimmer) into second and third place, while England's men's footballers were named team of the year and Gareth Southgate the coach, as a triumphant period for British sport across the board was commemorated at a ceremony in Salford. Tom Daley won gold for the first time at his fourth Olympics in Tokyo.

## **13. Former Twitter India head Manish Maheshwari to launch ed-tech start-up Metaversity**

Maheshwari (Former Twitter India head) has partnered with Tanay Pratap, who has been a Senior Software Engineer with Microsoft, for the ed-tech venture. Earlier in August, he had relocated to the US as the Senior Director, Global Strategy and Operations of the company.

## **14. Gabriel Boric wins Chile's presidential election**

Leftist candidate Gabriel Boric has won Chile's presidential election to become the country's youngest ever leader.

At 35, Boric is set to become Chile's youngest-ever president.

Gabriel Boric won 56 percent of the votes, compared with 44 percent for his conservative opponent, Jose Antonio Kast. Capital: Santiago; Currency: Chilean peso.

## **15. Harbhajan Singh announces retirement from all forms of cricket**

Indian spinner Harbhajan Singh announced retirement from all forms of cricket.

He has 417 wickets to his name in just 103 matches. While picked up 227 wickets in 236 ODI matches. For T20Is, the Turbanator played for India in 28 matches and claimed 25 wickets.



Harbhajan, now 41, made his international debut back in March 1998, in a Test match against Australia.

### 16. Alia Bhatt Named PETA India's 2021 Person of the Year

To celebrate Alia Bhatt's work in support of an animal-friendly fashion industry and her advocacy for dogs and cats in need, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India has named the actress its 2021 Person of the Year.

Her vegan kidswear line, Ed-a-Mamma, also won a 2021 PETA India fashion award for helping to nurture kids' love for animals and nature.

### 17. Mohammed Shami Becomes 5th Indian Fast Bowler to Claim 200 Test Wickets

Mohammed Shami achieved the milestone of 200 Test wickets after removing Kagiso Rabada on Day 3 of the first Test against South Africa at the SuperSport Park in Centurion.

The 31-year-old pacer is third-fastest among Indian pacers to reach the landmark, achieving it in his 55th Test match.

He is the 11th Indian bowler to pick up 200 or more wickets. He is only the fifth fast bowler to reach the milestone.



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## Insurance

### 1. IPO-bound LIC improves asset quality, lowers net NPA to 0.05%

As per the latest Annual Report of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) ahead of its proposed IPO, the non-performing assets (NPAs) as of March 31, 2021, are Rs. 35,129.89 crore out of a total portfolio of Rs. 4,51,303.30 crore.

While the sub-standard assets are Rs. 254.37 crore, the doubtful assets are Rs. 20,369.17 crore and loss assets are Rs. 14,506.35 crore.

### 2. Liberty General Insurance Signs Corporate Agency Agreement with Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank

Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB), a regional rural bank headquartered in Dharwad, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Liberty General Insurance for selling general insurance products through 629 branches of KVGB.

The company will provide a variety of general health insurance products to the customers with reasonably affordable cost. Liberty General Insurance is a private general insurance company headquartered in Mumbai.

### 3. IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance appoints HO Suri as MD and CEO

IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance announced the appointment of HO Suri as its new managing director and chief executive officer. Suri was the financial advisor, head, internal audit & legal, at the company and the new position took effect from October 1.

IFFCO-Tokio General Insurance Company Limited is a 51:49 joint venture between IFFCO and Japan's Tokio Marine Group.

### 4. LIC, GIC Re and New India systemically important insurers: IRDAI

Insurance regulator IRDAI has said that the state-owned LIC, GIC Re and New India continue to be identified as Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) for 2021-22.

D-SIIs refer to insurers of such size, market importance and domestic and global inter connectedness, whose distress or failure would cause a significant dislocation in the domestic financial system.



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## India & World

### 1. India re-elected to International Maritime Organisation Council

India has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council after elections were held at its Assembly in London for 2022-23 biennium.

India's election falls under the Category of 10 states with 'the largest interest in international seaborne trade', alongside Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UAE.

### 2. Bhutan confers its highest civilian decoration 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo' to PM Narendra Modi

Bhutan conferred its highest civilian decoration 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo' on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of the country's National Day.

Last year, PM Modi received the Legion of Merit by the US Government' award of the US Armed Forces that is given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements 114th National Day of Bhutan: 17 December, 2021.

### 3. India fourth most affected country by spam calls in 2021: Truecaller

Spam call rates in India have spiked again, with the country moving up in global rankings from 9th position to 4th position owing to a significant increase in sales and telemarketing calls in 2021, according to the latest insights by callerID, spam detection and blocking company, Truecaller.



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## Environment

### 1. Inti Tanager: Colorful New Species of Bird Discovered in South America

A team of ornithologists from Brazil and Finland has discovered a cryptic new species of flatbill flycatcher living in the Amazonian lowlands. Flatbill flycatchers are members of the genus *Rhynchocyclus* in the exclusively New World family Tyrannidae. Four known species in the genus are distributed from southern Mexico to northeastern Bolivia, eastern Venezuela, and Brazil. The new species is named as cryptic flatbill (*Rhynchocycluscryptus*)

### 2. NITI Aayog launches 'e-Sawari India E-Bus Coalition' in tie-up with CESL

Government think tank NITI Aayog announced the launch of 'e-Sawaari India Electric Bus Coalition' in partnership with Convergence Energy Service Ltd (CESL) and World Resources Institute, India (WRI India), with support from Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI).

It is a paced electrification of the bus transport system in India.

CESL, CEO Mahua Acharya. NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.

### 3. BEE Launches 'Certification Course on Home Energy Audit' Initiative

Bureau of Energy Efficiency virtually launched 'Certification Course on Home Energy Audit (HEA)', during "National Energy Conservation Week: 8th-14th Dec 2021", marked as Iconic Week under "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav". HEA enables appropriate accounting, quantification, verification, monitoring, and analysis of energy use of various energy-consuming equipment in the home. Energy Management Centre, Kerala has been identified as Mentor SDA for the initiative.

### 4. India's TVS Motor and BMW Motorrad tie up to make electric vehicles

India's TVS Motor Company will develop electric vehicles (EV) with BMW's motorcycle brand in India, joining a host of Indian automakers that have sought to expand their clean mobility offering.

The tie-up comes at a time when new-age start-ups like Ola Electric & Ather are ramping up investment in electric scooters.

### 5. Scientists resume tagging of Olive Ridley sea turtles along Odisha coast

Scientists have resumed tagging of Olive Ridley sea turtles at Rushikulya rookery along the Odisha coast, which would help them identify the migration path and places visited by the marine reptiles after congregation and nesting.

The exercise was undertaken in Odisha in January 2021 after a span of about 25 years and 1,556 turtles had been tagged.

## Apps & Portals

### **1. Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog launches Genesys International's digital twin platform**

Genesys International, today launched its pan India program to make the Digital Twin of entire Urban India. The launch program was inaugurated by Amitabh Kant, CEO, Niti Aayog. The creation of this very accurate 3D data will mean a host of applications would open up in high-definition mapping, which was hitherto not possible, for smart cars, e-commerce, logistics, etc.

### **2. Jammu & Kashmir Bank launches revised Mobile Banking App- 'mPay Delight'**

To make daily transactions of its customers more secure and easier, J&K Bank has launched its revised and refurbished Mobile Banking App - mPay Delight - for the Public.

Chairman and Managing Director of, R K Chhibber unveiled the app.

It has been made more user friendly, vibrant & easier to use with biometric fingerprint authentication for faster and more secure Logins.

### **3. Bhasha Sangam mobile app launched with 100 sentences, 22 languages**

The mobile app is developed for both android & iOS platforms, to give users familiarity with common expressions of daily conversation in scheduled Indian languages. Union Minister of State for Education, Dr. Subhas Sarkar has informed that the government is all set to launch Bhasha Sangam mobile app. The app aims to foster the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative.

### **4. NCW Launches Online Resource Center on Cyber Safety Under 'We Think Digital' Programme**

To ensure women safety in cyberspace, the National Commission for Women (NCW) has launched an online resource center to offer help for women in distress on issues pertaining to online safety such as cyberbullying, cyberstalking, financial frauds, etc under the 'We Think Digital' programme, run collaboratively by the Commission, Facebook, and Cyber Peace Foundation.

### **5. NITI Aayog and Bharti Foundation announce the launch of 'Convoke 2021-22'**

Convoke is a National research Symposium that aims at addressing challenges in imparting education and strengthening its quality with a special focus on all teachers, educationists, heads of schools across India. Through this platform, School Teachers/ Heads/Principals of Govt Schools and teachers from Bharti Foundation network will be encouraged to use research-based solutions. Bharti Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Bharti Enterprises.

### **6. PNB launched PNB Pride-CRMD module tool, an android-based application for differently-abled employees**

Punjab National Bank (PNB) launched the PNB Pride-CRMD module tool, an android-based application for differently-abled employees, to monitor and effectively follow up with the special mention account (SMA) borrowers. SMA accounts are stressed loans that are recognized early, which enables banks to initiate remedial action in time. According to PNB, the device will be compatible with iOS very soon.

### **7. MoRTH, IIT Madras and MapmyIndia jointly launched Free-to Use navigation app service**

Government of India's Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, IIT Madras and MapmyIndia, India's leading digital data and technology products and platforms company for maps, geospatial and location-based IoT, signed an MoU for collaboration on driver and road safety technologies, and jointly launched India's best and FREE-TO-USE navigation app service.

### 8. Digi Yatra biometric boarding system to be introduced to simplify processes at airports: MoS Civil Aviation VK Singh

Four airports of Airports Authority of India (AAI) -- Varanasi, Pune, Kolkata and Vijayawada -- and three joint venture airports namely Hyderabad International Airport, Bangalore International Airport and Delhi International Airport have completed preliminary testing of the Digi Yatra biometric boarding system with registration only for the 'Day of Travel'.

### 9. Prime Minister launches a Portal and Logo dedicated to the Conformity Assessment Scheme of milk products, in Varanasi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a portal and logo dedicated to the Conformity Assessment Scheme (CAS) of milk products developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) with the help of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB). The Unified Dairy Mark was launched under the CAS, which was notified by the BIS.

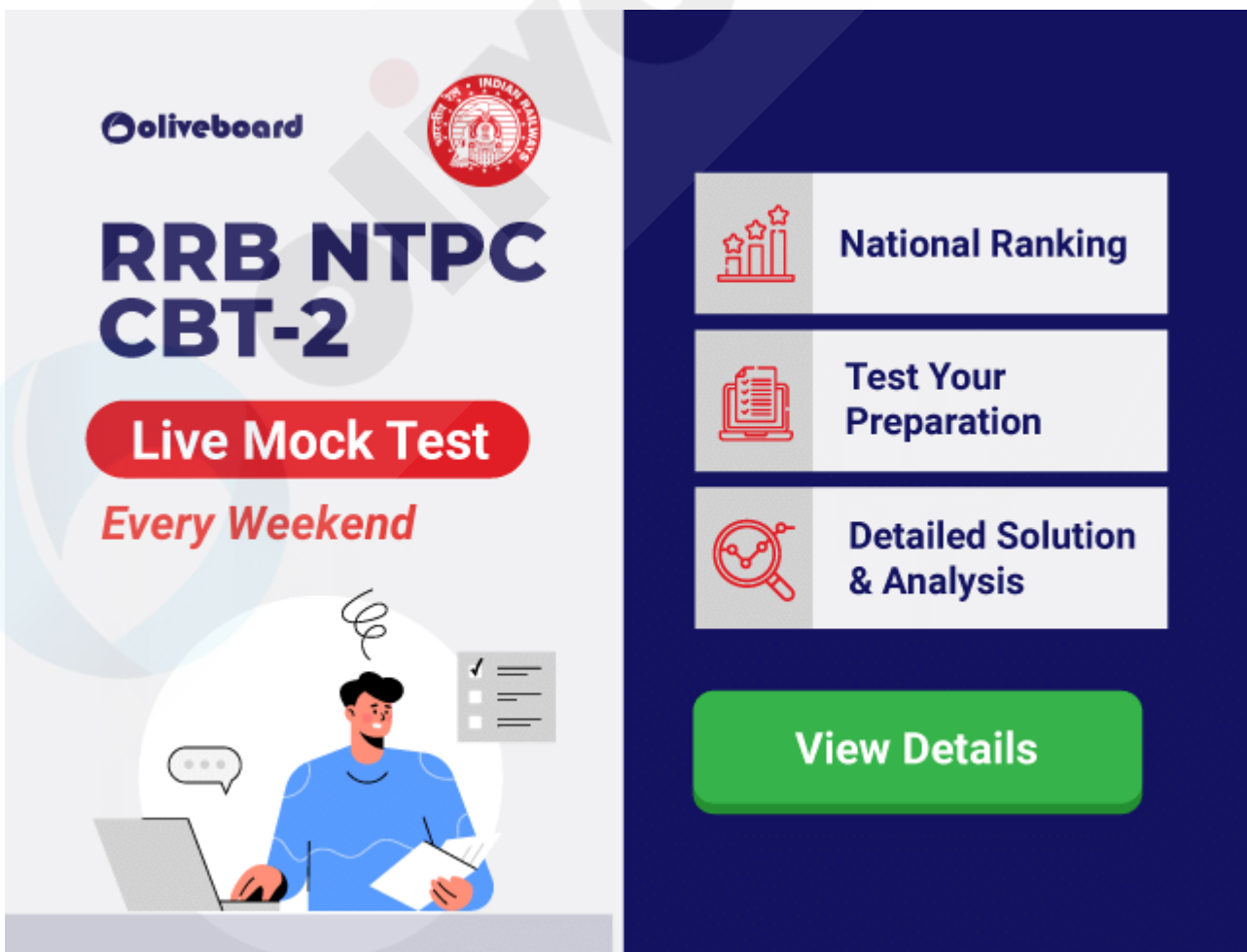
### 10. Army launches indigenous in-house messaging application called ASIGMA

ASIGMA, which stands for Army Secure IndiGeneous Messaging Application, is a new generation, state-of-the-art, web-based application developed entirely in-house. The new application is being deployed on the Army's internal network as a replacement of Army Wide Area Network (AWAN) messaging application.

### 11. Chalo mobile app and smart card launched for convenient bus travel in Mumbai

Bus travelling gets convenient in Mumbai! From ticket purchasing through e-wallet to live bus tracking, passengers can now enjoy smooth and convenient bus travel with Chalo smart cards and Chalo mobile application.

This mobile app and smart card will facilitate digital, and advance purchase of BEST bus tickets. Chalo mobile app will allow passengers to buy bus tickets and passes through e-wallet.



The advertisement features the Oliveboard logo and the Indian Railways emblem. The main text reads "RRB NTPC CBT-2 Live Mock Test Every Weekend". Below this is an illustration of a man sitting at a desk with a laptop, looking thoughtful. To the right, a dark blue sidebar contains three white boxes with red icons: "National Ranking" (bar chart), "Test Your Preparation" (document), and "Detailed Solution & Analysis" (magnifying glass). At the bottom of the sidebar is a green button labeled "View Details".

## Acquisitions & Mergers

### 1. CRED to acquire Happay for \$180 million

Fintech unicorn CRED plans to acquire Happay, a corporate expense management company. The acquisition is expected to be a cash-and-stock deal, potentially valuing Happay at about \$180 million.

While Happay will operate as a separate entity, the team will work closely with CRED to expand the product offering and drive scale. Cred is an Indian fintech company, based in Bangalore, founded in 2018 by Kunal Shah.

### 2. PolicyBazaar's holding firm PB Fintech to acquire MyLoanCare

PB Fintech, which operates Policybazaar has cleared a proposal to acquire up to 70.1% stake in Myloancare. The board also cleared a proposal to set up a new company to do the business of an account aggregator.

PB Fintech will initially acquire 24.9% stake in Myloancare after intimation to the RBI. Subsequently, the company will increase its stake to 70.1%. It aims to complete the acquisition within six months for a cash consideration.

### 3. Plaza Premium Group selects TCS to transform airport hospitality experience

Tata Consultancy Services announced that Plaza Premium Group (PPG), a global airport hospitality services provider based in Hong Kong, has selected TCS to develop an end-to-end digital platform. The partnership will focus on improving customer experience and operational excellence at Plaza Premium's 70 airport locations that serve 20 million passengers annually.

### 4. Wipro to acquire Edgile for \$230 million

Wipro announced that it will acquire Austin, Texas-headquartered Edgile for USD 230 million, a move that will strengthen the IT major's play in the cybersecurity services space. Edgile's experienced cybersecurity and risk management professionals will allow Wipro to further enhance its cybersecurity and risk consulting capabilities for the benefit of its customers.

### 5. Zee-Sony Merger Approved, Punit Goenka Will Be CEO Of Merged Entity

Zee Entertainment's board of directors approved the merger between Sony Pictures Networks India and Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited (ZEEL), according to a regulatory filing by the media company to the stock

Sony Pictures Networks India (SPNI) will hold a majority stake of 50.86 percent stake in the merged entity.

### 6. Axis Bank emerges as highest bidder for Citi consumer business

Private sector Axis Bank has emerged as the highest bidder to buy Citi's consumer banking business, according to reports. The valuation could be around USD 2 billion (about '13,000 crore).

American banking major Citibank in April announced its plan to exit from the consumer banking business in India as part of a global strategy.

Citi had entered India in 1902 and started the consumer banking business in 1985.

### 7. CCI Approves Acquisition Of 96% Stake In Jindal Power By Worldone

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of over 96 per cent stake in Jindal Power by Worldone.

Part of O P Jindal Group, JSPL is an industrial powerhouse with a dominant presence in steel, power, mining and infrastructure sectors.

Worldone Private Ltd is a private company owned by the Promoter Group of JSPL, managing and holding investments. Chairman of CCI:- Ashok Kumar Gupta.

## FinTech

### 1. RBI extends card tokenisation deadline by 6 months till June-end

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) extended the card-on-file (CoF) tokenisation deadline by six months to June 30, 2022

Card-on-file, or CoF, refers to card information stored by payment gateway and merchants to process future transactions.

The earlier deadline was December 31, 2021.

### 2. First cricket NFT auction clocks \$335,950 in bids

In a recent cricket-themed NFT (non-fungible token) auction of digital memorabilia in Dubai, the rights to products, including a bat signed by M.S. Dhoni-led 2011 World Cup winning Indian cricket team and a David Warner-signed IPL jersey, were auctioned for about \$335,950.

## Legal

### 1. CCI suspends Future deal, fines Amazon

In a setback for Amazon, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) suspended its approval accorded more than 2 years back to e-commerce firm to acquire 49% stake in Future Coupons, following a review of allegations of concealment of info while seeking regulatory nod for the deal. The anti-trust regulator also imposed Rs 202 cr penalty, which Amazon has to pay within 60 days



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## States/UTs

### Andhra Pradesh

#### 1. Ministry of Electronics & IT, Govt of Andhra Pradesh & NASSCOM launch 'Centre of Excellence of IoT and AI' in Visakhapatnam

National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), in a joint partnership with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and Government of Andhra Pradesh, has inaugurated the 'Centre of Excellence on IoT and AI' at Andhra University Campus, Visakhapatnam, aimed at promoting innovation in emerging technologies of IoT, AI, robotics, etc.

#### 2. Andhra Pradesh government joins hands with Food and Agriculture Organization , ICAR to help farmers

The Andhra Pradesh government has joined hands with the FAO & Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) to help strengthen its support to farmers in adopting sustainable agri food systems.

A network of Rythu Bharosa Kendras were set up at the village level by government as part of efforts to weed away fake seeds, pesticides and pesticides and fertilizers from market.

CM:- Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy; Governor:-Biswabhusan Harichandan.

### Arunachal Pradesh

#### 1. Arunachal Pradesh govt ropes in Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt as brand ambassador for 50th year celebrations

Arunachal Pradesh government has roped in bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt as the brand ambassador for '50 Years of Arunachal Pradesh' celebration.

The popular actor kicked off the media campaign for the month-long celebrations, from 20th January to 20th February 2022, commemorating the birth of Arunachal Pradesh as an identity.

CM :- Pema Khandu; Governor:- B. D. Mishra.

### Assam

#### 1. Ratan Tata To Be Conferred Assam's Highest Civilian Award for Contribution Towards Cancer Care

On the occasion of Assam Divas, the state government of Assam has decided to accolade renowned industrialist Ratan Tata with the 'Asom Bhaibav' award, the highest civilian state award for his contribution to cancer care in the state. The awards that precede it are Asom Saurav, followed by Asom Gaurav.

CM of Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma, announced the award in New Delhi.

### Bihar

#### 1. Center accepts plea and awards GI tag to Mithila Makhana

Geographical Indications Register (GIR) under the Central Ministry of Commerce accepted the call to rename Bihar Makhana to Mithila Makhana & also suggested other changes to the brand's logo to better reflect its origins, in addition to identify & protect the geographical indications of the product. Mithila region is known for this specific type of aquatic cultured fox nut.

### Goa

#### 1. 7th edition of India International Science festival begins in Panaji

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the seventh edition of India International Science Festival at Panaji, Goa.

The theme of 4-day science festival is 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' - "Celebrating Creativity, Science, Technology and Innovation for a prosperous India".

First India International Science Festival was held in 2015 at IIT Delhi.

## Gujarat

### 1. GACL, GAIL team up to establish bioethanol plant in Gujarat

Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Limited (GACL) and GAIL (India) Limited has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for setting up a bioethanol plant with a production capacity of 500 kilo litre per day (KLD) in Gujarat.

The cost of the project is estimated to the tune of Rs 1,000 crore and it is expected to generate annual revenues of approximately Rs 1,500 crores.

## Haryana

### 1. Haryana launches 'khel nursery scheme'

Haryana government had started 'Khel Nursery Scheme 2022-23' to promote sports in the state, under which sports nurseries would be started in government, private educational institutions and private sports institutions.

Under the scheme, sports nurseries are being opened for the sports included in the Olympic, Asian and Commonwealth Games. Haryana CM:- Manohar Lal Khattar; Governor:- Bandaru Dattatreya

## Himachal Pradesh

### 1. Himachal cabinet approves draft electric vehicle policy

The policy aims to promote a sustainable transport system for making Himachal a global hub for electric mobility development and manufacturing of electric vehicles besides creating public and private charging infrastructure for such vehicles, along with providing subsidies and incentives to the electric vehicle manufacturing industries. Himachal Pradesh Chief minister:- Jai Ram Thakur; Governor:- Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar

### 2. PM Modi launches Rs 11,000 cr hydropower projects in Himachal Pradesh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has embarked on a visit to Mandi, also known as 'Chhoti Kashi', and inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of hydropower projects worth Rs 11,000 cr that will help boost the state's economy and provide additional power to the states. He laid the foundation stone of Renukaji Dam project.

It will generate electricity for the Himachal Pradesh. The 40 MW project will be built at a cost of around Rs 7,000 cr.

## Jharkhand

### 1. Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren launches mobile app for budget suggestion

Chief Minister Hemant Soren has launched 'HamarApan Budget' and a mobile application prepared by the state finance Department from the Chief Minister's residential office in Ranchi. Through this portal, the general public of the state will be able to share their valuable suggestions for the 2022-23 budget.

### 2. Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren Launches SAHAY Scheme In Maoist-Hit Districts

The Hemant Soren-led Government took an appreciable step to promote sports among youths of the worst Maoist-hit districts in Jharkhand.

During the launch of Sports Action towards Harnessing Aspiration of Youths (SAHAY), the Government aims to promote sports hence dissuading youths from joining the ranks of rebels.

## Karnataka

### 1. Karnataka govt partners with National Payments Corporation of India & State Bank of India, for enabling and implementing e-RUPI

The NPCI, SBI and Department of e-Governance, government of Karnataka have partnered for enabling & implementing e-RUPI, a cashless & contactless payment solution for students under the State's scholarship programme.

e-RUPI will be used to ensure a leak-proof delivery of education fees of eligible students by paying digitally to the college by Karnataka government.

## **Madhya Pradesh**

### **1. Madhya Pradesh government organises first drone fair at Gwalior**

In Madhya Pradesh, the first drone fair in the country was organised at Gwalior. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was addressing the youths and farmers present at the "Drone Mela" in Gwalior.

Around 20 companies displayed their drones in the fair.

Agriculture drone technology is also playing an important role in the Swamitva Yojana being run in the state. Madhya Pradesh Governor:- Mangubhai C. Patel

## **Nagaland**

### **1. Nagaland Police Department Launches 'Call Your Cop' Mobile Application To Curb Violence**

In an attempt to curb the violence, and enabling citizens to directly communicate with the police personnel, the Nagaland Director General of Police (DGP) T. John Longkumer recently launched the 'Call your Cop' at Police Headquarters in Kohima. CUG App envisages to make it convenient for the public to directly communicate with police officials Nagaland Capital:

Kohima Chief minister: Neiphiu Rio

### **2. Nagaland creates 3 new districts Niuland, Tseminyu, Chumukedima; State now has 15**

The Nagaland government has announced the creation of three new districts, namely Tseminyu, Niuland and Chumoukedima. This comes less than a year after the 12th district of the state 'Noklak' was inaugurated.

With the addition of the three new districts, Nagaland will now have 15 districts.

Tseminyu is the sub-division of the Kohima district. Chumukedima has created as an urban-rural district & Niuland is a border district.

### **3. Centre extends AFSPA in Nagaland for six more months**

The Union Home Ministry has extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in the whole of Nagaland for another six months (With effect from December 30, 2021).

The Act, which has been in force in the northeast since 1958, gives unbridled powers to the armed forces & the Central Armed Police Forces deployed in 'disturbed areas'. A disturbed area is one where the use of armed forces in aid of civil power is necessary.

### **4. Centre launches project to upskill 4,000 cane and bamboo artisans from Nagaland under Recognition of Prior Learning**

The Central government is set to upskill over 4,000 craftsmen, cane, and bamboo artisans from Nagaland under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana.

The objective is to upskill the local weavers and artisans to enhance their productivity through RPL assessment and certification in traditional handicrafts

## **Odisha**

### **1. Argentina beat Germany, 4-2 to lift Men's Junior Hockey World Cup in Bhubaneswar, Odisha**

Argentina lifted the coveted trophy of the Junior Men's Hockey World Cup after defeating Germany, 4-2 in the Summit Clash in Bhubaneswar.

Argentina's forward Lautaro Domene made all the difference in the match with his hat-trick and then in the last minute Agostini sealed the championship trophy with his brilliant goal.

### **2. Odisha govt joins hands with UNCDF for financial empowerment of women**

The Odisha government and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) signed an agreement to announce the launch of Mission Shakti Living Lab to empower women economically and drive gender equality.

This will address barriers that limit the access of women to autonomy and financial freedom with the use of digital technologies and e-commerce.

Mission Shakti was launched in 2001 to bolster the holistic development of women.

### **3. Odisha CM inaugurates State's longest bridge 'T-Setu' over Mahanadi**

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has inaugurated T-Setu, the State's longest bridge over Mahanadi in Cuttack district.

The 3.4 km long bridge, connecting Gopinathpur in Badamba, Baideswar in Banki to SinghanathPitha located in the middle of the river, has been built in the shape of English alphabet 'T' at a cost of Rs 111 crore.

### **4. Mission Shakti Living Lab Launched In Odisha**

The Government of Odisha through the Department of Mission Shakti and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), signed an agreement to announce the launch of the Mission Shakti Living Lab.

The Living Lab is a joint initiative designed by the state Government of Odisha and UNCDF through its Centre for Financial Health.

## **Rajasthan**

### **1. Gyandoot 2.0 to be launched for online live classes by Rajasthan college education department**

Gyandoot 2.0, the second phase of the Gyandoot programme, is being launched to enhance the subjective knowledge, academic problem solving and creative use of their time by the students studying in colleges of Rajasthan state.

The faculty members working in government colleges will give lectures on a completely voluntary basis for the project. The classes would be free for the students studying in all government & private colleges.

### **2. 'Back to Work' scheme for Rajasthan women who left jobs due to family circumstances**

Rajasthan government has come up with a 'Back to Work' scheme for women who sometimes have to quit their jobs due to family circumstances.

The scheme targets to provide jobs to 15,000 women with the help of the private sector in the next three years. Priority will be given to widows, women who have been abandoned, divorced and victims of violence.

## **Sikkim**

### **1. Gangtok to Indo- China Border named as Narendra Modi Marg by Governor**

A second road linking Tsomgo lake and Nathula border pass with Gangtok -- christened as 'Narendra Modi Marg' -- was officially inaugurated by Governor Ganga Prasad.

The older route is called Jawaharlal Nehru Road.

The stretch, constructed by Border Roads Organisation, has reduced the distance between Gangtok and Tsomgo lake by 15 km. Prem Singh Tamang :- CM of Sikkim

## **Tamil Nadu**

### **1. Tamil Nadu declares 5,151 hectares of Kaliveli wetlands in Villupuram as bird sanctuary**

Tamil Nadu government declared 5,151.60 hectares of swamp/wetlands in Villupuram district as Kazhuveli Wetland Birds Sanctuary effectively putting brakes on some of the controversial infra projects proposed in the ecologically sensitive region.

The declaration was made in exercise of the power conferred in subsection (1) of section 18 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

### **2. 'Tamil Thai Vazhthu' declared Tamil Nadu's state song**

The Tamil Nadu government has declared 'Tamil Thai Vazhthu' (invocation to mother Tamil) as the state song. An order released by Chief Minister MK Stalin stated that the song has to be sung before the start of any event at all educational institutions, government offices and public forums.

The song is written by scholar Manonmaniam Sundaranar.

## Telangana

### 1. India gets its 1st international arbitration centre in Hyderabad

India's first international arbitration and mediation centre was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India NV Ramana and Telangana chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad. CM Chandrasekhar Rao handed over keys of two floors space at VK towers in Gachibowli to CJI Ramana for commencement of the operations temporarily.

A permanent building is yet to be completely built at puppalaguda in Hyderabad.

## Tripura

### 1. First GPS-based app launched to define land allotted under Forest Rights Act

Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Giriraj Singh, has launched the National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS) and Banadhikar app, a GPS-based mobile application for demarcation of forest 'patta' (land rights) for the landless indigenous people under the Forest Rights Act.

Tripura became the first state in the country to introduce this app.

Tripura CM: Biplab Kumar Deb; Governor: Satyadev Narayan Arya.

## Uttar Pradesh

### 1. Prime Minister Modi to launch Rs 9,600-crore development projects in UP's Gorakhpur

The projects that the Prime Minister will inaugurate a newly-built fertiliser plant of Hindustan UrvarakRasayan Limited (HURL), a state-of-the-art AIIMS Gorakhpur hospital, equipped with 300 beds and 14 operation theatres and a hi-tech lab at ICMR's regional unit Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC) in BRD Medical College. UP CM: - Yogi Adityanath; Governor: - Anandiben Patel

### 2. Haiderpur wetland in Uttar Pradesh recognised as Ramsar Site

The Haiderpur Wetland abutting the Madhya Ganga barrage, about 10 km from Bijnor in western Uttar Pradesh, has been recognised under the 1971 Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, bringing the total number of such designated areas in the country to 47.

Uttar Pradesh is now home to 9 Ramsar wetlands.

### 3. PM Modi lays foundation stone of Ganga Expressway at Shahjahanpur in Uttar Pradesh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur district.

Prime Minister said that the Ganga expressway will open new avenues of development to the region and for Jawan and Kisan of Uttar Pradesh this will be an expressway of infinite opportunities.

### 4. Union Min Rajeev Chandrashekhar Inaugurates MedTech Centre of Entrepreneurship in Lucknow

Union Minister Rajeev Chandrashekhar has inaugurated the MedTech Centre of Entrepreneurship established at Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGI) in Lucknow. The center will boost cross-disciplinary application development like medical plus technology in the state. Dr Saurabh Srivastava, former chairman of NASSCOM, the chief mentor of MedTech CoE.

### 5. UP to launch 'Free Smartphone Yojna' on Dec 25, to dole out 1 lakh smartphones.

The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh is set to launch the ambitious 'Free Smartphone Yojna' on December 25, which is the birth anniversary of senior BJP leader and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Under the scheme the state government will distribute smartphones and tablets to final year students of graduation and above.

## **6. Justice SK Mishra Appointed As Acting Chief Justice Of Uttarakhand HC**

President Ram Nath Kovind on basis of the recommendations of the Chief Justice of India has appointed Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra as acting Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court.

Justice Mishra, who is the senior-most Judges of the Uttarakhand High Court, will perform the duties of the office of the Chief Justice of the HC from December 24, 2021. The Uttarakhand High Court is located at Nainital.

## **7. PM Modi launches multiple development initiatives worth '2,095 cr in Varanasi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Kisan Diwas, laid the foundation stone for 27 projects worth '2095 crore in his Varanasi parliamentary constituency.

The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of 'Banas Dairy Sankul' at UP State Industrial Development Authority Food Park, Karkhiyaon, Varanasi

## **8. 7 New Internet Exchange Nodes to boost connectivity & Digital economy in Uttar Pradesh**

These nodes will be located at Meerut, Agra, Kanpur, Lucknow, Prayagraj, Varanasi & Gorakhpur. Till date only one Internet exchange node was operating in UP at Gautam Buddha Nagar.

## **9. Nitin Gadkari inaugurates and lays foundation stone of National Highway projects of 240 Km worth Rs.9119 crore in Uttar Pradesh**

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari today inaugurated and laid foundation stone of National Highway projects of 240 Km worth Rs.9119 crore in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh.

Gadkari also launched first Intelligent Transport system (ITS) on 6 Lane Eastern Peripheral Expressway at Dasna, Ghaziabad.

## **10. Rajnath Singh lays foundation of BrahMos unit, defence technology centre in Lucknow, U.P**

Defence minister Rajnath Singh has laid the foundation stone of the Defence Technology and Test Centre and BrahMos manufacturing centre that will be established by Defence Research and Development Organisation in Lucknow.

The Uttar Pradesh government has allocated 200-acre land for the project in Lucknow. This facility will be made operational in the next two-three years.

## **11. Uttar Pradesh crowned 11th Hockey India junior national championship winners**

Uttar Pradesh Hockey maintained their unbeaten record in the 11th Hockey India Junior Men National Championship 2021 in Kovilpatti in Tamil Nadu with a decisive 3 - 1 victory over Hockey Chandigarh in the final of the competition.

Tournament top scorer Sharda Nand Tiwari opened the scoring for Uttar Pradesh.

## **12. PM Modi launches blockchain-based digital degrees at IIT Kanpur; Also inaugurates completed section of Kanpur Metro Rail Project**

Under the National Blockchain Project, Prime Minister was launched blockchain-based digital degrees at the 54th Convocation Ceremony of IIT Kanpur.

Later Prime Minister also inaugurated the completed section of Kanpur Metro Rail Project and the Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project.

These digital degrees can be verified globally and are unforgeable.

## **13. Lulu Group to set up Rs500 crore food processing plant in Greater Noida**

Middle East-based retail company Lulu Group announced the setting-up of its export-oriented food and agriculture-produce processing park in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, planned with an initial investment of '500 cr. Lulu Group will procure and export an estimated 20,000 tons (annually) of local fruits & vegetables from the state for the company's hypermarkets.

## Uttarakhand

### 1. Rishabh Pant appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami announced that Indian wicket-keeper batsman Rishabh Pant has been appointed as the brand ambassador of the state.

The 24-year Pant, who was rested for the New Zealand Tests, is currently in South Africa as the Indian Team is all set to face Proteas in the three-match Test series, starting December 26.

### 2. PM inaugurates, lays foundation stones of projects worth over Rs 17,500 cr in Haldwani

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated and laid foundation stones of projects worth over Rs 17,500 crore here ahead of the assembly elections in Uttarakhand.

The unveiling of projects by Modi included the inauguration of six worth Rs 3,420 crore and laying the foundation stones of 17 others worth Rs 14,127 crore.

## West Bengal

### 1. West Bengal secures \$135 million World Bank loan to upgrade rural power distribution network

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has approved a USD 135 million loans to West Bengal to improve the operational efficiency and reliability of electricity supply in select pockets in the state.

The IBRD and its concessional lending arm, the International Development Association (IDA), are collectively also called the World Bank.

CM:- Mamata Banerjee; Governor:- Jagdeep Dhankhar

### 2. Durga Puja inscribed on UNESCO's 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' list

Durga Puja is a classic fusion of religion and culture, regarded with a lot of pride and celebrated predominantly by the Bengali community. The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage has inscribed 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The decision came recently during the 16th session, taking place virtually.

## Delhi

### 1. Rakesh Asthana launches Delhi Police's e-learning platform to impart skill training to school dropouts

Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana has launched an e-learning initiative by the southwest district of the police force to help educate youths and impart skill training to school dropouts from the weaker sections of society.

The e-learning platform, 'Unnati', was launched under the Delhi Police's flagship scheme 'YUVA'.

## Jammu and Kashmir

### 1. Jal Jeevan Mission: J&K plans to provide 100% tap water connection by 2022

In J&K, continuing with its efforts to cover 100 percent of rural households with functional tap water connections under Jal Jeevan Mission by 2022, the UT Administration has provided 4.62 lakh tap water connections in two years. J&K, two districts Srinagar and Ganderbal which include 11 Blocks, 383 Panchayat, and 925 villages were covered with 100% pipe-water connections

## Committees

### 1. RBI appoints advisory committee to assist Reliance Capital administrator

The Reserve Bank of India has appointed an advisory committee to advise the administrator of Reliance Capital.

The committee includes Sanjeev Nautiyal, ex-DMD of State Bank of India, Srinivasan Varadarajan, ex-DMD of Axis Bank, and Praveen P Kadle, ex-MD & CEO, Tata Capital Limited.

### 2. Centre forms three-member committee to review criteria for EWS quota

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has announced the formation of a three-member committee to review the criteria for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) reservations.

The committee will comprise Former Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey, Member Secretary ICSSR Prof VK Malhotra, and Principal Economic Advisor to the Indian government Sanjeev Sanyal.

### 3. Govt expands SCALE committee, appoints 3 new members

Government has expanded the SCALE committee (Steering Committee for Advancing Local Value-Add and Exports) by adding 3 new members, hailing from diverse industry backgrounds, according to an industry insider.

The new appointees are:-

- # Panasonic India Chairman & CEO Manish Sharma,
- # Toyota Kirloskar, Vice-Chairman- Vikram S Kirloskar,
- # Asian Paints promoter Jala Dani.

Currently, the 14-member committee is headed by former Mahindra CEO Pawan Goenka.

### 4. SEBI inducts Aarati Krishnan as a member of MF advisory panel

Aarati Krishnan, has been inducted as a member of the Securities & Exchange Board of India's Advisory Committee on Mutual Funds.

The committee, chaired by Usha Thorat, former Deputy Governor of RBI, advises SEBI on matters related to mutual fund regulation to ensure investor protection, development of the industry.

### 5. Centre forms committee to look into withdrawal of AFSPA in Nagaland

The Centre has formed a committee to look into the withdrawal of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in Nagaland.

The move comes after representatives of the Nagaland government held a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India Vivek Joshi will head the five-member committee. The panel will submit its report in 45 days. Nagaland CM :- Neiphiu Rio; Governor:- Jagdish Mukhi (additional).





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## QUICK LEARNERS

### BANKING

<b>Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)</b>	4.0%
<b>Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)</b>	18.0%

<b>POLICY/EXCHANGE RATE &amp; RESERVE RATIO</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>Repo Rate</b>	4.00%
<b>Reverse Repo Rate</b>	3.35%
<b>Marginal Standing Facility Rate (MSF)</b>	4.25%
<b>Bank Rate</b>	4.25%

### APPOINTMENTS

<b>APPOINTMENT</b>	<b>POST</b>
<b>Sambit Patra</b>	Chairman of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)
<b>Pradip Shah</b>	Chairman of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL)
<b>Sanjay Jain</b>	Chief Executive of India Debt Resolution Company (IDRCL),
<b>Ajay Banga</b>	Vice Chairman of General Atlantic
<b>Gita Gopinath</b>	First Deputy Managing Director (FDMD) of IMF
<b>Alka Upadhyaya</b>	Chairperson of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).
<b>Rajnish Kumar</b>	Strategic Group Advisor of OYO
<b>Neelam Shammi Rao</b>	Central Provident Fund Commissioner in the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)
<b>Ittira Davis</b>	MD & CEO of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank
<b>Sanjiv Mehta</b>	President of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)
<b>Adama Barrow</b>	President of Gambia
<b>Olaf Scholz</b>	Chancellor of Germany
<b>Sunil Arora</b>	Board of Advisers for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
<b>Jasprit Bumrah</b>	Brand ambassador OnePlus wearables
<b>Catherine Russell</b>	Executive Director of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).
<b>Leena Nair</b>	CEO of Chanel
<b>Arvind Kumar</b>	Director General of Software Technology of India
<b>Mohit Jain</b>	President of The Indian Newspaper Society
<b>PV Sindhu</b>	Members of Badminton World Federation Athletes Commission

<b>Atul Dinkar Rane</b>	CEO and MD of BrahMos Aerospace Limited
<b>Pradeep Kumar Rawat</b>	India's ambassador to China.
<b>Kamlesh Gandhi</b>	Co-chairman of Finance Industry Development Council (FIDC)
<b>Mohammed bin Sulayem</b>	President of the Fdration Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA).
<b>Rajeev Ahuja</b>	Executive Director of RBL Bank
<b>Eishin Chihana</b>	Chairman of Yamaha Motor India Group
<b>Praveen Kumar</b>	Director General &CEO of Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs
<b>Radhika Jha</b>	CEO of Energy Efficiency Services
<b>Vikram Misri</b>	Deputy National Security Advisor
<b>Rajiv Anand</b>	Deputy MD of Axis Bank
<b>CP Goyal</b>	Director-General of Forests & Special Secretary (DGF&SS)
<b>Atul Kumar Goel</b>	MD & CEO of Punjab National Bank
<b>Pankaj Sharma</b>	India's ambassador to Mexico
<b>Vasudevan Pathangi Narasimhan</b>	MD & CEO of Equitas Small Finance Bank
<b>H R Khan</b>	Additional Director of AU Small Finance Bank

## AWARDS

WINNER	AWARD
<b>Lionel Messi</b>	Ballon d'Or
<b>V Praveen Rao</b>	Dr M S Swaminathan Award
<b>Lakshmi Subramanian</b>	International Press Institute (IPI) India Award
<b>Bhanu Prakash Chandra</b>	International Press Institute (IPI) India Award
<b>Nikhil Srivastava</b>	AMS Ciprian Foias Award
<b>Nilmani Phookan Jr</b>	56th Jnanpith Award
<b>Damodar Mauzo</b>	57th Jnanpith Award
<b>IIT-Kanpur Scientist</b>	Young Geospatial Scientist award
<b>Neena Gupta</b>	Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians
<b>Azim Premji</b>	Dr. Ida S. Scudder Oration award
<b>BV Doshi</b>	Royal Institute of British Architects Royal Gold Medal for 2022.
<b>Lewis Hamilton</b>	Knighthood at Windsor Castle
<b>Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL)</b>	Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2021

<b>IIT Roorkee</b>	Industrial Innovation Awards of Confederation of Indian Industry
<b>Kumar Mangalam Birla</b>	The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) Global Entrepreneur of the Year
<b>Dr Anil Prakash Joshi</b>	Mother Teresa Memorial Award
<b>Vidyut Mohan</b>	Mother Teresa Memorial Award
<b>Ridhima Pandey</b>	Mother Teresa Memorial Award
<b>Anukrti Upadhyay</b>	Sushila Devi Award 2021
<b>Viral Desai</b>	Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award

### IMPORTANT DAYS

DATE	DAY	THEME
<b>December 1<sup>st</sup></b>	World AIDS Day	End inequalities. End AIDS & End Pandemics
<b>December 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	Ending Slavery & Legacy of Racism: A Global Imperative for Justice
<b>December 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	International Day of Persons with Disabilities	Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world
<b>December 4<sup>th</sup></b>	International Day Of Banks	
<b>December 7<sup>th</sup></b>	International Civil Aviation Day	Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development
<b>December 9<sup>th</sup></b>	International Anti-Corruption Day	Your right, your role: say no to corruption
<b>December 10<sup>th</sup></b>	Human Rights Day	Equality, Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights
<b>December 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Vijay Diwas	
<b>December 20<sup>th</sup></b>	International Human Solidarity Day	
<b>December 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	National Mathematics Day	
<b>December 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	Kisan Diwas	
<b>December 24<sup>th</sup></b>	National Consumer Day	
<b>December 27<sup>th</sup></b>	International day for Epidemic Preparedness.	

## OBITUARY

OBITUARY	RELATED FIELD
<b>Srivennela Seetharama Sastry</b>	Telugu lyricist
<b>Konijeti Rosaiah</b>	Former Andhra Pradesh CM
<b>Vinod Dua</b>	Journalist
<b>Eileen Ash</b>	Former England Cricketer
<b>Sarada Menon</b>	India's first woman psychiatrist
<b>General Bipin Rawat</b>	Chief of Defence Staff
<b>Anne Rice</b>	Author
<b>Justice GT Nanavati</b>	Former Supreme Court Judge
<b>KS Sethumadhavan</b>	Malayalam Film maker
<b>R.L. Jalappa</b>	Former Union Minister
<b>Sanath Sett</b>	Former Indian Footballer
<b>Ray Illingworth</b>	Former England Cricketer
<b>Desmond Tutu</b>	South African anti-apartheid campaigner
<b>Karolos Papoulias</b>	Former Greek President
<b>E.O. Wilson</b>	Father of Biodiversity



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<b>STATE</b>	<b>CAPITAL</b>	<b>CHIEF MINISTER</b>	<b>GOVERNOR</b>
Andhra Pradesh	Amaravati	Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy	Biswa Bhusan Harichandn
Arunachal Pradesh	Itanagar	Pema Khandu	Brigadier B.D. Mishra (retd)
Assam	Dispur	HimantaBiswaSarma	Prof. Jagdish Mukhi
Bihar	Patna	Nitish Kumar	Phagu Chauhan
Chhattisgarh	Raipur	Bhupesh Baghel	AnusuiyaUikey
Goa	Panaji	Pramod Sawant	P.S. Sreedharan Pillai
Gujarat	Gandhi Nagar	Vijaybhai R. Rupani	Acharya Dev Vrat
Haryana	Chandigarh	Manohar Lal Khattar	BandaruDattatraya
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	Jai Ram Thakur	Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar
Jharkhand	Ranchi	Hemant Soren	Ramesh Bais
Karnataka	Bengaluru	Basavaraj Bommai	Thaawarchand Gehlot
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	Pinarayi Vijayan	Arif Mohammed Khan
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	Shivraj Singh Chauhan	MangubhaiChhaganbhai Patel
Maharashtra	Mumbai	Uddhav Thackrey	Bhagat Singh Koshiyari
Manipur	Imphal	N Biren Singh	La. Ganesan
Meghalaya	Shillong	Conrad Kongkal Sangma	Satya Pal Malik
Mizoram	Aizawl	Pu Zoramthanga	Dr Kambhampati Haribabu
Nagaland	Kohima	Neiphiu Rio	Jagdish Mukhi
Odisha	Bhubaneshwar	Naveen Patnaik	Ganeshi Lal
Punjab	Chandigarh	Charanjit Singh Channi	Banwarilal Purohit
Rajasthan	Jaipur	Ashok Gehlot	Kalraj Mishra
Sikkim	Gangtok	PS Golay	Ganga Prasad
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	M. K. Stalin	R. N. Ravi
Telangana	Hyderabad	K. Chandrasekhar Rao	TamilisaiSoundararajan
Tripura	Agartala	Biplab Kumar Deb	SatyadeoNarain Arya
UttarPradesh	Lucknow	Yogi Aditya Nath	Anandiben Patel
Uttarakhand	Dehradun	Pushkar Singh Dhami	Lt. Gen. Gurmit Singh

West Bengal	Kolkata	Mamata Banerjee	Jagdeep Dhankhar
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### UNION TERRITORIES, LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS & ADMINISTRATORS

UNION TERRITORY	LT. GOVERNOR & ADMINISTRATOR
Andaman and Nicobar Island (UT)	Admiral D K Joshi (Lieutenant Governor)
Chandigarh (UT)	Banwarilal Purohit (Administrator)
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (UT)	Praful Patel (Administrator)
Delhi (NCT)	Anil Baijal (Lieutenant Governor)
Jammu and Kashmir (UT)	Manoj Sinha (Lieutenant Governor)
Lakshadweep (UT)	Praful Patel (Administrator)
Puducherry (UT)	Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan (Addl. Charge) (Lieutenant Governor)
Ladakh (UT)	Radha Krishna Mathur (Lieutenant Governor)

### UNION MINISTERS & PORTFOLIO

UNION MINISTER	PORTFOLIO
<b>Narendra Modi</b>	Ministry of personnel, public grievances and pensions Department of Atomic Energy Department of Space
<b>Rajnath Singh</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>Amit Shah</b>	Ministry of Home Affairs Ministry of Cooperation
<b>Nitin Gadkari</b>	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
<b>Nirmala Sitharaman</b>	Ministry of Finance Ministry of Corporate Affairs
<b>Piyush Goyal</b>	Ministry of Commerce and Industry Ministry of Textiles Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution
<b>Narendra Singh Tomar</b>	Ministry of agriculture and Farmers welfare
<b>Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar</b>	Ministry of External Affairs
<b>Arjun Munda</b>	Ministry of Tribal Affairs
<b>Smriti Zubin Irani</b>	Ministry of Women and child Development
<b>Dharmendra Pradhan</b>	Ministry of Education Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
<b>Pralhad Joshi</b>	Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry of coal Ministry of Mines

<b>Narayan Tatu Rane</b>	Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>Sarbananda Sonowal</b>	Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)
<b>Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi</b>	Ministry of Minority Affairs
<b>Dr. Virendra Kumar</b>	Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
<b>Giriraj Singh</b>	Ministry of Rural Development Ministry of Panchayati Raj
<b>Jyotiraditya M. Scindia</b>	Ministry of Civil Aviation
<b>Ramchandra Prasad Singh</b>	Ministry of Steel
<b>Ashwini Vaishnaw</b>	Ministry of Railways Ministry of Communications Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
<b>Pashu Pati Kumar Paras</b>	Ministry of Food Processing Industries
<b>Gajendra Singh Shekhawat</b>	Ministry of Jal Shakti
<b>Kiren Rijju</b>	Ministry of Law and Justice
<b>Raj Kumar Singh</b>	Ministry of Power Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
<b>Hardeep Singh Puri</b>	Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
<b>Mansukh L. Mandaviya</b>	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
<b>Bhupender Yadav</b>	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Ministry of Labour and Employment
<b>Mahendra Nath Pandey</b>	Ministry of Heavy Industries
<b>Parshottam Rupala</b>	Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
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