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MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

August 2021

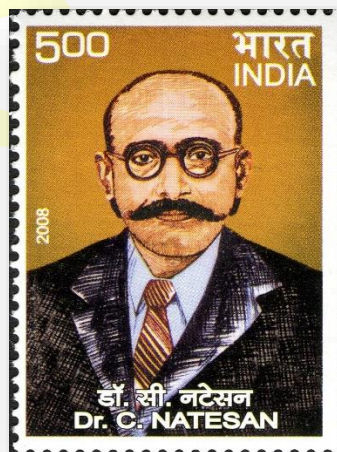
“Muslim Women Rights Day” Observed Across India

- “Muslim Women Rights Day” was observed by different organizations across the country today.
- The Day marked bringing the law against the practice of Triple Talaq on **1st August 2019** which has made the social malpractice of Triple Talaq a criminal offense.
- They said that the Government has strengthened “**self-reliance, self-respect and self-confidence**” of the Muslim women of the country and protected their constitutional, fundamental, and democratic rights by bringing the law against Triple Talaq.
- Talaq is an Islamic word for **divorce**, denoting dissolution of marriage when a Muslim man can sever all marital ties with his wife by simply uttering the word ‘**talaq**’ three times this instant talaq is also known as ‘**talaq-e-biddat**’.
- The other two are ‘**talaq-e-ahsan**’ and ‘**talaq-e-hasan**’ is, that in the former there is a single pronouncement of ‘talaq’ followed by **abstinence** during the period of ‘**iddat**’, whereas, in the latter there are three pronouncements of ‘talaq’, **interspersed with abstinence**.
- The **Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act of 1937** had legalized and allowed the practice of Triple Talaq.



Commemoration of the 100th year of the Madras Legislative Council

- The President of India, **Shri Ram Nath Kovind** will grace and address the event and unveil a portrait of the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, **Dr Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi** in Chennai today (August 2, 2021).
- The first elected legislature in the State, originally called the **Madras Legislative Council**, was established in 1921 under the Government of India Act, 1919.
- Under the **Government of India Act, 1919**, the first general election to the Madras Legislative Council was held in **December 1920**.
- The Congress party did not participate in the election due to its **non-cooperation movement**, and the **Justice Party** registered a tremendous victory, capturing 63 out of 98 seats.
- The Justice Party, officially the **South Indian Liberal Federation**, was established in 1916 by Dr C. Natesa Mudaliar, T. M. Nair, P. Theagaraya Chetty because of a series of **non-Brahmin conferences** and meetings in the presidency.



P V Sindhu Wins Bronze at Tokyo Olympics

- **P V Sindhu** scripted history on Sunday as she defeated, **He Bing Jiao of China** to become the first Indian woman to win **two individual Olympic medals**.
- Sindhu defeated He Bing Jiao 21-13 and 21-15 in the bronze medal match.
- Sindhu had suffered a heart-breaking loss to world no.1 **Tai Tzu Ying** in the semi-final on Saturday. Sindhu lost the semi-final 18-21, 12-21.

India Assumes UNSC Presidency for August

- India took over from **France** to assume the presidency of the UNSC for the month of August.
- This is the first presidency for India during its 2021-22 tenure as a **non-permanent member** of the UNSC.
- During its term, India will organize three high-level signature meetings focusing on **maritime security, peacekeeping, and counterterrorism**.
- The **UNSC** is composed of 15 members, 5 permanent and 10 non-permanent.
- **Five permanent members:** China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
- **Ten non-permanent members:** Elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly.
- Each year, the General Assembly elects **five non-permanent members** (out of ten in total) for a two-year term. The ten non-permanent seats are distributed on a **regional basis**.
- As stipulated in rule 144 of the rules of procedure, a **retiring member** is not eligible for immediate re-election.

PM Launches Digital Payment Solution “e-RUPI”

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched e-RUPI, a cashless and contactless instrument for digital payments.
- The one-time payment mechanism aims to stop leakages in government welfare schemes and ensures that the benefits reach those they are meant to be.
- e-RUPI has been developed by the NPCI in collaboration with other govt departments.
- What Is e-RUPI And How Does It Work? - The beneficiaries receives a QR code or an SMS-based electronic voucher on their cell phones and they do not require a card, digital payment app or even internet banking access to redeem the e-voucher when availing of a service.
- This system can also be of great use in ensuring leak-proof delivery of government's welfare services.
- Since the benefits will be transferred as a voucher, they can only be used for the intended purpose.

Parliament Passes 'Inland Vessels Bill, 2021'

- Parliament today passed the **Inland Vessels Bill, 2021**, which aims to replace over 100 years old **Inland Vessels Act, 1917** and usher a new era in the inland water transport sector to make the **Legislative framework user friendly and promote ease of doing business**.
- To realize the potential of inland water transport and promote it as a supplementary and eco-friendly mode of transport to the congested **road and rail network** for movement of cargo and passenger, the Government had taken several initiatives and had declared **111 waterways as national waterways**.
- **Uniform applicability** of rules and regulations to ensure seamless, safe and economical trade and transportation by using inland waterways.
- Prescribing of **standards for classification and categorization of mechanically propelled vessels**, standards and processes involved in registration of vessel.
- Provides for a **Central Data Base /E-Portal** for registration/crew database thereby imbibing the spirit of **Digital India Campaign** etc.



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Hunger Hotspots Report: FAO-WFP

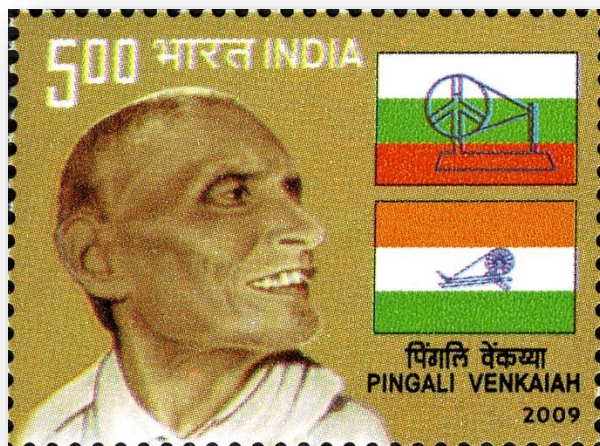
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) released a report named Hunger Hotspots - August to November 2021.
- The 2021 Global Food Crises Report (by WFP) released in May 2021 had already warned of acute food insecurity, soaring to a five-year high, pushing at least 155 million people into acute food insecurity in 2020.

- Ethiopia, Madagascar, South Sudan, northern Nigeria, and Yemen are among 23 countries where acute food insecurity will worsen from August through November 2021.



Remembering Pingali Venkayya

- A country is identified and distinguished by **its flag, emblem, anthem**, that are unique to it. To India, **Pingali Venkayya**, a freedom fighter, gave India its unique identity by designing the national flag.
- **Pingali Venkayya**, the designer and architect of the national flag was a freedom fighter, who was born on **August 2, 1876**. On his **145th birth anniversary**, remembering the man who gave India an identity and united the country in its freedom struggle against the Britishers.



Bhubaneswar Becomes First City in India to Fully Vaccinate its Residents

- The **Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation** as of **August 2, 2021**, 18,77,178 vaccination (1 and 2) doses have been administered in **Bhubaneswar**.
- **Strategies** like identification of priority population, increase in vaccination centers, and creating awareness helped the administration to achieve 100% vaccination in the city.

Battery Operated Vehicles Exempted from Payment of Fees

- The **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** has issued a notification dated 2nd August 2021 to **exempt Battery Operated Vehicles** from the payment of fees for the purpose of issue or renewal of registration certificate and assignment of new registration mark.
- This has been notified to encourage **e- mobility**.

Lovlina Borgohain Wins Bronze at Tokyo Olympics

- **Lovlina Borgohain** settles for bronze, loses against reigning world champion **Busenaz Surmeneli** in Tokyo 2020.
- The 23-year-old hails from Assam participated in the **Women's welterweight event**, becoming only **the third Indian boxer** to win a medal at the Olympics.
- In 2020, she had received **Arjuna Award**.



Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2021 Passed

- The legislation seeks to amend the **Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India Act, 2008**.
- The Act designates an airport as a **major airport** if it has annual passenger traffic of at least **35 lakhs**.
- The Bill amends the definition of major airport and adds that the Central Government may **group airports** and notify the group as a **major airport**.

Indian Men's Hockey Team Wins a Bronze Medal in Tokyo Olympics

- In an historical win, Indian men's hockey team won the **bronze medal** in Tokyo Olympics 2020 today.
- It is the first Olympic medal win of Indian men's hockey team in the **last 41 years** which they secured with a 5-4 win over Germany in an interesting bronze medal match.
- This is India's first Olympic medal in hockey since they won the gold medal in the **1980 Olympics in Moscow**.

Wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya Bags a Silver Medal

- Wrestler **Ravi Kumar Dahiya** won **silver medal** in Tokyo Olympics today after losing to Russian two-time World Champion Zaur Uguev 4-7 in the men's freestyle 57kg final.
- The 23-year-old became the second male wrestler to win a silver for India in wrestling at the Olympics, after wrestler **Sushil Kumar**.
- This is India's **fifth medal** in Tokyo after medals from **Mirabai Chanu, P.V. Sindhu, Lovlina Borgohain and men's hockey team**.



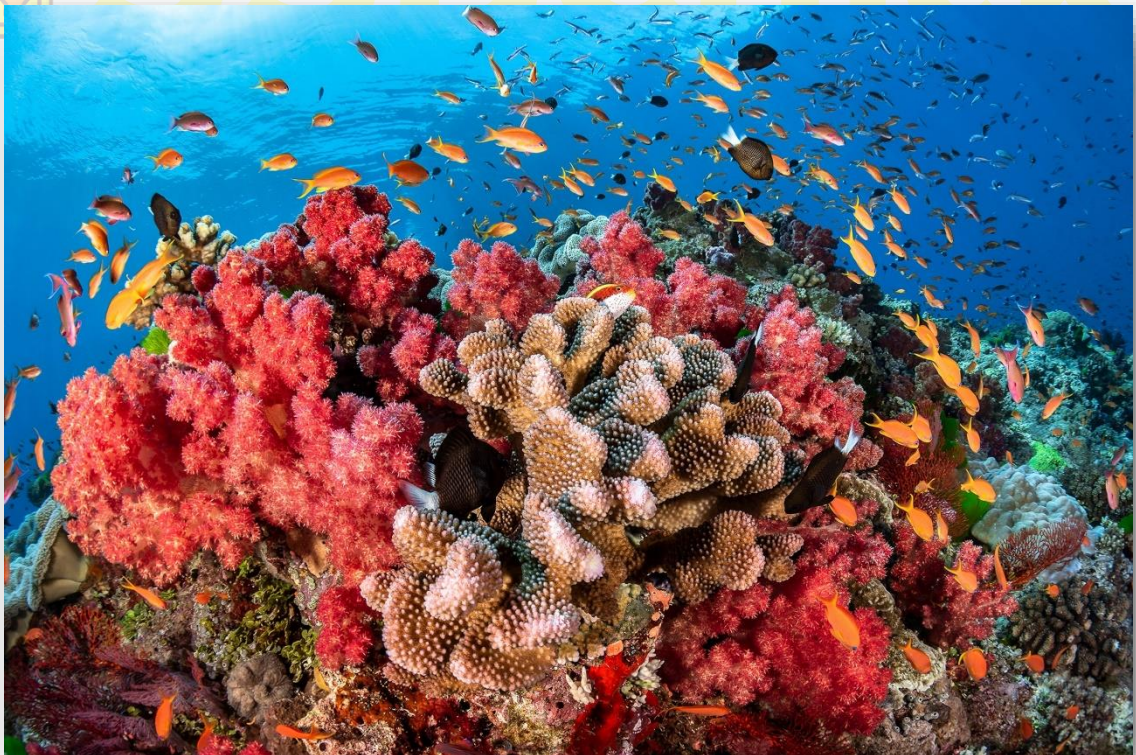
TRIFED Celebrates its 34th Foundation Day

- Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (TRIFED) was founded on August 6, 1987.
- It was founded to drive tribal development through marketing support for tribal products, both, handicrafts, and Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP).
- TRIFED will celebrate this day to raise awareness among one and all regarding the issues related to trade in tribal areas, and the need to ensure a fair deal for the tribes in the commerce of their products.
- The event will feature Presentation on TRIFED's journey, Announcement of Van Dhan Awards, Interaction with Tribals etc.



Thailand Bans Sunscreens From all its Marine National Parks

- Thailand has banned **sunscreens** containing chemicals that damage coral from all its **marine national parks**.
- Concerns are growing that lotions tourists use for sun protection are harming slow-growing corals.
- The **Thai Department of Conservation** said four ingredients commonly found in sun creams were shown to destroy coral larvae, obstruct coral reproduction and cause reef bleaching.
- Anyone flouting the ban can be fined up to **100,000 baht (£2,100)**.
- However, officials have not said how they plan to enforce the new rule. The banned lotions are those containing **oxybenzone, octinoxate, 4-methylbenzylidene camphor or butylparaben**.
- Similar bans have been introduced by the **Pacific Island of Palau and the US state of Hawaii**.
- This is the latest attempt by the Thai government to protect its coral from the **tourism industry**.



Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award

- The **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award**, the **highest sporting honor** of India, has been renamed **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award**.
- The renaming recognizes the ultimate hockey hero and legend of the sport, **Dhyan Chand**.
- The Prime Minister said the move was based on the numerous requests he received from across the nation.
- Dhyan Chand, whose birthday is celebrated as **National Sports Day**, won three Olympic golds for the country.
- **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy (1956)**, is given to the **university** for "**top performance in the inter-university tournaments**" over the period of last one year
- **Arjuna Award (1961)** is given to sportspersons for "**consistent outstanding performance**" over the period of last four years.
- **Dronacharya Award (1985)**, it is given to **coaches** for "**producing medal winners at prestigious international events**".
- **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna (1991–1992)**, is given to sportspersons for "**most outstanding performance by a sportsperson**" over the period of last four years.
- **Dhyan Chand Award (2002)**, It is given to individuals for "**lifetime contribution to sports development**".
- **Rastriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar (2009)**, It is given to **organizations** (both private and public) and individuals for "**playing a visible role in the area of sports promotion and development**" over the period of last three years.



Rajiv Gandhi
Khel Ratna
Award



Arjuna
Award



Dronacharya
Award



Dhyan Chand
Award



Rashtriya
Khel
Protsahan
Puruskar



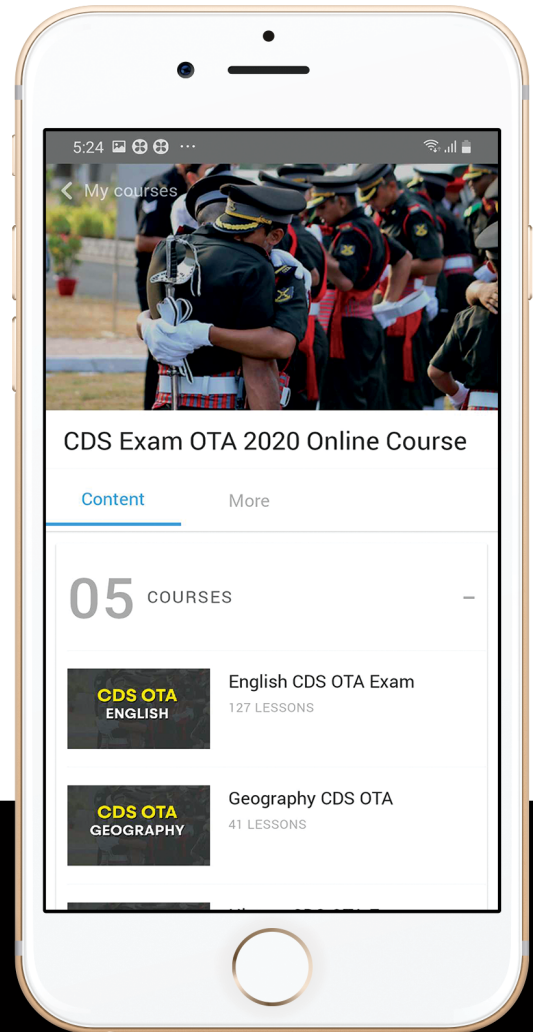
Maulana
Abul Kalam
Azad Trophy



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Wrestler Bajrang Punia Bags Bronze Medal

- Wrestler **Bajrang Punia** won the bronze medal in the **men's freestyle 65 Kg** category at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.
- He defeated his opponent from **Kazakhstan** with 8-0 in the bronze medal match.
- This was India's **sixth medal** in the Tokyo Olympics thus equaling the **London Olympic (2012)** record of six medals.
- Started wrestling at the age of 7, the 27-year-old hails from **Haryana** has made the nation proud.



Neeraj Chopra Scripts History at Tokyo 2020 Olympics

- The 23-year-old Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra created history by winning gold medal in men's javelin throw at Tokyo Olympic.
- Chopra gave his best throw of 87.58m to bag the gold medal.
- With this, he has become the first Indian athlete to win gold ever and India's second ever individual Olympic gold medalist after shooter Abhinav Bindra, who bagged gold in Beijing 2008.
- He hails from Haryana and is a Subedar with 4th Battalion Rajputana Rifles in the Indian Army.
- This took India's medal haul to seven in the Tokyo Olympics.



“PM-DAKSH” Portal & Mobile APP Launched

- Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment **Dr. Virendra Kumar** launched ‘**PM-DAKSH**’ Portal and ‘**PM-DAKSH**’ Mobile App.
- Through ‘**PM-DAKSH**’ Portal, all information related to **skill development** are available at one place for **Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Safai Karamcharis**.
- Skill development training has been imparted to **2,73,152 persons** of target groups in the last **five years**.
- During the year 2021-22, a target has been set to provide skill development training to approximately **50,000 persons** of the target groups.
- PM-DAKSH stands for **Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi Yojana**. This scheme is being implemented by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment from the year **2020-21**.
- Under this scheme, eligible target group will be provided skill development training Programmes on:
 - Up-skilling or Re-skilling Programmes
 - Short Term Training Programme
 - Long Term Training Programme and

- Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP).

PM DAKSH YOJANA

79th Anniversary of the Quit India Movement

- India commemorates the 79th anniversary of the Quit India Movement on 8th August.
- Also known as the August Kranti Din, the mass civil disobedience movement is one of the most significant events in the history of India's freedom struggle.
- On 8th August 1942, a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Mumbai was followed by the launch of the movement by Mahatma Gandhi.
- Attaching the clarion call, “Do or Die” to the movement, Mahatma Gandhi delivered a speech in Gowalia Tank Maidan, also referred to as the August Kranti Maidan. In it, he demanded that the British leave the country immediately and grant India freedom.
- In a bid for co-operation in the war, Britain was ready to offer distribution of power from the Crown. However, the talks held in March 1942 failed as India wanted nothing but complete freedom from British rule.
- The call for mass agitation coupled with the arrests of leaders led to the outbreak of violence in various parts of the country.



Enhancing Maritime Security - A Case for International Cooperation

- A week into India's United Nations Security Council (UNSC) month-long presidency, PM Modi is chairing a debate on maritime security.
- The debate "Enhancing Maritime Security - A Case for International Cooperation" began with several heads of state or government in attendance, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, President of Kenya Uhuru Kenyatta, and Prime Minister of Vietnam Pham Minh Chinh.
- PM Modi outlined a five Principal framework for the debate.
- Firstly, removing barriers to maritime trade.
- Secondly, disputes shall be resolved peacefully and in accordance with international law.
- Thirdly, countries shall jointly tackle threats from non-state actors and natural disasters.
- Fourthly, maritime environment and resources needed to be conserved, highlighting pollution from plastic waste and oil spills.
- Fifthly, responsible connectivity saying a structure was required to boost maritime trade, with the development of global norms and standards.

Foreign Nationals are Now Eligible for Vaccination in India

- In a landmark initiative to ensure safety from COVID-19, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has taken a decision to allow **foreign nationals** residing in India to get registered on **CoWin portal** to take COVID-19 vaccine.
- They can use **their passport** as identity document for the purpose of registration on **CoWIN portal**. Once they are registered on this portal, they will get a slot for vaccination.
- As on 9th August 2021, India has administered more than **51 crore vaccine** doses across the country.

World Tribal Day 2021

- World Tribal Day or International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is observed on 9th August every year.
- It is aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of the world's indigenous population and to acknowledge the contributions that indigenous people make towards world issues such as environmental protection.

- Theme 2021: “Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract.”
- Celebrated every year since 1994, The day recognizes the first meeting of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations in Geneva in 1982.
- There are over 476 million indigenous peoples living in 90 countries across the world, accounting for 6.2% of the global population.
- Still numerous indigenous peoples experience extreme poverty, marginalization, and other human rights violations.



World Lion Day 2021

- **World Lion Day** is observed every year on August 10 to raise awareness about the conservation of lions. The lion is an **endangered species** on the **IUCN Red List**.
- To arrest the rapid decrease of Lion population, a group of non-profits and tourism companies created **World Lion Day** to celebrate the animal and redirect the world's attention towards them. Organizations such as **Panthera** and **National Geographic Society's Big Cats Initiative** support this.
- While the population of wild lions saw a catastrophic decline across the world, except for **Africa**, the mighty beasts have found a natural home in India.
- Their population has increased steadily in India, especially in **Gir forest** - the only wild population of lions outside Africa.

- Asiatic lion population has increased steadily in Gujarat's **Gir forest**, and the larger **Saurashtra** protected region. Their population has gone up from **523 in 2015 to 674 in 2020**.



PM launches Ujjwala 2.0

- P M Modi launched **Ujjwala 2.0** - the second phase of the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)** - by handing over LPG connections in Mahoba in Uttar Pradesh.
- During Ujjwala 1.0 launched in 2016, a target was set to provide LPG connections to **five crore women** members of **BPL** households.
- Scheme was expanded in **April 2018** to included women beneficiaries from seven more categories such as **SC and ST communities and forest dwellers**.
- Also, the target was revised to **eight crore LPG connections**. This was achieved in **August 2019**, seven months ahead of schedule.
- **Features of Ujjwala 2.0:** Deposit-free LPG connection, first refill and hotplate free of cost, minimum paperwork, no need for migrants to submit ration cards or address proof. A self-declaration for both 'family declaration' and as a 'proof of address' will suffice.
- Ujjwala 2.0 will help achieve the prime minister's vision of **universal access to LPG**.

World Biofuel Day 2021

- World Biofuel Day is celebrated annually on 10 August.
- The day is set aside to raise awareness about unconventional fuel sources that can serve as an alternative to the more traditional fossil fuels. The emphasis is on the usage of non-fossil fuels or biofuels that enable cleaner consumption patterns.
- Theme 2021: the promotion of biofuels for a better environment.
- Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) conducted a webinar to raise the awareness and discuss policy issues related to Biofuels.

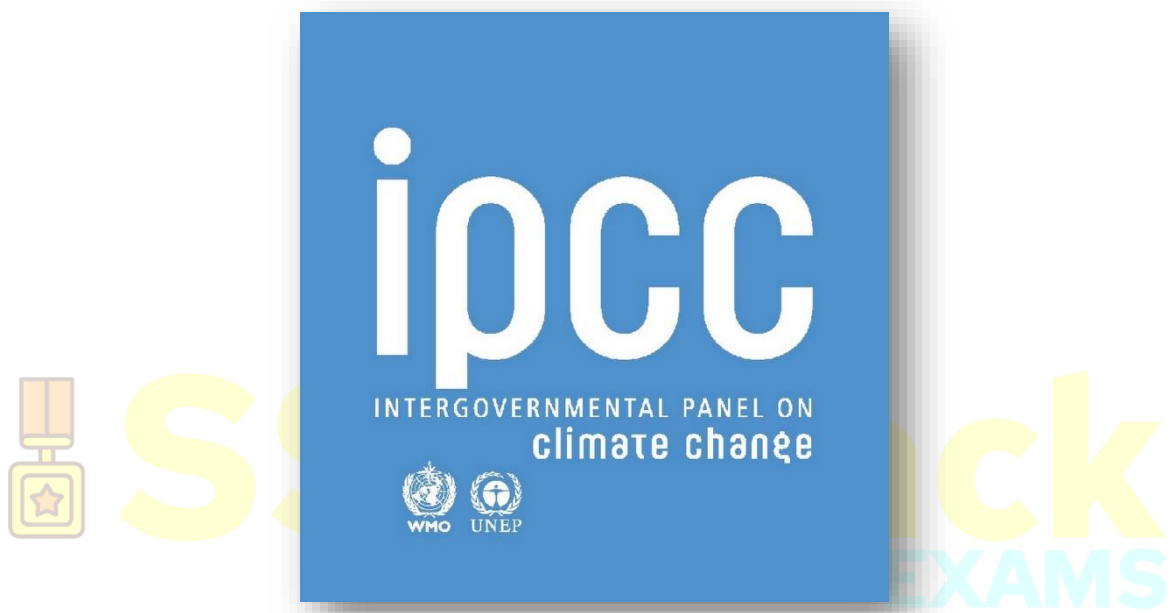
Chhattisgarh Becomes First State to Recognize Community Forest Resource Rights in Urban Areas

- Chhattisgarh became the first State to recognize the Community Forest Resource Rights in **urban areas**.
- The State Government recognized the rights of residents of **Dhamtari district** spread over 4,127 hectares of forest.
- Community resource rights over 5,544 hectares of forest within the core area of the **Sitanadi Udanti Tiger Reserve** area were also recognized.
- Under **Forest Rights Act, 2006**, Community Forest Resource Right gives gram sabhas the right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any forest resources used by the entire community, or village.
- For recognition of community forest resource rights, **traditional boundary** of a tribal village is recognised, empowering a gram Sabha to take decisions about the forest and its produce.
- In Chhattisgarh, core areas of tiger reserve were out of bound for villagers - they were not even allowed to pick **tendu leaves**, a forest produce.
- Now, with the recognition of their rights, the gram Sabha has a say on access allowed in the forest that falls within their **traditional boundaries**.

UN's 6th Assessment report: A Code-Red Warning

- The United Nations' **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (1988)** has just published the first part of the much-awaited sixth assessment report (AR6).
- Prior to the latest report, the **fifth assessment report (AR5)** was published in 2013-14.

- The key findings and conclusion of the coveted report however show trends of not merely a grim future, but a **'code red'** warning for humanity with global temperatures likely to rise **1.5°C in 20 years**.
- It was unanimously concluded that humans are primarily responsible for the **"unequivocal"** warming of the planet and for causing **"widespread & rapid"** changes to Earth's oceans, ice, and land surface.
- The report further warned that the present state of changes in the climate system is **"unprecedented"** and **"irreversible"** and thus cannot be ruled out.



National Mission on Edible Oil-Oil Palm

- Prime Minister has announced a new national initiative on palm oil production to help increase farm incomes.
- The scheme, called **National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)**, for self-reliance in edible oil involves investment of over Rs. 11,000 crores (over a five-year period).
- The special emphasis of the scheme will be in **India's north-eastern states** and the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands** due to the conducive weather conditions in the regions.
- Under the scheme, oil palm farmers will be provided financial assistance and will get remuneration under a price and viability formula.
- To harness domestic edible oil prices that are dictated by expensive palm oil imports.

- To raise the domestic production of palm oil by three times to **11 lakh MT by 2025-26**.
- This will involve raising the area under oil palm cultivation to **10 lakh hectares by 2025-26** and **16.7 lakh hectares by 2029-30**.



The General Insurance Business (Nationalization) Amendment Bill, 2021 Passed

- The bill seeks to amend **General Insurance Business (Nationalization) Act, 1972** to "provide for **greater private participation** in the **public sector insurance companies**".
- It seeks to enhance **insurance penetration** and **social protection** and "better secure the interests of policyholders and contribute to faster growth of the economy".
- The bill seeks to remove provision of the Act to remove the requirement that the Central Government holds not less than **51 per cent of the equity capital** in a specified insurer.
- The government hopes to achieve its **planned divestment** target of **₹1.75 lakh crore** for 2021-22 but the target has hit hurdles posed by the pandemic.

India achieves 100 GW Milestone of Installed Renewable Energy Capacity

- The total installed renewable energy capacity in India, excluding **large hydro**, has crossed the mile-stone of **100 GW**.

- Today India stands at **4th** position in the world in terms of **installed RE capacity**, **5th** in **solar** and **4th** in **wind** in terms of installed capacity.
- While 100 GW has been installed, 50 GW is under installation and 27 GW is under tendering. India has now set its ambition to install **450 GW** of renewable energy capacity by 2030.
- If large hydro is included the installed RE capacity increases to 146 GW.

World Elephant Day 2021

- World Elephant Day is an international annual event on August 12, dedicated to the preservation and protection of the world's elephants.
- Conceived in 2011 by Canadian filmmakers Patricia Sims and Michael Clark and Elephant Reintroduction Foundation of Thailand.
- It aims to create awareness of the urgent plight of African and Asian elephants, and to share knowledge and positive solutions for the better care and management of captive and wild elephants.
- African elephants are listed as "Vulnerable" and Asian elephants as "Endangered" on the IUCN Red List of threatened species.
- Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change announced on the occasion that "All India Elephant and Tiger population estimation" exercise to be done in convergence for the first time in 2022.
- The required estimation protocol to be adopted was also released.

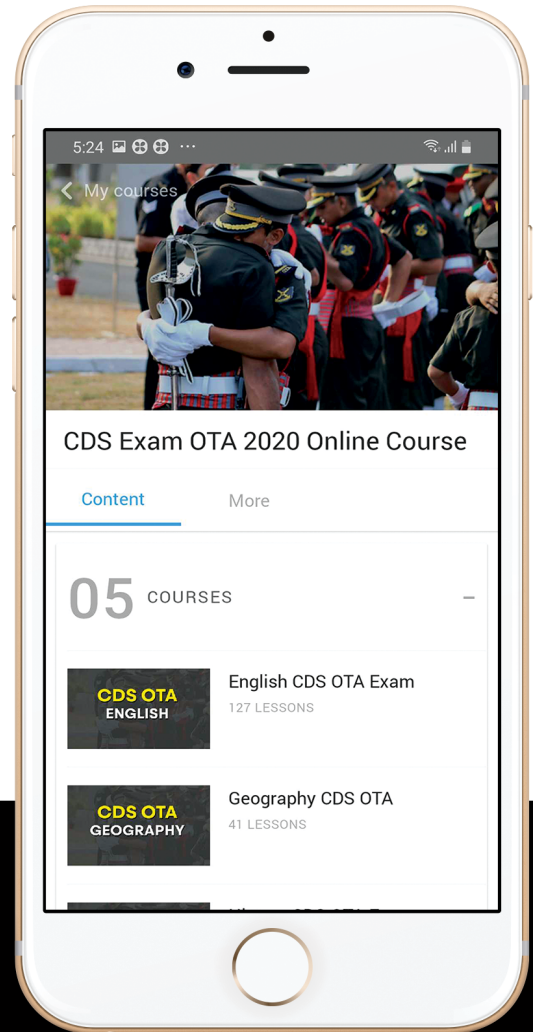




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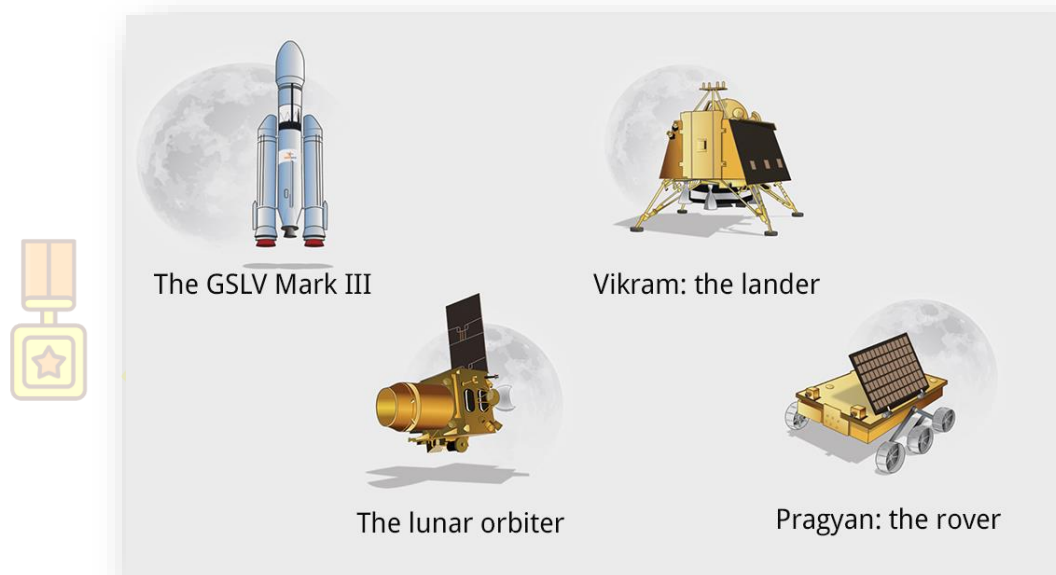
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ISRO's Chandrayaan-2 Finds Hydroxyl & Water molecules on Lunar Surface

- Even though India's historic lunar-landing bid, the **Chandrayaan-2 (2019)** mission may have had a fatal ending on the moon, the orbiter that remained active and currently orbiting the moon, is now used by the scientists for high and low, new discoveries from the lunar surface.
- The latest revelation of the orbiter is detecting the presence of **hydroxyl** and **water molecules** on the surface of the Moon.
- The discovery is being hailed as significant for future planetary explorations & future projects on earth's lunar surface.



130th EDITION OF DURAND CUP 2021

- **Durand Cup**, the world's third oldest and Asia's oldest football tournament is scheduled to be held at Kolkata from **05 SEP TO 03 OCT 21**.
- The prestigious tournament was first held in **1888**, at Dagshai (Himachal Pradesh) and is named after **Mortimer Durand**, who was then the Foreign Secretary in charge of India. The tournament was a conscious way to initially maintain health and fitness amongst the **British troops** but was later opened to civilians and currently is one of the leading sports events in the world.
- The winning team is presented with **three trophies** i.e., the President's Cup (first presented by Dr Rajendra Prasad), the Durand Cup (the original challenge prize -

a rolling trophy) and the Shimla Trophy (first presented by citizens of Shimla in 1903 and since 1965, a rolling trophy).

- **West Bengal** would be the host for this year's tournament.



Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules 2021

- The Government has notified the **plastic waste management amendment rules 2021** prohibiting identified **single-use plastic** items by **2022**. Pollution due to **single-use plastic items** has become major environmental challenge.
- The manufacturing, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of several single-use plastic will be prohibited with effect from **1st July of next year**. The thickness of plastic carry bags will be increased from **fifty microns** to **seventy-five microns** with effect from **30th September** of next month and to **120 microns** with effect from the **31st of December** of this year.



Vehicle Scrappage Policy Launched

- The Government of India has today officially launched its **vehicle scrappage policy** that's aimed at phasing out **unfit and polluting vehicles** in an environment friendly manner.
- Constituting the infrastructure for this initiative will be **Automated Testing Stations** and **Registered Vehicle Scrapping facilities** across the country.
- The policy implementation will begin with **heavy commercial vehicles**, which will need to undergo mandatory fitness tests starting **April 1, 2023**. All other vehicles, including private ones, will be included in the mandatory fitness test criteria from **June 1, 2024**, in a phased manner.
- The scrappage policy comes into effect after a vehicle's registration cycle is over. In general, private passenger vehicles have a life of **15 years** and commercial vehicles have a life of **10 years**, after which they become much more polluting than when they were new.
- if a vehicle fails the **fitness test**, and the two allowed retests, it will not be issued a renewed **registration certificate**. An unregistered vehicle is practically illegal to run on the road.
- This policy will also provide a great boost for the auto and metal industry, particularly from steel recycling. Getting rid of older vehicles will also boost sales of new models in the auto industry.

Government asks it offices to switch over to Prepaid Smart Meters

- **Ministry of Power** has issued an advisory to all Central Ministries of the Government to direct organizations under their administrative control to ensure switch over to **Prepaid Smart Meters** on priority.
- This would go a long way in ensuring the commitment of the Government in bringing **DISCOMs** back on the path of financial sustainability and promotion of energy efficiency.

India Celebrates 75th Independence Day

- India is celebrating '**Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**', marking the 75th year of Independence from the foreign rule.

- Remembering the **sacrifices** made by the **Indian freedom fighters** on the 75th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed his wishes to the entire country.
- Speaking from the ramparts of the Red Fort, the PM hailed the **Tokyo Olympics participants** and greeted the athletes who made the country proud by their achievements.
- 75th Independence Day should not be merely a ceremony; we must march with **new pledges for next 25 years.**
- We must ensure we meet our goal of building **Atmanirbhar Bharat** when we celebrate 100 years of India's Independence.
- PM Modi gives call for '**Sabka Prayas**' along with '**Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas**' for building a new India.
- To honor the pain and suffering faced by people during the partition, the prime minister said that August 14 will now be observed as "**Partition Horrors Remembrance Day.**"
- From **Ujjwala** to **Ayushman Bharat**, the poor of the nation knows the strength and impact of these schemes.
- Over **4.5 crore new households** have received piped water supply within two years of '**Jal Jeevan Mission.**'
- We must bridge the gap between lives in **villages** and **cities** and reach out to the deprived communities.
- Today, the **optical fiber network** is providing the power of data to villages, and the internet is reaching there.
- India will launch '**Pradhan Mantri Gatishakti National Master Plan**', a **100-lakh crore** national infrastructure master plan which will create a foundation for holistic infrastructure and give an integrated pathway to our economy.
- **Seventy-five Vande Bharat trains** will connect every corner of India in 75 weeks of Amrit Mahotsav of Independence.
- Efforts have increased in the last 7 years to free the people from **unnecessary laws and procedures.**
- The government's **New Education Policy** is a means to fight poverty, it will focus on encouraging teaching in regional languages.
- We must ensure India becomes **self-reliant in energy production.**

Four New Ramsar Sites: India's Wetlands

- Four new sites have been recognised as **wetlands of international importance** under the **Ramsar Convention**. Two of these sites are in Haryana, while the other two are in Gujarat. PM Modi called it “**a matter of pride**” for the country.
- **Sultanpur National Park in Gurgaon** and **Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary in Jhajjar (both in Haryana)** have been added to the list this year. Apart from that, **Thol** and **Wadhvana** from **Gujarat** too have now become a part of the convention.
- **Natural wetlands** are permanently or seasonally saturated in water and create habitats for aquatic plants. They retain large volumes of water, and their slow release makes them important for combating extreme weather conditions like floods and droughts.
- The **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands** is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on February 2, 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar, It came into force for India on February 1, 1982.
- The **World Wetlands Day** marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands (February 2, 1971).
- Last year, Ramsar declared **10 more wetland sites from India** as sites of international importance. After the latest addition, India now has **46 such sites**, the Union environment ministry said.

India Records 572% Growth in Grant of Patents in last 7 years

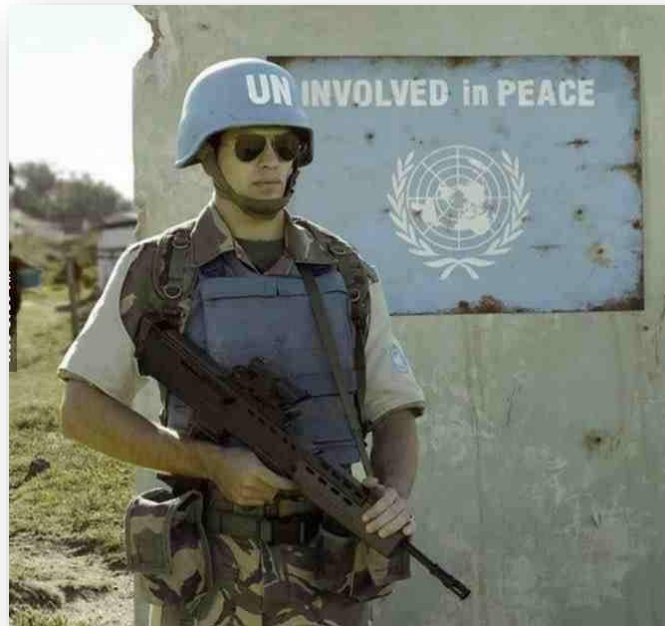
- **28,391** patents granted in 2020-21 as compared to **4,227** grants during 2013-14 by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)
- Shri Piyush Goyal conferred **National Intellectual Property Awards 2020**.
- Centre aims to impart **training & awareness** to 10 Lakh students on **IPR** matters in this Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav (15th Aug 2021 to 15 Aug 2022)
- 14.2 lakh trademark registrations done in 4 years (2016-2020) in comparison to 11 lakh for 75 years (1940-2015).
- India's ranking in **Global Innovation Index** jumps to 48th in 2020, (+33 ranks from 81st in 2015-16) (GII - INSEAD; Cornell University; World Intellectual Property Organization)
- We must aim to make India the “**Design hub of World**” said **Shri Piyush Goyal (Minister of Commerce and Industry)**

Aarogya Dhara 2.0

- Shri Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare chaired the event **Aarogya Dhara- 2.0** to mark the completion of **2 Cr treatments** under **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana**.
- Treatment's worth approximately **Rs 25,000 crore** have been provided till date through a growing network of **23,000** public and private empaneled hospitals.
- **Aarogya Dhara 2.0** aims to increase the reach of **AB PM JAY** programme to the poorest of the poor households in the country and to make the beneficiaries aware about the scheme.
- The following key initiatives were also launched on the occasion:
- **Adhikar Patra**: to be issued to the beneficiaries during their hospital admissions for treatment under PM-JAY scheme to make them aware about their rights so that they can claim free and cashless healthcare services up to Rs 5 lakhs under the scheme.
- **Abhinandan Patra**: a 'thank you note' to be issued to the beneficiaries during their discharge after the treatment under PM-JAY for availing the benefits of AB PM-JAY scheme. The Abhinandan Patra is also accompanied by a feedback form to be filled in by the beneficiary regarding the service they received under the scheme.
- **Ayushman Mitra**: Another key initiative launched which provides an opportunity to all citizens to contribute to the vision of Ayushman Bharat by helping eligible people to get their Ayushman Cards created and bring them under the ambit of the scheme. This can be done by logging in to **<https://pmjay.gov.in/ayushman-mitrato>** create Ayushman Mitra ID which can then be shared with eligible people. While getting Ayushman Cards and while availing treatments under the scheme the Ayushman Mitra ID can be shared by beneficiaries to empaneled hospital.

UNITE Aware Platform

- India, in collaboration with the United Nations (UN), has launched a technology platform to ensure the safety and **security of peacekeepers** who are operating across the world.
- The launch of the **UNITE AWARE platform** came as India assumed the Presidency of the 15-nation **UN Security Council** for the month of August.
- **Aim**: This project aims to demonstrate the impact of **modern surveillance technology** on the detection of **asymmetric threats**.



National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR)

- The NCCR under the Ministry of Earth Science has published a report that said **one-third of India's coastline** underwent sea erosion in **28 years**.
- As much as **32%** of India's coastline underwent sea erosion and **27%** of it expanded between **1990** and **2018**.
- **60%** of the coastline of West Bengal underwent erosion during the period followed by Puducherry (**56%**), Kerala and Tamil Nadu at **41%** and **41%**, respectively.

Afghanistan will no longer be able to access lender's resources: IMF

- **IMF** informed that this step was due to lack of clarity within the international community over recognizing a government in **Afghanistan**.
- Resources of over **370 million \$** from the IMF had been set to arrive on **23 August**. These funds were part of a global IMF response to the **economic crisis**.
- Access to the IMF's reserves in **Special Drawing Rights (SDR) assets**, which can be converted to government-backed money, have also been blocked.
- **SDRs are the IMF's unit of exchange** based on sterling, dollars, euros, yen and yuan.

National Monetisation Plan

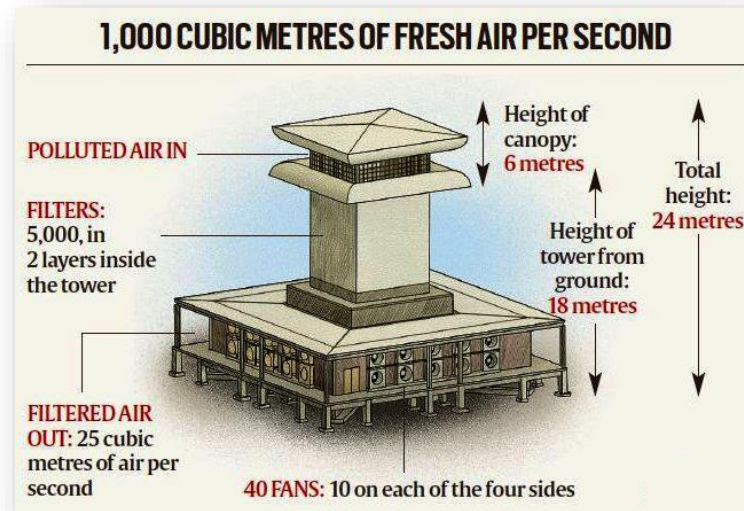
- The **Union Budget for 2021-22**, had made a lot of significant announcements regarding asset Monetisation and stressed on the fact that the government is looking at innovative ways to **raise finances**.
- **Infra assets worth ₹ 6 lakh crore** across rail, road, power sectors to be **monetized over 4 years**.
- **National Monetisation Pipeline** talks about **brownfield assets** where investment is already being made, where there are assets either **languishing or not fully monetized or under-utilized**.
- By bringing in **private participation**, we are going to **monetize** it (assets) better and with whatever resource that you obtained by monetization, you can put in for further **investment into infrastructure building**.
- **Is Govt selling away the lands? No: National Monetization Pipeline** is talking about brownfield assets that need to be better monetized
- **Ownership of assets remains with the government**. There will be a mandatory hand back. **Private sector partners** will have to give it back after a certain time



Delhi's New Smog Tower

- Country's first '**smog tower**' in **Connaught Place**.
- Smog towers are structures designed to work as **large-scale air purifiers**.
- They are usually fitted with multiple **layers of air filters**, which clean the air of pollutants as it passes through them.

- The NCCR under the Ministry of Earth Science has published a report that said **one-third of India's coastline** underwent sea erosion in **28 years**.



Global Manufacturing Risk Index: Cushman & Wakefield Report

- **India** has emerged as a global manufacturing hub and effectively surpassed the United States to become the world's **second most desired manufacturing destination**.
- The Report is released by **Cushman & Wakefield** that is a global commercial real estate services firm.
- In addition, **Ease of Doing Business 2020** in India has gained significant traction and India climbed 14 positions to stand at **63rd** now (out of 190 Countries).
- Based on the **most favorable locations for international manufacturing**, Cushman & Wakefield's Manufacturing Risk Index report ranks countries based on a range of factors including:
 - Risk and cost factors, Political and economic risk, Market conditions and labor costs, Market Access.
- The index ranks **47 countries** across Europe, the Americas, and the Asia Pacific.

SAMARTH Scheme: Upskilling Handicrafts Artisans

- To meet the **skill gap** in the industry, **Ministry of Textiles** is implementing Samarth Scheme for **Capacity Building** in Textile Sector.
- The handicrafts artisans will be provided with **technical** and **soft skill trainings** and enable sustainable livelihood either by wage or self-employment.
- First batch in each **63 training centers** have been completed successfully benefitting **1,565 artisans**. The second batch will also complete during the month of August 2021 benefitting **1,421 artisans**. Additionally, **65 new handicrafts training centers** are being established to scale up the training program so that the maximum number of artisans can be benefitted.



100 days 'SUJALAM' Campaign Begins

- The **Ministry of Jal Shakti** began Campaign For Making More ODF Plus Villages By Undertaking Wastewater Management At Village Level.
- **'SUJALAM'** Campaign to Ensure Sustainability of ODF Gains & Create One Million Soak Pits.
- **'SUJALAM'** Campaign Aims to Achieve ODF Plus Status for Villages Across The Country In An Accelerated Manner.
- It would boost momentum of **SBM-G phase II** activities through community participation, and it will increase awareness about ODF-plus activities.



SAMRIDH Scheme to Help Startups in the Early Stage

- **SAMRIDH** will create a conducive platform for **Indian software product startups** to enhance their products and secure investments for scaling their business.
- The programme is being implemented by **MeitY Start-up Hub (MSH)**.
- Government will support **startups and entrepreneurs** in the most challenging phase which is the **initial risk phase**.
- The **SAMRIDH initiative** will not only provide funding support to startups but will also help in bringing skill sets together which will help them become successful.
- The SAMRIDH programme will focus on accelerating **300 start-ups** by providing **customer connect, investor connect, and international expansion opportunities in the next three years**.
- Also, an investment of up to **Rs 40 lakh to startups**, based on their current valuation and **growth stage** will be provided through selected accelerators. It will also facilitate equal matching investment by the accelerator or investor.
- The programme aims to further the Indian startup growth which has seen the emergence of **63 unicorns (Startups with over \$1 billion valuation)**, making India the third largest unicorn hub globally with a total valuation of **\$168 billion**.

EASE 4.0

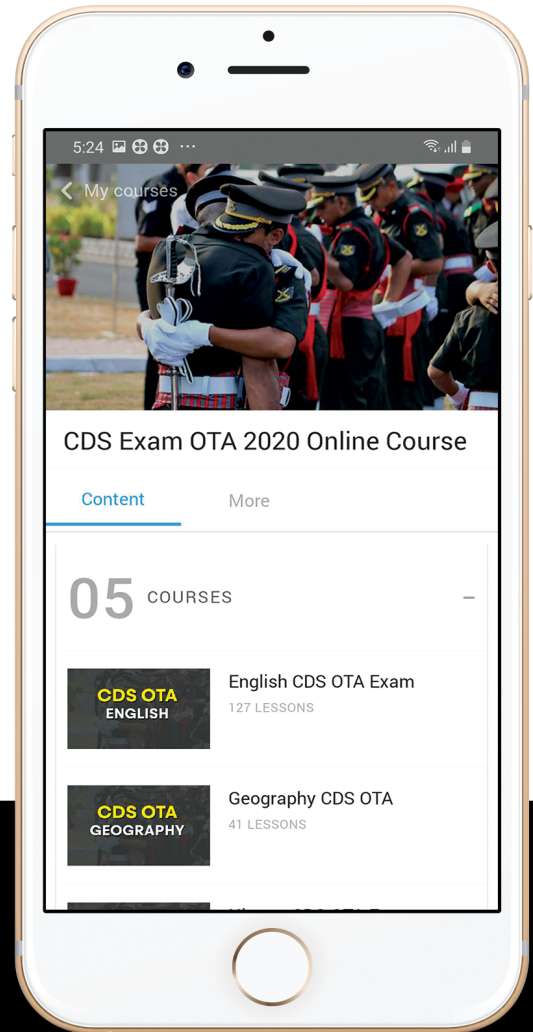
- The **Union Finance Minister** undertook the annual performance review of the public sector banks (PSBs) and launched the **EASE 4.0 or Enhanced Access and Service Excellence Reform Agenda**.



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- **EASE 4.0** is a common reform agenda for PSBs aimed at institutionalizing **clean and smart banking**.
- **EASE 4.0** commits PSBs to tech-enabled, simplified, and collaborative banking to further the agenda of customer-centric digital transformation.
- **EASE Agenda was launched in January 2018** jointly by the government and PSBs, commissioned through Indian Banks' Association and authored by Boston Consulting Group.
- **EASE 1.0:** The EASE 1.0 report showed significant improvement in PSB performance in resolution of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) transparently.
- **EASE 2.0:** Introduced new reform Action Points across six themes to make reforms journey irreversible, strengthen processes and systems, and drive outcomes.
- **Ease 3.0:** It seeks to enhance ease of banking in all customer experiences, using technology

e-Shram Portal

- **Registration of Unorganized Workers** begins across the Country as Government of India launches the **e-Shram Portal**.
- Portal will help build a comprehensive **National Database of Unorganized Workers (NDUW)** in the country.
- Portal will prove to be a huge boost towards last mile delivery of the **welfare schemes** for crores of unorganized workers: Shri Bhupinder Yadav
- Game changer in the history of the country, where more than **38 Crore workers** would register themselves under one portal.
- **Registration is totally free**, and workers do not have to pay anything.

Drone Rules, 2021

- **Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)**, commonly known as drones, offer tremendous benefits to almost all sectors of the economy like – **agriculture, mining, infrastructure, surveillance, emergency response, transportation, geo-spatial mapping, Defence, and law enforcement** etc.
- Drones can be significant creators of **employment and economic growth** due to their reach, versatility, and ease of use, especially in India's remote and inaccessible areas. In view of its traditional strengths in innovation, information technology, frugal engineering and huge domestic demand, India has the potential to be **global drone hub by 2030**.

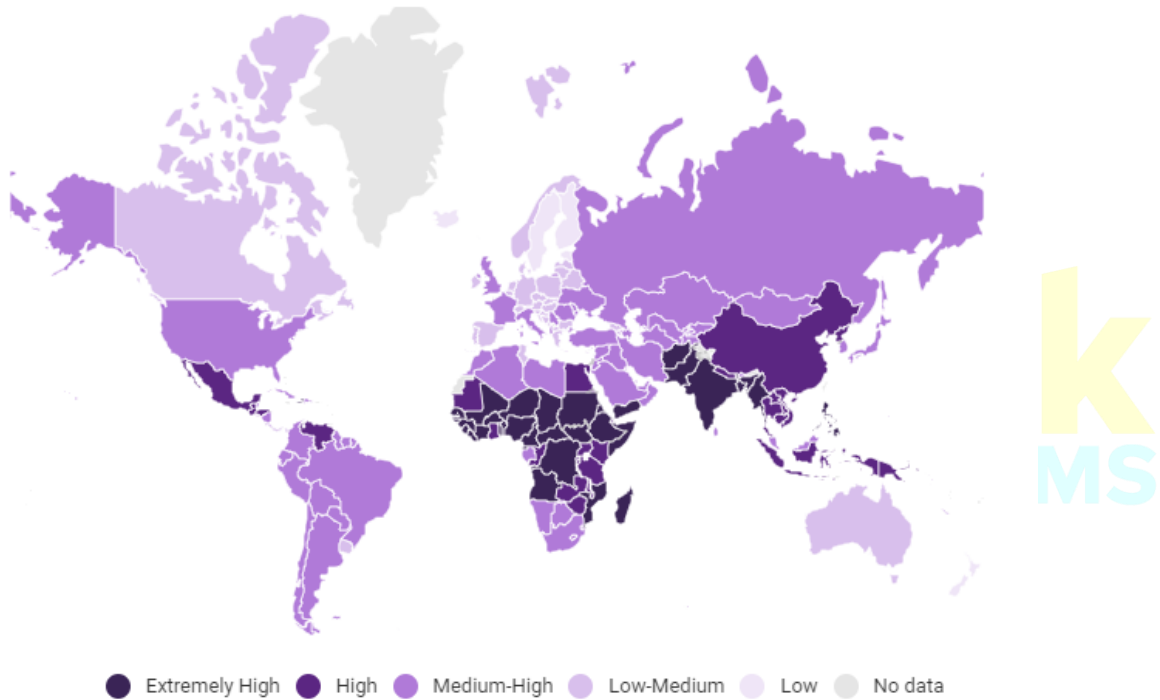
- **Built on a premise of trust, self-certification, and non-intrusive monitoring.**
- Number of forms reduced from **25 to 5.**
- Types of fees reduced from **72 to 4.**
- **Digital sky** platform shall be developed as a user-friendly single-window system. There will be **minimal human interface** and most permissions will be self-generated.
- **No remote pilot license** required for micro drones (for non-commercial use) and **nano drones.**
- No requirement for **security clearance** before issuance of any registration or license.
- No restriction on **foreign ownership** in Indian drone companies.
- **Import of drones** to be regulated by **DGFT.**
- Requirement of **import clearance** from DGCA abolished.
- Coverage of drones under Drone Rules, 2021 increased from **300 kg to 500 kg.** This will cover drone taxis also.
- Drone corridors will be developed for **cargo deliveries.**
- **Drone promotion council** to be set up by Government with participation from academia, startups, and other stakeholders to facilitate a growth-oriented regulatory regime.



Children's Climate Risk Index: UNICEF

- The **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** in collaboration with **Fridays for Future** launched a report named '**The Climate Crisis Is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index**'.
- It is the first comprehensive analysis of climate risk from a child's perspective.

- Earlier an analysis, based on **Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) index**, had shown the impact of Climate Change on children across the world.
- **Children's Climate Risk Index:**
- It ranks countries based **on children's exposure to climate and environmental shocks**, such as Cyclones and Heatwaves, as well as their vulnerability to those shocks, based on their access to essential services.
- Pakistan (14th), Bangladesh (15th), Afghanistan (25th) and **India (26th)** are among four South Asian countries where children are at extremely high risk of the impacts of the climate crisis.



Renovated Complex of Jallianwala Bagh Smarak

- PM inaugurated **renovated Complex of Jallianwala Bagh Smarak & Museum Galleries**.
- Dreams of the innocent boys and girls are still visible in the bullet marks in the walls of Jallianwala Bagh: PM
- Those 10 minutes of **April 13, 1919**, became the immortal story of our freedom struggle, due to which we can celebrate the Amrit Mahotsav of freedom today: PM.

Ministry of Culture
Government of India

75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

Grateful Nation Pays Heartfelt Tribute to the
Martyrs of Jallianwala Bagh

Renovated Complex of Jallianwala Bagh Smarak

- Four Audio Visual Museum galleries featuring the events related to the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre in Hindi, Punjabi and English languages created with 3D representation & Art and Sculptural installations
- Tech-enabled 180° Sound & Light show to display the occurrences on 13th April, 1919
- Audio Nodes installed throughout the garden
- Development of area around Salvation Ground, Amar Jyot and Flag Mast
- Shaheedi well, Flame Monument restored
- Water body rejuvenated as lily pond and the pathways made broader for better navigability
- Illumination of strategic spots to beautify the premises

Dedication to the Nation by
Narendra Modi
Prime Minister
Through Video Conferencing
28th August, 2021 | 6 PM onwards

I bow to those martyrs who were killed mercilessly in Jallianwala Bagh. We will never forget their courage and sacrifice. Their valour continues to inspire every Indian. - Narendra Modi

Join the event **LIVE** : www.pmindiawebcast.nic.in

Indian Athletes Shine @ Tokyo 2020 Paralympics

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has congratulated:
- **Bhavina Patel** on winning silver medal in Table Tennis.
- **Nishad Kumar** for winning the silver medal in Men's High Jump.
- **Vinod Kumar** for winning the Bronze Medal in men's Discus Throw.
- **Avani Lekhara** for winning the Gold Medal in shooting.
- **Yogesh Kathuniya** for winning the silver medal in men's discus throw.
- **Devendra Jhajharia** for winning the silver medal in Javelin.
- **Sundar Singh Gurjar** for winning the bronze medal in Javelin

PM Jan-Dhan Yojana Completes Seven Years

- It has been able to connect **43.04 crore** of underprivileged persons to the banking system with their total deposits soaring to **Rs 1.46 lakh crore**.
- PMJDY accounts have grown three-fold from Rs **14.72 crore** in March 15 to **Rs 43.04 crore** as on August 18 this year.
- Women were major beneficiaries of the scheme as **55% Jan-Dhan** account holders belong to this category and **67% Jan Dhan** accounts are in rural and semi-urban areas.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Vande Bharat Express has been built by

- A. Integral Coach Factory, Chennai.
- B. Rail Coach Factory, Punjab.
- C. Bharat Earth Movers Ltd., Bangalore.
- D. Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW), Varanasi.

ANSWER: A

2. National Centre for Coastal Research is located at

- A. New Delhi
- B. Mumbai
- C. Visakhapatnam
- D. Chennai

ANSWER: D

3. Montreux Record sometimes seen in news is associated with

- A. Kyoto Protocol
- B. Nagoya Protocol
- C. Ramsar Convention
- D. Rio Declaration

ANSWER: C

4. It will provide incentives for the installation of rooftop solar power plant projects in India.

- A. Tarang
- B. SRISTI
- C. Uday
- D. Surya Mitra

ANSWER: B

5. Which state is the largest producer of palm oil in India?

- A. Maharashtra
- B. Madhya Pradesh
- C. Andhra Pradesh
- D. Tamil Nadu

ANSWER: C

6. With three medals, _____ is India's most decorated Paralympian.

- A. Devendra Jhajharia
- B. Kunal Singh
- C. Joginder Singh Bedi
- D. H M Kapoor

ANSWER: C

7. When Alexander invaded India the dynasty which was ruling over India was _____

- A. Brihadratha dynasty
- B. Haryanka dynasty
- C. Shishunaga dynasty
- D. Nanda dynasty

ANSWER: D

8. Big Cats Initiative was undertaken by

- A. Animal Planets
- B. National Geographic Society
- C. Discover International
- D. BBC Earth

ANSWER: B

9. Which of the following is not a Biofuel?

- A. Ethanol
- B. Biodiesel
- C. Biogas
- D. Petrol

ANSWER: D

10. The iconic 'Quit India' slogan was coined by

- A. Mahatma Gandhi
- B. Yusuf Meherally
- C. Maulana Hasrat Mohani
- D. Pandit Nehru

ANSWER: B

11. 'Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana' is a scheme by

- A. Ministry of Women and Child Development
- B. Ministry of Rural Development
- C. Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
- D. Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

ANSWER: D

12. The Congress Working Committee authorized Gandhiji to take charge of the non-violent mass movement at _____ in 1942

- A. Wardha meeting
- B. Kanpur meeting
- C. Faizpur meeting
- D. Lahore meeting

ANSWER: A

13. The National Sports Day is celebrated on Dhyani Chand's birthday on _____ to honor the hockey legend.

- A. August 29
- B. September 14
- C. October 20
- D. November 17

ANSWER: A

14. Who is the current Chairperson of NITI Aayog?

- A. Amitabh Kant
- B. Dr Rajiv Kumar
- C. Arvind Panagariya
- D. Narendra Modi

ANSWER: D

15. 'Self-Respect Movement' was founded by?

- A. S Ramanathan
- B. E V Ramasamy
- C. T. M. Nair

D. C. Natesa Mudaliar

ANSWER: A

16. He is also known as 'Father of the Dravidian movement'.

A. S Ramanathan

B. E V Ramasamy

C. T. M. Nair

D. C. Natesa Mudaliar

ANSWER: B

17. The first woman driver of Indian Railways, _____ drove all women-staffed Mumbai-Lucknow Special train on International Women's Day (08th March 2021).

A. Surekha Yadav

B. Subhashini Kumari

C. Anjali Jadav

D. M R Gopika

ANSWER: A

18. The first version of the 'Jana Gana Mana' was sung in a convention of the Indian National Congress in _____ at _____.

A. 1910, Bombay

B. 1905, Kanpur

C. 1915, Madras

D. 1911, Calcutta

ANSWER: D

19. He was India's longest-serving union cabinet minister.

A. Sardar Swaran Singh

B. Babu Jagjivan Ram

C. Chaudhry Charan Singh

D. Morarji Desai

ANSWER: A

20. The first national flag of India is said to have been hoisted on 7th August 1906 in _____.

- A. Madras
- B. Bombay
- C. Calcutta
- D. Delhi

ANSWER: C

21. Global Hunger Index is annually released by _____.

- A. World Health Organization (WHO)
- B. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- C. World Hunger Aid
- D. United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)

ANSWER: C

22. The First Managing Director of IMF was _____.

- A. Dr. Camille Gutt
- B. Ivar Rooth
- C. Per Jacobsson
- D. Rodrigo Rato

ANSWER: A

23. Who was the first Chief Economist of IMF?

- A. Edward M. Bernstein
- B. William C. Hood
- C. Simon Johnson
- D. Olivier Blanchard

ANSWER: A

24. Current Chairmen of Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) is

- A. Ramesh Chand Meena
- B. Pratibha Brahma
- C. Pravir Krishna
- D. Arjun Munda

ANSWER: A

25.AMRUT, Digital India, Atal Innovation Mission, Medical Education Reform were initiatives by

- A. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
- B. MHRD
- C. NITI Aayog
- D. UGC

ANSWER: C

26.It is a dispute resolution scheme for closing pending disputes relating to Service Tax and Central Excise cases.

- A. Sabka Saath
- B. Sabka Sankalp
- C. Sabka Vishwas
- D. Sabka Vikas

ANSWER: C

27.World's first Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention was from

- A. India
- B. Australia
- C. New Zealand
- D. Canada

ANSWER: B

28.The countries with the most Ramsar Sites is

- A. USA
- B. UK
- C. Mexico
- D. Brazil

ANSWER: B

29.The Central Pollution Control Board was constituted in_____

- A. September 1974

- B. October 1986
- C. August 1997
- D. February 1972

ANSWER: A

30. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana was launched in

- A. 2014
- B. 2015
- C. 2016
- D. 2017

ANSWER: A

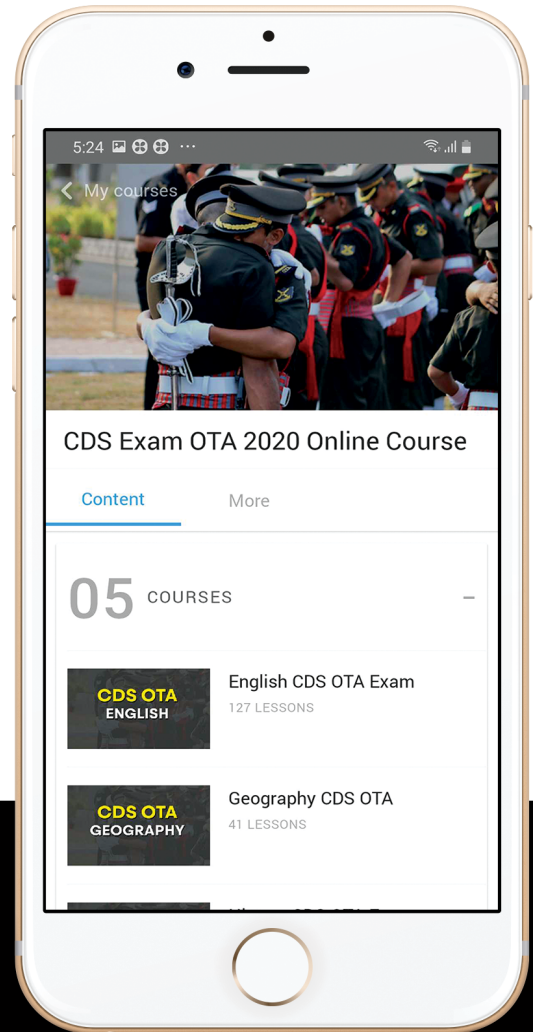




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