

FCI AGM GK Digest

May 2021



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FCI AGM GK DIGEST: MAY 2021

AGRICULTURE CURRENT AFFAIRS: APRIL 2021

- Madhukranti portal and Honey Corners has been launched by Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar for online registration to achieve traceability source of Honey and other beehive products on a digital platform.
- Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), and the Ministry of AYUSH, signed an MOU for introducing the concept of Ayurveda and its allied disciplines into veterinary science.
- To strategize the actions for positive change in Agri-food systems in the World, the United Nations Secretary-General has called the first-ever UN Food Systems Summit which will be held in September 2021, to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. On 12th April 2021, the first National Level Dialogue on Agri-Food Systems-Advancing Equitable Livelihoods has been organized in Delhi.
- To establish a shared platform to generate awareness on NRLM's gender interventions across the country, The Ministry of Rural Development's Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) and the Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE), collaborate with to launch Gender Samvaad.
- Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare inaugurated the National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign-2021 to interact with the States on challenges & strategies for effective crop management during the Kharif season.
- The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund achieved Rs 8,000 crore mark recently. In 2020, the Government of India established this Fund as a part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat, to inject credit into agriculture and its allied activities and is to be implemented between 2020 and 2029.
- To develop interaction between agriculture and industry, Italy launched the first "Mega Food Park" in India involving food processing facilities.
- The Agricultural Ministry of India recently signed an agreement with Microsoft to provide smart agricultural techniques to the farmers especially during the post-harvest season.

- The scientists from Singapore have developed a technology named as “Robo Plant” to interact with plants and to control the plants using smartphone applications. It will also enable farmers to identify diseases in plants.
- To encourage and find innovative solutions leveraging artificial intelligence to conserve freshwater usage, and to address water scarcity problems in India, The Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Agriculture Hackathon was begun with the help of Google, MyGov and HUL to improve AI solutions in the field of Agriculture.
- Chennai-based Institute, The Central Institute of Brackish Aquaculture has developed an indigenous vaccine named Nodavac-R for Viral Nervous Necrosis for fish.
- German-based Bank Deutsche Bank signed a loan agreement of Rs 600 crore to National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) to fund cooperatives across the country for agriculture development.
- Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has launched an e-commerce platform called eSaNTA for marine products which will help to empower farmers as well as to sell their produce at the click of a button through this portal.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has sanctioned a sum of Rs 21,658.73 crore towards Cash Credit Limit (CCL) for the procurement of wheat in Punjab during the ensuing rabi marketing season.

IMPORTANT CIRCULARS: APRIL 2021

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS' WELFARE

- Madhukranti portal and Honey Corners has been launched by Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar for online registration to achieve traceability source of Honey and other beehive products on a digital platform. Also, it will help in checking the quality & source of adulteration of honey and enable consumers/public to know the source of honey and assure the quality of the products.
- Indian Bank is the technical and banking partner for the development of this digital platform. National Bee Board (NBB) and Indian Bank signed an MOU for this project. This project will boost the income of farmers, employment generation, and increase exports.
- Government has approved Rs 500 crores for a new Scheme named National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM) under Aatma Nirbhar Bharat for promoting and developing scientific beekeeping & to achieve the goal of “Sweet Revolution”.

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING

- Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), and Ministry of AYUSH, signed an MOU for introducing the concept of Ayurveda and its allied disciplines into veterinary science including research on new formulations in quality drugs for veterinary science through medicinal herbs, which will help to develop a new mechanism for the use of Ayurveda in the veterinary sector for the benefit of animal health.

AGRICULTURE QUESTIONS: APRIL 2021

Q.1 Which Bank is the technical and banking partner of the digital platform 'Madhukranti portal' and 'Honey Corners'?

- a) State Bank of India
- b) Bank of Baroda
- c) Indian Bank
- d) Indian overseas Bank
- e) None of these

Answer: Option C

Explanation: Indian Bank is the technical and banking partner for development of the digital platform Madhukranti portal and Honey Corners. National Bee Board (NBB) and Indian Bank signed a MOU for this project.

Q.2 Government has approved ----- crores for National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM) scheme under Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.

- a) 600 crore
- b) 500 crore
- c) 200 crore
- d) 450 crore
- e) None of these



Answer: Option B

Explanation: Government has approved Rs 500 crores for a new Scheme named National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM) under Aatma Nirbhar Bharat for promoting and developing scientific beekeeping & to achieve the goal of "Sweet Revolution".

Q.3 The first National Level Dialogue on Agri-Food Systems-Advancing Equitable Livelihoods has been conducted in -----

- a) Goa
- b) Delhi
- c) Mumbai
- d) Lucknow
- e) None of these

Answer: Option B

Explanation: On 12th April, 2021 the first National Level Dialogue on Agri-Food Systems-Advancing Equitable Livelihoods has been conducted in Delhi.

Q.4 To generate awareness on National Rural Livelihoods Mission's gender interventions across the country, DAY NRLM and IWWAGE jointly taken an initiative called -----

- a) Gender Samvaad
- b) Gender equality
- c) Samvaad
- d) Gender equivalency
- e) None of these

Answer: Option A

Explanation: The Ministry of Rural Development's DeendayalAntyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) and the Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE) at LEAD, jointly launched Gender Samvaad to establish a shared platform to generate awareness on NRLM's gender interventions across the country.

Q.5 The Government of India established the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund in which year?

- a) 2021
- b) 2020
- c) 2019
- d) 2018
- e) 2002

Answer: Option B

Explanation: In 2020, the Government of India established this Fund as a part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat, to inject credit into agriculture and its allied activities and is to be implemented between 2020 and 2029.

Q.6 Which country recently launched the first "Mega Food Park" in India involving food processing facilities?

- a) Italy
- b) Brazil
- c) Canada
- d) Indonesia
- e) Japan

Answer: Option A

Explanation: To develop an interaction between agriculture and industry, Italy launched the first "Mega Food Park" in India involving food processing facilities.

Q.7 The Agricultural Ministry of India recently signed Memorandum of Understanding with which company to provide smart agricultural techniques to the farmers?

- a) Dell
- b) Microsoft

- c) Apple
- d) IBM
- e) None of these

Answer: Option B

Explanation: The Agricultural Ministry of India recently signed Memorandum of Understanding with Microsoft to provide smart agricultural techniques to the farmers especially during post-harvest season.

Q.8 Which country has developed a technology named as “Robo Plant” to interact with plants by using smart phone applications?

- a) Japan
- b) China
- c) South Korea
- d) Singapore
- e) None of these

Answer: Option D

Explanation: The scientists from Singapore have developed a technology named as “Robo Plant” to interact with plants and to control the plants using smart phone applications. It will also enable farmers to identify diseases in plants.

Q.9 The Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Agriculture Hackathon was begun with the help of MyGov, HUL and which company to improve AI solutions?

- a) Google
- b) Microsoft
- c) Dell
- d) IBM
- e) Amazon

Answer: Option A

Explanation: To encourage and find innovative solutions leveraging artificial intelligence to conserve freshwater usage, and to address water scarcity problems in India, The Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Agriculture Hackathon was begun with the help of Google, MyGov and HUL to improve AI solutions in the field of Agriculture.

Q.10 Which Bank has signed a loan agreement of Rs 600 crore to National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) to fund cooperatives across the country for agriculture development?

- a) Deutsche Bank
- b) HSBC
- c) BNP Paribas
- d) Citigroup

e) None of these

Answer: Option A

Explanation: German based Bank Deutsche Bank signed a loan agreement of Rs 600 crore to National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) to fund cooperatives across the country for agriculture development.

YOJANA MAGAZINE SUMMARY: APRIL 2021

TOPIC: JAL JEEVAN MISSION



- The JalJeevan Mission was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in August 2019, the major objective of this mission is to ensure pipe water supply (HarGharJal) to all rural households by the year 2024.
- The priority of the JalJeevan Mission is to provide safe drinking water in all parts of the country.
- Under this mission, attention will also be paid to building local infrastructure for rainwater harvesting, ground water recharge and management of domestic wastewater for reuse in agriculture.
- It is noteworthy that the Ministry of Jalshakti has been appointed as the nodal ministry for the implementation of the JalJeevan Mission.
- Statistics show that India has about 16 % of the world's total population, while only 4 percent of potable water is available in the country. At the same time, the effect of climate change on the constantly falling ground water and water sources are some other challenges in water conservation. In such a situation, it is a big challenge for the government to balance the demand and supply of potable water.

TAKING WATER TO EVERY HOME AND SOUL:



- Recently, in the 'Mann Ki Baat' program, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called for a water conservation movement with active participation of the public mind, just like the cleanliness movement.
- Recovering from this crisis is not under government alone. Consumption of drinking water in various uses in households, harvesting of rainwater and water recycling will be done at the local, provincial and national level in the field of water recycling.
- We have to be determined to avoid zero water situation. The government will have to make it mandatory to build small domestic water recycling plants in colonies of multi-storeyed buildings and metros, as most of the water is wasted in these areas. These should be strictly prohibited.
- The most important thing is for the public to be self-aware, as it has been said, "Rahim paaniashiye, bin pani subsaun".

WATER SECURITY:



- If we consider some facts of water availability and usage in India, only 4% of the global fresh water source exists in India, which has to provide water to 18 percent (Indian population) of the global population.
- According to the data, around 330 million people (a quarter of the country's population) have been affected due to severe drought across the country after two consecutive years of weak monsoon.

MEASURES TAKEN BY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT:

"JAL SHAKTI ABHIYAN: CATCH THE RAIN" CAMPAIGN



- The campaign implemented in the country from March 22, 2021 to November 30, 2021 (pre-monsoon and monsoon periods).
- The objective of this campaign is to construct rainwater harvesting structures (RWHS) to store the state and all other stakeholders to store rainwater suited to climatic conditions and subsoil levels.

JAL JEEVAN MISSION (JJM):

- Under the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry to provide universal coverage of water supply to households through working tap in all statutory cities , as per Sustainable Development Goal-6 (SDG-6) in the Union Budget for the financial year 2021-22 JalJeevan mission (urban) has been announced.
- This is a supplement to the JalJeevan Mission (Rural), which envisages supply of 55 liters of water per person daily to all rural households through a working household tap connection (FHTC) by the year 2024.

WATER FUTURE IN A CLIMATE RISKED WORLD: THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE



- The 'Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare' (MoHFW) has implemented the state governments to ensure the availability of clean drinking water and its management during the lockdown to control the spread of COVID-19 in the country. Necessary guidelines have been issued for this.

CHALLENGES:

- Although hand hygiene or keeping hands clean regularly has been considered as an effective way to avoid coronavirus, the lack of clean water for all has been a major challenge for the country for many years.

USHERING SOCIAL REVOLUTION:



- At present, the agriculture sector is the most exploited water, so if 20-30% of water is saved in agriculture, then it will be a big success in tackling the current challenge of the water crisis.
- Efforts such as drip or sprinkler irrigation and agroforestry should be encouraged to conserve water in the agricultural sector.
- The groundwater level can be improved by stopping the encroachment of natural water resources and increasing the green cover i.e., afforestation.
- There has been an increase in the water used in homes during lockdown, so the water use can be reduced to some extent by promoting the economical use of water in the houses and recycling / reuse of waste water coming out of the houses.
- Promote water conservation by rainwater harvesting at the level of households and housing societies.

With the implementation of stringent laws for industrial water pollution, industries should be encouraged to set up treatment plants for pollution control.

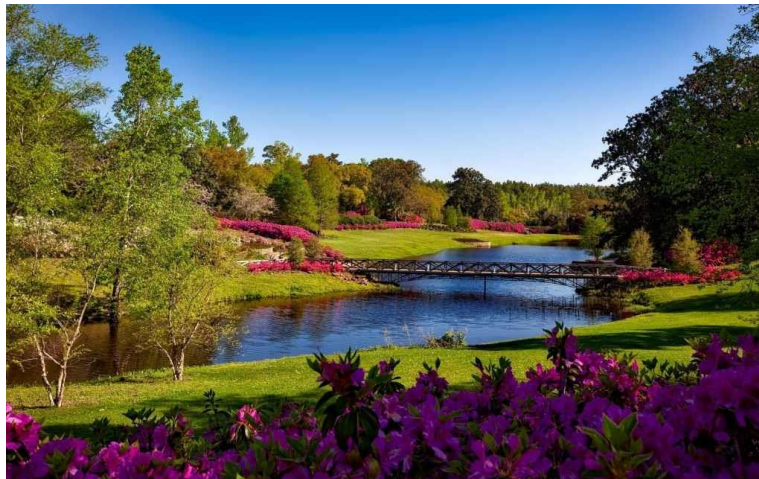
To increase social support towards water conservation through public awareness campaigns.

WATER GOVERNANCE:



- For ' good water governance ', apart from government, all communities, societies, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisation), action groups, startups and individual efforts will also have to be integrated.

FRAMEWORK FOR RIVER REJUVENATION:



- Since the 1990s, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has been monitoring the quality of rivers mainly on the basis of Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD). The higher the quantity of BOD, the worse the quality of the river is considered.

LATEST DIRECTION

- Despite the Water Act enacted in the year 1974, the water quality of the rivers has been declining.
- The objective of this act was to improve quality at the earliest.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NRRM:



- According to the suggestion given by the NGT, this system can be called the 'National River Rejuvenation Mechanism' (NRRM). The NRRM may consider establishing an environmental data grid at the national, state, or district level as an effective monitoring strategy.

NATIONAL WATER MISSION (2010):

- It ensures better water resource management for water conservation, less wastage and equal distribution.

NATIONAL CLEAN GANGA MISSION:

- This mission envisages a five-tier structure at the national, state and district levels to take measures for the prevention, control and reduction of environmental pollution in the Ganges river.
- Its objective is to ensure continuous adequate water flow for the rejuvenation of the Ganges River.

NAMAMI GANGE PROJECT:

- It integrates efforts to clean and preserve the Ganges River in a comprehensive manner.

GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT: A PARADIGM SHIFT



- India has adequate water availability compared to Israel, but the water management there is much better than India. Recycled water is used in Israel for farming, industry, irrigation, etc., so people do not face a shortage of drinking water there.

SOLUTION:

- It is essential that we see ground water as a collective resource rather than as an individual resource. Most people think that 'if this land is mine, the water under it will be mine', but until we leave this assumption, proper management of ground water will not be possible.
- Issues such as waterlogging, salinity, use of chemical fertilizers in agriculture and industrial waste need to be given serious attention.

SWACHHTATA MOVEMENT COUNTRIES:



- The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was launched by the government on 2 October 2014 with an aim to accelerate efforts to focus on universal sanitation in the country.
- It is to be noted that this mission is being executed by two different ministries - Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation for rural areas and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for urban areas.
- The main reason for dividing the campaign into two parts is that both areas (rural and urban) have different hygiene requirements, which require different approaches.
- The problem of open defecation, whose elimination is the primary objective of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, is not limited to rural India alone. While the implementation of total sanitation is a major challenge in rural India, there are some serious challenges on the urban sanitation front, which need to be addressed from a different perspective.

JAL SHAKTHI ABIYAN:



- The Ministry of Personnel and Training of the Central Government has announced the launch of 'Jal Shakti' campaign from July 1, 2019, for the collection and conservation of rainwater in 255 districts of the country facing water scarcity.

SALIENT FEATURES OF JAL SHAKTI ABHIYAN:

- It focuses on the management of integrated demand and supply of water at the local level, including the creation of local infrastructure for rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and domestic wastewater management for reuse.
- It mainly focuses on five aspects:
 - Water conservation and rainwater harvesting.
 - Renovation of conventional and other water bodies / tanks.
 - Development of reuse and recharge structures.
 - Watershed Development.
 - Intensive afforestation.

INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT FOR FASTER SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WATER SECURITY:



Why Water Supply Management Program is required?

- Indian agriculture has a greater dependence on the monsoon.

- Excess of rainfed areas.
- Due to problems of low income, poverty etc.
- Due to the presence of food insecurity.

Components of water supply management program

- Promoting crop intensification.
- Promote crop diversification.
- To conserve the land by managing pesticides and nutrients.
- Orient people from agriculture to non-agricultural activities like animal husbandry, beekeeping etc.
- Capacity Building in a particular area.

NITI AAYOG'S @ 75 STRATEGY AND WATER MANAGEMENT



- In the year 2018, the NITI Aayog had issued a strategy for Abhinav Bharat @ 75, under which it was decided that by 2022-23 India's water resource management strategy should include water for life, agriculture, economic development, ecology and environment. There should be water security facilities to ensure adequate availability.
- Providing adequate and safe drinking water for citizens and animals for sanitation.
- Ensuring proper irrigation system in all farms (water every field) and improving agricultural water utility.
- To ensure the continuous and uninterrupted stream of the Ganges and its tributaries.

ROAD AHEAD



- The bureaucratic, non-transparent and non-participatory approach still continues in the functioning of water governance institutions in India. Hence, it cannot be denied that there is a need to improve the water administration of the country.
- It is essential that reliable information about natural disasters such as droughts and floods and its data are available to us as soon as possible so that they can be dealt with in time and possible damage can be minimized.
- It is necessary that important decisions regarding raising ground water level and regulating ground water use are taken at the earliest.
- The condition of the rivers in the country remains miserable and the efforts of the present government to make the river Ganga pollution free may not achieve the anticipated success, so it is necessary to seriously consider the situation of the rivers in the country and to make them pollution free. For the above policies should be formulated.

THE CONCLUSION:

- Water is the most valuable resource of the earth and we not only have to protect it for ourselves but also to preserve it for future generations. At present, when India as well as the whole world is facing a water crisis, it is necessary to pay serious attention to it. Water management or conservation policies exist in India, but the problem lies in the level of implementation of those policies. Therefore, the implementation of policies should be overcome and the implementation of them should be ensured so that the biggest problem of water mismanagement can be addressed in the country.
- Especially during the COVID-19 epidemic, it is extremely important to ensure safe water supply inside homes. This initiative, which provides water from domestic tap connections in rural India in the form of silent revolution, will prove to be a progressive step towards making India a 'New India'.

YOJANA MAGAZINE QUIZ: APRIL 2021

Ques.1 Which of the following statements is/ are correct with regards to the Jal Jeevan Mission?

I	It was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in August 2019
II	The major objective of this mission is to ensure pipe water supply (Har Ghar Jal) to all rural households by the year 2026.
III	The Ministry of Jaisakthi has been appointed as the nodal ministry for the implementation of the Water Life Mission.

Select the correct option using given codes below

- a) I & III only
- b) II only
- c) II & III only
- d) None of the above

Answer: a. I & III only

Explanation: The major objective of this mission is to ensure pipe water supply to all rural households by the year 2024.

Ques.2 Consider the following statements with regards to Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign.

- a. The campaign has been implemented in the country from March 22, 2021 to November 30, 2021 (pre-monsoon and monsoon periods).
- b. The objective of this campaign is to construct rainwater harvesting structures (RWHS) to store the state and all other stakeholders to store rainwater suited to climatic conditions and subsoil levels.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a only
- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both a & b

Explanation: Both the statements regarding Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign are correct.

Ques.3 Which of the following statements regarding JJM (Urban) is/are correct?

- a. As per Sustainable Development Goal-7 (SDG-7) in the Union Budget for the financial year 2021-22 Jal Jeevan mission (urban) has been announced.
- b. This is a supplement to the Jal Jeevan Mission (Rural), which envisages supply of 55 liters of water per person daily to all rural households through a working household tap connection (FHTC) by the year 2024.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a only
- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: b. b only

Explanation: As per Sustainable Development Goal-6 (SDG-6) in the Union Budget for the financial year 2021-22 Jal Jeevan mission (urban) has been announced.

Ques.4 Which of the following revolution steps have been taken to conserve water in the agricultural sector?

I	Efforts such as drip or sprinkler irrigation and agroforestry should be encouraged to conserve water in the agricultural sector.
II	The groundwater level can be improved by stopping the encroachment of natural water resources and increasing the green cover i.e., afforestation.

Select the correct option using given codes below

- a) I only
- b) II only
- c) Both I & II
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both I & II

Explanation: Both the above two steps to be taken by the Government to conserve water in the agricultural sector are correct.

Ques.5 Expand the term BOD

- a) Biological Oxygen Defect (BOD).
- b) Biochemistry Oxygen Demand (BOD).
- c) Biological Oil Demand (BOD).
- d) Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD).

Answer: d. Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD).

Explanation: The full form of BOD is Biological Oxygen Demand.

Ques.6 Which of the following steps have been taken by the government to preserve the water quality of the rivers?

I	Water Act enacted in the year 1974,
II	National Water Mission (2010) has been enacted to ensure better water resource management for water conservation, less wastage and equal distribution.
III	National Clean Ganga Mission has been passed to envisage a five-tier structure at the national, state and district levels to take measures for the prevention, control and reduction of environmental pollution in the Ganges river.

Select the correct option using given codes below

- a) I & III only
- b) II only
- c) II & III only
- d) All of the above

Answer: d. All of the above

Explanation: All the above three steps taken by the government to preserve the water quality of the rivers are correct.

Ques.7 Consider the following statements with regards to Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

- a. It was launched by the government on 2 October 2014 with an aim to accelerate efforts to focus on universal sanitation in the country.
- b. This mission is being executed by two different ministries - Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation for rural areas and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for urban areas.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a only
- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both a & b

Explanation: Both the statements regarding Swachh Bharat Abhiyan are correct.

Ques.8 Which of the following focusing areas regarding Jal Shakti Abhiyan is/are correct?

- a. Water conservation and rainwater harvesting.
- b. Renovation of conventional and other water bodies / tanks.
- c. Development of reuse and recharge structures.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a & b only
- b) b & c only
- c) All the above
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. All the above

Explanation: All the above three focusing areas regarding Jal Shakti Abhiyan are correct.

Ques.9 Consider the following statements with regards to NITI Aayog's @ 75 strategy.

I	The NITI Aayog in 2018 had issued a strategy for Abhinav Bharat @ 75, under which it was decided that by 2022-23 India's water resource management strategy should include water for life, agriculture, economic development, ecology and environment.
II	It aims to ensure the continuous and uninterrupted stream of the Ganges and its tributaries.

Select the correct option using given codes below

- a) I only
- b) II only
- c) Both I & II
- d) None of the above



Answer: c. Both I & II

Explanation: Both the above statements with regards to NITI Aayog's @ 75 strategy are correct.

Ques.10 What can be the solution be offered to improve the water administration of the country?

- a. Reliable information about natural disasters such as droughts and floods and its data are available to us as soon as possible so that they can be dealt with in time and possible damage can be minimized.
- b. It is necessary that important decisions regarding raising ground water level and regulating groundwater use are taken at the earliest.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a only
- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both a & b

Explanation: Both the solutions offered to improve the water administration of the country are correct.

KURUKSHETRA MAGAZINE SUMMARY: APRIL 2021

TOPIC: INDIAN FOLK ART AND CULTURE



- India is a country with a diverse culture, a fact that is also prominently reflected here in its people, culture and weather. From the inhospitable snow of the Himalayas to the fields in the far south, from the deserts of the west to the moist deltas of the east, from the dry heat to the coolness of the middle plateau of the foothills of the hills, Indian lifestyles clearly reflect the grandeur of its geography.
- The costumes, plans and habits of an Indian vary according to its place of origin. Regarding Indian culture, Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya states that "The vastness and importance of Indian civilization and culture is rooted in the sacred spirit of 'VasudhaivaKutumbakam' to establish identification with the whole human being.

NURTURING INDIA'S RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE:



- It is important to note that India has a repository of unique intangible cultural heritage (ICH) traditions, 13 of which are also recognized by UNESCO as the intangible cultural heritage of humanity.
- The National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) aims to provide a new identity to the diversity of Indian culture contained in the Indian Intangible Heritage.

SO WHAT IS INTANGIBLE CULTURE?



- It is a fund of a community, nation, etc. which has been continuously enriched over the centuries, overwhelming the subconscious of that community or nation.
- Intangible cultural assimilates the characteristics of its contemporary generations over time and becomes available as a legacy to the current generation.
- Intangible culture is a reflection of the mental consciousness of society, expressed in art, action or any other form.
- For example, yoga is a form of this expression. Yoga in India is both a philosophy and a way of life. It paves the way for physical and spiritual progress of a person through various physical activities.

INDIAN FOLK ART: AN INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION TOOL:



- Art reflects the aesthetic sense of man and is a product of human culture. India is an ancient cultural country. Hence, there is a unique fusion of folk art in art and culture.

FOLK PAINTING OF INDIA

- Folk art is the traditional art that has been passed down from generation to generation in any area or place of castes and tribes. Folk art can be seen in various forms in different provinces like India. Which is known by various names, which is discussed below.

MADHUBANI PAINTING

- It is a prominent painting of Mithilanchal region such as Darbhanga in Bihar, Madhubani and some areas of Nepal. Jitwarpur village in Madhubani district is the main center of this folk painting.

PATTACHITRA ART

- 'Patta' means 'cloth'. This is a traditional painting of Odisha. This painting depicts scenes related to the lives of Subhadra, Balarama, Lord Jagannath, Dashavatar and Krishna.

PITHORA PAINTING



- It is a traditional painting of the Rathwas of Gujarati and the people of the Bhil tribe. It is more than ritual rather than art form.

KALAMKARI PAINTING

- 'Kalmari' literally means pictures made with a pen. It is one of the major folk arts of India. Kalamkari is a type of handicraft in which an impression is made with colored blocks on cotton cloth by hand. The term Kalamkari is used for both art and fabric. This art is mainly practiced in Machilipatnam and Krishna district of Krishna district in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India.

TRIPURA OF MUSIC AND DANCE



- Famous music and classical dances are an essential part of Tripura. Geria dances are organized for the property and welfare of the people; Dances of the Reang community; The 'Biju' dance performed the chalk community, explaining the conclusion of the Bengali calendar year.

MUSIC AND DANCE OF MANIPUR



- Manipur offers a broad spectrum of music and classical dance form, which is the best way to revive and refresh people's daily monotonous lifestyles. The hill and valley people of Manipur love both songs and music.

MUSIC AND DANCE OF MIZORAM

- The music and dance of Mizoram are basically performed during religious festivals. Performances are performed in most of the dance and music groups of Mizoram. Bamboo dance is the most colorful and distinctive dance of Mizo.

MEGHALAYA MUSIC AND DANCE

- Meghalaya is home to the famous music and dance forms of northern East India. Dance is associated with its festivals or seasons and is therefore enjoyed throughout the year. The dances are social, religious, agricultural, funeral and recreational.

MUSIC AND DANCE OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH



- Music and dance are an integral part of every festival and occasion, which is taking place in Arunachal Pradesh in the northeastern part of India.

MSME- A POWERFUL ENGINE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH:



- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have always played an important role in the Indian economy. Currently, about 6.3 crore MSMEs operating in the country not only make a major contribution to the GDP of the country but also provide employment opportunities to a large population.
- Significantly, this sector plays an important role in the stability of the labor market, providing around 110 million jobs. In such a situation, the role of MSMEs has become more important from the point of view of India's economy and economic strategy, with special emphasis on the presently self-reliant India campaign by the government.
- Given the importance of the MSME sector, the Government of India estimated in 2019 that the sector would be responsible for half of India's GDP and the creation of about 50 million new jobs in the next five years.

- While there were signs of a slowdown in the supply side due to the demand side and the structural reforms like the ' Goods and Services Tax ' (GST) due to the COVID-19 epidemic, demonetisation also has a wide negative impact on the MSME sector.

MAJOR CHALLENGES OF MSME SECTOR:



- Significantly, the participation of MSMEs in GDP of Germany and China is 55% and 60% respectively, indicating that India has yet to travel a long journey in this area, some of the major obstacles to the path of progress of MSME are the following:

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES:



- Lack of credit supply remains a major challenge in the MSME sector in India.
- The formal debt available in this sector is only 16 trillion rupees, due to which there is still a gap of about 20 trillion rupees in relation to the total practical loan requirement (36 trillion rupees) in this sector.

- At the same time, MSMEs in India mostly depend on ' Non-Banking Financial Companies ' (NBFCs) or Micro Financial Institutions (MFIs) due to lack of banking access.
- The liquidity crunch in the NBFC sector since September 2018 has further exacerbated the financial challenge of MSMEs.

Lack of formalization of MSMEs: A major reason for the credit gap in this sector has been the lack of formalization among MSMEs.

TECHNICAL CONSTRAINTS:



- India's MSME sector is largely based on outdated and obsolete technology, constraining its production capacity.
- The emergence of artificial intelligence, data analytics, robotics and other related technologies (collectively known as Industrial Revolution 4.0) presents a much greater challenge for MSMEs than organized sector enterprises.
- Production Challenges: Most of the MSMEs currently operating in the country are in the micro enterprises category.

THE ROAD AHEAD:

DEVELOPING THE BOND MARKET:



- Amidst the progress made in the Indian bond market in recent years, the promotion of SME Bonds can boost the participation of MSMEs in debt capital markets.
- While encouraging SME bonds will provide MSMEs with a lower interest rate advantage than other financial intermediaries, these bonds will serve as a viable high return tool for aware and educated investors working in the market.

REFORM IN LABOR LAWS:



- The labor laws currently in force in the country are not very favorable for the development of MSMEs.
- If we truly want MSMEs to have a significant intervention in the economic sector of the country, then it is very important to provide MSMEs with a regulatory framework free from the current complexities that work for them rather than working against them.

WARLIS: LIFE AROUND NATURE



- Warli painting originated in Maharashtra, it is widely made by the Warli tribe in northern Sahyadri.

CHARACTERISTICS OF WARLI PAINTING:

- Natural elements are the main attraction in Warli painting, in this painting a mixture of rice paste, gum and water are used to decorate the paintings. The bamboo stick is used as a brush.
- Geometric figures like circles, triangles and squares are used in this painting, as well as many shapes are made in this painting depicting different aspects and beliefs of life.
- The Warli painting shows a close connection between man and nature.

UNDERSTANDING INDIAN CLASSICAL DANCES:

- The tradition of dance in India has been since ancient times. The sculpture of the dancing girl has been found by excavation of the Harappan civilization, which proves that the dance had developed in that period too. The NatyaShastra of Bharata Muni is considered to be the first and authentic text of Indian choreography. It is also called Panchaveda.
- Following is a brief description of classical dance arts of India:

BHARATANATYAM



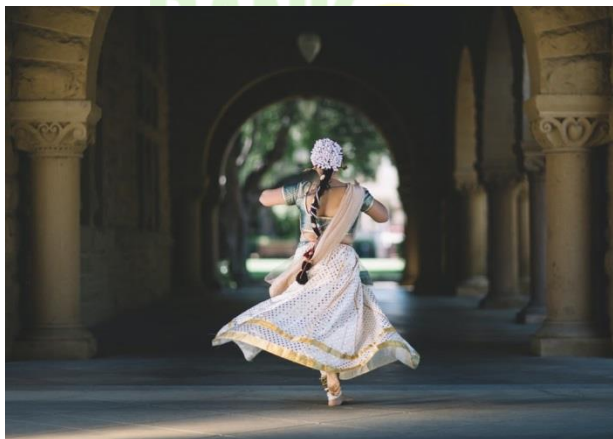
- Bharatanatyam is a very traditional and uniquely stylized dance based on the Natyashastra of Bharata Muni. This dance form was developed in Tamil Nadu, South India.

KUCHIPUDI



- This dance form originated in a village called Kuchelapuram in Andhra Pradesh. This classical dance follows the rules of the Natyashastra of Bharatamuni.

KATHAK



- This classical dance of North India is basically based on the Natyashastra of Bharatmuni.

Kathakali

- Born in the state of Kerala, this dance form is based on the Natyashastra of Bharatmuni. Kathakali is also a dance associated with temples and is performed only by men.

TRADITIONAL TOY INDUSTRY- NEW INDIA'S SUNRISE SECTOR:



- The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Textile, Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and All India Council for Technical Education.
- **Aim:** To conceptualize innovative toys based on the Indian value system which will inculcate the positive behaviour and good value among the children.
- To promote India as a global toy manufacturing hub (Atmanirbhar Abhiyan).

FEATURES:

- **Based on:** Indian culture and ethos, local folklore and heroes, and Indian value systems.
- **Themes:** Nine themes, including fitness and sport and rediscovering traditional Indian toys.
- **Participants:** Students, teachers, start-ups and toy experts.
- **Prize:** Participants can get prizes upto Rs. 50 lakhs.
- **Significance:**
 - Toys can be an excellent medium to further the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'
 - It was announced by the Prime Minister in 2015 to enhance the understanding and bonding between the States, thereby strengthening the unity and integrity of India.
 - It will help in promoting the use of educational toys in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
 - It will create an ecosystem for the domestic Toy industry and the local manufacturers, tapping the untapped resources and utilizing their potential.
 - It will help in reducing toy imports.
 - Though the toy market in India is worth USD 1 billion, 80% toys are imported.

THE CONCLUSION:



- It can be said that Indian culture itself has many characteristics which are still giving consciousness of the highest values and ideals to the entire Indian society. Therefore, it is clear that the records provide information about various aspects of ancient Indian public life, culture, but now there is a need to review the views expressed in the records in the context of other ideas so that we can get better and sophisticated knowledge about our past.

KURUKSHETRA MAGAZINE QUIZ- APRIL 2021

Ques.1 Consider the following statements with regards to Intangible Culture.

I	It is a fund of a community, nation, etc. which has been continuously enriched over the centuries, overwhelming the subconscious of that community or nation.
II	It assimilates the characteristics of its contemporary generations over time and becomes available as a legacy to the current generation.

Select the correct option using given codes below

- I only
- II only
- Both I & II
- None of the above

Answer: c. Both I & II

Explanation: Both the above two statements are correct with regards to Intangible Culture.

Ques.2 Which of the following statements is/ are correct with regards to Kalamkari Painting?

- 'Kalmari' literally means pictures made with a pen. It is one of the major folk arts of India.
- The term Kalamkari is used for both art and fabric. This art is mainly practiced in Machilipatnam and Krishna district of Krishna district in the state of Assam, India.

Select the option using given codes below

- a only

- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: a. a only

Explanation: This art is mainly practiced in Machilipatnam and Krishna district of Krishna district in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India.

Ques.3 Consider the following statements with regards to Music and Dance of Manipur.

- a. Bamboo dance is the most colorful and distinctive dance of Mizo.
- b. The music and dance of Mizoram are basically performed during religious festivals.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a only
- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both a & b

Explanation: Both the statements regarding Music and Dance of Manipur are correct.

Ques.4 Which of the following statements is/ are correct with regards to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)?

I	They have always played an important role in the Indian economy. Currently, about 6.3 crore MSMEs operating in the country making a major contribution to the GDP of the country.
II	Given the importance of the MSME sector, the Government of India estimated in 2019 that the sector would be responsible for half of India's GDP and the creation of about 50 million new jobs in the next five years.

Select the correct option using given codes below

- a) I only
- b) II only
- c) Both I & II
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both I & II

Explanation: Both the above two statements are correct with regards to MSMEs.

Ques.5 What are all the major challenge faced by the MSME sector?

- a. Lack of credit supply remains a major challenge in the MSME sector in India.
- b. A major reason for the credit gap in this sector has been the lack of formalization among MSMEs.
- c. The emergence of artificial intelligence, data analytics, robotics and other related technologies presents a much greater challenge for MSMEs than organized sector enterprises.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a & b only
- b) b & c only
- c) All the above
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. All the above

Explanation: All the above statements regarding challenge faced by the MSME sector are correct.

Ques.6 What can be the solutions offered to boost the MSME sector?

I	Encouraging SME bonds will provide MSMEs with a lower interest rate than other financial intermediaries.
II	It is very important to provide MSMEs with a regulatory framework free from the current complexities that work for them rather than working against them.

Select the correct option using given codes below

- a) I only
- b) II only
- c) Both I & II
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both I & II

Explanation: Both the above two statements are correct with regards to solutions offered to boost the MSME sector.

Ques.7 Consider the following statements with regards to Warli painting.

- a. This painting originated in Maharashtra, it is widely made by the Warli tribe in northern Sahyadri.
- b. In this painting a mixture of rice paste, gum and water are used to decorate the paintings.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a only

- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both a & b

Explanation: Both the statements regarding Warli painting are correct.

Ques.8 Which of the following statements is/ are correct with regards to Kathakali?

- a. Born in the state of Kerala , this dance form is based on the Natyashastra of Bharatmuni.
- b. Kathakali is also a dance associated with temples and is performed only by men.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a only
- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both a & b

Explanation: Both the statements regarding Kathakali are correct.

Ques.9 Consider the following statements with regards to Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat.

- a. Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat was announced by the Prime Minister in 2015 to enhance the understanding and bonding between the States, thereby strengthening the unity and integrity of India.
- b. It will help in promoting the use of educational toys in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Select the option using given codes below

- a) a only
- b) b only
- c) Both a & b
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both a & b

Explanation: Both the statements regarding Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat are correct.

Ques.10 Consider the following statements with regards to Kuchipudi.

I	This dance form originated in a village called Kuchelapuram in Andhra Pradesh .
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II This classical dance follows the rules of the Natyashastra of Bharatamuni.

Select the correct option using given codes below

- a) I only
- b) II only
- c) Both I & II
- d) None of the above

Answer: c. Both I & II

Explanation: Both the above two statements are correct with regards to Kuchipudi.

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS GK DIGEST: APRIL 2021

GOV. TO INFUSE RS 14,500 CRORE IN 4 PSBS

Current Context: The Government of India has announced to infuse Rs 14,500 crore in 4 Public Sector Banks (PSBs).

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The 4 PSBs are:** Central Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of India and UCO Bank.
- The amount will be infused by issuing non-interest bearing bonds to them despite reservations raised by the RBI over the use of this instrument.
- Rs 4800 crore will be infused in Central Bank of India, Rs 4100 crore in Indian Overseas Bank, Rs 3,000 crore in Bank of India and Rs 2,600 crore in UCO Bank.
- These securities will be issued in six different maturities, and the special securities would be 'at par' for the amount as per the application made by the eligible banks.

ANANDAM: THE CENTER FOR HAPPINESS

Current Context: The Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank inaugurated 'Anandam: The Center for Happiness' at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jammu in a virtual manner.

KEY POINTS

- The centre was inaugurated to solve mental stress issues of the people, to spread positivity and bring holistic well-being.
- While addressing the inauguration ceremony, Union Minister said that incorporating happiness in the academic curriculum is a very positive step towards empowering the nation.
- The centre follows the National Education Policy 2020.

- The centre will fulfil the objectives for which it is developed and will be completely dedicated to mental well-being.
- **The 'Anandam: The Center for Happiness' is classified in 5 broad categories:** Counselling, Holistic Wellness, Elective courses on happiness development, Research and Leadership and Faculty Development.

SBI INKED \$1 BN. LOAN AGREEMENT WITH JBIC

Current Context: The State Bank of India, has raised \$1 billion from Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

KEY FACTS

- **The loan agreement was signed to extend loans to the supply chain of the Japanese automobile industry in India.**
- The loan amount is in the form of refinancing against the funding support which will be provided to the manufacturers, suppliers and dealers of Japanese automobiles in India.
- The loan amount will ensure a smooth flow of funds particularly for the business operations of Japanese automobile industries in India.
- In Oct 2020, SBI had signed a similar loan agreement of \$1 billion with JBIC. Now, the total loan facility becomes \$2 billion between both entities.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of SBI: Mumbai
 - Chairman of SBI: Dinesh Kumar Khara
 - JBIC is wholly owned by the Japanese government and is a policy-based financial institution.

6TH ANNUAL MEET OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF NDB

Current Context: The 6th annual meeting of the Board of Governors of New Development Bank (NDB) was held via video conference.

ABOUT

- **Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the meeting.**
- **Theme of the meet was:** New Development Paradigms: The Evolution of Infrastructure.
- The meeting was attended by the dignitaries from Brazil, China, Russia and South Africa.
- The dignitaries acknowledged and congratulated the role played by New Development Bank in last year to implement the Emergency Assistance Fund.
- They held a discussion to set up an Integrated BRICS Digital Platform and approved the Annual Financial Accounts of the Bank for 2020.
- The next annual meeting will be hosted by India in 2022.
- **Static Part:**

- HQ of NDB: Shanghai, China
- President of NDB: Marcos Prado Troyjo

UJJIVAN SFB PARTNERED WITH NSTORE TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LTD

Current Context: The Ujjivan Small Finance Bank has entered into a partnership with nStore Technologies Private Limited.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **They have partnered to digitise offline retailers and small businesses in India.**
- Under this partnership, Ujjivan SFB will provide a mobile app called 'nLincs' to the current account holders who are the owners of local businesses, which will allow them to sell their products in an online manner.
- The nLincs app is developed by nStore.
- This partnership will prove beneficial to Kirana, general stores, medical shops, fruits and vegetable shops etc.
- Through nLincs, the small business owners can register themselves and launch their product catalogue to have the sale of their products.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Ujjivan SFB: Bengaluru, Karnataka
 - HQ of nStore: Chennai, TN

INDIA & JAPAN SIGNED PACTS FOR HEALTHCARE SECTOR UNDER GGP SCHEME

Current Context: India and Japan has entered into 4 agreements to support health care projects.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Under these agreements, Japan will support India's health care projects which are funded under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (GGP) scheme.**
- The GGP scheme is designed to support development projects framed to meet human needs in developing countries.
- **The agreements include a total amount of around 29.30 million Yen (\$ 265,000). The projects are mentioned below:**
 - Project (1): Provision of medical equipment at Anchal Charitable Trust of Ghaziabad, UP: For this 7.4 million yen are sanctioned.
 - Project (2): Provision of eye medical equipment at Dr Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital of UP: For this 6.8 million yen are sanctioned.
 - Project (3): Provision of medical equipment at Saint Hardayal Educational and Orphans Welfare Society of Amroha, UP: For this 7.95 million yen are sanctioned.

- Project (4): Provision of eye medical equipment at Shinja Hospital, Imphal, Manipur: For this 7.2 million yen are sanctioned.
- **Static Part:**
 - GGP Scheme: It was launched in 1989 by Japan to grant financial support for development projects undertaken by developing nations
 - Capital of Japan: Tokyo
 - Currency of Japan: Yen

WEF'S GLOBAL GENDER GAP REPORT 2021

Current Context: The World Economic Forum (WEF) has released the Global Gender Gap Report 2021. This is the 15th edition of the report.

KEY POINTS

- **As per the report, India is ranked at 140th position among 156 countries, with a score of 0.625.**
- **Iceland has topped the ranking with a score of 0.892.**
- The second and third positions are marked by Finland and Norway respectively.
- The report was drafted based on the evolution of gender-based gaps among 4 key factors like Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival and Political Empowerment.
- **India's ranking in each of the key factor was:** (a) Economic Participation and Opportunity (Rank 151) (b) Educational Attainment (Rank 114) (c) Health and Survival (Rank 155) (d) Political Empowerment (Rank 51).
- The lowest rank of 156th was attained by Afghanistan.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of WEF: Cologny, Switzerland

WORLD IMMUNISATION AND LOGISTICS SUMMIT 2021

Current Context: The HOPE Consortium's 1st 'World Immunisation and Logistics Summit 2021' was held in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

KEY FACTS

- **India was represented by Union Health and Family Welfare Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan in a virtual manner.**
- Union Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan participated in the panel discussion of 'Focus on Asia: Vaccine production and distribution across Asia'.
- He addressed the discussion by mentioning India's vaccine administration program. He also mentioned the two vaccines against COVID 19 namely COVISHIELD and COVAXIN.

- The summit was held to boost partnership among all nations to tackle pandemic and have a healthy future for all.

AXIS BANK TO SELL ITS UK SUBSIDIARY TO OPENPAYD HOLDINGS

Current Context: India's private sector bank Axis bank announced to sell its UK subsidiary named Axis Bank UK Limited to OpenPayd Holdings.

DETAILS

- As per Axis Bank, Axis Bank UK Limited contributed Rs 206 crore total income in FY20 and a net worth of Rs 765 crore as of March 2020 which is almost 1% of the bank's net worth.
- In this regards the decision was taken and both the entities entered into an agreement for the sale of a 100% stake which is approved by the UK Financial Regulator namely the Prudential Regulation Authority.
- The UK subsidiary is being hived off at net asset value and fixed premium of \$5.5 million and the date for the completion of the sale is set to 30th Sep 2021.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Axis Bank: Mumbai
 - MD and CEO of Axis Bank: Amitabh Chaudhry

APPOINTMENTS ON 2ND APRIL 2021

Current Context: Subhash Kumar: He is appointed as Chairman and MD of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). He has replaced ShashiShanker.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ONGC: New Delhi
- **Mukhmeet S Bhatia:** He is appointed as DG of Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ESIC: New Delhi
- **R K Chhibber:** He is granted an extension to be the Chairman and MD of Jammu and Kashmir Bank for 6 months by RBI.

INDIAN ARMY TO PARTICIPATE IN 'SHANTIR OGROSHENA 2021'

Current Context: Indian Army will be participating in the 'ShantirOgroshena 2021' (Front Runner of the Peace) in Bangladesh.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The 'ShantirOgroshena 2021' is a multinational military exercise.
- The exercise is based on the theme of 'Robust Peace Keeping Operations'.
- The exercise is scheduled to be held from 4th April 2021 to 12th April 2021 in Bangladesh.
- The military forces from the United Kingdom, the US, Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Singapore will also be participating in the exercise being the Military observers.
- Along with the Indian Army, Bangladesh army, Sri Lankan Army, and Royal Bhutan Army will also be participating in the military exercise of 'ShantirOgroshena 2021'.
- The Indian Army will be comprised of 30 personnel including Junior Commissioned Officers, Officers, and Jawans of a battalion from the Dogra regiment.
- The 'ShantirOgroshena 2021' is being held to commemorate the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh Father of the Nation, and will mark 50 glorious years of Bangladesh liberation.

APPOINTMENTS ON 3RD APRIL 2021

Current Context: Urjit Patel: He is appointed as Additional Director of Britannia Industries for a tenure of 5 years.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Britannia: Bengaluru
- **Mallika Srinivasan:** She is appointed as Chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB). The PESB appoints the top management posts in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). She is serving as the CMD of Tractors and Farm Equipments (TAFE).
- **Dr R K Elangovan, P L N Murthy and D K Shami:** They are appointed as the heads of the committee set up by the Ministry of Labour and Employment to review the standards under occupational safety, health and working conditions code, 2020.
- **Eduard Heger:** He is appointed as the Prime Minister of Slovakia.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Slovakia: Bratislava
 - Currency of Slovakia: Euro

DRDO AND DMSRDE (KANPUR) DEVELOPED LIGHT WEIGHT BULLET PROOF JACKET

Current Context: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Kanpur-based Defence Materials and Stores Research and Development Establishment (DMSRDE) have developed a lightweight bullet-proof jacket.

KEY POINTS

- The bulletproof jacket weighs nine kilogrammes and fulfills the qualitative standards of the Indian Army.
- The DMSRDE is one of the laboratories of DRDO.
- The jacket is developed using front hard armour panel technology. Because of this technology, the weight of a medium-sized bulletproof jacket was reduced from 10.4 kilograms to 9 kilograms.
- The front hard armour panel bulletproof jacket was tested at Terminal Ballistics Research Lab in Chandigarh.
- The jacket meets the standards framed by BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of DRDO: New Delhi
 - Chairman of DRDO: Dr G Satheesh Reddy

AIM-PRIME

Current Context: The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI Aayog launched AIM-PRIME (Program for Researchers on Innovations, Market-Readiness & Entrepreneurship).

KEY FACTS

- The AIM-PRIME is an initiative to support and promote science based deep tech start-ups and ventures in India.
- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is the supporting agency for AIM-PRIME.
- The AIM-PRIME will be implemented by Venture Centre, which is the non-profit technology business incubator.
- Under the AIM-PRIME initiative, the tech developers and incubation managers will be given training on deep technology entrepreneurship for 1 year.
- This initiative will help tech developers and incubation managers to commercialize their deep-tech ideas.
- The training and guidance will be granted in 3 categories of: (a) Start-up Leadership Team—This is applicable for tech developers and translators from early-stage deep tech startups (b) Faculty Entrepreneurs—This is applicable for applied researchers from academic institutions and R&D labs with technology commercialization or entrepreneurship plans. (c) Incubation Managers—This is applicable for CEOs, Senior Managers of AIM managed Atal Incubation Centres.
- **Static Part:**
 - Mission Director of AIM: RamananRamanathan

ACI WORLDWIDE'S REPORT ON 'PRIME-TIME FOR REAL TIME'

Current Context: The ACI Worldwide in partnership with Global Data released a report titled 'Prime-Time Real Time' 2021.

DETAILS

- As per the report, India has topped with 25.5 billion transactions in the list of countries with the most real-time digital payment transactions in 2020.
- India is followed by China and South Korea at 2nd and 3rd positions respectively.
- As per the report, by 2025, India's digital payment transactions will account for 71.7% of all transactions. The transactions through cash, cheques and other forms will account for only 28.3%.
- Globally in 2020, the total number of digital transactions was 70.3 billion, which is an increase of 41% with respect to 2019.

MIZORAM HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING PROJECT

Current Context: The World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved the project for Mizoram.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The project is titled 'Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project'.
- The World Bank has approved the project for USD 32 million.
- The project will help to strengthen the management capacity and quality of health services in the state.
- The 'Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project' will grant quality certified health facilities, expert human resources, health insurance schemes and other innovations in the health sector.
- The project will remove the gap which the community faces in opting for health benefits. In this regards, a cooperation with the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana will be developed under the project.
- The project will ensure 100% delivery of quality health services to the community.
- **Static Part:**
 - National Parks and Wild Life Sanctuaries in Mizoram: Murlen NP, Phawngpui Blue Mountain NP, Dampa Tiger Reserve, Khawnglung WLS, Lengteng WLS, Palak (Tokalo) WLS

17TH BIMSTEC MINISTERIAL MEETING

Current Context: The Union External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar participated in the 17th BIMSTEC (The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Ministerial Meeting.

KEY POINTS

- The meeting was held virtually from Colombo, Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka held the chairmanship of the meet.
- While addressing the meeting, Union External Affairs Minister focused on a master connectivity plan framed among South and Southeast nations, which will be finalized during the 5th edition of the BIMSTEC Leaders Summit.

- This master connectivity plan for Transport Connectivity will prove beneficial in fulfilling the aspirations of the people by granting them better connectivity and integration.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of BIMSTEC: Dhaka, Bangladesh

TRIFED LAUNCHED TWO CONTESTS

Current Context: The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation Ltd (TRIFED) in association with MyGov.in has launched two interesting competitions.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The two competitions are:** (a) 'Be the Brand Ambassador of Tribes India' (b) 'Be a Friend of Tribes India' Contest.
- **The main objective behind these competitions is to promote tribal craft, culture and lifestyle.**
- **Both the competitions will create awareness about tribal heritage, arts, crafts among the public.**
 - **'Be the Brand Ambassador of Tribes India':** This contest invites stories featuring any tribal products from customers. The stories should be based on experience and details about the product. The stories should be in the form of a short video from 30 seconds to 15 minutes.
 - **'Be A Friend of Tribes India':** It is a quiz contest that will be held on MyGov.in from 2nd April to 14th May 2021. The winners will be awarded a Tribes India Gift Voucher, which will be valid on Tribesindia.com and all Tribes India outlets.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of Tribal Affairs: ArjunMunda

'MYNEP2020' PLATFORM

Current Context: Union Education Minister, Ramesh PokhriyalNishank launched the 'MyNEP2020' platform of NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) Web Portal.

ABOUT

- The platform is in operation from 1st April 2021 and will remain open till 15th April 2021.
- **The 'MyNEP2020' platform invites inputs or suggestions or memberships from the stakeholders to frame a draft for the development of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) and National Mission for Mentoring Program membership (NMM).**
- The NPST and NMM are the two major recommendations of NEP 2020 and to frame them, NCTE will work in accordance with the suggestions from individuals or organisations.
- The suggestions and inputs received on the platform will be reviewed by an expert committee which will finally formulate the Drafts for public review. The comments will then be used to prepare a final Draft for notification.

WB, AIIB APPROVED LOAN FOR CANAL BASED DRINKING WATER PROJECT IN PUNJAB

Current Context: The World Bank (WB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) approved the loan amount for canal-based drinking water projects in Punjab.

KEY FACTS

- **The loan amount of USD 300 million was approved for the same.**
- The canal-based drinking water projects in the state will grant quality drinking water along with minimizing water losses for Amritsar and Ludhiana cities of the state.
- The project will be co-financed by IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) of World Bank with the contribution of USD 105 million. The AIIB will contribute USD 105 million and the state government will contribute USD 90 million for the complete project.
- The source of the water for the project in Amritsar will be from Upper Bari Doab Canal.
- The project will be executed to develop a water treatment plant with a capacity of 440 million litres per day. The water treatment plant will be constructed at Vallah village of Amritsar.
- The treated clean water will be pumped to the Over Head Service Reservoirs which will grant water to the entire city.
- Whereas, the source of water for the project which will be developed in Ludhiana will be from Sirhind Canal.
- For this, a water treatment plant of 580 million liters per day capacity will be constructed which will be further provided to Over Head Service Reservoirs to supply water to the city.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of World Bank: Washington DC, US
 - President of World Bank: David Malpass
 - HQ of AIIB: Beijing, China
 - President of AIIB: Jin Liqueun
 - Lakes in Punjab: Harike Lake, Kanji Lake, Ropar Lake

HEALTH MINISTER APPROVED 'NATIONAL POLICY FOR RARE DISEASES 2021'

Current Context: The Union Health Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan has approved the 'National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021'.

DETAILS

- **The policy focuses on reducing the cost of treatment for rare diseases, by increasing focus on indigenous research and local production of medicines.**
- **The policy promotes to have domestic research on medicines to cure rare diseases.**
- The aim of the policy will be implemented with the help of the National Consortium which will be set up under the Health Research Department, Health Ministry as convener.

- The policy also mentions setting up a national hospital-based registry of rare diseases, which will grant adequate data of rare diseases for research and development.
- The policy also focuses on the early screening and prevention of rare diseases through healthcare infrastructure. The screening will be supported by NidanKendras of the Department of Biotechnology.
- Also, the provision for financial support up to Rs 20 lakhs under RashtriyaArogya Nidhi is proposed to cure rare diseases which need a one-time treatment (diseases listed under Group 1 in the rare disease policy).
- It mentions strengthening tertiary health care facilities to offer treatment against rare diseases through 'Centres of Excellence', which will be funded with the one-time financial support of up to Rs 5 crore.

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY ZONE BECOMES FULLY ELECTRIFIED

Current Context: The Indian Railway's Western Central Railway zone has become the first fully electrified railway zone in India.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- This has happened after the CCRS inspection and the commissioning of electrification of the Kota-Chittaurgarh railway station (Srinagar-Jalindri) in Rajasthan.
- Now, the zonal railway boasts a 3012 Route Km electrified network.
- This full electrification of the railways in this particular zone will allow trains to run at a faster speed.
- This will also lead to a reduction in time required for travel and in also saving fuel.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Railway Minister: PiyushGoyal

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATION ON 5TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: AdilZainulbhai: He is appointed as Chairman of Capacity Building Commission.

ABOUT

- **ViratKohli:** He is appointed as Brand Ambassador of Digit Insurance.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Digit Insurance: Bengaluru.
- **Amit Chadha:** He is appointed as MD and CEO of L&T Technology Services.
- **BP Kanungo:** He has stepped down to be the RBI'S Deputy Governor The Other Deputy Governors of RBI: Mahesh Kumar Jain, MD Patra and Rajeshwar Rao.

CONSULTATION MEET OF EDUCATION MINISTERS OF E9 COUNTRIES

Current Context: The consultation meeting of Education Ministers of E9 countries is scheduled to be held on 6th April 2021.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **India will be represented by the Minister of State for Education, Sanjay Dhotre.**
- **The meeting is held on 'E9 initiative: Scaling up digital learning to accelerate progress towards SDG4'.**
- The meeting is the part of the first of the three phases to create initiatives on digital learning skills, targeting marginalized children, youth, specifically girls.
- The dignitaries will also review the progress activity and the challenges being faced for digital learning and skills.
- The E9 initiative aims to boost Sustainable Development Goal 4 agenda through: (a) support to teachers (b) investment in skills (c) narrowing of the digital divide.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Education Minister: Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'

RAJASTHAN—FIRST STATE TO PROVIDE FREE HEALTH INSURANCE TO ALL

Current Context: Rajasthan has become the first state to grant free health insurance facility to all the citizens of the state.

KEY POINTS

- In this regards, the state government has commenced the registration process for Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme.
- Under this scheme, each family of the state will get an annual health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh.
- The scheme includes 1576 packages and the procedures to treat various diseases and illnesses.
- **Static Part:**
 - Dams in Rajasthan: Ranapratap Sagar Dam(Chambal River), Mahi Bajaj Sagar Dam (Mahi River), Bisalpur Dam (Banas River)
 - Thermal Power Plant in Rajasthan: Chhabra Thermal Power Plant, Kalisindh Thermal Power Station

IIT KANPUR DEVELOPED WATCH FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE

Current Context: The researcher team from IIT Kanpur has developed a sensitive watch for the use of visually impaired people.

KEY FACTS

- **The watch is developed by Prof. Siddhartha Panda and VishwarajSrivastava.**
- It is a haptic watch with a tactile interface that help visually impaired people to read the time easily.
- It has tactile hour indicators of different shapes which allow recognizing time easily.
- The user has to touch and scan the hour indicators of the watch and based on different vibration patterns, the watch will communicate time to the user.

DRDO DEVELOPED ADVANCED CHAFF TECHNOLOGY

Current Context: The Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) has developed advanced chaff technology.

DETAILS

- The advanced chaff technology is developed to protect and safeguard India's naval ships against missile attacks from enemies.
- The technology is developed by DRDO's laboratory called Defence Laboratory Jodhpur.
- The laboratory has developed three variants of technology namely short-range chaff rocket, medium-range chaff rocket and long-range chaff rocket.
- All the variants fulfil the qualitative requirements of the Indian Navy as they conducted the trials for the same in the Arabian Sea.
- Chaff: It is a passive expendable electronic countermeasure technology that is used to protect naval ships from the enemy's radar and RF missile seekers. A small quantity of chaff material, when deployed in the air, acts as a decoy and deflects the enemy's missiles, which keeps the ships safe from enemy attacks.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of DRDO: New Delhi
 - Chairman of DRDO: G Satheesh Reddy

INTEGRATED HEALTH INFORMATION PLATFORM (IHIP)

Current Context: The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan virtually launched the Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP).

ABOUT

- The latest version of IHIP will serve as the data entry management platform for India's disease surveillance program.
- The IHIP will track 33 diseases while the earlier version used to track 18 diseases.
- The platform will allow automated data collection in a real-time manner. It will also aggregate and further analyse the data which will be used for policymaking.
- The platform will also provide analysed reports on mobile or other electronic devices.

RBI'S BI-MONTHLY MONETARY POLICY

Current Context: The Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced RBI's bi-monthly monetary policy review after conducting the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Following are the decisions taken by the central bank in the meeting:-**
- The RBI's MPC has decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 4% and the reverse repo rate stands at 3.35%.
- The MSF (Marginal Standing Facility) rate is kept unchanged at 4.25% and the bank rate is also kept unchanged at 4.25%.
- The real GDP growth for 2021-22 is projected at 10.5%.
- There are revised projections for CPI (Consumer Price Index) inflation to 5% in Q4 of 2021, 5.2% in Q1 of 2021-22, 5.2% also in Q2 of 2021-22, 4.4% in Q3, and 5.1% in Q4 with risks broadly balanced.
- The inflation target was retained at 4% earlier on March 31, 2021, with a lower tolerance level of 2% and upper tolerance level of 6% for the next 5 years i.e. from April 2021 to March 2026.
- Also, to ensure adequate liquidity in the system so that the sectors get adequate credit, the central bank has decided to have fresh lending of Rs 50,000 to all Indian financial institutions.
- The RBI has announced to increase the centre's Ways and Means Advances by 46% with the current limit of Rs 32,225 crores, which is thus increased to Rs 47,010 crores.
- Also, RBI has announced that prepaid payment instruments and white label ATMs which are regulated by the RBI can now take up direct membership in NEFT and RTGS.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of RBI: Mumbai
 - Governor of RBI: Shaktikanta Das

APPOINTMENTS ON 7TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: Tarun Bajaj: He is appointed as Revenue Secretary under Finance Ministry.

ABOUT

- **Ajay Seth:** He is appointed as Economic Affairs Secretary.
- **Jatindra Nath Swain:** He is appointed as Secretary for Department of Fisheries in the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying.
- **Ali Raza Rizvi:** He is appointed as Secretary for the Department of Public Enterprises.
- **Gyanesh Kumar:** He is appointed as Secretary in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.
- **Anjali Bhawra:** She is appointed as Secretary in the Department of empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- **ShabirKhandwawala:** He is appointed as BCCI Anti-Corruption Unit Chief.

'SANKALP SE SIDDHI'—A VILLAGE AND DIGITAL CONNECT DRIVE

Current Context: The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has launched 'Sankalp se Siddhi' - Village and Digital Connect Drive.

KEY FACTS

- **The objective of this drive is to activate the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs) in the villages.**
- The drive will be held for 100 days and is comprised of 150 teams that will visit 10 villages. Total 100 villages in each region and 1500 villages in the country will be covered by the teams.
- The teams will track the locations and will shortlist the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras for clustering as TRIFOOD, and SFURTI units as larger enterprises (The SFURTI is a scheme of MSME).
- The teams will identify the tribal artisans and other groups and will frame them to work as a supplier to the larger markets through the Tribes India network.
- They will also ensure the benefits of schemes reach the tribal community in an effective manner.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Tribal Affairs Minister: ArjunMunda
 - HQ of TRIFED: New Delhi
 - MD of TRIFED: Pravir Krishna

INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL ELECTION VISITORS PROGRAMME 2021

Current Context: The International Virtual Election Visitors Programme (IEVP) 2021 was hosted by the Election Commission of India.

KEY POINTS

- **The programme was conducted for Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and organisations from 26 nations and 3 International Organisation.**
- **The inaugural programme was addressed by Chief Election Commissioner, Sunil Arora.**
- He mentioned that Election Management Bodies should work jointly to adopt each other's best practices and incorporate them in the elections.
- He also mentioned that the ECI will work to conduct elections in a free, fair, transparent, robust and safe manner in this pandemic situation by following the safety and social distancing norms.
- He also released the maiden issue of A-WEB Journal of Elections, which will help to bridge the gap between academics and practice in the electoral landscape.

FLIPKART PARTNERED WITH MAHINDRA LOGISTICS LIMITED (MLL)

Current Context: The e-commerce platform Flipkart announced its partnership with Mahindra Logistics Limited (MLL).

DETAILS

- **The partnership is made for fast-track deployment of electric vehicles across its logistics fleet in the country.**
- Both the entities will develop a conducive environment for EV deployment and operations in India.
- They will jointly develop supportive infrastructure and technology like charging stations and parking lots, training workforce, route planning and battery swapping stations.

- Through this partnership, Flipkart aims to achieve its target of making the logistics fleet fully electric by 2030.

SUPACE—SUPREME COURT'S AI PORTAL

Current Context: The Chief Justice of India S A Bobde, unveiled the Artificial Intelligence (AI) portal of Supreme Court India via video conference.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The AI portal is named as 'Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court's Efficiency (SUPACE)'.
- The AI based portal is a 1st of its kind in the world that will collect relevant facts and laws related to the case.
- This will lead to ease the research process of judges and will also reduce their workload.
- Through this portal, the SC aims to leverage machine learning to handle a large amount of data related to cases.
- Static Part:
 - Justice Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana is appointed as 48th Chief Justice of India replacing Justice S A Bobde

APPOINTMENTS ON 8TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: Vjosa Osmani Sadriu: She is appointed as President of Kosovo.

ABOUT

- Static Part:
 - Capital of Kosovo: Pristina
 - Currency of Kosovo: Euro
- Nguyen Xuan Phuc:** He is appointed as President of Vietnam
- Static Part:
 - Capital of Vietnam: Hanoi
 - Currency of Vietnam: Vietnamese Dong
- Pham Minh Chinh:** He is appointed as Prime Minister of Vietnam
- Static Part:
 - Capital of Vietnam: Hanoi
 - Currency of Vietnam: Vietnamese Dong
- Dr Chintan Vaishnav:** He is appointed as Mission Director of Atal Innovation Mission of NITI Aayog. He has replaced Ramanathan Ramanan.

ATAL INNOVATION MISSION COLLABORATED WITH CIPS

Current Context: The NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has collaborated with the Centre for Innovations in Public Systems (CIPS).

KEY POINTS

- They have entered into a partnership by signing a Statement of Intent (Sol).
- **Both the entities have collaborated to promote innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in the country particularly in the sector of public systems.**
- To achieve the motto of the partnership they will make use of their knowledge, experience and the connectivity of CIPS.
- They will develop a database of innovation in the public system to improve public services.
- Through these partnerships, the startups will be benefited as they will be given access to promote their innovations through local administrations.
- Also, AIM and CIPS will address the issues faced by local administrations while delivering services to the community.
- They will also frame and Innovation Learning Management System (iLMS), which will help to promote an innovative environment among students and to enhance the capacity building of teachers and mentors.
- They will organize groups with district and local administrations levels to promote awareness about innovative products. They will also conduct online exhibitions for the same.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of AIM: New Delhi
 - Mission Director of AIM: Dr ChintanVaishnav
 - HQ of CIPS: Hyderabad, Telangana

INDIA'S GDP TO GROW TO 12.5% FOR FY22-- IMF

Current Context: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has released its biannual World Economic Outlook report.

KEY FACTS

- **As per the report, India's GDP will grow to 12.5% for FY2021-22.**
- Initially, IMF had projected India's growth at 11.5% for FY22.
- Also, for FY23, India's growth forecast is projected to 6.9% with the initial was 6.8%.
- As per the report, the global economy will grow to 6% in 2021 and 4.4% in 2022, against the contraction of 3.3% in 2020.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of IMF: Washington DC, USA
 - MD of IMF: KristalinaGeorgieva
 - Economic Counsellor and Research Department Director: Gita Gopinath

'ANAMAYA'

Current Context: The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan and Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, ArjunMunda launched 'Anamaya'.

DETAILS

- 'Anamaya' is the Tribal Health Collaborative.
- It is a multi-stakeholder initiative that is supported by Piramal Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).
- It is launched to boost the nutritional and health status of the tribal communities of India by converging efforts of various Government agencies and organisations.
- Under this 'Anamaya' initiative, the ministries will form National Council on Tribal Health.
- This National Council on Tribal Health Cell will track and monitor the delivery of healthcare facilities upto the tribal community and will thus devise mechanisms to implement the Tribal Health Action Plan.

RBI DOUBLED DEPOSIT LIMIT FOR PAYMENT BANKS

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India announced to raise the limit of maximum balance at the end of the day for payment banks.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The maximum balance limit for the end of the day is increased from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakhs.
- As per the 'Guidelines for Licensing of Payments Banks' which was issued on 27th Nov 2014, the payments banks were allowed to have the maximum balance of Rs 1 lakh per individual customer. But, the payment banks were asking for a hike in this deposit limit for a long time.
- Based upon the performance of payments banks, to expand their businesses, and to meet their customer needs, RBI has taken the decision to raise the limit to Rs 2 lakhs.
- Also recently, RBI has extended the National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) and Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) facilities to digital payments intermediaries which was earlier allowed to only banks.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of RBI: Mumbai
 - Governor of RBI: Shaktikanta Das

APPOINTMENTS ON 9TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: OuhoumoudouMahamadou: He is appointed as Prime Minister of Niger.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**

- Capital of Niger: Niamey
- Currency of Niger: West African CFA Franc
- **Virat Kohli:** He is appointed as Brand Ambassador of Vivo Communication Technology Co. Ltd (Vivo).
- **S Ramann:** He is appointed as CMD of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). He is also serving as CEO of National e-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of SIDBI: Lucknow, UP

INDIA- SEYCHELLES HIGH-LEVEL PROGRAMME

Current Context: India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the high-level programme with Wavel Ramkalwan, the President of Seychelles.

KEY POINTS

- While addressing the programme, PM Modi highlighted that Seychelles is central to India's vision of 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region).
- He mentioned that India is grateful and honoured for being a partner with Seychelles's development in security capabilities.
- Both the dignitaries jointly inaugurated the new Magistrate Court building in Seychelles.
- They also inaugurated ten High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP).
- Also, India handed over a Fast Patrol Vessel (Rs 100 crore) and a Solar Power Plant with a capacity of 1 MW to Seychelles.
- Seychelles acknowledged and appreciated India's support during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Seychelles: Victoria
 - Currency of Seychelles: Seychellois Rupee

2021 BRICS FMS AND GOVERNORS MEETING

Current Context: India hosted BRICS Finance Ministers and Governors meeting 2021 virtually.

KEY FACTS

- **The meeting was chaired by Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman and Governor of RBI, Shaktikanta Das.**
- **The theme of the meeting:** 'BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus'.
- During the meet, the FM and RBI Governor presented the agenda for cooperation in the finance domain.
- **The agenda included:** (a) Global Economic Outlook and Response to COVID-19 pandemic (b) Activities of New Development Bank (c) BRICS Rapid information security channel and BRICS Bond Fund (d) IMF

reforms, Financial Inclusion, Fintech developments (e) Cooperation in custom related issues (f) Digital Technologies in finance.

INDIA CONTRIBUTED USD 500,000 TO THE UN TRUST FUND FOR COUNTER-TERRORISM

Current Context: India announced that it has contributed USD 500,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism.

DETAILS

- This has led to taking India's contribution to the UN office to combat terrorism to over USD 1 million.
- With this contribution, until now India has contributed USD 1.05 million.
- The office of the UN Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism was set up in 2017.
- The office aims to boost coordination and coherence across the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities to have a balanced implementation of the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

AYUSH MINISTRY SIGNED MOU WITH DEPT. OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Current Context: The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) of the AYUSH Ministry has signed an MoU with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The MoU was signed to develop a regulatory mechanism to make usage of Ayurveda in the veterinary sector in order to provide the benefit of animal health, livestock owners' community and society.
- The partnership will also focus on developing capacity building in the sector through training and herbal veterinary education programmes.
- They will explore the markets for herbal veterinary medicines. Also, a proper mechanism for the cultivation, preservation and conservation of medicinal plants will be adopted.
- The entities will conduct scientific research in partnership with veterinary colleges and ICAR institutes to test the medicinal plants on animals.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of State (IC) of AYUSH: Shripad Yesso Naik
 - Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying: Giriraj Singh

ADB SANCTIONED LOAN TO IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY IN CKIC IN TN

Current Context: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a loan to improve the road maintenance and transport connectivity in the Chennai-Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor (CKIC) in Tamil Nadu.

KEY POINTS

- **The ADB has approved the loan amount of USD 484 million for the same.**
- The CKIC is part of India's East Coast Economic Corridor and it stretches from West Bengal to Tamil Nadu and then allows connectivity of India to the production networks of Southeast and East Asia.
- This CKIC will help to boost industrial centres and regional value chains.
- The CKIC will also lead to an increase in the number of manufacturing industries and will also create job opportunities.
- The loan amount will be used to upgrade about 590 km of state highways, resizing bridges or culverts in the areas of CKIC.
- Also, various road safety improvement programmes with the use of advanced technologies will be adopted under the project.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ADB: Manila, Philippines
 - President of ADB: Masatsugu Asakawa

SARTHAQ INITIATIVE

Current Context: India's Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched the implementation plan for the SARTHAQ initiative.

KEY FACTS

- **The SARTHAQ signifies 'Students' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement through Quality Education.**
- **The initiative will help to attain the goals and objectives framed under National Education Policy 2020.**
- The SARTHAQ initiative is basically an indicative and suggestive implementation plan for school education as it is framed by keeping in view the concurrent nature of education and adheres to the spirit of federalism.
- It will help students to meet national and global challenges in terms of educational skills. It will also help them to incorporate skills like India's tradition, culture and value system.
- The SARTHAQ initiative will prove beneficial to stakeholders including 25 crore students, 15 lakh schools, 94 lakh teachers.
- The initiative is interactive, flexible and inclusive of all benefits and grants linkage of NEP with 297 Tasks along with responsible agencies, timelines and 304 outputs of these tasks. It will ensure whether the policy is being executed in a framed manner or not.

INDIA AND JAPAN SIGNED MOU

Current Context: India and Japan signed MoU to achieve cooperation in the academic and research sector.

DETAILS

- The MoU was signed between the National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL), Dept of Space, GOI and Research Institute for Sustainable Humanosphere (RISH), Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan.
- Under this MoU, both NARL and RISH will work jointly in the area of atmospheric science and technology. They will jointly conduct scientific experiments, campaigns and modelling studies by using the infrastructure and manpower support of both organisations.
- They will also exchange scientific materials, publications and information and will conduct training and workshops for their faculty members and students.
- They will jointly utilise the facilities like Middle and Upper atmosphere (MU) radar in Shigaraki, Japan, the Equatorial Atmosphere Radar (EAR) in Kototabang, Indonesia and complementary instruments available from RISH, and the Mesosphere-Stratosphere-Troposphere (MST) radar and complementary instruments available at NARL.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Japan: Tokyo
 - Currency of Japan: Japanese Yen

MADHUKRANTI PORTAL AND NAFED'S HONEY CORNERS

Current Context: The Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched Madhukranti Portal and NAFED's Honey Corners.

ABOUT

- The portal and honey corners were launched to promote the honey mission of the country.
- **Madhukranti Portal:** It is an initiative of the National Bee Board under the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission. The Indian Bank is the technical and banking partner for the development of the portal. To develop the portal, an MoU was signed by National Bee Board and Indian Bank.
- The portal will allow online registration which will help to trace the source of honey and other beehive products through an online platform. With the help of the portal, quality and the source of adulteration of honey can also be checked.
- The Honey Corners of NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation) are special spaces formed for the sale of honey.

U GRO CAPITAL PARTNERED WITH SBM BANK INDIA

Current Context: Fintech firm U Gro Capital collaborated with SBM Bank India.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- They have collaborated to launch credit cards for small businesses and MSMEs in India.
- The credit card is powered by Rupay and EnKash.
- This partnership will help to empower MSME business owners by granting financial assistance to solve their financial challenges. Through the credit card, they will be able to meet their immediate expenses

like purchases of equipment and supplies, manage vendor payments, make business utility bill payments, managing reimbursements for travel and entertainment expenses of employees.

- The card can be availed by U GRO Capital borrowers against having a fixed deposit holding with SBM Bank India.
- The GRO Smart Business credit card is based on the Tap-To-Pay feature which will allow the user to withdraw cash from ATM in a contactless manner.
- It is based on the feature of zero joining and annual fees and finance charges of 1.99% per month.
- The card is having a limit of 90% of the FD amount.
- Also with the help of a Fixed Deposit facility, MSME borrowers would be able to build a long-term wealth-creating asset.
- The Fixed deposit amount is in the range of Rs 10,000 to Rs 10 lakhs and has a tenure of 1 to 5 years. The rate of interest is 7.5% on it.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of U GRO Capital and SBM Bank India: Mumbai

INDIA-NETHERLAND VIRTUAL SUMMIT 2021

Current Context: The India- Netherland Summit 2021 was held virtually and was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Netherland Mark Rutte.

ABOUT SUMMIT

- The meeting was held to discuss trade, economy, water management, agriculture sector, science and technology, healthcare and space.
- They discussed the issues of climate change, terrorism and Pandemic COVID-19 along with the ways to tackle them.
- The dignitaries agreed to make use of emerging convergences in areas like Indo-Pacific, Resilient Supply Chains and Global Digital Governance.
- They also decided to set up 'Strategic Partnership on Water' and 'Fast Track Mechanism to promote bilateral trade' in order to boost cooperation between both nations in the water and trade sector.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Netherland: Amsterdam
 - Currency of Netherland: Euro

30TH BASIC MINISTERIAL MEETING ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Current Context: The 30th BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change was hosted by India.

KEY DETAILS

- The meeting was chaired by Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar.
- The meeting observed the participation of Ricardo Salles (Minister of the Environment of Brazil), Huang Runqiu, (Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China), XIE Zhenhua, (China Special Envoy for Climate Change) and Barbara Creecy (Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment of the Republic of South Africa).
- At the meeting, all the dignitaries agreed to cooperate in the Chilean Presidency of COP 25 and the incoming United Kingdom Presidency of COP 26 for a successful outcome in Glasgow.
- They assured to work jointly with all other Parties for the success of COP 26 in an open, transparent, consensus-based and party-driven manner.
- They also agreed to provide support to developing countries and overcome their challenges and issues.
- The BASIC Nations are taking global efforts to combat climate change and also taking steps to implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- **Static Part:**
 - BASIC group was implemented in 2009.

KHELO INDIA STATE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (KISCE)

Current Context: Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju inaugurated the Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE) for rowing.

KEY FACTS

- It was inaugurated at the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council Water Sports Academy at Nehru Park, Dal Lake, Srinagar.
- Currently, the centre will focus on rowing only and is granted with the funds of Rs 145.16 lakh and an annual recurring grant of Rs 96.17 lakh.
- This is one of the two KISCES from UT, with the Maulana Azad Stadium for fencing in Jammu being the other.

INDIA FINALIZED AN AIR BUBBLE AGREEMENT WITH SRI LANKA

Current Context: The government of India has finalized an air bubble agreement with Sri Lanka.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The agreement allows all eligible passengers to travel between the two countries by operating special international passenger flights between both countries.
- The announcement for the same was made by the Civil Aviation Ministry of India.
- India has signed this as the 6th such arrangement in the SAARC nations and 28th in total.
- This agreement was signed with an aim to resume flights between both nations during this pandemic situation of COVID-19 and to allow people to relocate to their destinations.

- Currently, India has signed bilateral air bubble agreements with 27 nations including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Canada, France, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, the UAE, the UK, and the US.
- **Static Part:**
 - Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Civil Aviation: Hardeep Singh Puri

SCIENTIFIC CONVENTION ON 'HOMOEOPATHY - ROADMAP FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE'

Current Context: The Scientific Convention on 'Homoeopathy - Roadmap for Integrative Medicine' was held in New Delhi to celebrate the occasion of World Homoeopathy Day.

KEY FACTS

- The convention observed the Minister of State for Defence, ShripadYessoNaik as chief guest.
- The convention also observed the participation of Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan.
- It was organised by Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, which is an autonomous apex research organization under the Ministry of AYUSH.
- Minister of State for Defence, ShripadYessoNaik addressed the convention by highlighting the importance of Homeopathy in controlling epidemics and pandemics.
- Union Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan mentioned the important role played by Homoeopathy to meet the healthcare demands of the country.

SINGAPORE- 1ST NATION TO RATIFY 'RCEP'

Current Context: Singapore announced that it has ratified the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement.

KEY POINTS

- **RCEP is the world's largest free trade agreement, which was led by China.**
- **By doing so, Singapore has become the first participating country to ratify RCEP.**
- This RCEP ratification proves Singapore's strong commitment to strengthening trade and economic linkages with partner nations and will ultimately benefit businesses and the people of the nations.
- For making RCEP in force, at least 6 ASEAN and 3 Non-ASEAN member states are supposed to come into effect.
- If RCEP gets implemented it will become the world's largest free trade agreement and will cover one-third of the world's population and 30% of the world's economy
- India has opted out of RCEP in 2019.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Singapore: Singapore

- Currency of Singapore: Dollar

APPOINTMENTS ON 12TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: Poonam Gupta: She is appointed as DG of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). She is an Economist at World Bank. She has replaced Shekhar Shah.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NCAER: New Delhi
- **Sonu Sood:** He is appointed as Brand Ambassador for Punjab's Anti-Coronavirus Vaccination Programme.

'MENTOR CONNECT' PROGRAMME—AMAZON INDIA

Current Context: Amazon India has announced that it will be launching the 'Mentor Connect' programme.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The 'Mentor Connect' programme will help to accelerate the growth of startups and emerging brand owners which are enrolled under Amazon's Launchpad initiative.
- The start-ups and brand owners will get guidance from venture capital firms, industry experts and Amazon leaders through knowledge sharing sessions, networking events and 1:1 mentorship sessions.
- Also, the winners of the Amazon Smbhav Entrepreneurship challenge in the upcoming Amazon Smbhav summit can take the benefit of the programme.

FLIPKART PARTNERED WITH ADANI GROUP

Current Context: India's e-commerce platform Flipkart partnered with infrastructure firm Adani Group to set up a data centre in Chennai and a large fulfilment centre in Kalyan, near Mumbai.

KEY POINTS

- For this purpose, Flipkart will be jointly working with Adani Logistics Ltd, which is the subsidiary of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ).
- Under this partnership, Adani Logistics will construct a 534,000 sq. ft fulfilment centre (FC) at its logistics hub in NRC Complex at Mohone-Thane in Kalyan. This FC will be utilised by Flipkart to meet its increasing demand in western India and support access to the sellers.
- Also, they will set up a data centre at the Chennai facility of AdaniConneX Pvt. Ltd. The data centre will meet infrastructure needs and will grant data security.

REWARDS 123 SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Current Context: The Airtel Payments Bank has launched its new 'Rewards123' savings account.

KEY FACTS

- **The account will prove beneficial to the digital customers as it offers various perks on digital transactions.**
- To opt for this account, customers have to pay an annual fee of Rs 299.
- Customers can avail of various benefits like cashback per month on payments for prepaid recharges, post-paid, broadband, landline, and DTH bill payments, load money benefits, and shopping rewards.
- It also offers benefits like zero minimum balance, free Platinum Online Mastercard Debit Card and PTI reports.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Airtel Payments Bank: New Delhi
 - MD and CEO of Airtel Payments Bank: Anubrata Biswas

BAFTA AWARDS 2021

Current Context: The 74th British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA 2021) was held in London in which the nominees attended the awards virtually.

ABOUT

- **Following is the list of winners in each category:**
- Best Film: Nomadland
- Outstanding British Film: Promising Young Woman
- Best Director: Chloe Zhao, Nomadland
- Best Leading Actress: Frances McDormand, Nomadland
- Best Leading Actor: Sir Anthony Hopkins, The Father
- Best Documentary: My Octopus Teacher
- Best Animated Film: Soul
- Best Supporting Actress: Yuh-Jung Youn, Minari
- Best Supporting Actor: Daniel Kaluuya, Judas and the Black Messiah

ONLINE DISPUTE HANDBOOK (ODR)—NITI AAYOG

Current Context: NITI Aayog has launched the first-of-its-kind Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) handbook in India.

DETAILS

- **The handbook was launched in partnership with Agami and Omidyar Network India.**
- To launch this handbook, NITI Aayog received support from ICICI Bank, Ashoka Innovators for the Public, Trilegal, Dalberg, Dvara, NIPFP.
- **The handbook was released by Justice DY Chandrachud, Supreme Court of India.**
- The ODR handbook provides encouragement to business leaders to adopt ODR in India.
- It describes the mechanism and models of ODR which businesses can adopt.
- **ODR:** It is the mechanism to resolve the disputes outside courts for small and medium cases by using digital technology platform and techniques of alternate dispute resolution (ADR) like negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. It helps to resolve disputes efficiently and at a low cost.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NITI Aayog: New Delhi
 - Chairman of NITI Aayog: PM Narendra Modi
 - CEO of NITI Aayog: Amitabh Kant

6TH RAISINA DIALOGUE

Current Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 6th Raisina Dialogue.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Raisina Dialogue is India's flagship conference programme on geopolitics and geoeconomics.**
- **It is organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation.**
- **The theme for 6th Raisina Dialogue: #ViralWorld: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control.**
- The inaugural session was virtually attended by President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame and Prime Minister of Denmark, Mette Frederiksen.
- The dialogue will be held for 4 days starting from 13th April 2021. And the four days of the sessions will observe discussions on topics like (a) Reconstructing the UN and Beyond (b) Securing and Diversifying Supply Chains (c) Global 'Public Bads': Holding Actors and Nations to Account (d) Infodemic: Navigating a 'No-Truth' World in the Age of Big Brother (e) The Green Stimulus: Investing in Gender, Growth, and Development.

'ESANTA' PLATFORM FOR MARINE PRODUCTS

Current Context: India's Union Commerce and Industry Minister, Piyush Goyal launched the e-commerce platform 'eSANTA'.

KEY FACTS

- **The platform is launched for marine products which will empower aqua farmers to sell their products through this portal.**
- The portal will allow farmers to sell their products on the spot and also to conduct forward sales.

- The portal will help to reduce the gap and time required for the transactions and processes between the buyers and the farmers.
- The idea to launch this portal evolved from National Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture which is an arm of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) which is under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Static Part:**
 - National Fish Farmers Day: 10th July

PNB@EASE INITIATIVE

Current Context: The Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched a digital initiative called 'PNB@Ease'.

KEY POINTS

- **Under this initiative, customers themselves can make every transactions undertaken by the branch of the bank.**
- The initiative will lead to having a 'banking-on-the-go' model.
- The service of 'PNB@Ease' will be loaded at 5 kiosks i.e. ATM, Bunch Note Acceptor, Account opening Kiosk, Card Issuance Kiosk and Internet-enabled kiosk.
- The initiative is available from opening a savings account to availing loans without visiting a branch or help from the bank employees.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of PNB: New Delhi
 - MD and CEO of PNB: S SMallikarjuna Rao
 - Tagline of PNB: The Name you can bank upon

LILAVATI AWARDS 2020

Current Context: Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank presented AICTE Lilavati Awards 2020.

DETAILS

- **The awards were based on the theme of: Women Empowerment.**
- **Following is the list of winners in each theme category:**
- Women Entrepreneurship Category: SWEAT (Sona Women Entrepreneurship and Training) from Sona College of Technology, TN.
- Self Defense Category: Paritrana from St. Joseph's College of Engineering, TN.
- Literacy Category: Bharatiya Vidyapeeth of the Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development Pune.
- Women's Health Category: WIT Women Health Coalition from Walchand Institute of Technology, Maharashtra.

- Legal Awareness Category: Radiant Seetha from Thiagarajar Polytechnic College.
- Sanitation & Hygiene Category: Smt. KishoritaiBhoyar College of Pharmacy, Nagpur, Maharashtra.

APPOINTMENTS ON 14TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: Siddharth Logjam: He is appointed as DG of NADA (National Anti-Doping Agency). He has replaced Navin Agarwal.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NADA: New Delhi
- **Sushil Chandra:** He is appointed as Chief Election Commissioner of India. He has replaced Sunil Arora.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Election Commission: New Delhi
- **Prithvi Shaw:** He is appointed as Brand Ambassador of SportzXchange.
- **Guillermo Lasso:** He is appointed as President of Ecuador.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Ecuador: Quito
 - Currency of Ecuador: Dollar

AIM SIGNED SOI WITH DANISH EMBASSY

Current Context: The NitiAayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) signed Sol with the Embassy of Denmark.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Sol was signed to jointly work to promote innovation and entrepreneurship among aspiring entrepreneurs.**
- As per the Sol, Innovation Center Denmark in India will partner with AIM to support AIM's ongoing and future initiatives.
- They will also work together to develop global innovation green economy partnerships to address Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The Sol is part of the Indo-Danish Bilateral Green Strategic Partnership.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of AIM: New Delhi
 - Mission Director of AIM: Dr ChintanVaishnav
 - Capital of Denmark: Copenhagen
 - Currency of Denmark: Krone

BPCL PARTNERED WITH ACCENTURE

Current Context: India's second-largest oil marketing company, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) has partnered with Accenture to transform its sales and distribution network.

KEY FACTS

- Under this partnership, Accenture will use its AI and cloud technologies to develop the digital infrastructure for BPCL. The digital platform developed by Accenture for BPCL will be named IRIS.
- The IRIS platform will be based on the features like real-time data, automated alert and tracking mechanism.
- The IRIS will integrate real-time data from across BPCL's countrywide network which will provide a consolidated view of BPCL's sales and distribution network.
- The platform will also trigger automated alerts and actions in cases like equipment failures or hazardous situations.
- Also, the employees will be empowered to make faster and accurate decisions, including preventive maintenance which will increase sales at fuel retail outlets by reducing infrastructure downtime, ensuring consistent quality and quantity of the fuel for the customers.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of BPCL: Mumbai
 - HQ of Accenture: Dublin, Ireland

NHB LAUNCHED SPECIAL REFINANCE FACILITY

Current Context: The National Housing Bank (NHB) has launched Rs 10,000 crore 'Special Refinance Facility-2021' (SRF-2021).

KEY POINTS

- The facility was launched to provide short term refinance support to housing finance companies (HFCs) and other eligible Primary Lending Institutions (PLIs).
- This facility will help to meet short term liquidity requirements of the PLIs and will help them to grant lending to individuals to maintain steady growth in the housing finance sector.
- **Eligibility criteria for PLIs for this facility:** All PLIs who have availed financial assistance under SRF or ASRF including any other eligible PLI with a maximum net NPA of 7.5% and a minimum of 51% ratio of individual housing loans to total assets are eligible.
- The tenure of the loan is 1 year and the interest rate is based on the repo rate.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NHB: New Delhi
 - MD of NHB: Sarada Kumar Hota

MANAS APP

Current Context: The Principal Scientific Advisor K Vijay Raghavan launched the 'MANAS App'.

ABOUT

- **The app is launched to promote mental wellbeing across all age groups in India.**
- The app will focus to promote positive mental health in the age group of 15-35 in its initial stage.
- **The MANAS signifies 'Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System'.**
- The MANAS app is endorsed as a National Program by the Prime Minister's Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council.
- The app is a scalable, comprehensive, and national digital well-being platform to promote the mental well-being of people.
- In the health and wellness efforts of various government ministries of India, mental health improvement games and tools are integrated into the app.
- The app was initiated Principal Scientific Advisor Office and was jointly executed by AFMC (Armed Forces Medical College), Pune, NIMHANS Bengaluru, and C-DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing) Bengaluru.
- **Static Part:**
 - World Mental Health Day: 10th Oct 2021

AAHAAR KRANTI MISSION

Current Context: The Union Minister, Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan launched the 'AahaarKranti' Mission.

DETAILS

- **The mission will focus to create awareness about the importance of a nutritious balanced diet and the importance of accessibility to the local fruits and vegetables for good health.**
- It will also focus to tackle the problem of hunger and diseases in India.
- The mission is based on the motto of UttamAahaar, UttamVichar' which means 'Good Diet, Good Cognition'.
- The mission was launched jointly by PravasiBharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark (PRABHASS), Global Indian Scientists and Technocrats' Forum (GIST), VijnanaBharati (Vibha) and Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous body of the Department of Science and Technology.
- Under this mission, training sessions will be given to the teachers, who will thus pass the importance of nutritious food to the students and their families.

RBI SETUP REGULATIONS REVIEW AUTHORITY (RRA 2.0) FOR 1 YEAR

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a new Regulations Review Authority (RRA 2.0) for a period of one year.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The RRA will perform the review of regulations and compliance procedures of a central bank.**
- This will help to make regulations and compliance procedures more effective.
- The RRA will be set up from 1st May 2021 for 1 year and its timeline, if needed, will be extended by the RBI.
- **The RRA will be headed by M Rajeshwar Rao, RBI's Deputy Governor.**
- The RRA 2.0 will be tasked with making regulatory and supervisory instructions more effective by removing redundancies and duplications.
- It will also work to get feedback from regulated entities on simplification of procedures and enhancement of ease of compliance.
- It will suggest changes if any in disseminating RBI circulars. It will work coordinately by engaging itself with external and internal entities and stakeholders to perform its task.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of RBI: Mumbai
 - Governor of RBI: Shaktikanta Das

INCLUSIVE INTERNET INDEX 2021

Current Context: The Economist Intelligence Unit in partnership with Facebook has released the Inclusive Internet Index 2021.

ABOUT INDEX

- **As per the index, India is ranked at 49th rank position.**
- India has scored 77th position in internet availability, 20th position in affordability and 49th position in relevance and 29th position in readiness.
- **The top 5 countries in the index ranks are:** Sweden (1st), The US (2nd), Spain (3rd), Australia (4th) and Hong Kong (5th).
- Total 120 countries are ranked in the index representing 98% of global GDP and 96% of the global population.

IAF COMMANDERS CONFERENCE

Current Context: The Union Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh inaugurated the Indian Air Force's (IAF) Commander's Conference.

KEY POINTS

- **The conference was held to address issues related to IAF's operational capabilities in the near future.**
- The conference observed the participation of air officers commanding-in-chief of all commands of IAF, all principal staff officers and all director generals posted at the air headquarters.
- The dignitaries discussed the strategies and policies to improve the operational capabilities of the Indian Air Force

- They also discussed multiple welfares and human resource measures to improve the administrative efficiency of the IAF.
- **Static Part:**
 - Air Chief Marshal: Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria

APPOINTMENTS ON 16TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: Claude Joseph: He was appointed as Prime Minister of Haiti.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Haiti: Port-au-prince
 - Currency of Haiti: Haitian Gourde
- **Suresh Raina:** He was appointed as Brand Ambassador for 'Elista', which is the consumer electronic company.
- **Puneet Das:** He was appointed as President for Tata Consumer Products (TCP) for India and South Asia region.

'POSHAN GYAN'—A NATIONAL DIGITAL REPOSITORY ON HEALTH & NUTRITION

Current Context: NITI Aayog partnered with the Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University, and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to launch the PoshanGyan portal.

KEY FACTS

- **The PoshanGyan is a national digital repository on health and nutrition.**
- The PoshanGyan is basically a collection of communication materials that are framed by government agencies and other organisations to address the challenges of knowledge awareness and behaviour change in the nutrition area.
- The portal enables to search communication materials in 14 thematic areas of health and nutrition sector.
- It includes data related to antenatal care, complementary feeding, diet diversity, anaemia prevention etc.
- The poshangyan also has a crowdsourcing feature that allows anyone to submit the data on the website so that everyone gets the benefit of it.
- The data on the website are sourced and reviewed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Women and Child Development and other organisations.
- The website will be having a dedicated 'Theme of the month'.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare: Dr Harsh Vardhan
 - Union Minister of Women and Child Development: Smriti Irani

INDIA SIGNED MOU WITH FRANCE

Current Context: The Indian space agency, ISRO and space agency of France named CNES have signed MoU to cooperate in a human space mission, Gaganyaan.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Under this agreement, the Indian flight physicians will be given training sessions at French facilities.
- Also the French space agency, CNES will provide equipment developed by it, tested and still operating aboard the International Space Station (ISS) to Indian crews.
- It will also supply fireproof carry bags to shield equipment from shocks and radiation.
- The agreement will allow implementing a scientific experiment plan on validation of missions, data sharing will take place on food packaging and the nutrition programme.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ISRO: Bengaluru, Karnataka.
 - Chairman of ISRO: K Sivan
 - Capital of France: Paris
 - Currency of France: Euro, CFP Franc

EATSMART CITIES CHALLENGE AND TRANSPORT4 ALL CHALLENGE

Current Context: The Union Minister of State (IC) for Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri launched two challenges namely (a) EatSmart Cities Challenge (b) Transport4 All Challenge.

KEY FACTS

- **The aim behind these challenges is to develop healthy eating habits and to have digital solutions for safe public transport in smart cities.**
- Both the challenges will prove remarkable work for Smart Cities Mission.
 - **EatSmart Cities Challenge:** This challenge will help smart cities of the country to frame a plan which will lead to having a healthy, safe and sustainable food environment. The challenge will also strengthen food safety and continuity. It will make people aware to make better food choices in order to maintain their health.
 - **Transport4 All Challenge:** This challenge will lead to developing digital solutions for having safety, affordability and reliability in the public transport domain. This challenge is launched by MoHUA in partnership with Institute for Transportation and Development Policy. It will also help cities to recover from the mobility crisis which occurred due to the pandemic. The challenge will be based on 3 stages namely, problem identification, solution generation and pilot testing.
- The cities with a population of more than 5 lakhs are eligible for both challenges.

INDIA AND KYRGYZSTAN BEGAN SPECIAL FORCES EXERCISE

Current Context: The 8th Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Special Forces Exercise named 'Khanjar' was inaugurated at the Special Forces Brigade of National Guards of the Kyrgyz Republic in Bishkek.

KEY POINTS

- It will be a two-week-long exercise that will focus on high-altitude warfare, mountain warfare and counter-extremism exercises.
- The exercise was initiated in 2011. At this 8th edition, Ambassador Alok A. Dimri welcomed the Indian contingent for the Exercise and acknowledged India's role in promoting shared mountain and nomadic heritage between both nations.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Kyrgyzstan: Bishkek
 - Currency of Kyrgyzstan: Kyrgyzstani Som

MEITY LAUNCHED 3 INITIATIVES OF NIXI

Current Context: The Secretary of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Ajay Prakash Sawhney launched the three initiatives of the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI).

DETAILS

- **The initiatives are:** IP Guru, NIXI Academy and NIXI-IP-INDEX.
- These initiatives will support IPv6 awareness and its adoption in the country. The initiatives are supported by NIXI, Department of Telecommunication and MeitY.
- **IP Guru:** This is an IPv6 expert panel that will grant technical support to Indian entities that want to adopt IPv6.
- **NIXI Academy:** It will offer educational sessions about IPv6 to the people.
- **NIXI-IP-INDEX:** The portal for the same is developed by NIXI which will display the IPv6 adoption rate in India and across the world.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NIXI: New Delhi
 - CEO of NIXI: Anil Kumar Jain

RBL BANK PARTNERED WITH MASTERCARD

Current Context: The RBL Bank and Mastercard have entered into a partnership to launch first its kind payment solution through the Pay by bank app.

ABOUT

- The solution is a mobile-based user-friendly payment solution.

- Through Pay by Bank app payment solution, customers will be able to perform contactless transactions in a secure manner.
- This payment solution will prove beneficial to the merchants, as this facility will be availed with any merchant who accepts Mastercard and the user thus can perform transactions in a contactless online manner worldwide.
- The payment solution also has the feature of personalized transaction control which allows Bank's customers to dictate how, where and when their payment credentials are used.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of RBL Bank: Mumbai
 - Tagline of RBL Bank: ApnoKa Bank
 - HQ of Mastercard: New York, USA

ITALY LAUNCHED ITS FIRST MEGA FOOD PROJECT IN INDIA

Current Context: In order to boost GOI's 'Make in India' initiative, Italy has launched its maiden mega food park in India.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A Letter of Intent (LoI) between both nations was signed for the same. The LoI was signed between the ICE Office in Mumbai and Gujarat based Fanidhar Mega Food Park.
- The project will be promoted by the Italian Embassy in New Delhi and the ICE Office.
- The main motto of mega food park is to develop interaction between the agriculture sector and the industry sector which will link agricultural production and markets.
- Under this, Italy will explore the opportunities available in the Indian market.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Italy: Rome
 - Currency of Italy: Euro

HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX: Q2 2021 GLOBAL RANKING

Current Context: The Henley Passport Index released its list of the most powerful passports. It measures the world's most travel-friendly passports and ranks the countries on the basis of how strong their passport is.

KEY FACTS

- **As per the index, India is ranked at 84th position in the list, as the Indian citizens can visit Visa-Free or Visa-on-Arrival in over 58 places.**
- The index is topped by Japan with a visa-free score of 193.
- The second rank is marked by Singapore.
- **Static Part:**

- In Jan 2021, Henley and Partners released 'Henley Passport Index: Q1 2021 Global Ranking'. As per this, India was ranked at 85th position

TOURISM MINISTRY SIGNED MOU WITH CLEARTRIP, EASE MY TRIP

Current Context: The Ministry of Tourism signed MoU with Cleartrip and Ease My Trip, both are online travel companies.

KEY POINTS

- **The MoU was signed to boost the hospitality and tourism sector of India.**
- The partnership will grant extensive visibility to accommodation units that have self-certified themselves on SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness and Training for the Hospitality Industry) on the OTA platform.
- The entities will encourage units to register on NIDHI (National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry) and on SAATHI.
- The units are supposed to register themselves on NIDHI and SAATHI to promote safe and sustainable tourism in the pandemic situation.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of Tourism: Prahlaad Singh Patel
 - HQ of Cleartrip: Mumbai
 - HQ of Ease My Trip: New Delhi

WISDEN AWARDS 2021

Current Context: To acknowledge and celebrate the 50th anniversary of the 1st One-Day International, 5 ODI cricketers of the decade have been listed in Wisden Almanack's 2021 edition.

ABOUT

- One cricketer from every decade between 1971 and 2021 are selected as the winner for different categories.
- **Below is the list of winners**
 - Wisden Almanack's ODI player of 2010s: Virat Kohli
 - ODI Cricketer of 1990s: Sachin Tendulkar
 - ODI Cricketer of 1980s: Kapil Dev
 - Leading Cricketer of the Year: Ben Stokes (England)
 - Leading Women's Cricketer in the World: Beth Mooney (Australia)
 - Leading T20 Cricketer in the World: Kieron Pollard (West Indies)
 - Wisden Cricketers of the Year 2021: Jason Holder, Mohammed Rizwan, Dom Sibley, Zak Crawley, and Darren Stevens

GENDER SAMVAAD EVENT

Current Context: The Gender Samvaad Event was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The event was the joint initiative DAY-NRLM (Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana National Rural Livelihood Mission) and IWWAGE (Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy).
- The event was organised to create a common platform to share experiences emerging from DAY-NRLM and IWWAGE.
- The event aimed to create awareness of gender-related interventions and to promote best practices to understand gender interventions globally.
- The event leads the opportunities to understand the best practices of other states to improve women agencies. For instance, facilitating women's access to land rights and their engagement in Farmer Producer Organisations, establishing strong institutions for public service delivery, best practices around food, nutrition, health and water and sanitation.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of Rural Development: Narendra Singh Tomar

SENIOR ASIAN WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP 2021

Current Context: The Senior Asian Wrestling Championship 2021 was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

DETAILS

- At the event, India won 14 medals and was ranked at third position in medal rankings.
- India has won 5 Gold, 3 Silver & 6 Bronze Medals.
- **Following is the list of winners in each category:**
 - **GOLD MEDAL:** (a) Ravi Kumar Dahiya (57 kg Men's freestyle) (b) Vinesh Phogat (53 kg Women's freestyle) (c) Anshu Malik (57 kg Women's freestyle) (d) Sarita Mar (59 kg Women's freestyle) (e) Divya Kakran (72 kg Women's freestyle).
 - **SILVER MEDAL:** (a) Bajrang Punia (65 kg Men's freestyle) (b) Deepak Punia (86 kg Men's freestyle) (c) Sakshi Malik (65 kg Women's freestyle).
 - **BRONZE MEDAL:** (a) Karan Mor (70 kg Men's freestyle) (b) Narsingh Yadav (79 kg Men's freestyle) (c) Sanjeet (92 kg Men's freestyle) (d) Satyawart Kadian (97 kg Men's freestyle) (e) Seema Bisla (50 kg Women's freestyle) (f) Pooja Sihag (76 kg Women's freestyle).

ONLINE EXHIBITION ON RAMAYANA

Current Context: The Union Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (IC), Prahlad Singh Patel inaugurated the first-ever Online Exhibition on Ramayana.

KEY POINTS

- The online exhibition showcases collections of 49 miniature paintings of the National Museum, New Delhi from different art schools of India, dating from the 17th through the 19th century.
- **The link address of the online exhibition:** https://nmvirtual.in/Virtual_Tour/Ramayan/.
- The minister also addressed a webinar titled 'India's Heritage: Powering Tourism'.
- While addressing, he mentioned that it is a collective responsibility of everyone to protect and preserve India's unique heritage of dance, temples, shastras, music that cannot be found anywhere in the world.

NATIONAL CLIMATE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Current Context: The Department of Science and Technology launched the National Climate Vulnerability Report.

ABOUT

- As per the report, 8 Eastern States of India namely, Mizoram, Bihar, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Assam are highly vulnerable to climate change.
- The report also mentioned that these states require prioritisation of adaptation interventions.
- The report cited reasons for each state being vulnerable to climate change. For Assam, lack of forest area per 100 rural population was marked as the reason. Even though the state has 42% of forest cover.
- For Bihar, poor health infrastructure in 36 districts, followed by a high percentage of marginal and small operational holders in 24 districts were cited as the reasons.
- For Jharkhand, lack of crop insurance and rainfed agriculture was the reason mentioned in the report and which has led to adding the state for vulnerable to climate change.
- As per the report, Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Sikkim and Punjab are termed as lower-middle vulnerable states.
- Whereas, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Nagaland, Goa and Maharashtra are termed as states with low vulnerability.

UNION MINISTER PIYUSH GOYAL LAUNCHED SISFS

Current Context: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal launched the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS).

HIGHLIGHTS

- The SISFS aims to grant financial assistance to the startups for prototype development, proof of development, market-entry, commercialization, and product trials.

- The scheme will prove beneficial to domestic entrepreneurs and startups. The scheme will help to implement all those business ideas which the entrepreneurs are unable to implement because of a shortage of capital.
- The SISFS will grant seed funding, support the transformative ideas, inspire innovation and implement the ideas.
- The funds of Rs 945 crore has been allocated for the scheme and will benefit around 3,600 startups particularly in tier-2 and 3 cities.
- The Expert Advisory Committee is formed which will monitor the execution of the SISFS.

INDIA AND GERMANY SIGNED AGREEMENT

Current Context: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), GOI and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH India on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety entered into an agreement to have technical cooperation.

KEY FACTS

- Both entities will cooperate technically for 'Cities Combating Plastic Entering the Marine Environment'.
- The partnership between both nations is in line with the objectives of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban which will focus on sustainable solid waste management.
- The partnership will also help to achieve PM Modi's vision to phase out single-use plastic by 2022.
- Both India and Germany will cooperate to prevent plastic from entering into marine environment as plastic is harmful to the lives of the marine ecosystem.
- Also, plastic gives a harmful impact on human health as there is a high risk of plastic particles entering the food chain.
- The partnership will be executed for a period of 3 and half years and the project will be implemented in states like UP, Kerala and Andaman and Nicobar islands. It will be implemented in the cities of Kanpur, Kochi and Port Blair.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Germany: Berlin
 - Currency of Germany: Euro

SUPPLEMENTAL OXYGEN DELIVERY SYSTEM--DRDO

Current Context: The Supplemental Oxygen Delivery System is developed by Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO).

KEY POINTS

- **The system will be used by soldiers who are posted at extreme high-altitude areas and by COVID-19 patients.**
- It is an automatic system that delivers supplemental oxygen based on the SpO2 (blood oxygen saturation) levels and prevents the person from sinking to a state of hypoxia, which is fatal in most cases if it sets in.
- The system is developed by DRDO's lab which is named Defence Bio-Engineering & Electro Medical Laboratory (DEBEL) in Bengaluru.
- The electronic hardware of the system is designed in such a way that it operates at extremely low temperature, low humidity and low barometric pressures.
- The system reads the SpO2 levels of the person through a wrist-worn pulse oximeter. Based on the SpO2 levels, the solenoid valve is adjusted to supply oxygen to the person and thus the system delivers oxygen through nasal nares.
- It supplies oxygen for 750 minutes at a flow rate of two litres per minute and is low in weight.

RBI FRAMES COMMITTEE TO REVIEW REGULATIONS ON ARCS

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a six-member committee to review regulations on asset reconstruction companies (ARCs).

DETAILS

- **The committee will be headed by Sudarshan Sen, former RBI executive director.**
- The committee is framed to review the legal and regulatory working of ARCs and will recommend measures to improve the efficiency of ARCs.
- The improved ARCs will also define their role in resolving stressed assets including under Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC).
- The committee will review the business models of ARCs and will suggest the measures to improve the liquidity in the trading of security receipts.
- The other members of the committee are: Vishakha Mulye (ICICI's Executive Director), PN Prasad (former SBI DMD), Abizer Diwanji (EY Partner), Rohit Prasad (MDI Professor of Economics) and R Anand (CA).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of RBI: Mumbai
 - Governor of RBI: Shaktikanta Das

APPOINTMENTS ON 20TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: **Jeremy Choy:** He is appointed as chief financial officer of Chinese home appliances giant Midea Group Co.

ABOUT

- **Murali M Natrajan:** He is re-appointed as MD and CEO of DCB Bank.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of DCB Bank: Maharashtra

INDO-PACIFIC OCEANS INITIATIVE: AUS. ANNOUNCED GRANT OF RS 8.12CR

Current Context: Australia has announced a grant of Rs 8.12 crore under the 'Australia-India Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative Partnership (AIPOIP)' which is an Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).

HIGHLIGHTS

- PM Narendra Modi has proposed IPOI in 2019 at the East-India Summit.
- Through this partnership between India and Australia, new proposals will be framed to attain shared maritime objectives.
- The grant will also enable stakeholders from both nations to share their expertise and proposals.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Australia: Canberra
 - Currency of Australia: Dollar

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX 2021

Current Context: The World Press Freedom Index 2021 was published by the international journalism not-for-profit body, Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

KEY POINTS

- The index ranking was calculated by evaluating 180 countries.
- **India is ranked at 142nd position in the index.**
- **The index is topped by Norway.**
- The second and third ranks are marked by Finland and Denmark respectively.
- The last rank position of 180th is marked by Eritrea.

UNION CABINET APPROVED MOU BETWEEN INDIA-BANGLADESH

Current Context: The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of MoU between India and Bangladesh to cooperate in the trade sector.

DETAILS

- The MoU was signed between India's Director General of Trade Remedies and the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission to increase cooperation in the area of trade remedies.

- As per the agreement, both the nations will be allowed to exchange data trade remedies and other activities in accordance with the provisions of the World Trade Organisation.
- The agreement focuses on countervailing, anti-dumping and safeguarding rules in bilateral trade between both nations.
- The MoU will lead to having rule-based trading activities and will eradicate unfair trade practices.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Bangladesh: Dhaka
 - Currency of Bangladesh: Taka

ADB PARTNERED WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Current Context: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) partnered with Habitat for Humanity International to grant support to a microfinance institution (MFIs).

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The support to MFIs will enable them to grant housing loans to low-income families residing in rural and semi-urban areas of India, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Indonesia.**
- The technical expertise will be provided to MFIs to deliver the housing loans.
- With this collaboration, ADB will be expanding its microfinance risk participation and guarantee program.
- In the first phase of the partnership, the commercial banks will grant \$30 million housing loans to MFIs.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ADB: Manila, Philippines
 - President of ADB: Masatsugu Asakawa
 - HQ of Habitat for Humanity: Atlanta, Georgia

APPOINTMENTS ON 21ST APRIL 2021

Current Context: Miguel Diaz Canel: He is appointed as President of Cuba.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Cuba: Havana
 - Currency of Cuba: Cuban Peso
- **Ulisses Correia e Silva:** He won the parliamentary elections and became the Prime Minister of Cape Verde.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Cape Verde: Praia
- **Kim Boo Kyum:** He is nominated as the new Prime Minister of South Korea and will replace Chung Sye Kyun.

- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of South Korea: Seoul
 - Currency of South Korea: South Korean Won
- **Washington Sundar and Devdutt Padikkal:** They are appointed as Brand Ambassadors of Puma India.

JAGANANNA VIDYA DEEVENA SCHEME—ANDHRA PRADESH

Current Context: The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh released the first instalment of Rs 671.45 crore of Jagananna Vidya Deevena for 2021-22.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Under this, CM reimbursed the academic fees of around 10.88 lakh students into the bank accounts of their mothers.**
- The scheme aims to grant scholarship to those students who are not able to pay their academic fees.
- The scheme also helps those students who want to pursue higher education.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Andhra Pradesh: YS Jaganmohan Reddy
 - Governor of Andhra Pradesh: Biswabhusan Harichandan
 - Dams in Andhra Pradesh: Srisailem Dam (Krishna River), Somasila Dam (Penna River), Tatipudi Reservoir (River Gosthani), Gandipalem Reservoir (River Penner), Ramagundam dam, Dummaguden Dam (Godavari River)

INDIA ELECTED TO 3 BODIES OF UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Current Context: India is elected by acclamation to three bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

KEY FACTS

- **The 3 bodies of UN ECOSOC:** (a) Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) (b) Executive Board of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). (c) Executive Board of the World Food Programme.
 - a) **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ):** Its HQ is in Vienna, Austria. India is elected for 3 years term commencing from 1st Jan 2022. The organisation works in the area of crime prevention and granting justice.
 - b) **Executive Board of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women):** Its HQ is in New York, USA. India is elected for 3 years term commencing from 1st Jan 2022. The organisation works for women empowerment objectives.
 - c) **Executive Board of the World Food Programme:** Its HQ is in Rome, Italy. India is elected for 3 years term commencing from 1st Jan 2022.
- **Static Part:**

- HQ of UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC): New York, USA

MOUS APPROVED BY UNION CABINET

Current Context: The Union Cabinet has approved the **MoU between the Competition Commission of India (CCI) and the Administrative Council for Economic Defense of Brazil, (CADE).**

KEY POINTS

- As per the 18th Section of the Competition Act, 2002, CCI has the right to sign MoU with the agencies of foreign countries for the purpose of discharging its duties or performing its functions under the Act.
- The Union Cabinet also gave the approval to enter into **Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) between the Institute of Chartered Accounts of India (ICAI) and the CPA (Certified Practising Accountant) Australia.** Both ICAI and CPA will work jointly to establish cooperation to frame advancements in the sectors of accounting knowledge, professional and intellectual development. They will work to develop their accounting structure.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Brazil: Brasilia
 - Currency of Brazil: Real
 - Capital of Australia: Canberra Currency of Australia: Dollar

INDIA'S GDP FOR FY22 TO BE 10-10.5% --- ICRA

Current Context: The Information and Credit Rating Agency of India Limited (ICRA) has revised its GDP forecast for India.

DETAILS

- **The rating agency has reduced India's GDP by 0.5% for FY22.**
- **As per ICRA, India's economy to grow in the range of 10-10.5% for FY22.**
- Earlier, it had projected growth of 10-11%.
- The reduction in the GDP growth was predicted due to the lockdown situation and restrictions imposed on various activities because of rising in a pandemic situation.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ICRA: Gurgaon, Haryana

ICC DEVELOPMENT AWARDS 2020

Current Context: The International Cricket Council (ICC) 2020 announced the global winners for ICC Development Awards 2020.

ABOUT

- **The Winning countries are: Argentina, Brazil, Uganda and Vanuatu.**
- They were selected as winners for their exceptional work and contribution to cricket through various programmes in 2020.
- **Argentina:** It was awarded under the category of ICC Development Initiative of the Year. The country attracted a local audience from South America to the cricket sport by launching courses related to coaching, umpiring and scoring in cricket in Spanish.
- **Brazil:** It was awarded under the category of 100% Cricket Female initiative of the Year. The nation developed women's cricket game in South America by granting professional central contracts to the national women's team.
- **Vanuatu:** It was awarded under ICC Digital Fan Engagement of the Year. The country provided live sessions of cricket to the fans during the pandemic situation when there was a Women's T20 Grand final event.
- **Uganda:** It was awarded under the category of Cricket 4 Good Social Impact Initiative of the Year. The nation supported players, their families and volunteers by launching the COVID-19 relief programme.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ICC: Dubai, UAE
 - Chairman of ICC: Greg Barclay
 - CEO of ICC: Manu Sawhney

WEF GLOBAL ENERGY TRANSITION INDEX 2021

Current Context: The 2021 Energy Transition Index (ETI) was released by World Economic Forum (WEF).

HIGHLIGHTS

- The report was published in partnership with Accenture.
- **As per the index, India is ranked at 87th position among 115 countries with a score of 53.**
- **The index is topped by Sweden.**
- The second and third ranks are marked by Norway and Denmark respectively.
- **The index was drafted by considering 3 dimensions namely:** (a) Economic Development and Growth (b) Environmental Sustainability (c) Energy Security and Accessibility.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of WEF: Cologny, Switzerland

3RD TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION IMPACT RANKINGS 2021

Current Context: The 3rd edition of Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2021 was released.

KEY FACTS

- The ranking includes 1,240 universities from 98 countries and regions.

- As per the ranking, Amrita VishwaVidyapeetham is the only Indian university to achieve a top 100 in the overall ranking. It is ranked at the 81st position.
- The rank of Amrita VishwaVidyapeetham in various categories: 5th in quality education, 8th in gender equality, 37th in good health and well-being and 52nd in clean water and sanitation.
- The 1st rank was secured by the University of Manchester, United Kingdom.
- The 2nd rank was secured by the University of Sydney, Australia.

INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LTD PARTNERED WITH HDFC LTD

Current Context: The Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd (IBH) has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with HDFC Ltd.

KEY POINTS

- They have entered into a partnership to grant housing loans to homebuyers at competitive rates.
- Under this partnership, the funding ratio will be 80:20. That is, 80% of loans will be with HDFC books and 20% of the loans with Indiabulls HFL's books.
- Indiabulls will service the loan account throughout the life cycle of the loan.
- This partnership will prove beneficial to IBH's new balance-sheet light growth business model.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd and HDFC: Mumbai

INDIA'S GDP FOR FY22 TO BE 10.2% --- CARE RATINGS

Current Context: The Care Ratings has revised the GDP forecast for India for FY22.

DETAILS

- As per Care Ratings, India's GDP will be at 10.2% for FY22.
- Earlier it had projected GDP for India to be in the range of 10.7-10.9%.
- The reduction in GDP forecast is due to the rising situation of the pandemic which has led to the stoppage of many economic activities due to rules imposed for lockdown.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Care Ratings: Mumbai
 - MD and CEO of Care Ratings: Ajay Mahajan

5TH GLOBAL FORUM ON TB VACCINES

Current Context: The 5th Global Forum on TB Vaccines was held from 20th to 22nd April 2021 in a virtual manner.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan addressed the forum.**
- The forum was organised by Stop TB Partnership Working Group on New Vaccines in association with International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (TBVI).
- The forum was organised to enhance the process of Tuberculosis (TB) Vaccination in the pandemic situation of COVID-19.
- The forum was basically one of the largest meetings of stakeholders who are working to develop and deploy new vaccines to prevent TB.
- **Static Part:**
 - Chairman of Stop TB Partnership Board: Dr Harsh Vardhan
 - HQ of Stop TB Partnership Board: Geneva, Switzerland
 - The next i.e. 6th edition of the Global Forum on TB Vaccines will be held in Toulouse, France in Feb 2022.

'CONQR'—WORLD'S 1ST QR ON CARD PROGRAMME

Current Context: Mastercard and Bank of Baroda Financial Solutions (BFSL) have entered into a partnership to launch 'ConQR', which is the world's first QR on Card Program.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The 'ConQR' is a Mastercard QR on card solution which is launched to offer simplicity to perform digital transactions.**
- It is based on Mastercard patented technology which allows cardholders or SMEs to perform cashless payments using their cards.
- It is having a Bharat QR Code on the card face that allows the cardholder to accept and to receive payments.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Mastercard: New York, US
 - HQ of BFSL: Mumbai

INDIAN ECONOMY TO GROW AT 11% FOR FY22—S&P RATINGS

Current Context: The S&P Global Ratings has projected that India's economy to grow at 11% in FY 2021-22 (FY22).

KEY POINTS

- Earlier it had estimated a contraction of 8% for the same.
- The rating agency has kept the sovereign rating on India at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of S&P Global Ratings: New York, US

BOAO FORUM FOR ASIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021

Current Context: The Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) Annual Conference 2021 was held in Boao, south China's Hainan Province.

KEY FACTS

- **Theme:** A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation'.
- Around 60 countries participated in the conference.
- An annual report on Asian Economy was also released at the conference.
- The BFA Annual Conference 2021 was held to promote economic integration and to enhance cooperation among Asian nations.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of BFA: Beijing, China

LEADERS' SUMMIT ON CLIMATE 2021

Current Context: The President of the USA, Joe Biden hosted the Leaders' Summit on Climate.

DETAILS

- **India's PM Narendra Modi participated in the summit.**
- **The theme of the Summit:** Our Collective Sprint to 2030
- The summit was held to strengthen the cooperation among the nations to tackle the climate change issues.
- The leaders from 40 nations participated in the summit.
- The dignitaries discussed climate action, nature-based solutions, climate security and technological innovations for clean energy.

APPOINTMENTS ON 24TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: CAG G C Murmu: He is appointed as External Auditor of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for a tenure of three years.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - He is India's Comptroller and Auditor General
 - HQ of OPCW: Hague, Netherland
- **AtanuChakraborty:** He is appointed as Part-Time Chairman of HDFC Bank by RBI for the tenure of three years.

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of HDFC Bank: Mumbai
 - MD and CEO of HDFC Bank: Sashidhar Jagdishan
 - Tagline of HDFC Bank: We Understand Your World
- **Rekha Menon:** She is appointed as 1st woman Chairperson of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NASSCOM: New Delhi

RBI BANS AMERICAN EXPRESS AND DINERS CLUB

Current Context: The Reserve Bank has restricted American Express Banking Corp and Diners Club International Ltd from onboarding new domestic customers onto their card networks from 1st May 2021.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **They are restricted because of violating data storage norms.**
- Both the entities were authorised to operate card networks under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 (PSS Act). And it was found that both the entities were not following the directions on Storage of Payment System Data setup by RBI.
- In April 2018, RBI imposed regulations under the PSS act for the Storage of Payment System Data to payment system providers. The regulation was to ensure that within a period of six months the entire data (full end-to-end transaction details/information collected/carried/processed as part of the message/payment instruction) relating to payment systems operated by them should be stored in a system only in India.
- Also, payment system providers were required to report compliance to RBI and submit a System Audit Report (SAR) conducted by a CERT within Dec 2018.

SICCI PARTNERED WITH IIT KANPUR

Current Context: The Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) partnered with the Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) of IIT Kanpur.

KEY POINTS

- **They have partnered to promote tech-based startups.**
- **Under this partnership, they held a launchpad competition named 'SICCI-SIIC INNOVATION LAUNCHPAD'.**
- They will work jointly to promote entrepreneurs from India and Singapore who are working on high-end technologies.
- The Launchpad event involves 9 pre-selected contestants (5 from Singapore and 4 from India).
- The participants will present their innovative ideas through a virtual platform.

- Two winners, each from India and Singapore will be declared and will be awarded a token of appreciation of SGD 2000 each.
- Thus the event will encourage start-ups to take advantage of the Singapore-India trade and technology corridor and leverage relevant market opportunities.

#FOSS4GOV INNOVATION CHALLENGE-- MEITY

Current Context: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) has announced the #FOSS4GOV Innovation Challenge.

DETAILS

- The #FOSS4GOV Innovation Challenge is launched to boost the adoption of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in GOI.
- The challenge was launched by MEITY in partnership with Omidyar Network India.
- The innovation challenge will allow FOSS innovators, technology entrepreneurs and Indian Startups to submit implementable open-source product innovations in CRM and ERP.
- The submitted innovative works will be implemented in the Gov. managed areas like health, education, agriculture and urban upliftment.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology: Ravi Shankar Prasad

INDIAN BANK PARTNERED WITH CHENNAI ANGELS

Current Context: The Indian Bank collaborated with The Chennai Angels to grant support to the startups.

ABOUT

- They have collaborated on the project titled 'IND Spring Board' of Indian Bank.
- They will support the startups in expanding their commercial production.
- Under this program, credit support of upto Rs 50 crore will be provided by Indian Bank.
- The startups will also be supported with term loan requirements for acquiring fixed assets for their unit.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Indian Bank: Chennai, TN
 - Tagline of Indian Bank: Your Own Bank

VARUNA 2021

Current Context: The 19th 'Varuna-2021' Naval Exercise which is held between the Indian and French Navy commenced.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **It is being held in the Arabian Sea.**
- It is held to develop cooperation, synergy and interoperability between India and France Naval organisations.
- Both the navies will conduct advanced anti-submarine and air defence exercises, tactical manoeuvres, intense fixed and rotary wing flying operations, underway replenishment, surface and anti-air weapon firings and other maritime security operations.
- **The Indian side will be represented by:** INS Talwar, INS Tarkarsh, INS Kolkata, INS Deepak, Chetak Integral Helicopters, P81 Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft and a Kalvari Class Submarine.
- **France side will be represented by:** E2C Hawkeye aircraft, helicopters Dauphin and Caiman M embarked, aircraft carrier Charles-de-Gaulle, Rafale M Fighter, Aquitaine-class multi missions frigate FNS Provence, Caiman M Helicopter and Chevalier Paul.
- **Static Part:**
 - Chief of Naval Staff of India: Admiral Karambir Singh

IGBC MISSION ON NET ZERO

Current Context: The CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) launched 'IGBC Mission on Net Zero'.

KEY POINTS

- **The 'IGBC Mission on Net Zero' is launched to eradicate carbon emission from India.**
- It aims to achieve net-zero carbon emission by 2050.
- Under this mission, around 250 leading firms from India's building sector have announced their commitment to achieving the target.
- And thus to work to attain the objective, the leading organisations have decided to adopt phenomenal shifts in the way to source their power, manufacturing, transit and policy interventions.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of CII: New Delhi
 - President of CII: Uday Kotak
 - HQ of IGBC: Hyderabad

MOHUA SIGNED MOU WITH IIT KHARAGPUR

Current Context: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has signed an MoU with IIT Kharagpur.

DETAILS

- The MoU has signed to set up an Accelerator Centre for R&D activities in the institute.

- The IIT Kharagpur will act as an incubation hub centre to perform technological innovations and develop products.
- The Accelerator Centre will be similar to the 'ASHA-India' Initiative of the central government.
- The 'ASHA-India' Initiative was launched by MoHUA under its Global Housing Technology Challenge India (GHTC-India).
- The 'ASHA-India' Initiative aims to adopt research and tech in the housing construction sector and allied areas.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of State (IC) for Housing and Urban Affairs: Hardeep Singh Puri

IRDAI ALLOWED INSURERS TO INVEST IN DEBT INSTRUMENTS

Current Context: The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has allowed insurers to invest in debt securities which are issued by Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) and Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs).

HIGHLIGHTS

- This move will lead to improving the overall yield of the portfolios held by the firms and will provide more long-term funding to the realty sector.
- This will also allow the insurance companies to perform investments in top-rated infrastructure assets.
- IRDAI has also defined the categories of investments. The investment will be said to be an 'approved investment' if it is made in debt instruments of InvITs and REITs which are rated above AA. Whereas, the investment will be said to be 'other investment' if it is made in debt instruments of InvITs and REITs which are rated below AA.
- As per IRDAI, 75% of the insurers' investments must be in AAA-rated assets and 25% of investment can be AA or even A- rates. Also, an insurer can invest in below AA- rated instruments only if it is approved by the IRDAI.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of IRDAI: Hyderabad
 - Chairman of IRDAI: Subhash Chandra Khuntia

GOOGLE & MICROSOFT GRANTED FUNDS TO INDIA TO TACKLE PANDEMIC

Current Context: Google and Microsoft announced to grant funds to India in order to tackle the rising pandemic situation in the country.

KEY POINTS

- Google has announced to provide 18 million USD (Rs 135 crores) to India. Microsoft will be helping India through relief efforts to purchase oxygen concentration devices.
- The grants from Google will be particularly provided to UNICEF and the non-profit Give India.

- Through Give India, Google aims to provide financial support to those families who suffered from the pandemic.
- The grants offered to UNICEF will help to arrange the medical equipment for India.
- Apart from these grants, around 900 Googlers will be providing funds of Rs 3.7 crore to India to tackle the rising pandemic cases.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Google: Mountain View, California, United States.
 - CEO of Google: Sundar Pichai
 - HQ of Microsoft: Redmond, Washington, United States
 - CEO of Microsoft: Satya Nadella

APPOINTMENT AND RESIGNATION ON 27TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: ArunRaste: He is appointed as MD and CEO of National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX) by SEBI. He has replaced Vijay Kumar.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NCDEX: Mumbai
- **NikolPashinyan:** He resigned from the post of Prime Minister of Armenian.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Armenian: Yerevan
 - Currency of Armenian: Armenian Dram

93RD OSCARS AWARDS (ACADEMY AWARDS)

Current Context: The 93rd edition of Oscars Awards took place in Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles, California, U. S.

DETAILS

- The awards are presented annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).
- Below is the complete list of winners in each category:
- Best Picture: Nomadland
- Best Director: Chloé Zhao (Nomadland)
- Best Actor: Anthony Hopkins (The Father)
- Best Actress: Frances McDormand (Nomadland)
- Best Animated Feature Film: Soul
- Best Documentary Feature: My Octopus Teacher
- Best Documentary Short: Colette
- Best International Feature Film: Another Round

- Best Music (Original Score): Soul
- Best Music (Original Song): Fight For You
- Best Short Film (Live Action): Two Distant Strangers
- Best Short Film (Animated): If Anything Happens I Love You

INDIA'S GDP GROWTH TO BE AT 10.2% FOR 2021 — OXFORD ECONOMIES

Current Context: Oxford Economics has revised the GDP growth forecast for India for 2021.

KEY FACTS

- **As per the firm, India's GDP growth to be at 10.2% for 2021.**
- Earlier it has estimated the GDP growth forecast of 11.8% for the same.
- The downward fall is estimated because the country is facing a crisis due to the second wave of the pandemic which has affected economical activities.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Oxford Economics: Oxford, United Kingdom

IIT GUWAHATI SIGNED MOU WITH NFR

Current Context: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati signed MoU with North East Frontier Railway (NFR).

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The MoU was signed to work on research projects to improve the maintenance and operations of train running in the region and other fields.**
- Under this MoU, IIT Guwahati will develop alternate biodegradable polymer based technologies to make railway stations plastic-free. The institute will develop ideas to make world-class railways stations that are under NFR regions.
- Both the entities will jointly work on the projects in the areas like geotechnical assistance, structure, bridges, Information Technology, overhead equipment, signalling and safety assessment, Artificial Intelligence-based predictive maintenance systems and Internet of Things design features.
- They will also develop technology to improve the maintenance and operations of rolling stock, yards, train operations and green technologies.

'TRENDS IN WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURE 2020' REPORT

Current Context: The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released the report titled 'Trends in World Military Expenditure 2020'.

KEY FACTS

- **As per the report, India is the third biggest military spender in the world in 2020.**
- As per the report, India has spent 3.7% of its global share i.e. total expenditure of India on the military for 2020 was USD 72.9 billion.
- The list was **topped by the United States** with the total expenditure on military for 2020 to be USD 778 billion.
- The second position was marked by China with total expenditure on military for 2020 to be USD 252 billion.

CHANDLER GOOD GOVERNMENT INDEX

Current Context: The Chandler Institute of Governance released the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI).

DETAILS

- **As per the index, India is ranked at 49th position among 104 nations.**
- **The index is topped by Finland.**
- The second and third positions are marked by Switzerland and Singapore respectively.
- **The index ranking was calculated by considering 7 pillars:** (a) Leadership and foresight (b) Strong institutions (c) Robust laws and policies (d) Attractive market place (e) Financial stewardship (f) Helping people rise (g) Global influence and reputation.
- **Static Part:**
 - Good Governance Day in India is marked on 25th Dec

RBI FIXED BANK'S MD AND CEOS TENURE AT 15 YEARS

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised rules in its circular titled 'Corporate Governance in Banks- Appointments of Directors and Constitution of Committees of the Board'.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- As per the changes in the rules, RBI has fixed the tenure of MD and CEOs or Whole Time Directors (WTD) of banks to 15 years.
- The rules are applicable for the banks like private sector banks, SFBs and wholly-owned subsidiaries of foreign banks. The rules are not applicable for foreign banks operating as branches in India.
- As per the rules, MD, CEO or WTD who is also a promoter or shareholder cannot serve the post for more than 12 years.
- The RBI has also announced that the upper age limit for MD, CEO or WTD is retained at 70 years.
- The maximum age limit for chairman and non-executive directors (NED) is fixed at 75 years. The total tenure of a NED, continuously or otherwise, on the board of a bank, is not allowed to exceed 8 years. After completing 8 years on the board of a bank the person may be considered for re-appointment only after a minimum gap of three years.

- During the three-year cooling period, the individual cannot be appointed or associated with the bank or its group entities in any capacity, either directly or indirectly.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of RBI: Mumbai
 - Governor of RBI: Shaktikanta Das

APPOINTMENTS ON 28TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: Ajay Seth: He is Economic Affairs Secretary in Finance Ministry and is appointed as Director of the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

ABOUT

- **Justice Rajesh Bindal:** He is appointed as Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court by President Ram Nath Kovind.
- **Ravindra Jadeja:** He is appointed as Brand Ambassador of ASICS, Japanese Sports Brand.

SINGLE CRYSTAL BLADES TECHNOLOGY FOR HELICOPTERS-- DRDO

Current Context: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed single-crystal blades technology for helicopters.



- It has also supplied 60 of these blades to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) under an indigenous helicopter development programme for engine application.
- This development is part of a programme undertaken by the Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory (DMRL) which aims to develop five sets of single-crystal high-pressure turbine (HPT) blades by using a nickel-based superalloy.
- The main objective to develop single crystal blades technology is that the helicopters which are particularly used in strategic and defence applications are supposed to be with engines which are compact and strong as well. So to achieve this goal state-of-the-art single-crystal blades are designed by DRDO.
- The state-of-the-art single-crystal blades are manufactured out of nickel-based superalloy. They are capable to resist high temperature.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of DRDO: New Delhi
 - Chairman of DRDO: Dr G Satheesh Reddy

'SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE INITIATIVE (SCRI)'

Current Context: India, Japan and Australia formally launched the 'Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI)' in a virtual manner.

KEY POINTS

- **The SCRI was launched to counter China's dominance of the supply chain in the Indo-Pacific region.**
- The initiative was launched by trade ministers of three nations.
- The meeting for the same was attended by India's trade minister Piyush Goyal, Australia's minister for trade, tourism and investment Dan Tehan and Japan's minister of economy, trade and industry Kajiya Hiroshi.
- The initiative will help to create a virtuous cycle to enhance supply chain resilience to gain strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth in the regions.
- The SCRI will develop a resilient supply chain with its major focus on free, transparent trading activities and investment safe environment in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The initiative will work to share best practices for supply chain resilience, conducting promotional events of investments for stakeholders and grant them a vast platform.
- All the three nations assured to adopt policy measures that will support increase usage of digital technology in trading activities and will promote trade and investments on a large scale.
- The dignitaries also assured to conduct meeting once in year to review the SCRI implementations.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Japan: Tokyo
 - Currency of Japan: Japanese Yen
 - Capital of Australia: Canberra
 - Currency of Australia: Dollar

FSS PARTNERED WITH NIPL

Current Context: The FSS (Financial Software and Systems) has partnered with NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) to expand UPI (Unified Payment Interface) in international markets.

KEY FACTS

- The FSS is a leading provider of integrated payment products and the largest payments processor in India.
- Under this partnership, FSS will make use of its experience and understanding to implement national payment infra at a large scale and to grant UPI payment services for payment service providers.
- Whereas, NIPL will grant its real-time payment processing platform and technical support to the scheme operators.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of FSS: Chennai, TN

INDIA'S GDP TO GROW AT 11% FOR FY22 -- ADB

Current Context: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) released Asian Development Outlook 2021 which forecasted the GDP growth for India.

DETAILS

- As per ADB, India's GDP will grow at 11% for FY22.
- Earlier it had projected growth at 8% for the same.
- It has also predicted GDP expansion at 7% for FY22.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ADB: Manila, Philippines
 - President of ADB: Masatsugu Asakawa

APPOINTMENTS ON 29TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: Vaishali Hiwase: She is appointed to be the first woman commanding officer in BRO (Border Roads Organisation).

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of BRO: New Delhi
 - DG of BRO: Lt. Gen. Rajeev Chaudhary
- **Amit Banerjee:** He is appointed as CMD of Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of BEML: Bengaluru
- **Amar Merani:** He is appointed as Head of Real Estate strategy for IIFL Asset Management Company.

'MERCHANT STACK'—ICICI BANK

Current Context: ICICI Bank launched the 'Merchant Stack' which is the digital banking platform.

HIGHLIGHTS

- It is specifically developed for retail merchants. It will prove highly beneficial to grocers, supermarkets, large retail store chains, online businesses and large e-commerce firms.
- Due to 'Merchant Stack,' the users will be able to fulfil their banking needs in a seamless manner in this pandemic situation.
- The users can avail of this 'Merchant Stack' service on InstaBIZ which is the Bank's mobile banking application for businesses.
- **Services offered under 'Merchant Stack' are:** 1) 'Super Merchant Current Account' (Name of new account) 2) Instant credit facilities called 'Merchant Overdraft' and 'Express Credit' 3) 'Digital Store Management' facility to help merchants take their business online 4) Exclusive loyalty rewards

programme 5) Value-added services like alliances with major e-commerce and digital marketing platforms for expansion of online presence.

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ICICI Bank: Mumbai

APPOINTMENTS ON 30TH APRIL 2021

Current Context: TV Somanathan: He was appointed as the Finance Secretary. He has replaced Ajay Bhushan Pandey.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - Union Finance Minister: Nirmala Sitharaman
 - Minister of State for Finance: Anurag Thakur
- **Amitabh Chaudhry:** He was re-appointed as the MD and CEO of Axis Bank
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Axis Bank: Mumbai
- **Justice Vimla Singh Kapoor:** She was appointed as the Judge of Chhattisgarh High Court.

TIME 100 MOST INFLUENTIAL COMPANIES 2021

Current Context: The TIME Magazine's 'TIME 100 Most Influential Companies 2021' list was released recently.

KEY POINTS

- **Reliance Industries Limited's (RIL) Jio Platform and E-learning firm named Byju's** has made an entry in the list.
- **Jio Platform:** It was categorized under Innovation Category and listed for Leading Digital Transformation in India.
- **Byju's:** It was listed under Disruptors Category.
- The list includes companies from domains like health care, entertainment, transportation, technology, etc.
- The list was framed by considering parameters like relevance, impact, innovation, leadership, ambition and success.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Jio Platform: Mumbai
 - HQ of Byju's: Bengaluru

23RD ASEAN-INDIA SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING

Current Context: The 23rd ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting was held.

KEY FACTS

- The meeting observed the participation of senior officials from all ten ASEAN Member States.
- India was represented by Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs Riva Ganguly Das.
- The meeting was held to discuss ASEAN-India cooperation and to review the whole spectrum of political-security, economic, socio-cultural and developmental cooperation.
- They also discussed steps to implement the ASEAN-India Plan of Action 2021-2025.
- The dignitaries discussed the measures to boost ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership and to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.

DRDO CONDUCTED TRIAL OF PYTHON 5 AAM

Current Context: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the maiden trial of the 5th generation Python-5 Air-to-Air Missile (AAM).

DETAILS

- **The trials were conducted from Tejas Aircraft.**
- The test-firing operations were held at Goa with a series of missile trails in order to evaluate the performance under extreme operational scenarios.
- The Python 5 AAM is built by the Israeli weapon manufacturer Rafael Advanced Defence Systems.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of DRDO: New Delhi
 - Chairman of DRDO: Dr G Satheesh Reddy

PIB SUMMARY: APRIL 2021

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE INKS PACK WITH MICROSOFT TO BOOST FARMER'S INCOME

- Union Agriculture Ministry has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Microsoft to boost farmer's income by reducing input cost and better post-harvest management.
- Microsoft has entered this MOU along with its associate Crop Data Technologies.

"MADHUKRANTI PORTAL" TO TRACE THE SOURCE OF HONEY AND OTHER BEEHIVE PRODUCTS IS LAUNCHED BY UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR

- This portal is to achieve online traceability of source of honey.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is signed between National Bee Board (NBB) and Indian Bank.
- Main aim is that “Indian Honey” should meet global standards.

EXPERT PANEL WILL BE SET UP BY UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR TO EXAMINE 27 BANNED PESTICIDES

- The panel will examine and consider all the aspects like safety, toxicity and efficacy of the 27 banned pesticides.

MINISTRY OF CHEMICAL AND FERTILIZERS

FERTILIZER FIRMS TO SUPPLY 50 TONNES OF MEDICAL OXYGEN PER DAY TO COVID-19 PATIENTS

- Both public and private sector fertilizer firms will produce medical oxygen for COVID-19 patients, says Minister of State for Fertilizers and Chemicals Mansukh Mandaviya.
- At present IFFCO, Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals (GSFC), Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers and Chemicals (GNFC) and other fertilizer companies are providing oxygen supply to COVID-19 patients.

MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

INDIA HAS FINALIZED AIR BUBBLE PACT WITH SRILANKA

- Union Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri told India has finalized air bubble pact with Srilanka.
- Including this India has air bubble pact with 28 countries at present.
- Air Bubble pact is that between two countries, special passenger flights will be operated under restrictive conditions.
- This will allow eligible passengers to travel between two countries in near future.

MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION PERMITS TELANGANA GOVERNMENT TO DELIVER COVID-19 VACCINES THROUGH DRONE

- This is the first state to get permission to deliver COVID-19 vaccines through Drone.
- The permission is granted under Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Rules, 2021, to conduct experimental delivery of COVID-19 vaccines using drones within the visual line of sight range.

MINISTRY OF COAL

“COVID MONITORING CELL” SET UP BY MINISTRY OF COAL

- This cell is to help officials and their family members in coal industry who have been tested positive for COVID-19.
- This cell will help officials by providing logistics support and other necessary help as far as possible.
- Logistics support will be provided by Coal India.

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE

COMMERCE MINISTRY HAS MADE IMPORT REGISTRATION OF 46 COPPER AND 43 ALUMINIUM ITEMS

- This is to reduce import and promote local manufacturing.
- Commerce ministry have already done this for Iron and Steel items.
- Importer have to register not earlier than 60th day and not later than 5th day before the expected date of arrival of import consignment.

MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS

MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS PERMITS STATE BANK OF INDIA TO MAKESHIFT HOSPITALS FOR COVID-19 PATIENTS

- State Bank of India has given Rs. 30 crore for temporary hospitals for COVID-19 patients under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Activity.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA WILL TAKE CONSERVATIONAL WORKS AT TAJ MAHAL, AGRA FORT AND FATEHPUR SIKRI PREMISES IN AGRA

- Archaeological Survey of India comes under Ministry of Culture.
- Due to COVID-19 initiative all these places are shut till May 15.

JAMMU & KASHMIR TOURISM PROMOTION EVENT IN SRINAGAR BY MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE

- The event named "Tapping the potential of Kashmir: Another Day in Paradise" will take place in Srinagar on April 11- 13.
- This event is headed by Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Manoj Sinha and Tourism and Cultural Minister Prahlad Singh Patel.
- Delegates will have technical visit to Tulip garden during this event.

MINISTER OF DEFENCE

OPERATION "CO-JEET" IS LAUNCHED BY ARMED FORCES TO FIGHT COVID-19

- This operation “CO-JEET” is to strengthen the medical infrastructure and oxygen supply chains and ensure mental wellbeing of the people.
- This operation is provided by all the three wings of the armed forces – The Army, Air Force and Indian Navy.

“OPERATION SAMUDRA SETU II” IS TO TRANSPORT OXYGEN AND OTHER MEDICAL EQUIPMENT FROM ABROAD

- “Operation Samudra Setu II” is done by Indian Navy with 9 warships.
- Ministry of Defence told that main aim of this mission is to get liquid oxygen from Persian gulf and southeast Asian friendly countries.

INS AIRAVAT CARRIES OXYGEN FROM SINGAPORE TO INDIA

- As the part of Operation Samudra Setu II, INS Airavat brings liquid oxygen from Singapore to India.
- It carries 3,650 oxygen cylinders of varying capacities and concentrators.

MINISTER OF EDUCATION

UNION EDUCATION MINISTER, SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL ‘NISHANK’ TODAY LAUNCHED NANOSNIFFER

- Union Education Minister, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ today launched NanoSniffer, the world’s first Microsensor based Explosive Trace Detector (ETD) developed by NanoSniff Technologies, an IIT Bombay incubated startup.
- NanoSniffer has been marketed by Vehant Technologies, a spin-off from a former IIT Delhi incubated startup Kritikal Solutions.

MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS & IT

“INITIATE AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS” IS DONE BY MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS & IT TO PREVENT “FALSE NEWS OR MISINFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19”

- Social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and Instagram have been asked to curb fake news and misinformation related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This advisory campaign is defined under Information Technology Act, 2000.

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

SUPREME COURT ALLOWS VEDANTA TO RUN OXYGEN PLANT IN TAMIL NADU TO TACKLE OXYGEN CRISES

- Vedanta was closed due to environment pollution caused by copper smelting process.
- Due to National requirement of oxygen for COVID-19 patients, this measure has been taken.

LIONS IN HYDERABAD ZOO TEST COVID-19

- All zoological parks, national parks, tiger reserves and wildlife sanctuaries are closed for visitors to control COVID-19 pandemic by Ministry of Environment Forests and climate Change.
- Hyderabad Zoo with 8 Asiatic lions were tested positive for COVID-19.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

INDIA AND UK TO BOOST WORK VISAS FOR INDIANS

- External Affairs Minister S Jaishanker and Home Secretary Priti Patel signed a new migration partnership between two countries.
- Both the country citizens can live and work in one another countries.

MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS

OIL PSU'S COMMIT RS. 100 CR FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF BADRINATH DHAM TEMPLE

- Ministry of Petroleum Dharmendra Pradhan announced to give Rs. 100 crores for the redevelopment of Badrinath Dham Temple.

MINISTRY OF POWER

POWER MINISTRY ASKS ALL THE REGULATORS TO REVISE POWER TARIFF BY APRIL 1 OF EVERY YEAR

- According to Electricity Act 2003 and the Tariff Policy 2016, there should be timely determination of the adequate power tariffs by the electricity commissions.

GOVERNMENT ISSUES DRAFT NORMS FOR FLY ASH DISPOSAL BY POWER PLANTS

- Fly ash user industries for non-compliance will be charged penalties of Rs 1,500 per tonne.
- If the residue is not disposed in time will be charged Rs 1,000 per tonne on power generators.

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

ARCH OF WORLD'S HIGHEST RAILWAY BRIDGE IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- The 1.3-kilometre-long bridge is constructed at a cost of Rs 1,486 crore to enhance connectivity in the Kashmir Valley.
- This bridge is a part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Link (USBRL) project.

RAILWAYS TO RUN "OXYGEN EXPRESS" TO MEET OXYGEN DEMAND IN COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- Railway Ministry is ready for the project "oxygen express" in order to get ready to transport Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) and oxygen cylinders across the country.

RLDA TO DEVELOP MULTI-FUNCTIONAL COMPLEXES AT THREE RAILWAY STATIONS

- Multi-Functional Complexes (MFC) at Bellary, Sikar and Bharatpur Railway Stations are leased for 45 years by The Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA).
- Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) is a statutory body functioning under the Ministry of Railways for the development of Railway land.

MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

VEHICLE LOCATION TRACKING DEVICES MANDATORY FOR OXYGEN CONTAINERS

- Vehicle Location Tracking (VLT) devices should be fitted for all the oxygen containers, tankers and vehicles made mandatory.
- GPS tracking will help in proper monitoring and protection of these tankers including timely delivery.

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

HAFFKINE INSTITUTE GETS NOD TO PRODUCE COVAXIN

- Haffkine Institute in Mumbai, Maharashtra has got permission to produce Bharat Biotech's Covaxin.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

DISABILITY CERTIFICATES TO BE ISSUED ONLINE IS MADE MANDATORY

- Disabled people will get "certificate of disability" through online mode using UDID portal with effect from June 1, 2021.
- It is made mandatory for all States and Union territories to issue this certificate through online because people with disabilities were unable to get their certificates due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK WILL SUPPORT INDIA TO COMBAT COVID-19

- European Investment Bank announced an emergency fund of EUR 250,000 to India in response to the escalating COVID-19 crisis.

- The donation will be used to improve access to oxygen including oxygen generation plants as well as the procurement of oxygen cylinders urgently needed across India.

EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK WILL LEND LOAN FOR PUNE METRO RAIL PROJECT

- EIB had approved a loan of 600 million euros to for the construction of the Pune Metro Rail project.
- As the first tranche of 200 million euros was given in 2019.
- Now the, Second tranche of 150 million was given in April 2021.

MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES

ITALY LAUNCHES FIRST MEGA FOOD PARK & FOOD PROCESSING UNIT IN INDIA

- The pilot project "The Mega Food Park" was launched by Italy with the signing of a Letter of Intent between the ICE Office in Mumbai and Fanidhar Mega Food Park, in Gujarat.
- The project aims to create a synchronous between Agriculture and Industry between two countries and many research and development project ideas be exchanged between two countries.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS REMOVES ELECTRONIC RESTRICTIONS

- The Union home ministry has lifted restrictions on electronic visas for such as e-medical visa, e-business visa, e-medical attendant visa and e-conference visa.,
- This e-visa is available to all the members of the 156 countries.
- But electronic restrictions still prevail on e-tourist visa.

PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE

NV RAMANA IS APPOINTED AS THE NEXT CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA BY PRESIDENT RAM NATH KOVIND

- Justice Nathulapati Venkata Ramana is the next Chief Justice of India and his tenure is from April 24, 2021 to August 26, 2022.
- He will be succeeding Arvind Bobde.

PRIME MINISTER OFFICE

PRIME MINISTER OFFICE WELCOME US PRESIDENT JOINING LEAD IT CLIMATE INITIATIVE

- The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is likely to join the Indian-Swedish climate initiative as said by USA.

- It is known as “Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT)”, will help to meet the Paris Agreement goals.

NITI AAYOG

NITI AAYOG LAUNCHES INDIA ENERGY DASHBOARDS VERSION 2.0

- With the rise of renewables and other new energy technologies, there is increasing demand between energy supply and demand industry.
- The aim of this dashboard is to provide single-window access to the energy data for the country.

AYUSH

ANTIVIRAL DRUG 'CLEVIRA' IS USED FOR TREATING MILD TO MODERATE COVID-19 PATIENTS

- Clevira, a drug primarily used to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 cases.
- It is primarily used for treating dengue.
- Liver and kidney are not affected by this drug.

