



MONTHLY ONE- LINER GK DIGEST

MARCH 2021

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

US India Artificial Intelligence Initiative

- The announcement for the same was made by the **Department of Science and Technology**.
- The **US India Artificial Intelligence Initiative** will focus on AI cooperation in the prioritized areas of both nations.

India-South Korea Friendship Park

- **India's Union Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh and South Korea's Minister of National Defence, Suh Wook** jointly inaugurated an Indo-Korean Friendship Park in Delhi State Park.
- The park is developed jointly by the Ministry of National Defense, the Government of India, the Indian Army, the Delhi Cantonment Board, the **Korean Embassy and the Indian North Korean Veterans Association**.

NATIONAL NEWS

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting partnered with IIT-B

- The **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** has collaborated with IIT Bombay.
- They have collaborated to set up a **Centre of Excellence in gaming and allied areas**.

6th Technology Exhibition Cum Seed Mela

- The **Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and Chancellor of the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Science and Technology (SKUAST)**, Manoj Sinha, inaugurated the 6th Technology Exhibition cum Seed Sale Mela.
- The event observed the showcasing of various stalls which **described farmers welfare schemes and programs, farm machinery, and organic products**.

India & Fiji to Co-operate in Agri and Allied Sectors

- The agreement will be signed between **agricultural ministries of India and Fiji and will remain in force for a tenure of 5 years**.
- The agreement will allow the promotion of **joint ventures associated with agriculture between the private sectors of both countries**.

Atal Innovation Mission partnered with MathWorks

- MathWorks is a developing organisation of **mathematical computing software for scientists and engineers**.
- Both entities have partnered to **develop mathematical computing software** in order to boost deep-technology based startups in India.

PM Modi Addressed 'Janaushadhi Diwas' Event Celebrations

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** addressed the celebration event of 'Janaushadhi Diwas' via video-conference.
- He dedicated 7500th Janaushadhi Kendra to **North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences, Shillong, Meghalaya**.

PM inaugurated 'Maitri Setu' between India & Bangladesh

- **'Maitri Setu'** is constructed over the **Feni River**. The Feni River flows between the Indian boundary in Tripura and Bangladesh.
- The name 'Maitri Setu' symbolizes **the friendly relations between both nations**.

DBS Bank India partnered with TRRAIN

- The TRRAIN is a **non-profit organisation engaged in training and placement of youth** particularly in the e-commerce & retail sectors.

- They have partnered to support youth from low-income houses, economically affected **due to pandemic and people with disabilities with skill training and job opportunities.**

Aquaconnect partnered with Bank of Baroda

- The credit access will be provided at an **annualized rate of as low as 10%.**
- This partnership will prove beneficial to **15,00,000 fish farmers and over 1,50,000 shrimp farmers across the country.**

'Wheels of Love' Programme—Tata Motors

- The programme is launched to **support new parents in the workforce environment.**
- The programme supports them in their exciting journey **both as a parent and also as an employee through a culture of care, inclusion and sensitization** within the organization across levels.

'E3 Certifications Programme for Brick Manufacturing Sector'

- **R K Singh, Minister of State (I/C) for Power and New & Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship** launched the 'Energy Efficiency Enterprise (E3) Certifications Programme for Brick Manufacturing Sector'.
- While launching, the minister acknowledged the **responses received from the bricks manufacturing sector to avail the certificate.**

Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated Centre for Advanced Radiation Shielding

- He inaugurated both the **centre and lab during his visit to CSIR-AMPRI, Bhopal.**
- He laid the foundation stone for **CSIR-AMPRI Bamboo Composite Structure.**

India's Second Largest Oil Supplier after Iraq

- As per the data, **India's imports from the US raised to 48% with a record of 545,300 bpd** for last month which has led to 14% of overall imports from last month of India.
- In all, India shipped **3.92 million bpd of oil in Feb 2021.**

MG Motor India partnered with IIT Delhi

- MG Motor has collaborated with the **Centre for Automotive Research and Tribology (CART)** of IIT Delhi.
- They have collaborated to **conduct the research activities in the deployment of electric, connected and autonomous vehicles** in urban areas of India.

IATA Partnered with Standard Chartered Bank

- **IATA has appointed StanC as one of its IATA EasyPay service** providers in India which will provide greater payment flexibility to travel agents.
- The API based EasyPay grants a **secure way to the traditional billing mechanism. The EasyPay is based on 'pay-as-you-go'.**

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Paid Visit to India

- They released the **joint statement on the establishment of a joint ministerial commission (JCM)**.
- The JCM will be an umbrella to engage the bilateral institutions like foreign office consultations and joint working groups.

Labour Bureau Signed Agreement with BECIL

- The service level agreement was signed for providing the technical and manpower support to the **Labour Bureau by BECIL**
- The partnership will help to conduct **All India Surveys on Migrant Workers & All India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey (AQEES)**.

UNOPS partnered with Denmark

- The **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** has entered into a partnership with Denmark to support the Jal Jeevan Mission Programme in Uttar Pradesh.
- Both the entities will work to offer strategic technical support to the mission and will ensure to fulfil the motto of bilateral Indo-Danish cooperation.

Niyo partnered with Equitas SFB and Visa

- The NiyoX has launched a new type of **zero balance saving account with an interest rate of 3.5% upto Rs 1 lakhs and 7% on incremental amounts above Rs 1 lakhs**.
- This NiyoX digital account can be utilised in two ways i.e. **using it as an online saving account or using it as a Wealth Management Account**.

Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre

- The '**Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre**' was inaugurated at Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh.
- It was inaugurated by **Union Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (Independent Charge) Prahlad Singh Patel**.

BANKING

NSE to Setup IBX at GIFT City, Gujarat

- The **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** has signed MoU with various entities to set up an **International Bullion Exchange (IBX)**, clearing corporation and depository at Gujarat International Finance Tec (GIFT) City in Gujarat.
- **NSE has signed MoU with the entities:** (a) Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (b) India INX International Exchange Ltd (c) National Securities Depository Ltd (d) Central Depository Services (India) Ltd.

'SBI International Access-US Equity FoF'

- The SBI Mutual Fund has launched '**SBI International Access-US Equity FoF**'. It is the SBI MF's first overseas offerings.
- The SBI International Access-US Equity FoF is an **open-ended Fund of Fund (FoF)** that invest in MF schemes or ETFs (Exchange Traded Fund) that invest in US markets.

GOI amends Insurance Ombudsman Rules 2017

- The amendments are made with an aim **to improve the working of the Insurance Ombudsman mechanism** and to have a resolution of complaints in the insurance sector in a timely, impartial and cost-effective manner.
- The Insurance broker is also brought under the **Ombudsman mechanism and the Ombudsmen will now have the power to pass awards against insurance brokers as well.**

Exim Bank Inked Soft Loan Pact with Eswatini

- The Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) has signed a **soft loan pact with Eswatini (Swaziland) on behalf of the GOI.**
- The loan pact is signed **to support the construction at disaster sites in the Kingdom of Eswatini (Swaziland).**

'Business Kisht Suraksha'—HDFC Ergo General Insurance

- The **HDFC Ergo General Insurance** has launched 'Business Kisht Suraksha' insurance cover.
- 'Business Kisht Suraksha' is an insurance cover that offers financial protection **to the balance sheets of Microfinance Institutions, financial institutions and banks in the case of any natural calamity or disasters.**

'SmartUp Unnati Mentoring Programme'—HDFC Bank

- The programme aims **to support women entrepreneurs.** It was launched to mark the celebrations of International Women's Day.
- Initially, the programme aims **to offer mentorship to more than 3,000 women entrepreneurs.**

'Yes Essence'—A Women Centric Service

- The 'Yes Essence' will provide **preferentially-priced loans and healthcare benefits to women.**
- It is launched to the women who belong **to various segments like homemakers, salaried professionals, entrepreneurs and senior citizens.**

OECD predicts India's GDP growth at 12.6% for FY22

- The **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** has projected that India's GDP to grow at 12.6% in FY22.
- Also, OECD has raised **India's growth estimate for FY22 by 4.7% from 7.9% which was projected in Dec 2020.**

RBI has Taken IDBI Bank out of PCA Framework

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has taken out IDBI Bank from the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework as enhanced regulatory supervision by RBI.
- The IDBI was taken out of the **framework after 4 years because of its improved financial performance**. IDBI Bank is owned by the Life Insurance Corporation of India.

'Wear N Pay' – Contactless Payment Wearable Device

- This range of devices linked to the **customers' bank account** and thus perform like a regular debit card.
- The devices are available in various forms like the **band, Key chain and watch loop with the starting price of Rs 750**.

Experts by SEBI to Examine Feasibility of SPACs

- The committee is set up under **SEBI's Primary Market Advisory Committee (PMAC)**.
- The main moto to examine SPACs is **to boost the funds in an initial public offering (IPO)**, which will be used to identify and merge with the target company.

Banks to Implement Image based CTS System—By RBI

- The RBI has also framed the **deadline for the same i.e. till 30th Sep 2021**.
- The image-based CTS will help in the **faster settlement of cheques thus giving a better customer experience**.

RBI Imposed Rs 2 crore Penalty on SBI

- The penalty was **imposed for contravention of certain provisions of Section 10** of the Banking Regulation (BR) Act, 1949.
- The penalty was also **imposed for not following the specific directions issued to SBI on payment of remuneration to employees** in the form of commission.

India's GDP to Grow 5% in FY 2021-- UNCTAD

- The **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** has estimated that the Indian economy to **contract by 6.9% in FY2020 amidst COVID-19**, is forecast to record a 'stronger recovery', with growth by 5% in FY 2021.
- It has also estimated that the **global economy to grow by 4.7% in FY 2021**.

RBI sets up Panel to Evaluate Applications for Universal Banks and SFBs

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has set up a **5 member committee to evaluate applications** for Universal Banks and Small Finance Banks.
- The committee will work for a **tenure of three years and the secretarial support to the committee** will be granted by the Department of Regulation of the RBI.

RBI imposed Rs 15 lakh Penalty on Fedbank Financial Services Limited

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has imposed a penalty of Rs 15 lakh on Fedbank Financial Services Limited, Mumbai.
- The penalty was imposed for not following the **directions framed by RBI in 'Monitoring of Frauds in NBFCs (Reserve Bank) Directions, 2016'**.

India's GDP to 12.8% for FY22—Fitch

- The Fitch Ratings has upgraded the **growth projection for India to 12.8% for the fiscal year 2022**.
- Earlier it had estimated **11% of growth for India for FY22**.

'IOB Trendy' Saving Account by Indian Overseas Bank

- It is particularly launched **for the growing millennial population in the country** by keeping their banking preferences in mind.
- The 'IOB Trendy' comes up with no **'Opening Balance' requirement, therefore no charges will be levied for the first month for non-maintenance of balance**.

SEBI announced to Ease Listing Norms for Startups

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) announced to ease the eligibility and listing criteria particularly on Innovators Growth Platform (IGP) to help the startups.
- The SEBI has also made amendments to SEBI regulations like the Delisting of Equity Shares and Alternative Investment Funds.

'Distributor to Retailer' (D2R) Finance-- BharatPe

- The Financial Technology firm, **BharatPe** has launched a product called **'Distributor to Retailer' (D2R) Finance**.
- It is launched **to grant instant liquidity to SMEs and empower SMEs in India**.

KBL Smart Trade

- The KBL Smart Trade will **allow the customers of Karnataka Bank to access IIFL Securities Demat and Trading account solution** to serve their capital market needs.
- This will also help the customers **to open a paperless, online trading account with IIFL Securities**.

'UNI-CARBON CARD'

- This card will create an opportunity **to add the value of benefits to the bank's customers**.
- The UNI-CARBON CARD is a **contactless tap and goes type of card**. It is also termed as **National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)**.

REPORTS

'Freedom in the World 2021 - Democracy under Siege'

- As per this report, **India's status is downgraded from 'Free' to 'Partly Free'**. In the current report, India's score is 67. In 2018, India scored 77 and in 2020, the score was 71.
- The 'most free countries' are Finland, **Norway and Sweden. These countries have secured a score of 100.**

World Air Quality Report—By Swiss Tech Company

- **Xinjiang in China is the topmost polluted city in the world.** It is further followed by Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh.
- The report states that Delhi is the **10th most polluted city in the world and the most polluted capital.**

World Happiness Report 2021

- The report is the survey of the **state of global happiness which analyses 149 countries** for how happy their citizens are.
- This current report focused on the **effects of the pandemic and how people all over the world have fared.**

World Development Report 2021--Data for Better Lives

- The report is a blueprint which describes that how to make use of power and solutions **to improve the lives of poor people and advance development objectives**, by ensuring that no one is left behind.
- The report highlights various ways **to improve the lives of people.**

INDEX AND RANKING

11th QS World University Rankings 2021

- The ranking is topped by the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)**, the United States.
- The IIT Madras is ranked at **30th position for the Petroleum Engineering programme.**

Ease of Living Index 2020

- The Ease of Living Index ranks the cities by **evaluating the quality of life and impact of initiatives for urban development.**
- The index is topped by Bengaluru in the **category of a population of more than a million.**

Economic Freedom Index 2021

- The index provides a ranking **for 184 countries for the period of July 2019 to June 2020.**
- As per the index, **India is ranked 26th out of 40 countries i.e. among Asia-Pacific Countries.**

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PwC's 24th Annual Global CEO Survey

- As per survey, **India is the 5th most attractive global destination in the world.**
- The USA has marked as the **first most attractive global destination in the world**, which is thus highly favoured by CEOs.

Ultimate Military Strength Index

- According to a study released by the **defence website Military Direct, India has the 4th Strongest Military Force with 61 points.**
- China is at the **1st rank position with 82 points** in the study for having Strongest Military Force in the world.

International Intellectual Property Index 2021

- It was released by the **US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC).**
- As per the index, **India is ranked at 40th position among 53 nations** with a score of 38.40.

APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Person	Designation
Sharad Goklani	President and CTO of AU Small Finance Bank
Matam Venkata Rao	MD and CEO of the Central Bank of India
Arun Kumar Singh	Chief Secretary of Bihar
Pramod Chandra Mody	Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)
Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh	Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command
Jaideep Bhatnagar	Principal Director General of Press Information Bureau (PIB)
Kuldeep Singh	Additional Charge of DG of CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force)
Manpreet Vohra	India's High Commissioner to Australia
Mary Kom	Chairperson of AIBA Champion and Veterans Committee
Michael Philip Carruth	Vice-Chairperson of AIBA Champion and Veterans Committee
Tarun Bajaj	Additional charge of Revenue Secretary
G R Chintala	Chairman of Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA)
Ligia Noronha	Assistant Secretary General and Head of the New York office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Rohit Sharma	Brand Ambassador of Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Limited
Naureen Hassan	First Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the

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	Federal Reserve Bank
Tirath Singh Rawat	Chief Minister of Uttarakhand
Deepika Padukone	Brand Ambassador of Plant-based nutrition brand OZiva
Pallav Mohapatra	MD and CEO of Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Ltd (Arcil)
Dr GP Samanta	Chief Statistician of India
Union Minister Anurag Thakur	Captain in the Territorial Army
Thomas Bach	President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC)
Girish Chandra Murmu (CAG of India)	Chairman of the Panel of External Auditors of the United Nations
Deepak Mishra	Director and Chief Executive of the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)
Hardeep Singh Brar	National Head of Sales and Marketing for Kia Motors India Ltd
Union Minister Prahlad Singh Patel	Head of the committee which is set up by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to have the multidisciplinary study of the Sarasvati River
Dr SK Singh	To head the 3 member committee to review medical care arrangements for the Haridwar Kumbh Mela
H K Mittal	To head the committee set up by GOI to execute and monitor the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme
Kapil Dev	Board Member of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI)
Union Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan	Chairman of the Stop TB Partnership Board
Dr Ajay Mathur	Director-General of International Solar Alliance (ISA)
Lt Gen DP Pandey	Commander of Kashmir based 15 Corps
M A Ganapathy	Director-General of the National Security Guard
Kuldeep Singh	Director-General of Central Reserve Police Force
Ajinkya Rahane	Brand Ambassador for NeoGrowth Credit Pvt Ltd
Samia Suluhu Hassan	First Woman President of Tanzania
Aparna Chennapragada	Chief Product Officer of Robinhood
Dattatreya Hosabale	General Secretary of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)
Arindam Bagchi	Official spokesperson of the Union ministry of external affairs
Mark Rutte	Prime Minister of the Netherland for the 4th term
Justice NV Ramana	Next Chief Justice of India
Dr Vivek Murthy	Surgeon General under US President Biden's administration
Sanjeev Kumar	Chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI)
Atish Chandra	Chairman and MD of Food Corporation of India (FCI)

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Saurabh Garg	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)
Anish Shah	MD and CEO of Mahindra and Mahindra
Denis Sassou Nguesso	President of the Republic of Congo
Dr HR Nagendra	To head an expert committee to explore the potential of Yoga as a productivity-enhancing tool for the population
Nilam Sawhney	Andhra Pradesh State Election Commissioner
Soma Mondal	Chairman of the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE)
Pradip Kumar Das	Vice-Chairman of Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE)

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Awards	Awardee
South Asian Digital Media Awards by WAN IFRA (World Association of News Publishers), being named as 'Champion Publisher of the Year'	The Hindu Group
2021 Film Archive Award by The International Federation of Film Archives (FIAPF)	Amitabh Bachchan
2020 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership	Mahamadou Issoufou (President of Niger)
ICC Men's Player of the Month for February 2021	Ravichandran Ashwin (India)
ICC Women's Player of the Month for February 2021	Tammy Beaumont (England)
BBC Indian Sportswoman of the year award	Koneru Humpy (Indian Chess Player)
BBC Lifetime Achievement award	Anju Bobby George (Indian Athlete)
BBC Emerging Player-of-the-Year award	Manu Bhaker (Indian Shooter)
King Bhumibol World Soil Day 2020 Award by Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)	Indian Council of Agricultural Research(ICAR)
International Woman of Courage Award 2021	Gowsalya Shankar
Pritzker Architecture Prize 2021	Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal
'Role Model' Award' at the 11th CII National HR Excellence Awards 2020-21	NTPC Ltd
Gandhi Peace Prize	For 2019 Late Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman
Gandhi Peace Prize	For 2020 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
Vyas Samman 2020	Prof. Sharad Pagare
Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2020	Asha Bhosle
CoreNet Global Academic Challenge 6.0	IIT Kharagpur
Rathbones Folio Prize 2021 for her book titles as ' In the Dream House: A Memoir'	Carmen Maria Machado
'India's Best Bank for SME's' at the Asiamoney Best Bank Awards	HDFC Bank

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IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme
1 st March 2021	Zero Discrimination Day	Theme: 'End Inequalities'
1 st March 2021	World Civil Defence Day	Theme: 'Strong Civil Protection to Preserve the National Economy'
1 st March 2021	Civil Accounts Day	--
3 rd March 2021	World Hearing Day	Theme: 'Hearing Care for All!: Screen, Rehabilitate, Communicate'
3 rd March 2021	World Wildlife Day	Theme: 'Forest and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet'
March 2021	Women's History Month	Theme: 'Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to Be Silenced'
4 th March 2021	National Security Day or Rashtriya Suraksha Diwas	--
4 th March 2021	National Safety Day	Theme: 'Sadak Suraksha' or 'Road Safety'
8 th March 2021	International Women's Day	Theme: 'Women in Leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 World'
10 th March 2021	52nd Raising Day of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)	--
11 th March 2021	World Kidney Day	Theme: Living Well with Kidney Disease
15 th March 2021	World Consumer Rights Day	Theme: 'Tackling Plastic Pollution'.
16 th March 2021	National Vaccination Day or National Immunization Day	--
18 th March 2021	Global Recycling Day	Theme: Recycling Heroes
18 th March 2021	Ordnance Factory Day	--
20 th March 2021	International Day of Happiness	Theme: Happiness for All, Forever
20 th March 2021	World Sparrow Day	Theme: I Love Sparrows
20 th March 2021	World Oral Health Day	Theme: Be proud of your mouth
20 th March 2021	UN French Language Day	--
21 st March 2021	International Day of Forests or World Forestry Day	Theme: Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well being
21 st March 2021	World Down Syndrome Day	Theme: We Decide
21 st March 2021	International Day for the elimination of racial discrimination	Theme: Youth standing up against racism
22 nd March 2021	World Water Day	Theme: Valuing Water
23 rd March 2021	Shaheed Diwas or Martyrs Day or Sarvodaya Day	--
23 rd March 2021	World Meteorological Day	Theme: The ocean, our climate and weather

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24 th March 2021	World Tuberculosis Day	Theme: The Clock is Ticking
24 th March 2021	International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims	--
25 th March 2021	International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade	Theme: Ending Slavery's Legacy of Racism: A Global Imperative for Justice'
25 th March 2021	International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members	--
27 th March 2021	Earth Hour Day	Theme: Climate Change to Save Earth
27 th March 2021	World Theatre Day	--
31 st March 2021	International Transgender Day of Visibility	--

MOU'S SIGNED

NSE signed MoU with SIDBI

- They have collaborated to have cooperation in the initiatives framed by both of the organisations for the upliftment of MSMEs.
- They have also collaborated to explore the feasibility of the debt capital platform for MSMEs.

Kotak Mahindra Bank signed MoU with Indian Army

- The MoU was signed to provide a salary to the accounts of all active and retired army personnel.
- This MoU will enable the bank to offer its products and services to the active and retired Indian army personnel.

MoA&FW signed MoU with Central Silk Board

- The MoU was signed to implement Agroforestry in the silk sector under the Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF) Scheme.
- The MoU was signed with an aim to fulfil the target set under the Make in India and Make for the World vision of the Prime Minister.

Ministry of WCD signed MoU with Invest India

- The MoU was signed to boost the cooperation in Nutrition, Child Protection and Development, Women Empowerment and Capacity Building sectors.
- It will also provide international cooperation, impact assessment to the ministry in fulfilling the objective of the MoU.

Indian Navy signed Contract with Suryadipta Projects

- The contract was signed **to construct 11 Ammunition-Cum-Torpedo-Cum-Missile (ACTCM) barges.**
- Upon signing the contract, the **Suryadipta Projects will deliver ACTCM barges** to the Indian Navy from 22nd May 2021.

REC Ltd, PFC signed pact with Bhutan based KHEL

- The pact was signed **to finance the hydroelectric project of 600MW** at Trashiyangtse, Bhutan.
- The project will be **financially supported in the debt-equity ratio of 70:30.**

NHSRCL signed MoU with JRTC

- The MoU was signed **to get support for track works in the 237-km stretch between Vadodara and Vapi in Gujarat** for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR), which is the bullet train project of India.
- This partnership will allow the **transfer of Japan's high-speed rail system technology to India.**

AIM signed Sol with Aster DM Healthcare

- They have partnered **to transform the healthcare infrastructure of India through innovations.**
- Under this Sol, they will work **to conduct various initiatives of AIM programmes and support AIM beneficiaries in India.**

Italy signed Framework Agreement of the ISA

- Italy has entered into a **framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) with India.**
- The announcement **for the same was made by the Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Anurag Srivastava.**

APEDA Signed MoU with NSIC

- They have partnered **to boost the exports potential of agricultural and processed food products manufactured by MSMEs.**
- The expertise from **both the organisations will synergize the activities in the agriculture sector and allied areas thus bringing better value to the stakeholders.**

NITI Aayog signed Sol with AISPL

- The NITI Aayog has signed Sol with **Amazon Internet Services Private Limited (AISPL).**
- They have signed Sol with an aim **to empower the students about the fundamentals of cloud computing through Atal Tinkering Labs.**

India & Japan to Enhance Cooperation in Patent Verification

- The agreement for the same was signed during the **4th review meeting of the Department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) and Japan Patent Office (JPO).**

- They have agreed on **patent verification cooperation** under a memorandum of cooperation on **industrial property**.

MoC between India & Japan for Water Resources

- The Union Cabinet gave the approval to sign a **Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between Japan and India in the water resources sector**.
- The MoC will help in facilitating **irrigation requirements, water security, and sustainability** in water resources development.

Gov. of Karnataka signed MoU with ITC

- The MoU was signed to execute a **watershed development programme, which covers over one million acres and 100 watersheds in the state**.
- The MoU was signed under **Karnataka Watershed Development Department and ITC's social investment programme called Mission Sunehra Kal**. The partnership will work for a tenure of 3 years.

MP and UP signed MoU with Jal Shakti Ministry

- The MoU was signed to **implement the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project**.
- The **Ken-Betwa river interlinking project will carry water from surplus regions** to drought prone and water-scarce regions through interlinking of rivers.

Applied Materials signed Pact with IISc

- **Applied Materials India has signed a Research and Development (R&D) pact** with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.
- Both the entities in partnership with **CeNSE will work jointly to develop new applications and solutions in the advanced materials field**.

JICA signed Loan Agreement with TCCL

- The loan agreement was signed to **offer loans to the Indian firms which work in the Clean Energy project sectors**.
- The loan agreement of **10 billion Japanese yen (approx. 660 crores)** was signed between the firms.

MoU signed to Implement City Specific Action Plan under NCAP

- The MoU was signed in the presence of **Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar**.
- The MoU was signed to **fulfil the vision set by PM Modi to curb air pollution by 20% in the next 4 years** in over 100 cities of the country.

India and Bangladesh signed Various MoUs

- **India's PM Narendra Modi paid a visit to Bangladesh**, during which both the nations signed MoUs in various sectors to boost their cooperation.

- The MoUs were signed in the sector of **trade, resilience, sports facilities, ICT, Disaster management and mitigation.**

CESL signed Pact with CSC SPV

- The **Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL)** has signed a pact with **CSC e-Governance Services India Limited**, a Special Purpose Vehicle (CSC SPV).
- The pact was signed **to create demand aggregation for electric mobility, solar, energy efficiency solutions and other initiatives of CESL.**

India Australia talks on Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Export Control

- India and Australia held joint talks on **Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, and Export Control. This was the sixth edition of the same.**
- They held joint discussions about the issues being **faced in the areas of chemical, nuclear, biological disarmament and non-proliferation, outer space security, conventional weapons, and strategic export control.**

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

'Sugamya Bharat App' & 'Access-The Photo Digest- A Handbook'

- The **Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Thaawarchand Gehlot** launched the 'Sugamya Bharat App' and a handbook with a titled 'Access-The Photo Digest' via video conference.
- The app and handbook are developed by the **Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Department, which comes under the Social Justice and Empowerment ministry.**

Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship

- The fellowship is launched with an aim **to recognize students, SHGs, municipal and sanitary workers who are working as Swachhta Saarthi.**
- They are working to tackle the challenges of **waste management in a scientific and sustainable manner.**

India and Philippines signed Key Defence Pact

- The pact is named as **'implementing arrangement for the procurement of defence material and equipment'.**
- As per this pact, the **Philippines will purchase BrahMos cruise missiles from India.**

'CSIR Floriculture Mission'

- Under this mission, the **CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research)** will integrate the latest technologies in the area of Floriculture.
- The mission aims to focus on **floral crops, seasonal crops and cultivation of flower crops for honey bee rearing and wild ornaments.**

'Her Circle' Digital Platform

- The 'Her Circle' is a **dedicated content, social media, and digital platform, launched specifically for women.**
- The digital platform will help **to empower the women community and will develop the sisterhood bond among them at the global level.**

Super-75 Scholarship Scheme and Tejaswini Scheme—J&K

- The **Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir** launched the 'Super-75 Scholarship Scheme' and 'Tejaswini Scheme'.
- The schemes aim **to support the education facilities to the meritorious girls from poor families and women entrepreneurship.**

Union Cabinet approved Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi

- It is approved as a **single non-lapsable reserve fund.** It is approved for the share of Health from the proceeds of Health and Education Cess levied under Section 136-b of Finance Act, 2007.
- The PMSSN is a **non-lapsable reserve fund allotted for health in the public account.** It is comprised of the proceeds from a share of health in the Health and Education cess.

'Mera Ration' Mobile App

- The 'Mera Ration' mobile app will guide the **citizens to locate the nearest fair price shop.**
- This will be of high advantage **to those who have moved to new areas for livelihoods.**

'UPI Help' by NPCI

- **India's digital payments umbrella entity called National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has launched 'UPI-Help' on BHIM UPI.
- The 'UPI-Help' will help in the **grievance redressal mechanism for BHIM app users.**

Gram Ujala Scheme

- The Gram Ujala Scheme is launched **to offer the world's cheapest LED bulbs in rural areas of the country at a cost of Rs 10 only.**
- The first phase of the scheme was launched from **Arrah in Bihar.**

SAAMAR Campaign

- The SAAMAR signifies '**Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction.**'
- The campaign is launched with the **target of 1000 days, during which annual surveys will be conducted to track the progress.**

PM Modi launched 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain' Campaign

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the '**Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain**' Campaign via video conference.

- The campaign is based on the theme of **'Catch the rain, where it falls when it falls.'**

Manipur—Model State for Van Dhan Vikas Yojana

- In this state, the **Van Dhan programme** has emerged as a major source of employment for the local tribals.
- The programme is controlled by **TRIFED** along with the support and the implementing agencies from the district administration and other stakeholders of the state.

UPFPO Shakti Portal

- The government of **Uttar Pradesh** launched **UPFPO (Uttar Pradesh Farmer Producer Organisation) Shakti portal**. It was launched by the CM of the state, Yogi Adityanath.
- The portal is part of the **Kisan Kalyan Mission in Gorakhpur** and is the first of its kind in India.

PRANIT e-Tendering Portal

- The PRANIT portal will support **fewer paperwork activities, ease of operation** and will offer more transparency in the tender application process.
- The portal is certified by the **Standardisation, Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC)** under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

FM launched Central Scrutiny Centre & IEPFA App

- The app will allow **investors and common citizens** to file a report on the suspected fraudulent schemes.
- Both initiatives will develop a **new corporate and investor-friendly ecosystem**.

Tribal TB Initiative

- The Union Health Minister **Dr Harsh Vardhan** has launched the **'Tribal TB Initiative'** with an aim to achieve the target of TB Mukht Bharat.
- In this regards, a **Guidance Note on Joint Action Plan for eradicating TB** was framed.

Cognizant Returnship Programme

- The programme was launched to **offer support for IT professionals who wish to restart their careers**.
- The programme will be a **12-week paid experience for talented technology professionals** looking to restart their careers after a break.

DEFENCE

ISRO Launched the First Satellite of the Year 2021

- **ISRO** launched the **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C51**, which also carried Amazonia-1 and 18 other satellites.

- It was launched from **Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.**

IAF to Participate in Exercise Desert Flag-VI

- It is being held from **3rd March to 27th March 2021** at Al Dhafra airbase in the UAE.
- The Exercise Desert Flag is hosted by **United Arab Emirates Air Force.**

DRDO conducted Test of Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) Technology

- The flight test was conducted from the **Integrated Test Range at Chandipur** off the coast of Odisha.
- The experts also simulated and test the **air-launch scenario using the booster motor.**

'DUSTLIK II'-- Joint Military Ex. of India and Uzbekistan

- The second edition of the **joint military exercise between armies of both nations** is being held at Chaubatia near Ranikhet, Uttarakhand.
- The exercise is held to focus on **Counter Insurgency (IC) and Counter-Terrorism, thus boosting military cooperation between both countries.**

Interaction Session with Fishermen Community

- The session was held **to start the celebrations of the 75th Anniversary of Independence of India.**
- The fishermen community from the coastal areas of **Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, Guntur, Prakasam and Nellore** participated in the interaction.

'INS Dhruv', India's First Indigenous Nuclear Missile Tracking Ship

- India commissioned **'INS Dhruv, which is an ocean surveillance and nuclear missile tracking vessel.** Its code name is VC 11184.
- With this, India has become a **5th country to have a tracking vessel after the USA, France, Russia and China.**

Navies of India and the US Conducted 'PASSEX'

- The naval exercise was held in the **Eastern Indian Ocean Region (Bay of Bengal).**
- This is the first time that **Indian Air Force fighters were part of this exercise.**

11th Indo-US Joint Special Forces Exercise Vajra Prahar 2021

- The joint military exercise is termed **Vajra Prahar 2021.** This was the 11th edition of the joint military exercise.
- It was held to enhance **interoperability between both the nations.**

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

'AI Game Changers' Program

- The program will be launched with an aim **to promote AI (Artificial Intelligence) based innovations in India.**
- Microsoft will be the innovation partner for **Nasscom's 'AI Game Changers' program.**

RuPay SoftPoS Solution

- This solution will offer an innovative approach **to transform NFC-enabled smartphones into merchant Point of Sale (PoS) terminals** for the retailers.
- With the help of the 'RuPay SoftPoS' solution merchants will be able to perform contactless payments of up to **Rs 5,000 through tap and pay mechanism on their mobile phones.**

'NISAR'

- The NISAR is capable **to produce high-resolution images and will be used for Joint Earth Observation Satellite Mission.**
- The **Joint Earth Observation Satellite Mission** is a mission of ISRO and NASA.

ISRO launched RH-560 Sounding Rocket

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched a **sounding rocket named RH-560 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota Range.**
- The RH-560 was particularly launched **to study altitudinal variations in the neutral winds and plasma dynamics.**

Free-Space Quantum Communication Demonstrated by ISRO

- The **demonstration took place at the Space Applications Centre (SAC)** in Ahmedabad in between the two line-of-sight buildings within its campus.
- The demonstration was conducted **at the night to avoid interference from direct sunlight.**

SPORTS

Yonex All England Open Badminton Championship 2021

- The All England Open 2021 Championship was held at **Arena Birmingham, England.**

2021 Para Shooting World Cup

- The 2021 Para Shooting **World Cup** tournament was held in **Al Ain, UAE.**
- In the event, **India bagged 7 medals and finished at 3rd position. Ukraine topped in the number of medals by winning a total of 11 medals.**

2021 ISSF Shooting World Cup New Delhi

- The **2021 ISSF World Cup New Delhi** was held recently in which India finished at the top position in the medals tally.

- India secured 30 medals which included **15 gold, 9 silver and 6 bronze**. The USA was in second position by winning 8 medals.

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

16th FICCI Higher Education Summit

- The summit was addressed by **Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank**.
- The summit was organised by the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** in partnership with the **Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.

FM attended G20 Central Bank Governors Meeting

- The meeting was held **to discuss policy actions to have transformative and equitable recovery**.
- The dignitaries discussed **global economic outlook, financial sector issues, financial inclusion and sustainable finance**.

2nd Global Bio-India-2021

- The **2nd Global-Bio India 2021** was inaugurated by **Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare & Science and Technology Dr Harsh Vardhan** in New Delhi in a virtual manner.
- The Global-Bio India 2021 aims **to showcase the importance of the biotechnology sector of India at the National and International Level**.

India-Sweden Virtual Summit

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi headed the summit along with his **counterpart Stefan Lofven of Sweden**.
- The summit was organised to discuss **bilateral relations in various sectors of both nations**.

39th CERAWeek Conference 2021

- PM Modi also addressed the conference via video-conference. While addressing, **he highlighted India's goal to boost the share of gas in its fuel mix to 15% from 6% by 2030**.
- He also discussed **climate change which can be tackled through measures like policies, laws, rules and behavioural changes** at the individual and global level.

76th Annual Conference of Association of Physicians of India (API)

- It was addressed by **Union Minister of State (IC) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh**.
- While addressing he mentioned the **contribution of Physicians to the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Campaign**.

Virtual New Delhi World Book Fair 2021

- This was the 29th edition of the event which was organised by the **National Book Trust (NBT)**.

Monthly One-Liner GK Digest: March 2021

- The event is being held **from 6th March to 12th March 2021** in a virtual manner due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Combined Commanders Conference 2021

- The conference focused on the **catheterisation of armed forces, making the defence sector self-reliant** and combating evolving threats in the country.
- On the last day of the conference was addressed by PM Narendra Modi. While addressing the conference, **he focused on to develop the Indian military into a 'future force'**.

PM Modi participated in Quad Summit 2021

- The dignitaries held discussions about the **Indo-Pacific region, combating COVID19 Pandemic, maritime security**, emerging technologies and climate change.
- They discussed developing cooperation **to have an equitable and affordable distribution of vaccines in the Indo-Pacific region.**

BRICS CGETI Meeting

- The first meeting of the **BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI)** was held recently under India's Chairmanship.
- The theme of the meeting: **'BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus'**.

4th Global Ayurveda Festival

- He also highlighted that during the **pandemic, demand for ayurvedic products** increased to a greater extent.
- He discussed that **National AYUSH Mission has started to promote AYUSH medical systems through cost-effective AYUSH services.**

India-Finland Virtual Summit

- The meet was held between **PM Narendra Modi and PM of the Republic of Finland Ms Sanna Marin.**
- The meet was held **to discuss the bilateral, regional and multilateral issues between both nations.**

IBSA Women's Forum Meeting

- The 6th edition of the **India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Women's Forum meeting** was held virtually.
- The dignitaries **discussed the issues faced by women and adopt ways to transform their lives.**

11th India Chem 2021

- The India Chem is the **biennial International Exhibiting and Conference.**
- It was jointly organised by the **Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, GOI and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).**

World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2021

- The WSIS Forum is the **world's largest annual gathering of the 'ICT for the development community.**
- It was organised by **International Telecommunications Union (ITU), UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD.**

116th Meet of Permanent Indus Commission (PIC)

- Pakistan's side was represented by **Syed Muhammad Meher Ali Shah, Commissioner for IWT.**
- The dignitaries held a discussion about **two projects, namely, Pakal Dul (1000 MW) and Lower Kalnai (48 MW).**

7th Annual Summit of NATHEALTH

- The summit was addressed by **Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan.**
- **The theme of the Summit:** 'Indian Health system expansion in post-COVID era'.

